



# Spirit of the Peaks

Screening Toolkit



# About The Film

**Runtime:** 42 minutes

**Directed by:** Connor Ryan,  
Tim Kressin

**Produced by:** Davis Goslin,  
Greg Balkin

**Production Company:** REI Co-op Studios,  
Wondercamp



## Logline

Caught between athletic passion and cultural obligation, a Hunkpapa Lakota skier learns to be a better relative to the mountains where he skis and to the people who once called them home.

## Synopsis

Produced in partnership with REI Co-op Studios, Wondercamp and NativesOutdoors, and co-directed by Hunkpapa Lakota skier Connor Ryan, “Spirit of the Peaks” is a film about the struggle for balance between two worlds. For Connor, skiing in Ute Territory has always raised questions about being in reciprocity with the land and its people. As a skier who connects with the land through sport, he empathizes with the injustices that have displaced the Utes and ongoing colonization, erasure and extraction impacting the Ute people. This story connects conflicted pasts to an awakening in cultural awareness that can create an equitable future for Indigenous people and skiers. Connor's mission with the film is to do his part in restoring balance with all inhabitants of these mountains by illuminating the Utes' culture and traditional knowledge that can benefit everyone in the fight to preserve the land and dissipating snowpack. The film was produced with additional support from Salomon, Peak Design and Protect Our Winters.

# Film Resources

**Official Trailer:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnzdWsJC9LM>

**Full Film:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DSwmJMH04Ww>

**Download:** contact [ross@protectourwinters.org](mailto:ross@protectourwinters.org)

**POW Webpage:** <https://protectourwinters.org/grant-project/spirit-of-the-peaks/>

**REI Webpage:** <https://www.rei.com/blog/spirit-of-the-peaks-film>

**Blog:** [Protecting our Playgrounds: Connor Ryan and Cody Townsend](#)

**Podcast:** <https://www.rei.com/blog/podcasts/spirit-of-the-peaks-with-connor-ryan>





# The How To's

Thank you for your interest in screening Spirit of the Peaks!

This guide and toolkit is intended to help you host an impactful and successful screening. Here we have included a few tips to help bring this event to life.



**Promotion:** Make sure you promote your event! Social media, email, and phone calls are great ways to spread the word. Resources, sample language, and images can be found here.

**Timing:** Give yourself at least two weeks to schedule, plan, promote, and execute your event.

**Organizing your Event:** We highly recommend having a post-screening conversation or panel. Partner with other organizations for participants, reach across the aisle for different points of view, and develop a list of questions that will address the local and personal issues your audience cares about. If you'd like support in film discussion questions, please contact [info@protectourwinters.org](mailto:info@protectourwinters.org)

**Event Preparation:** Make sure you test your technology at least a day in advance of your screening so you have plenty of time to troubleshoot. If you are doing a panel conversation, do a test run with your participants and ensure they are all comfortable with the run of show.

**Creating Impact:** We're making this film available to you for free but we need your help! In this guide you will find ways for you and your audience to take action. Encourage your audience to get involved and to inspire others to join them. To learn more about how POW is creating impact and to join the cause, [Join Team POW!](#)

There are 50 Million passionate outdoor enthusiasts across the country. This is our common ground. Together, we can use our votes to protect the places we love.

# About The Alliance Member

Hau mitakuye pi, I'm Connor Ryan, aka @sacredstoke, proud Hunkpapa Lakota and passionate skier. I was born and raised in the homelands of the Arapaho, Cheyenne, and Ute peoples, who have become some of my biggest inspirations and closest relatives, at the foot of the Rocky Mountains in Colorado. I come from mixed heritage—Lakota and Irish, city life and wide-open spaces, skiing big mountains and doing traditional ceremonies. I actively seek to decolonize, reconnect, and learn to better honor all my relations through my adventures and activism. Skiing is my dance and prayer, a ceremony of its own, one that offers a chance to center myself within nature and the Great Mystery of the universe surrounding me. Skiing brings me in touch with the deepest gratitude for life, but also the most earnest humility within the landscape. The lessons I've learned through ceremony are reinforced by my relationship with the mountain. The traditional ecological knowledge that comes from Lakota culture helps me to understand the true value of the sacred land and frozen water I ski on in deeper and more tangible ways. My goal is to inspire others to deepen their connection to the places they live and play in order for us all to be better relatives to our planet, our communities, and ourselves.

[Visit Connor's POW Alliance Profile](#)

[@sacredstoke](#)

