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CONTACT: Debra Anderson

505-473-9590

EMAIL: [debra@redrockpictures.org](mailto:debra@redrockpictures.org)

Controversial New Mexico Film Celebrates Its Homecoming at the 10th Annual Santa Fe Film Festival

SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO, November 23, 2009: *Split Estate*, the story of a David versus Goliath struggle raging in the Rocky Mountain West, will screen at the 10th Annual Santa Fe Film Festival, December 2 – 6, 2009.

Narrated by Ali MacGraw, *Split Estate* maps a tragedy in the making, as citizens in the path of a new domestic drilling boom struggle against the erosion of their civil liberties, their communities and their health.

Natural gas is currently being sold to the American public as the answer to all of our energy woes. It's championed by industry and politicians on both sides of the aisle as "the clean fossil fuel," and "the bridge fuel," as we look to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and our dependence on foreign oil.

In the midst of the hype — even prominent environmentalists are jumping on board, *Split Estate* shows there is no such thing as a "clean" fossil fuel. Nor, is there clean extraction, as citizens on the frontlines of the drilling boom will attest.

"*Split Estate* tells a powerful story about Americans living with the dirty side of oil and gas development in their own backyards," states Amy Mall, Senior Policy Analyst with the Natural Resources Defense Council.

The film is not without its controversy: Days after the national broadcast in October on Planet Green, Kathy Hall, a Colorado Oil and Gas Association representative for the state's Western Slope, resigned. Hall, claiming that her voice was dubbed in the film, had stated in an on-camera interview: 'I have had frac'ing fluid taken right out of a frac'ing truck, I've had it in my mouth, I've tasted it and I'm just fine.'

For Santa Fe filmmaker Debra Anderson, the screening at the Santa Fe Film Festival is both a homecoming celebration and an opportunity to raise awareness of the crisis unfolding in our backyards as Royal Dutch Shell begins to move into Mora and San Miguel Counties — a crisis that will surely impact the Northern New Mexico bioregion.

A long-time editor for the film and television industry, Anderson began to shoot *Split Estate* three years ago after reading a story in *On Earth* Magazine about a woman named Laura Amos from Garfield County, Colorado, who developed a rare adrenal tumor after drilling commenced in her neighborhood. Anderson was moved to tell the story of a growing number of people, like Laura, who are experiencing serious health effects associated with drilling practices.

Much to her surprise, the story landed in Anderson's own backyard when Tecton Energy started drilling in the Galisteo Basin. This time, there was a happier ending: a grassroots coalition, which used a rough cut of the film as a educational tool, helped to establish one of the strongest ordinances in the country and the industry backed off...for now.

A large local crew included composers Molly Sturges, Chris Jonas, Joe West, Ron Sunsinger and Michael Sterns; advising producer Michael Mierendorf; writers Joe Day and Avery Garrett, cinematographer Doug Crawford, along with Mitchell Marti, Christian Leahy, Matt Vest, Ruth Frank, Nancy Holly Hughs, Diane Strauss, Grant Taylor and Susan Skeeel. *Split Estate* received two of Governor Richardson's New Visions/New Mexico contract awards in 2006 and 2007 and had further local financial support from the McCune Charitable Foundation, Livingry Foundation, and many generous individuals.

*Split Estate* will screen on Saturday, December 5 at 5:45 PM at the New Mexico History Museum in collaboration with Bioneers, Drilling Santa Fe and Common Ground United.

Filmmaker Debra Anderson will be joined by Nikki Spangenburg of Bioneers who will introduce the film. Spangenburg is the coordinator of the Dreaming New Mexico project, which promotes systemic, collaborative approaches toward a common vision of restoration — a dream of what New Mexico could look like in 2020.

Also on hand will be Drilling Santa Fe and Common Ground United, which were among members of the grassroots coalition instrumental in the effort to protect Santa Fe County. Both organizations are involved in supporting efforts in other New Mexico counties currently challenged by the presence of the industry. Anderson and guests will be meeting after the screening at a nearby bar and restaurant, TBA.

To purchase tickets: <https://santafefilmfestival.ticketleap.com/buy-tickets/film/split-estate/santa-fe/74C57947-B677-42C6-AC40-79E7A42F640>

*Split Estate* premiered at DocuWeeks in New York City and Los Angeles in August, and it had its world television premier October 17 on Planet Green, a network of Discovery Communications. Since DocuWeeks, communities in crisis across the country have been scheduling screenings.

*Split Estate* is a presentation of Red Rock Pictures, a production company dedicated to the creation of documentaries that explore deeply felt human stories about the environment, energy and human rights. ([www.splitestate.com](http://www.splitestate.com))

To view the Trailer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bvT4PycSAPk>