

THEY KNEW THESE WATERS BETTER THAN ANYONE...

OUTLAWS OF THE EVERGLADES

(not your typical smuggling story)

PRESS KIT

EXECUTIVE
PRODUCER

RON GREENBAUM

PRODUCER &
CO-DIRECTOR

BRIAN HOLAWAY

DIRECTOR,
CINEMATOGRAPHER, EDITOR

ROB HOOVIS

MUSIC SUPERVISOR,
ASSOCIATE PRODUCER

DEBI LEWIN



LOGLINE

When mounting fishing regulations prevented them from making a living, they turned to marijuana smuggling to survive. Outlaws of the Everglades...a story of loyalty, survival, determination and grit.

SYNOPSIS

Outlaws of the Everglades is a documentary about people & what happens when they have to make a decision between what's legal, and survival. We explore why men who made their living fishing their whole lives, began smuggling marijuana. Set in Chokoloskee and Everglades City, Florida – Kent Daniels, Darrel Daniels, Carl Hiaasen, Bobby Weeks, Tim Chapman Joyce Daniels, Steve Markley and more, tell the story. The biggest story to come out of this area, we find out what happened, from beginning to end. In the 1930s and 40s, during the formation of the National Park, promises were made that commercial fishing would never be endangered. When those promises were slowly broken, the fisherman made their choices... and lived with the repercussions.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

This film began shortly after our producer, Brian Holaway called in May of 2021, excited about a former marijuana smuggler in the Everglades he'd been speaking to. He wanted to capture some of the man's stories on camera. I asked if we could meet him first. A date was set & off we went. When we met Kent Daniels, I was in awe of his storytelling ability. He was a master, to say the least. He told stories of smuggling and family. Of injustice and loss. He stressed neither he nor his family ever wished to discuss what they'd done publicly, but for a number of reasons, he wanted to speak now. It was inspiring, and I knew then we had to tell the whole story.



The early vision was simple: have several former smugglers tell their stories & weave them together while including the beauty of the area as its own character. Everglades City and Chokoloskee, Florida, have such a unique look and feel. The goal was to find out why they felt forced to smuggle. But the vision & scale grew quickly. We needed to tell a full story of what happened there, beginning to end. We needed to include non-smugglers, wives, mothers, law-enforcement and journalists. We needed to hear if there were opposing views on the situation. In the 1970s and 80s, this was the biggest story to come out of this area. Empires were built here. The more we heard, the more we wanted to hear.

The main challenge was gaining trust. Everglades City and Chokoloskee are insular communities. They've been through much and don't trust easily. If we didn't have Kent vouching for us, we'd have spoken to no one. But even with his assistance, we had to convince each person we were trustworthy, and not there to do harm. We also had an incredibly small crew. But, after three years of filming and a year of editing (with hurricane Ian mixed in) we ended up with a story we're proud to tell. For me, it was the greatest adventure of my life. Along the way, we met incredibly interesting people and had unforgettable experiences. I hope people are moved by the stories they hear and the people who tell them. I hope they come away with an understanding of these people and why they felt the need to do what they did.

Rob Hoovis



BIOGRAPHIES



RON GREENBAUM

Ron Greenbaum is an angel investor serial entrepreneur, business guru, an author, and recognized philanthropist.

Ron has been a guide and success catalyst for projects, businesses, and individuals seeking to develop, create, and inspire.

Ron makes his executive producing debut with the independent Documentary Outlaws of the Everglades. He brings a unique background in music production, corporate finance, concert production, creative development to the project, where he leveraged his expertise in marketing, creative strategy, and team leadership to guide the production to completion.

Learn more at rongreenbaum.com.

BRIAN HOLAWAY

Brian Holaway is the Producer and Assistant Director of Outlaws of the Everglades, marking his debut in documentary filmmaking. Brian's love of Florida history, culture and people naturally connected him to the stories told by Kent Daniels of Chokoloskee, Florida, a past pot smuggler with a deep family history in the Florida Everglades. As a first-time producer, Brian brought a deep passion for storytelling and a strong vision to the project, helping shape the film's creative direction and production process. His hands-on involvement, from pre-production through post, was instrumental in bringing the untold stories of Everglades fisherman turned pot smugglers to life.

