



Dream of a Green Africa



Directed and Produced by Brent E. Huffman
Produced by Carolyn M. Scott
A **Turtle Island Films** Production

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Background:

Before Hammer Simwinga's work, villagers in Zambia's North Luangwa Valley were starving and the native wild elephant, and many other unique animal species, were near extinction. In the 1980s half of Africa's 1.2 million wild elephants were killed. Between 1979 and 1989 North Luangwa's elephant population plummeted from 17,000 to 1,300. These wild elephants, intelligent and beautiful creatures, were rapidly facing extinction due to poaching. Villagers, who had depleted wild game populations by over hunting, were starving.

With resources from the North Luangwa Conservation Project (NLCP), a non-profit funded by the U.S., Hammer's ingenious methods saved a village and elephant population from extinction. Hammer created innovative wildlife clubs that provided loans for economic alternatives to poaching. With these loans, villagers opened small general stores and grinding mills, offering employment to millers, mechanics and bookkeepers.



The program also assisted farmers with seed loans, transportation and technical assistance to help them grow protein-rich crops so they did not have to depend on elephant meat.

After this great success, Hammer came under fire from powerful government officials and others who had been capitalizing on poaching. They seized the NLCP's office and shut down Hammer's operation. But Hammer didn't give up. With little money Hammer created a new non-profit called the Foundation For Wildlife and Habitat Conservation to keep the work going. He has an uphill battle ahead of him to find funding and keep his project alive.

"There's something about Hammer that's magical," Delia Owens of NLCP says. "When everything is crumbling around him, he just stands there with a smile on his face and says, 'We can do this. His tireless efforts have dramatically transformed the region. Hammer was the recipient of the Goldman Environmental Prize in 2007 and was named a hero of the Environment by *Time Magazine*.

See short video clip of Hammer narrated by Robert Redford
<http://www.goldmanprize.org/node/604>

The Documentary Film:

Dream of a Green Africa will be a feature length documentary profiling Hammerskjoeld Simwinga, known as Hammer, and his attempt to not only save the African elephant in Zambia's North Luangwa Valley but to dramatically change the economic landscape of Africa. Africa's Elephants face extinction by 2020. Thinking green is a new concept in Africa, making Hammer's work for sustainable and earth friendly practices difficult. *Dream of Green Africa* will feature this uphill battle as Hammer attempts to not only change the thinking of his fellow villagers but all of Africa as well.

The documentary will feature Hammer, his village, and the amazing wild elephants that live around them. Much like Werner Herzog's *Grizzly Man*, *Dream of a Green Africa* will be part human drama and part wildlife film as it examines Hammer's efforts to create an environment where human and animal can coexist.

Dream of a Green Africa will be an entertaining and moving story about one man's noble effort to change the world around him. Through charisma, humor, and wit Hammer brought his community together. He continues to inspire the international community in his fight for the people and wildlife of Africa.

FILMMAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Director / Cinematographer / Writer

Brent E. Huffman is an award-winning director, writer, and cinematographer of documentaries and television programs. His work ranges from documentaries aired on *The Discovery Channel* and *The National Geographic Channel*, to Sundance Film Festival winners, to films made for FRONTLINE/World on PBS.

Huffman has been making social issue documentaries and environmental films for over ten years in Ohio, California, Afghanistan, China, Haiti, and Puerto Rico. These films have gone on to win numerous awards including a Primetime Emmy, Best Conservation Film, two Cine Golden Eagle awards, a College Emmy, a Student Academy Award, and a Grand Jury Award at AFI's SILVERDOCS 2004 in Washington DC.

Huffman was also an editor and shooter of Julia Reichert's and Steven Bogner's Primetime Emmy winning PBS documentary series *A Lion in the House* about children battling cancer.

Huffman is also a writer whose work has been featured in *Bust Magazine*, *The Wilson Quarterly*, *Frontline/World's* website, *Ventura Life Magazine*, and *The China Digital Times*. He recently completed a book about his experiences in China called *Life in the Heart of China: Diary from a Forbidden World*. Huffman was a former student of the documentary program at the Graduate School of Journalism at the University of California, Berkeley under Academy Award-winning director and cinematographer Jon Else.

Brent Huffman lives in Ojai, California with his wife filmmaker Xiaoli Zhou.

Carolyn Scott

Award Winning Producer/Director/Filmmaker and Educator with more than 25 years leading teams in education, technical and film endeavors.

Carolyn spent many years as an educator authoring and implementing environmental curriculum in schools in Northern California. Carolyn is Founder and Executive Director of **Turtle Island Films**, whose mission is to bring green films and media to a large audience. She won the prestigious 2003 Roy W. Dean Writer's Grant to further develop a film series about women around the world who are working to find solutions to global ecological issues. Carolyn directed and produced the first film in the series TEXAS GOLD, which has won numerous awards including Best Documentary at the New York City Short Film Festival, an official selection for BEST OF FEST at the prestigious Palm Spring International Short Film Festival and has been an official selection for more than 40 film festivals worldwide. TEXAS GOLD was acquired by Sundance Channel for Robert Redford's THE GREEN film series and PBS Emmy winning series Natural Heroes, whose senior producer submitted the film for an Emmy nomination in 2008.

Carolyn is currently developing a visionary project called Reel Community action, which recognizes the power of local community action, and gives local leaders the tools to drive specific actions to solve local environmental issues. ReelGreen identifies proven sustainability models and documents them with films to educate and inspire effective action, empowering people to help drive measurable and dramatic change.

<http://www.reelcommunityaction.org/>

Carolyn has developed a compatibility software which she sold in 2002 and is currently working with a specialized team on a ground breaking virtual assessment software with leaders in the entertainment and IT world.

Carolyn lives in a passive solar house in Sonoma, California. She and her husband founded the biofuels research cooperative.

