Final Report

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Project Title: Cinema and the Natural Environment: The Ecology of Shooting Locations

1.1 Project Summary

Under the sub-disciplinary cinema studies category of eco-cinema--and in relation to the interdisciplinary field known as the environmental humanities--this project situates the blockbuster film The Revenant on the Fortress Mountain, Alberta shooting location where most of the film's key scenes were shot. The spectacular cinematography of the area (specifically its evocative featuring of water in all its states) was connected in this study to the status of freshwater resources in the area and to their possible fate in an era of global warming and freshwater compromise. The hope is that such studies can help attach environmental awareness to the highly visible, commercial entertainments that saturate the society at large.

1.2 Project Outcomes and Impacts

1) High definition, 360-degree footage of the Fortress Mountain shooting locations for The Revenant were captured--footage that, like the movie itself, beautifully features natural, freshwater sources and flows in this mountain region. 2) Extensive interviews were held with Robert Sandford, the EPCOR Chair for Water and Climate Security at the United Nations, who just so happens to live in Canmore, Alberta, near to the area studied. 3) Information from the interviews was transferred into a chapter-length study that is part of a monograph already under contract with Wilfrid Laurier University Press. 4) A video essay summary of the project was created and is being distributed nationally and internationally to scholars interested in eco cinema, but is also aimed at a general public audience. 5) An augmented reality presentation (viewable on AR headsets, like Oculus, for example) is being created through technical resources at Mount Royal and will be distributed to the same expert communities to which the video essay was sent but also be made available to the general public. 6) The study's results and portions of the captured footage were featured prominently in 4 academic conference venues, one of them international: (2019). “The Night Moves of Eco-Noir: Essaying Dark Ecology”. Canadian Association for American Studies, U of B.C., Vancouver, Canada. (Role: First Listed Author) (2019). Cine-Hydrology: Canadian Water Security and Film Essay Advocacy. Environmental Studies Association of Canada, U of B.C., Vancouver, Canada. (Role: First Listed Author) (2019). “A Better Distribution Deal: Ecocinema and the Essay Film”. Film Studies Association of Canada, U of B.C., Vancouver, Canada. (Role: First Listed Author) (2019). Eco-bromantic Adventuring and The Revenant. Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment, University of California, Davis. (Role: First Listed Author)