Brian is also a full-time charter boat Captain guiding out of Captiva Island, Florida, for over 30 years specializing on Southwest Florida history, botany, wildlife, sea shells and local stories. He is also on the Board of the Captiva Island Historical Society and Friends of Cayo Costa State Park.



BIOGRAPHIES

ROB HOOVIS

Rob Hoovis (Rob) is a Fort Myers, Florida filmmaker and photographer, where he lives with his amazing family. Born in Columbus, Ohio, he moved to SW Florida in 1984 where he's been since. He grew up inspired by all variety of films and picked up his first video camera in 1997 to document skateboarding. In 2003 his 2nd independent skateboard video, 'FM 2' was called "Underground Video of the Year" by Thrasher Magazine. Right then he knew he wanted to be a filmmaker. Rob's work has appeared on ESPN, in documentaries, music videos, Tony Hawk's video games, and in the many projects he's produced for his own company, Old Sparky Productions. Rob's short nature film "Daze of Night" was an official selection in the 2020 Fort Myers Film Festival. His visual style is distinct and he's fully self-taught. Rob is influenced heavily, in work and in life, by nature. He spends much of his free time photographing nature and the night sky. His latest project, Outlaws of the Everglades, is his full-length documentary film directorial debut.



DEBI LEWIN

Born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio, Debi Lewin has built a distinguished career spanning performance, coaching, production, and promotion. Her work includes roles as a professional singer, theatrical agent and manager, musical theater instructor, vocal and performance coach, studio music producer, event manager, concert promoter, and book publisher.

As a performer, Debi's career highlights include singing backup for entertainment icon Wayne Newton in Las Vegas and sharing the stage with world-renowned artists such as Martha Reeves, Lou Gramm, Lou Christie, and Andy Kim.

Debi is equally respected behind the scenes. Known as a "Broadway star maker," she managed and guided the career of Kaley Voorhees, who went on to star as Christine in Broadway's The Phantom of the Opera. Her concert promotional work also includes collaborations with Peter Noone.

Today, Debi continues to expand her creative footprint as Associate Producer and Music Director for the film Outlaws of the Everglades, further cementing her legacy in the entertainment industry.

