

Documentary "Not If But When: Wildfire Solutions" screening at the Wild&Scenic Film Festival

By **Pamela Biery** - January 6, 2020, 08:49:21 AM

January 6, 2020 – This year's [Wild & Scenic Film Festival](#) (January 16-20 Nevada City and Grass Valley, CA) includes a sprinkling of local films—films with local topics and or local filmmakers. It sounds cliché, but for me, at this moment, it seems essential to think global and act local. [With climate and environmental laws being consistently reversed and or softened, *it is a time when our local communities are more important than ever. Taking action where we can is where we can consistently make a difference.*](#)

Not If But When: Wildfire Solutions is a 39-minute documentary that focuses on solutions to our current wildfire predicament. In doing so, local projects including a rurally-based biomass plant, the historic use of controlled burns and forest management development techniques in the UC Berkeley Sagehen Creek Field Station are examined. The outcomes for our region are potentially very significant with fire reduction programs reaching from Truckee to Yuba County and the forest surrounding Bullard's Bar. This is information that is valuable from the point of view of community awareness, but also in terms of impacts to ongoing forestry management and future wildfire control.

I spoke with filmmaker Radu Sava about his motivation to make this film. As a resident of the Yuba County Foothills, he is no stranger to living in constant threat of forest fire. In his work on the Nevada County Arts Council film, "Belonging" Radu interviewed Jeff Brown at UC Berkeley Sagehen Creek Field Station. *"This really changed my attitude. Jeff introduced the concept that more fire is needed and that fire is not all bad, and also how essential it is to manage small diameter trees in the forest."* Radu observed.





Attending the 2019 Wild & Scenic Film Festival was another aspect of his inspiration. The community panel discussions included a talk with Kelly Martin, Chief Fire & Aviation Officer at Yosemite National Park regarding the 2019 film "Wilder than Wild." This provided more education and background with the critical notion that we need to stop fighting fire with a male, aggressive attitude, but rather learn to work with fire in partnership, as Native Americans historically did.

SYRCL's Bear Yuba Watershed Council meeting was instrumental in introducing Radu and co-director Rebekah Hood-Sava to the Camptonville Community Partnership and Cathy LeBlanc, as well as other important initiatives. [The North Yuba Forest Partnership](#) is comprised of many organizations, including US National Forest Service, National Forest Foundation, SYRCL (South Yuba River Citizens League), The Nature Conservancy, Yuba Water Agency, Camptonville Community Partnership, Nevada City Rancheria Nisenan Tribe, Sierra County, and Blue Forest Conservation.

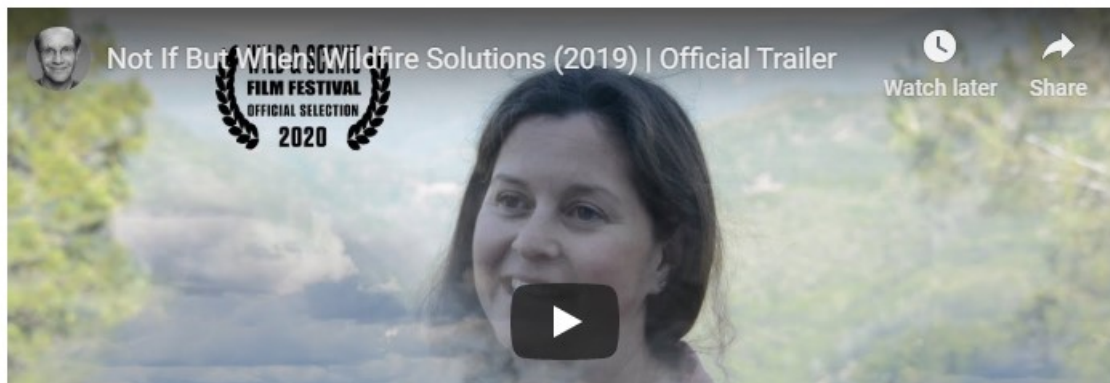
Together, the partners are working on an unprecedented scale to collaboratively plan, analyze, finance, and implement forest restoration across 275,000 acres of the watershed. This is a working example of how collaboration can create, manage and implement critical forestry solutions on a large scale.

This important film is an example of drawing on and connecting many local resources, such as the [Yuba Watershed & Fire Safe Council](#), Cal Fire, Bear Yuba Land Trust and SYRCL. Each county has a Fire Safe Council and [Nevada County](#) also offers fire preparedness information. Nine key agencies are interviewed in this pro-active film, giving a unique perspective and short-cutting research for viewers.

"We wanted to make a film that was focused on solutions, rather than the aftermath and fear of fire—a film that gives viewers a chance to see what can be done and what is being done from a positive outlook and how to get involved. It will take all of us to solve this issue, not just big institutions or the government." Radu Sava and Rebekah Hood-Sava.

This important film is scheduled with other wildfire films. The Friday evening screening includes a 30-minute panel discussion with both scientists and film participants. If you are wondering what can be done to prevent or limit wildfires in your own home or community, I strongly recommend this session.

Not If But When Wildfire Solutions provides insights into significant, progressive solutions currently underway in our local watershed.





Not if But When Wildfire Solutions Nevada City Vet's Hall screening is ***Friday January 17, 2020 8:00 pm – 10:15 pm*** and is followed by a 30-minute panel discussion including those in the film and scientists. Learn more <https://sched.co/YQvi>

Not if But When Wildfire Solutions also screens on Sunday January 19 at 1:30 pm, Gold Miners Inn, Grass Valley, California.