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SYRCL's Wild & Scenic Film Festival Releases Limited Number of Early Bird Passes and Preview of 2026 Film Selections

NEVADA CITY, CA – [The South Yuba River Citizens League's Wild & Scenic Film Festival](#) has announced a **preview of its 2026 lineup of environmental and adventure films** to be shown at its 24th annual event happening February 19-23, 2026. The film lineup preview - listed below and online - includes films such as *Snail Hunters*, *The American Southwest*, *Arctic Alchemy*, and *The Birds*. **Festival passes with special early bird pricing are now on sale.** A limited number of these specially priced passes are available through December 12th, or as quantities allow. The full lineup of films will be released in mid-December along with additional regularly priced passes and tickets.

For over two decades, the Wild & Scenic Film Festival has welcomed audiences to the towns of Grass Valley and Nevada City in the beautiful foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountains for its flagship event. During the **weekend of February 19-23**, the festival takes over the towns.

The festival is not only about first-class films, it also features a variety of events, such as activist workshops, an art exhibition in partnership with the Nevada County Arts Council, youth programs serving 4,000+ students from local and regional schools, the EnviroFair, filmmaker Q&A sessions, as well as opportunities to interact with filmmakers and special guests. In its 24th year, the Wild & Scenic Film Festival continues to bring together top filmmakers, activists, and social innovators to inspire environmental awareness and action.

This year's festival theme, "Mobilize," is a call to action and a celebration of movement and progress towards tangible change. Films that mobilize elevate voices, organize efforts, and address challenges with urgency and persistence. From grassroots resistance to international coalitions, from Indigenous land stewards to youth climate strikers, our films honor those who are mobilizing to create change. The official 2026 [artwork](#) – created by artist Jeremy Collins – celebrates these ideas, and audiences can expect to see it reflected throughout this year's programming.

To learn more and purchase early bird passes, visit [WSFF.eventive.org](https://wsff.eventive.org). Stay tuned for the full lineup of films to be announced in December.

Volunteer shifts for the film festival are also open. SYRCL relies on the time and talent of hundreds of volunteers to make the Wild & Scenic Film Festival a success every year. Volunteers at the festival have

access to a number of perks, including complimentary session tickets. Go to YubaRiver.org to find out more about this incredible community volunteer opportunity.

Some of the marquee films presented at the 24th Annual Wild & Scenic Film Festival include:

The American Southwest - A wild and unforgettable journey down the mighty Colorado River. Narrated by Indigenous environmentalist Quannah Chasinghorse, the film beautifully showcases the region's abundant wildlife, confronts the ecological impacts of dams and river depletion, and boldly advocates for increased water and wildlife conservation. The Fin and Fur Films production travels through legendary landscapes from the viewpoint of some of the Southwest's most charming characters... such as wetland-building beavers, bugling bull elk, and desert-adapted rattlesnakes. Made in association with Natives Outdoors, *The American Southwest* highlights the region's deep cultural history and the crucial need to better manage the river for both wildlife and society to thrive.

Snail Hunters - A team of evolutionary biologists from the University of Idaho travels to the Galápagos Islands to solve the Earth's biodiversity crisis. The twist? They aren't studying the iconic tortoises or blue footed boobies on this storied archipelago—they are Snail Hunters, studying a more unlikely subject in the crucible of evolution. By understanding the unique traits that make snails a champion of coexistence, the multi-disciplinary scientists hope to unlock a brighter future for humanity and the planet.

Valley Under Fire - When climber and National Park Service employee Nate Vince was fired under controversial circumstances, he staged a protest by hanging an upside-down American flag off Yosemite's iconic El Capitan, an act that captured national attention. This short documentary tells the story behind that moment and explores Nate's deep connection to the park, his passion for climbing, and his commitment to protecting public lands and the communities built around them.

The Birds - A filmmaker, facing up to the twilight of his career - sets out to use his camera skills to decipher the relationship between a million seabirds and a single hunting falcon. Ultimately his cinematic portrait of this "cosmic event" provides crucial insights into the mechanisms of the natural world and the difficulties of coming to terms with the end of a life well-lived.

Forgotten Flavors - Our ancestors knew every edible plant, every healing herb—knowledge we've almost entirely lost. Forager Pascal Baudar moves through Southern California's woodlands and desert with ancestral eyes, gathering what most would overlook. He teaches others to awaken senses dulled by modern life—to taste, smell, and touch their way back to an ancient knowing. He forages wild plants for food and fermentation, hand-harvests clay to craft vessels, creating an extraordinary feast that exists nowhere else. This intimate portrait reveals what we gain when we slow down enough to remember who we once were

Arctic Alchemy - This film follows renowned Alaskan adventurer and climate scientist Roman Dial and his team on a 112-mile research expedition above the Arctic Circle. Traveling by packraft and foot through Alaska's mighty Brooks Range, their goal is to find the source of a mysterious phenomenon poisoning watersheds in the Arctic. Along the journey, Roman reckons with fatherhood, personal tragedy, and the power of wilderness to both break us and bring us fully alive. Through expansive aerial cinematography, archival photography, and rare access to Roman's field expeditions, the film provides a window into a lifetime of discovery and legendary backcountry pursuits. As the Alaskan Arctic rapidly changes, Roman seeks to pass the torch to his students, in hopes that they carry on his unique style of expeditionary climate research. The documentary explores the power of one of the planet's last great expanses and the wild alchemy of transforming grief into love.

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ABOUT THE 2026 WILD & SCENIC FILM FESTIVAL:

One of the nation’s largest environmental and adventure film festivals, the 24th annual Wild & Scenic Film Festival combines stellar filmmaking, cinematography, and first-rate storytelling to inform, inspire, and ignite solutions to restore the earth and human communities while creating a positive future for generations to come. Festival goers are treated to a wide variety of award-winning films, including those about nature, community activism, adventure, conservation, water, energy, wildlife, and environmental justice. The Wild & Scenic Film Festival is hosted and produced by South Yuba River Citizens League (SYRCL) February 19-23, 2026. This flagship festival kicks off a nationwide tour bringing Wild & Scenic films to more than 40,000 people annually.

Official Artwork, Photos, Film Stills etc.: [Wild & Scenic Press - Wild & Scenic Film Festival](#)

For more information, visit <https://www.WildandScenicFilmFestival.org>

ABOUT SYRCL:

The South Yuba River Citizens League (SYRCL, pronounced “circle”) is the leading voice for the protection and restoration of the Yuba River watershed. Founded in 1983 through a rural, grassroots campaign to defend the South Yuba River from proposed hydropower dams, SYRCL has developed into a vibrant community organization with over 3,500 members and volunteers based in Nevada City, CA. See: www.yubariver.org