



MEDIA ASSOCIATION

By Julie Jacobs

Writer-director-producer Paul Haggis had a problem. Two problems, actually. On location in New Mexico

to direct *In the Valley of Elah* with Tommy Lee Jones and Charlize Theron, Haggis, an environmentalist, wanted to run his production's trucks and generators on low-sulfur diesel fuel. He also was earnest about building his sets with an alternative to the customary lauan, a hardwood product of the Malaysian rain forest tree by the same name that is currently considered endangered. As a visitor to the area, where was he

to go to find the fuel and fittings for his film? To the Environmental Media Association (EMA; ema-online.org), a burgeoning, Los-Angeles based nonprofit that serves as "the central point of connection between the entertainment industry and the environmental community," according to its literature.

"My production manager went on a crusade and finally found a plywood that was environmentally friendlier. The only downside was that the core was made from lauan – but it was environmentally

sanctioned lauan. It took six weeks out of preproduction to search that out, and all along the EMA helped us find resources," recalls Haggis, who is on the EMA Board of Directors. "The EMA pointed us in the right direction as well for low-sulfur diesel. Their motto is always, 'This is possible.'"

Established in 1989 by Norman and Lyn Lear and Alan and Cindy Horn, the EMA works closely with filmmakers to not only educate the public about environmental issues through cinema but to also assist them in "going green" on their sets. The association pitches and consults on environmentally focused story ideas, recommends nontoxic materials for set-building, procures props that are environmentally friendly, conducts environmental research and makes referrals to environmental experts. It can even deliver hybrid cars to remote movie locations.

Since its inception, its Board has grown to include such well-known figures as Blythe Danner, Darryl Hannah and Ed Begley Jr., and its outreach efforts