



For immediate release
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The Ride of “The Jaguars”

Four intrepid wilderness warriors ride motorcycles from New Mexico to Merida, Mexico, to illustrate their commitment to wilderness conservation and explore human relationships with nature

Boulder, CO -- Four wilderness lovers and conservation professionals from England, Canada and the U.S. **departed Albuquerque, New Mexico** this afternoon, October 27, 2009, on a **motorcycle odyssey to Merida, Mexico to attend WILD9**, the 9th World Wilderness Congress, which runs from Nov. 6 – 13, 2009.

“One of WILD9’s themes is the relationship between people and nature -- and that varies widely by culture. We wanted to put in perspective WILD9’s focus on Mexico’s nature, wilderness protection and culture by experiencing it for ourselves,” said Alan Watson, WILD9 executive committee member and Leopold Institute scientist based in Montana.

Their intended route will take them across the U.S.-Mexico border at Del Rio, Texas, then, once in Mexico, on to Monclova, Tampico, Veracruz, Campeche, down into Chiapas to the Blue Mountains (Monte Azules Biosphere Reserve) before sprinting up to Merida.

The group calls itself “The Jaguars” after the animal’s strength, large territory it roams, and significance in Mexican culture, but also because, like the endangered jaguar, its numbers declined. From an original group of nine who started planning the odyssey over a year ago, a final four made the journey a reality.

“We are eager to see Mexico’s varied and legendary wild places and learn about the country and its people to put WILD9 into context. We plan to stop in whatever communities we are in. We’ve checked it out a little, but we’re leaving lots to happen as it happens. *Asi es la vida* -- that’s life. It’ll unfold to us as we live it,” said Steve Carver, University of Leeds geography professor, who flew from England to Albuquerque to join his fellow wilderness warriors. Wilderness advocate and WILD9 volunteer Jim Tegler of Whitehorse, Yukon, Canada, and Bill Overbaugh of the U.S. Bureau of Land Management in Alaska complete the foursome.

The group calculated their combined motorcycles’ carbon emissions and purchased offsets, selecting projects in areas of special appeal to them.

Follow “The Jaguars” odyssey through Mexico at

<http://www.wild9.org/blog/category/ride-of-the-jaguars/>

Please send requests for **photographs of “The Jaguars”** to media contacts below.

About “The Jaguars” and their bikes:

Steve Carver, University Geography Professor, UK

"I'm a geographer and outdoor nut with an interest in old British motorbikes. I've been riding since 1999 and have two bikes: a 1939 BSA Silver Star 350cc and a 1954 Matchless G3LS 350cc. I recently competed in the 2008 Grossglockner Bergcup race in Austria on the BSA. I didn't win anything, but man and machine did make it to the top of the mountain!"

Jim Tegler, Wilderness Advocate, Canada

"I ride a Kawasaki that I bought on e-Bay a couple of years ago. I've had some great trips around Alberta and British Columbia on it. I live in Edmonton now because the wonderful lady I am teamed up with is working on her Ph.D there. Vicki will meet me in Merida for WILD9."

Bill Overbaugh, Federal Land Manager, Alaska, US

"I work for the Bureau of Land Management in the U.S. Department of the Interior. BLM manages millions of acres of land and water in Alaska and my job extends across recreation, tourism and protected areas there. I'm a rookie rider but haven't met an outdoor recreation activity that I haven't loved including paragliding, catarafting, sea kayaking, snowboarding and snowmobiling.

Alan Willow Watson, Leopold Institute Scientist, Montana, U.S

"I was born to bring up the rear, or ride drag as they say in Montana! I'm a wilderness scientist, committed to protecting wilderness with a shield of the highest integrity research and parrying threats with a sharp mind. I gave my 1972 Harley XLCH to my daughter a few years ago and quickly outgrew a 74 cubic inch Sportster while on one of several trips and ended a trip with an 88 cubic inch Missouri Dyna. I ride "straight up": feet below me on little tiny pegs, no windshield, leaning a little forward to meet the elements. I ride The Black Pearl." My wife will join me in Merida for WILD9 and then ride on a comfy cushion on the back of the bike to Albuquerque.

[Register Here for WILD9!](#)

WILD9 is a partnership between The WILD Foundation and Unidos para la Conservación and relies on the support and participation of many partner organizations.

The WILD Foundation (www.wild.org) Founded in 1974, WILD is the only international organization dedicated entirely and explicitly to wilderness protection around the world. WILD works to protect the planet's last wild places and the wildlife and people who depend upon them, because wilderness areas provide essential social, spiritual, biological and economic benefits. We believe that intact wilderness areas are an essential core element of a healthy modern society.

Unidos para la Conservación (www.undiosparalaconservacion.org) Founded in 1992, Unidos is a nonprofit Mexican conservation organization that has actively promoted the concept of wilderness conservation in Mexico. Its working strategy combines the establishment of alliances

with government, non-profit and corporate partners with the promotion of a conservation culture through publications and films in a search of conservation solutions through specific action.

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