

## **LOG LINE**

One man risks his family and future when he rallies a group of landowners and activists to blockade the controversial Keystone XL oil pipeline in rural East Texas.

## **SYNOPSIS**

One man will risk it all to stop the tar sands of the Keystone XL oil pipeline from crossing his land. Shot in the forests, pastures, and living rooms of rural East Texas, *Above All Else* follows David Daniel as he rallies neighbors and environmental activists to join him in a final act of brinkmanship: a tree-top blockade of the controversial pipeline. What begins as a stand against corporate bullying becomes a rallying cry for climate protesters nationwide. As in his previous film, *Mississippi Chicken*, director John Fiege puts a human face on a complex case of social injustice, capturing the South in all its drama and contradiction.

## **LONG SYNOPSIS**

One man risks his family and future to stop the tar sands of the Keystone XL oil pipeline from crossing his land. Shot in the forests, pastures, and living rooms of rural East Texas, *Above All Else* follows David Daniel, a retired high-wire artist and circus performer, from the moment that he discovers survey stakes on his land, through years of activism and civic engagement, to four climatic days in September 2012, when Daniel made a final stand against the pipeline. Backed into a legal and financial corner, he rallies an eccentric group of neighbors and environmental activists to join him in a final act of brinkmanship: a tree top blockade of the controversial project. We see pressure mounting from local officials, other East Texas residents, and TransCanada's legal maneuvers until Daniel is forced to confront his deepest motivations, and the fight becomes, as he says, "a battle in your soul." Inspired by his example, other East Texas residents and a band of young, Occupy-inspired activists embark on their own acts of civil disobedience with different degrees of success. What begins as a stand against corporate bullying and property rights abuse would become a rallying cry for climate protesters nationwide. Photographed in beautiful, cinematic HD by director/cinematographer John Fiege, an intimate portrait emerges of unforgettable characters and their East Texas home, interwoven with an exploration of how they were driven to drastic action—ordinary people transformed into political actors through circumstances not of their choosing.