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For Immediate Release

**MANISTEE'S NEW FILM BUSINESS PAYS DIVIDENDS
FOR PORTAGE LAKE WATERSHED**

Onkama, Michigan - What do a group of movie makers and a northern Michigan Watershed have in common? If you are **10 West Studios**, an award winning independent film company, looking for the perfect setting for your next project the connection is obvious: location, location *and* location.

After completing their first film, "*What If*" in Manistee last year, business partners, Harold Cronk and Matt Tailford, returned - this time to shoot "*John the Revelator*". Further, they found the perfect site for the filming: on the south side of the Portage Lake Channel at the home of Mike Acton and his family.

Relinquishing one's home to a film crew was an easy decision for Acton. "These people are professional and wonderful to work with," said Acton. "They've taken a real interest in the community and wanted to show their appreciation for all the support they've gotten."

As a result, Cronk and Tailford decided that the most fitting way to express their thanks to the Actons and the community was to contribute \$1,000 to the Manistee County Community Foundation's Portage Lake Watershed Forever Endowment Fund. The fund was created to implement and update the state-approved Portage Lake Watershed Plan to protect and preserve it forever.

"With decreased federal and state funding for implementing watershed plans, we have to find new ways to maintain and improve the Portage Lake watershed," said Kathy Ervin, newly elected chair of the Portage Lake Watershed Forever

Council. “Despite its high quality, the Portage Lake watershed faces many threats, including run-off, invasive species and pollution from failed septic systems. The purpose of the endowment is to provide a never-ending source of funds to deal with those challenges -- now and in the future. We hope others will consider the Portage Lake Watershed in their planned giving and annual charitable donations.”

“The generosity of 10 West Studios demonstrates that building community endowment can be added to the long list of local economic benefits of the film industry. We truly welcome their gift in appreciation of the Actons; it will generate income to support the watershed plan for generations to come”, said Laura Heintzelman, Executive Director of the Manistee County Community Foundation. “Films and endowments truly have one thing in common: they are gifts that keep on giving.”

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