INTERVIEWEES

GARY MCMILLIN

KENT DANIELS

JACK SHEALY

LOUIS DANIELS

TIM CHAPMAN

BOBBY WEEKS

DARREL DANIELS

RON CURRY

JOYCE DANIELS

CARL HIAASEN

STEVE MARKLEY

JEFF WHICHELLO

BETTY CAMPBELL

ROBERT MACOMBER

STANFORD DANIELS

CREW

Director: ROB HOOVIS

Assistant Director: BRIAN HOLAWAY

Executive Producer: RON GREENBAUM

Associate Producer: DEBI LEWIN

Producer: BRIAN HOLAWAY

Narration Scripting: ROB HOOVIS

Cinematographer: ROB HOOVIS

Lighting, Sound Recording,
Color Grading, Editor: ROB HOOVIS

Music: JOHN SCHWAB,
MCGUFFEY LANE

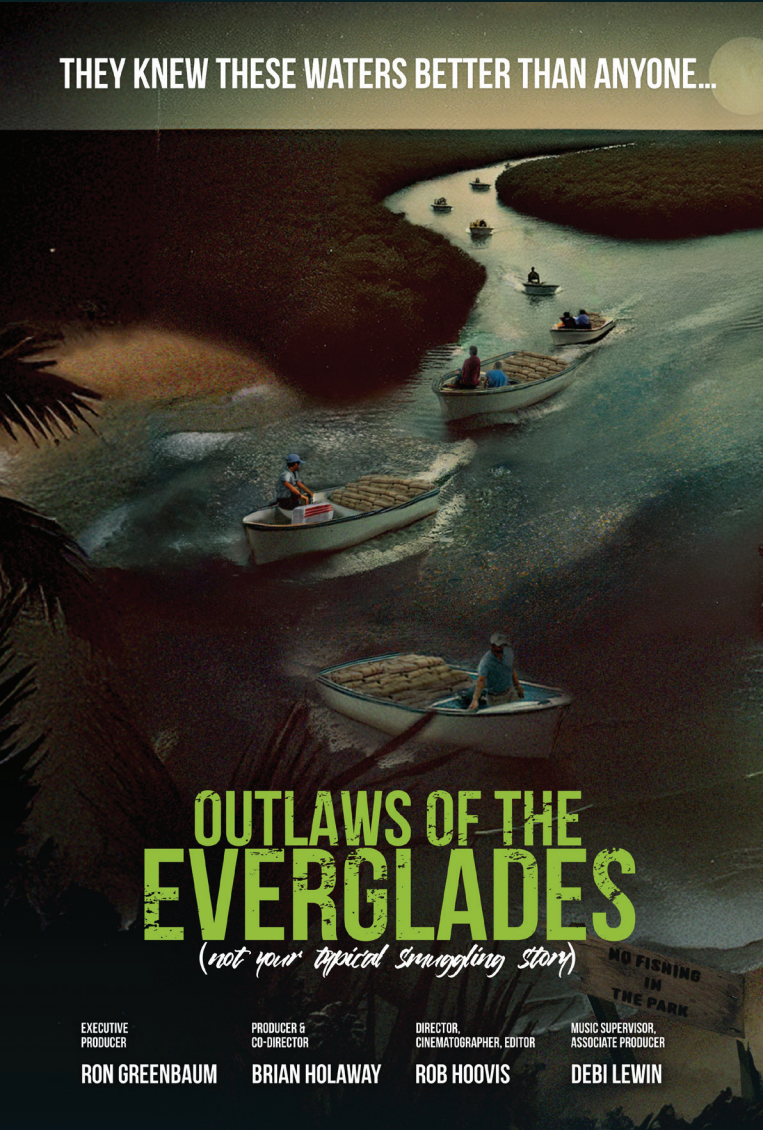
Music Director: DEBI LEWIN

Music Supervisor: TOBY RECORD

Music Editor/Mixer: ROB HOOVIS

Sound Effects Editor: ROB HOOVIS

Narrator: STEVE BRUDNIAK

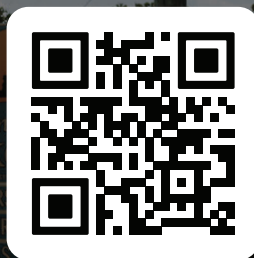


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FILM POSTER

**CLICK TO
WATCH**



(not your typical smuggling story)





PRODUCTION NOTES

INTERESTING FACTS

Chokoloskee and Everglades City are very small communities on the edge of the Everglades with a unique culture and population of about 900 people. Outsiders are not easily brought into the fold. Earning their trust took over a year. You just don't roll into town and say you want to do a documentary on their past smuggling life. A big part of this production was earning their trust and loyalty which included more than a year of weekly conversations with Kent Daniels. Once those were earned the filming began.

CHALLENGES

Challenges occurred in the making of this film were, waiting on tides, sunsets and weather. Sometimes we would travel 82 miles down to do an interview and find out that something had come up with the interviewer so we would try another day. During the campfire filming one of the interviewees just said, "I'm done" and walked off. So we were done. Personal challenges for our Producer were trying to schedule and coordinate time with Rob, the Director, for filming since he worked as a full-time guide and honestly this is my first time producing, I had a lot to learn in the process.

A major challenge was switching to a new executive producer, Ron Greenbaum, mid-stream and getting everyone on board and moving forward with this project.

We had continue to earn the trust of residents of that area over the entire process of the making of the film. We also had to earn the trust of additional interviewees (Ron, Tim, Carl etc...) who came into the process after it began to grow into a larger project.

