

= Lone Survivor ( film ) =

Lone Survivor is a 2013 American war film written and directed by Peter Berg , and starring Mark Wahlberg , Taylor Kitsch , Emile Hirsch , Ben Foster , and Eric Bana . The film is based on the 2007 nonfiction book of the same name by Marcus Luttrell with Patrick Robinson . Set during the war in Afghanistan , Lone Survivor dramatizes the unsuccessful United States Navy SEALs counter @-@ insurgent mission Operation Red Wings , during which a four @-@ man SEAL reconnaissance and surveillance team was tasked to track down and kill Taliban leader Ahmad Shah .

Berg first learned of the book Lone Survivor in 2007 , while he was filming Hancock ( 2008 ) . He arranged several meetings with Luttrell to discuss adapting the book to film . Universal Pictures secured the film rights in August 2007 after bidding against other major film studios . In re @-@ enacting the events of Operation Red Wings , Berg drew much of his screenplay from Luttrell 's eyewitness accounts in the book , as well as autopsy and incident reports related to the mission . After directing Battleship ( 2012 ) for Universal , Berg returned to work on Lone Survivor . Principal photography began in October 2012 and concluded in November after 42 days ; filming took place on location in New Mexico , using digital cinematography . Luttrell and several other Navy SEAL veterans acted as technical advisors , while multiple branches of the United States Armed Forces aided the film 's production .

Lone Survivor opened in limited release in the United States on December 25 , 2013 , before opening across North America on January 10 , 2014 , to strong financial success and a generally positive critical response . Most critics praised Berg 's direction , as well as the acting , story , visuals and battle sequences . Other critics , however , derided the film for focusing more on its action scenes than on characterization . Lone Survivor grossed over \$ 154 million in box @-@ office revenue worldwide ? of which \$ 125 million was from North America . The film received two Academy Award nominations for Best Sound Editing and Best Sound Mixing .

= = Plot = =

In Afghanistan , Taliban leader Ahmad Shah is responsible for killing over twenty United States Marines , as well as villagers and refugees who were aiding American forces . In response to these killings , a United States Navy SEALs unit is ordered to execute a counter @-@ insurgent mission to capture Shah . As part of the mission , a four @-@ man SEAL reconnaissance and surveillance team is tasked with locating Shah . These four SEALs include team leader Michael P. " Murph " Murphy ; snipers Marcus Luttrell and Matthew " Axe " Axelson ; and communications specialist Danny Dietz .

The team is inserted into the Hindu Kush region of Afghanistan , where they make a trek through the mountains . Here , they begin to encounter communications problems , which would play a critical role in the following events . Upon arriving at their designated location , the SEALs are accidentally discovered by an elderly shepherd and two teenage goat herders . Knowing that if they release them , the herders will likely alert Taliban to their presence , the team is split about whether to execute the herders or not . After a brief debate , Luttrell convinces the others that they will incite backlash if they kill the three herders . The team decides to release the herders and abort the mission , but before they can escape , they are discovered by Taliban forces . Although they manage to kill several Taliban soldiers , they find themselves heavily outnumbered and at a significant tactical disadvantage . Each of the men suffers serious injuries during the firefight , and in an attempt to flee from the insurgents , they jump off the edge of a precipitous ridge and into a large ravine .

Despite their injuries , the SEALs continue a defensive retreat through the steep woods . Dietz begins to lose consciousness and shouts questions to Luttrell , unwittingly revealing the team 's position to the Taliban . Murphy and Axelson jump off another ridge to flee from the Taliban fighters . Luttrell tries to carry Dietz down the mountain , but Dietz is shot in the shoulder ; the impact forces Luttrell to lose his grip and fall forward off the cliff . A dying Dietz remains at the top of the cliff and is killed by the Taliban insurgents . Murphy decides to try climbing back up the cliff to get a phone

signal in order to call in support forces via satellite phone . Axelson and Luttrell shoot at the Taliban fighters to provide Murphy with cover . When he finally reaches higher ground , Murphy is able to alert the SEAL base of his team 's location and request emergency assistance right before he is shot dead by Taliban fighters .

In response to Murphy 's distress call , a quick reaction force team assembles , boards two CH @-@ 47 Chinook helicopters , and heads toward the location without fighter escort seeking to extract the remaining members of the reconnaissance and surveillance team . During an attempt to insert the arriving forces , the Taliban insurgents shoot down one of the helicopters , killing eight Navy SEALs and eight Special Operations aviators who were on board . The second helicopter is forced to turn back . After witnessing the attack , Luttrell and a badly injured Axelson are left behind . Axelson attempts to find cover , but is killed when he leaves his hiding spot to attack several approaching insurgents . When Luttrell is discovered by the Taliban , one of the insurgents fires a rocket @-@ propelled grenade , and its impact causes him to land at the bottom of a rock crevice where he is able to hide from the Taliban fighters .

Luttrell stumbles upon a small body of water and submerges himself , only to find upon surfacing that a local Pashtun villager , Mohammad Gulab , has discovered his location . Gulab takes Luttrell into his care , returning to his village , where he attempts to hide Luttrell in his home . Gulab then sends a mountain man to the nearest American air base to alert military forces of Luttrell 's location . The Taliban fighters arrive at the village to capture and kill Luttrell , but Gulab and the villagers intervene , threatening to kill the fighters if they harm Luttrell . The fighters leave , but later return to punish the villagers for protecting Luttrell . Gulab and his fellow militia are able to fend off several fighters during the ensuing attack . American forces , arriving via helicopters , shatter the advancing Taliban and , in the process , kill the bulk of the insurgents with concentrated weaponry fire . The American forces evacuate Luttrell back to base .

