

Excerpt of original Bennett Stein Script ICEWATER (WGWA #):

An action drama about an eco-warrior hellbent on saving a mountain stream from pollution -- and anything else he finds in a state of contamination - vegetable, animal or human.

FADE IN:

EXT. CORONA CREEK/SOUTHERN CAL - DAY

A pair of water-logged SNEAKERS push upstream. They sink into a deep pool - currents engulf a dude's legs and the hem of his cargo shorts.

Pushing aside branches, DAN STRODE, 30ish, an ECO-WARRIOR with a goatee and an attitude, beelines it to a drainage culvert. His T-shirt says:

STREAM SAVERS - KEEP IT CLEAN

He plants himself over the cement culvert and sniffs deep.

DAN  
You're bouncing back, little  
crick... at long last.

He unzips a fanny pack to nab color-coded TEST TUBES. Breaks the seals and takes samples of water trickling from the culvert.

FURTHER UPSTREAM

Two OLD GUYS in tit-high waders fly fish. One whip casts his line deftly as the other reels in a six-inch STEELHEAD TROUT. He gingerly unhooks it, and guides it back into the current.

BACK TO THE DRAINAGE CULVERT

Dan squats to dab a drop of water on his tongue: he's a live wire vigilante for any hint of toxic insult to this stream. He stands abruptly, shouts downstream.

DAN (CONT'D)  
Hey, Nykesha! Yo, yo, yo! Get up  
here! Lickety split! Nykesha...

He fumes at the lack of a response and lights a cigarette.

FURTHER DOWNSTREAM

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NYKESHA MADISON, 20, a bright, slightly ghetto-speakin', klutzy black woman plays air tennis in her own fantasy Davis Cup match. Her "STREAM SAVERS - KEEP IT CLEAN" T-shirt is half-soaked.

NYKESHA

(like a sports anchor)

Though Blavatski the Slovak readies her serve for match point, it'd be foolhardy to count Nykesha Madison out. The Grand Slam champ's chipped unreturnable drop shots, an she been slicin' back hands all afternoon. Damn strait... The Slovak serves.

She crouches, at the ready, shoots the evil eye to the imaginary Slovak, lunges back to return the serve.

NYKESHA (CONT'D)

(like a sports anchor)

The hard hitting base-liner scoots back, let's it go--LONG! Reflexes faster than a cheetah! It be obvious the top-seeded Madison be makin' the Slovak a bundle of nerves--it's a duel in the sun. Blavatski deals--hits the net--double fault--

DAN (O.S.)

Hey, freak! Cut that Venus William's crap out right now!

She lunges and flails into the stream. Gets up and whirls around only to be caught in Dan's laser beam death stare.

DAN (CONT'D)

We're behind schedule, Nykesha! We got a damn river to save here!

She hoists a huge COOLER onto her shoulder. It's labelled STREAM SAVER TEST SAMPLES. She plods on and slips--down she goes with a splash. Up she pops brandishing an index finger.

NYKESHA

Cut it off right there, Big Dan! Ya can't fire me, 'cause I'm a volunteer!

He squints, marches over to help her up. Opens the cooler and plugs fresh samples into Styrofoam slots.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NYKESHA (CONT'D)

I needed a damn fool break. So I'm  
a lame assistant, I can't take the--

DAN

Lame? Nuh-uh, you're one of the  
best when you put your mind to it.  
Let's go--you wearing sunblock?!

NYKESHA

I'm your only assistant, Big D.  
Other five were no-shows. And no I  
forgot sunblock. I'm black,  
remember?

He taps cigarette ash carefully into an Altoids box, snaps it  
shut. Grabs an end of the cooler and floats her the other.

DAN

Sun burns black people, too.

He inspects her hatless, half-way to sunburnt head.

DAN (CONT'D)

Come on, grab a handle. We got ten  
more effluent points to test. We  
get through it, dinner's on me.

She takes hold of her end of the cooler.

NYKESHA

Don't go tryin' to courier favor on  
me.

DAN

It's curry favor with me.

He scans the stream, alert to its every murmur.

NYKESHA

Yeah, right. Always gotta be spell  
checkin' my ass--

DAN

Hey, stop right there. Park the  
cooler.

He hands her a bottled water to drink and sunblock to apply.

DAN (CONT'D)

Toss me the conductivity kit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Undone by his multi-tasking style, she drops the water bottle and the sunblock into the stream and splashes after them.

DAN (CONT'D)

In future, you need to abide by the  
volunteer guidelines. You brought  
no water, no sunblock, no  
protective hat, no energy bar--

She sneers as she frees two wires from a knapsack, one connects to a battery pack. The other to a light bulb, which she tosses to Dan as he moves upstream.

DAN (CONT'D)

Stop! Smell that?! Come on! What do  
you smell?!  
(off her futile sniffs)  
While we're young.

NYKESHA

Chill, dude! God, you're so all  
about the frickin' stream. Man!  
(off his fierce look)  
You always gotta be so pissed off?

DAN

If you're not pissed off, you're  
not paying attention. Well?

He snubs out his cigarette in the Altoids box and snaps it shut. Nykesha crouches over the water, whiffing the air, not one to shrink from a challenge.

NYKESHA

No rotten eggy, sulfur smell like  
last time... maybe just a hint of  
dirt smell.

DAN

Uh-huh. Dip the battery wire.

He dunks his light bulb wire as she dips the battery wire. He cups the bulb, blocking the sun. It remains unlit.

DAN (CONT'D)

Let there be darkness...

NYKESHA

Got light?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

DAN

Negatory... Upstream farms must be finally reducing runoff.

He comes over to inspect her hatless head again.

NYKESHA

What?

DAN

Dirt smell? That kinda talk makes you sound like a real brainiac.

He removes the camo-print fisherman's hat dangling off his back and flops it onto her head.

NYKESHA

Oh, right. It's clay. Shoulda said--

DAN

Silicate of aluminum if you want to be technical about it. Let's check D-O. Toss me the D-O-meter.

She scrounges in the knapsack, pulls out what looks like a digital guitar tuner on one end, a stun gun on the other.

FURTHER UPSTREAM - MOMENTS LATER

Back by the drainage culvert, Nykesha works a pH TESTER KIT. Dan reads the dial on the D-O-meter in the currents.

DAN (CONT'D)

D.O. is making a serious comeback.

NYKESHA

Guess the steelheads can breathe again. Hey check this.

(beat)

I get six-point-six on the pH.

DAN

Really? What's this all tell ya?

NYKESHA

Uh, that it's way less acid than last time. More dissolved oxygen. Good news for frogs and trouts.

(off his intense look)

Wrong? Shit, well, I guess it tells me that--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

DAN  
We're making a difference!

She's touched to be included. She stands up tall.

DAN (CONT'D)  
Trouts?! It's one trout or several  
trout. No 'S' when plural. Unless  
you're hot to go through life  
sounding unedge-a-micated.

She shoots him a don't-make-fun-at-my-expense glare. He puts  
out his fist. She pouts, then touches her knuckles to his.

END of excerpt. Registered WGWA # 2005 -- Bennett Stein