Hurricane IAN also occurred which impacted everyone in Southwest Florida.



PRODUCTION NOTES

RESEARCH

Research was done many ways, we used newspapers.com as well as the extensive library the Producer/Assistant Director collected over a 30-year period on the subject.

We also brought in Barbara Lindstrom to help with research; we were fortunate and grateful to have such talent helping with this project. Our team read a number of locally written history books, and watched several local PBS documentaries on Chokoloskee and Everglades City during our research. We received almost every bit of historical b-roll and photos which appear in the film, from interviewees in the film. A process which went on right through the final days of editing the film.

ACCESS

Honestly, Kent Daniels, was a key component in helping us with logistics and access to interviewees as well as remote spaces or places we wanted to film at. Many days were spent on boats in isolated areas of mangrove forests, some days with the ever-approaching rainstorm behind us or at night with dark starlit skies. We would not have been allowed any of this if it were not for the trust they had in us.



TESTIMONIALS

"Outlaws of the Everglades is a firsthand account of one of the biggest drug smuggling operations ever in the United States. The documentary dives deep into how small town working-class fishermen became international news by bringing together the rich history of the region and of the people that lead this expansive enterprise. The film does an excellent job of capturing the hardship, excitement, danger, and ultimate harsh conclusion that changed the area and its people forever."

Daniel E. Tibbets

Executive Producer, Hood River President/GM, El Rey



TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Runtime: 71 minutes

Aspect ratio: 16 x 9

Sound: Stereo

Format: 3840x2160 4K

Subtitles: English





PRIMARY CONTACT

DEBI LEWIN

Music Supervisor, Associate Producer
Debi@outlawsoftheeverglades.com

ADDITIONAL CONTACTS

ROB HOOVIS

Director, Cinematographer, Editor
robhoovis@gmail.com

BRIAN HOLAWAY

Producer and Assistant Director
captainbriancaptiva@gmail.com

RON GREENBAUM

Executive Producer
ron.greenbaum1@gmail.com
rongreenbaum.com

FILM MARKETING + ADVERTISING

GREENBAUM STIERS STRATEGIC MARKETING

Alyssa Vance, Marketing Director
419-615-2234



SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITE

YOUTUBE: @outlawsoftheeverglades

INSTAGRAM: @outlawsoftheevergladesfilm

FACEBOOK: Outlaws of the Everglades Film

TIKTOK: OutlawsOfTheEvergladesFilm

WEBSITE: outlawsoftheeverglades.com



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“Outlaws of the Everglades” to Premiere at Key West Film Festival

Location: Key West, Florida
Date: November 16, 2025

Filmmaker Grassland Productions will debut the new documentary “Outlaws of the Everglades” at the Key West Film Festival. This is a story of family, survival, loyalty and grit. This groundbreaking film uncovers untold stories of the 1970s & 80s smuggling operations in the 10,000 islands region of the Florida Everglades.

The film sheds light on the smuggling networks that defined a generation, exposing both the dangers and resilience of the communities caught in a situation they felt they couldn't win.

“After meeting one of the main characters of our story, I was struck by his uncanny ability to tell a story. It was unlike anything I'd seen or heard before,” said Hoovis, director of Outlaws of the Everglades. “He told stories of injustice & loss...I knew then and there it was a story we needed to tell.”

With a population of fewer than 900 people, Everglades City and Chokoloskee are often wary of outsiders. Earning their trust was no small task.

“You don't just roll into town and say you want to make a documentary about their past smuggling life,” said assistant director/producer Brian Holaway. “It took over a year of weekly conversations with Kent Daniels before doors began to open. Only once that trust was earned did filming begin.”

A team of two people, Rob Hoovis and Brian Holaway, had the opportunity to record their stories and tell this chapter of Florida History in words of these former pot smugglers.

Visit the Key West film festival website for the theater location as part of the festival's official documentary lineup.

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Media Contact:

Debi Lewin
Associate Producer
Phone: 216-470-3062
Email: outlawsoftheeverglades1@gmail.com

