

*Colorado Native John Weller Awarded 2009 Pew Fellowship in Marine
Conservation*

*Three-year Project Raises Awareness of Antarctic's Ross Sea through Multi-Media
Storytelling*

WASHINGTON – John Weller, a photographer and author whose work focuses on communicating the value of pristine places, has been awarded the 2009 Pew Fellowship in Marine Conservation for his project to raise awareness for the conservation of the Antarctic's Ross Sea.

“With the support of the Pew Fellowship, I will use multiple media and social-marketing strategies to help bridge the gap between science and the public, making these unseen stories accessible to a broad audience,” said Weller. “If I am successful, I will bring Ross Sea issues to life and create a grassroots community of ambassadors for marine conservation in the Ross Sea and beyond.”

Pew Fellows in Marine Conservation receive \$150,000 to conduct a three-year conservation project designed to address critical challenges to healthy oceans. Weller will use his fellowship to develop multimedia presentations that bring science to the public in more effective ways. Scientists have identified the Ross Sea in Antarctica as one of the world's last pristine marine environments. This ecosystem, however, is facing tremendous long-term risk from large-scale fishing. Weller's narratives will use a combination of media to illuminate scientific findings about the Ross Sea. He will establish an online library of stories and collaborate with established centers for science education to reach the public. This project intends to create a community of concerned, informed people that can serve as powerful advocates for ocean conservation.

“It's a challenge to make people who live miles away feel connected to special places such as the Antarctica's Ross Sea,” said Joshua S. Reichert, managing director of the Pew Environment Group. “John Weller is unique in his ability to use media creatively and persuasively to engage the public on important ocean conservation issues.”

Weller pursued nature photography after graduating Stanford with a degree in Economics. After moving home to Colorado, Weller took great interest in the Great Sand Dunes National Park and published a book of photography and essays, *Great Sand Dunes National Park: Between Light and Shadow*, to raise awareness about the delicate ecosystem of the dunes. The book won national and international attention, including museum shows, speaking engagements and publication in National Geographic Magazine.

The Pew Fellowship in Marine Conservation funds science and other projects that address critical challenges in the conservation of the sea, including communication of project information to increase awareness of global marine issues. Through a rigorous nomination and review process, an international committee of marine specialists selects Pew Fellows based on the strengths of their proposed projects, including their potential to protect ocean environments. Five unique and timely projects led by outstanding professionals in their fields are chosen annually. Since 1996, the Pew Marine Fellows Program has awarded 110 Fellowships to individuals from 29 countries.

Photographs and more information about each of the 2009 Pew Fellows in Marine Conservation are available at <http://www.pewmarinefellows.org/2009>.

The Pew Environment Group is the conservation arm of The Pew Charitable Trusts, a non-governmental organization that applies a rigorous, analytical approach to improving public policy, informing the public and stimulating civic life.

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