Photos of the real @-@ life Marcus Luttrell , Mohammad Gulab and the fallen service members who died during the mission are shown during a four @-@ minute montage , and an epilogue reveals that the Pashtun villagers agreed to help Luttrell as part of a traditional code of honor known as the Pashtunwali .

= = Cast = =

Mark Wahlberg as Marcus Luttrell :

The hospital corpsman and sniper of a four @-@ man reconnaissance and surveillance team , SEAL Team 10 . Wahlberg was the first actor to sign on as a star of the film during its early stages of development . He agreed to portray Luttrell after reading Peter Berg 's script . Wahlberg chose not to read Luttrell 's book *Lone Survivor* during production to avoid arguments with Berg over events and details that were left out in the book . " The problem when adapting a piece of material like that is that you always feel like something is missing , ? he explained . ? I wanted to come at it from this perspective . " Of Wahlberg 's portrayal , Luttrell stated , " Wahlberg is a consummate professional , and he ? s a great actor . It was a little strange watching somebody trying to play me , but we talked about it and I knew it would turn out great . I was more worried about the other guys because they ? re not around to speak for themselves . ? Wahlberg has since cited *Lone Survivor* as his favorite film role as an actor and producer : ? This is the best working experience I ? ve ever had , under the toughest conditions . I remember early on as an actor , you worked a long , hard day , but you did something you felt was special , and that car ride home you couldn ? t stop thinking about it . I had that feeling every day on this movie . "

Taylor Kitsch as Lieutenant Michael P. " Murph " Murphy :

The team leader and spotter of SEAL Team 10 . *Lone Survivor* is Kitsch 's second feature film collaboration with Berg after *Battleship* ( 2012 ) . Kitsch said , ? Murph ? s actions speak louder than anything he ? s ever said , and they should . I think he was that type of leader who just loved his guys , and getting the nod to play this guy was something special . ? Prior to production of the film , Kitsch prepared for the role by performing high @-@ intensity workouts with body armor and long runs with a 40 @-@ lb weighted vest .

Emile Hirsch as Danny Dietz :

SEAL Team 10 's communications specialist and spotter . Hirsch was approached by Berg in 2009 , and physically prepared for the role by attending a 90 @-@ minute weight program for nearly four months . " I wanted a challenge , so I started to train and work out on my own , " he said . " I genuinely didn't know what was going to happen . Months went by and it was to the point where I was passing on other movies , but I didn't have this job . I was willing to do anything . I ended up training six days a week , four to five hours a day . "

Ben Foster as Matthew " Axe " Axelson :

SEAL Team 10 's sniper . Wahlberg recommended Foster to Berg , as they had previously collaborated on Contraband ( 2012 ) . Prior to filming , Foster met with the fallen serviceman 's family and friends to understand the person he would be portraying . " It was such a rich opportunity to listen to the Axelsons talk about their son . Their generosity and inclusiveness with me was so touching and open . They love to talk about their boy because they love him ; so we , in turn , love him . We can't bring him back , but what we can do is aim , every day , to do the best that we can to honor him . "

Eric Bana as Lieutenant Commander Erik S. Kristensen :

SEAL Team 10 's quick @-@ reaction force ( QRF ) commander . Bana had read the book Lone Survivor prior to production , and was willing to appear in the film , regardless of which role was offered to him . Upon being cast as Kristensen , Bana researched the fallen serviceman and his family . On joining the production of Lone Survivor , Bana stated , " There are two factors that make this story special , and they are the reasons why I jumped on board . One is the story itself , and two is who chooses to direct a project like this . I knew how involved [ Berg ] would be and that he would know how to portray SEAL teammates . That was what I wanted to be a part of . The greatest way to honor these guys is to make a great film and have it stand the test of time . " Bana did not physically prepare for the role . " My responsibility was really to understand the role of the mission commander and the relevant information with respect with the chain of command and what it means to go in the QRF and the processes involved , " he explained . " It was far more important to be the person that was responsible for that part of the story and understand that completely . There 's no purpose in me going out and firing an M4 in this case . "

Ali Suliman , who previously collaborated with Berg on the 2007 film The Kingdom , plays Mohammad Gulab , an Afghan villager ; Alexander Ludwig plays Navy SEAL Machinist 's Mate Shane Patton . Marcus Luttrell appears in the film in an uncredited role . He first appears as a SEAL teammate who lightheartedly hazes Patton , then during a briefing scene where he is seen shaking his head when the Rules of Engagement are being explained , and later as one of the servicemen who perishes when an CH @-@ 47 Chinook is shot down . Luttrell said of the latter scene , " I was on the other side of the mountain when those guys came to help me , so getting to die on the helicopter in the movie was a very powerful moment for me . "

The cast is rounded out by Yousuf Azami as Ahmad Shah , a Taliban leader ; Sammy Sheik as Taraq , a field commander of the Taliban group ; Rich Ting as SO2 James Suh ; Dan Bilzerian as Senior Chief Special Operator ( SOCS ) Daniel Healy ; Jerry Ferrara as United States Marine Corps Sgt Hasslert ; Scott Elrod as Peter Musselman ; Rohan Chand as Gulab 's son ; and Corey Large as US Navy SEAL Captain Kenney . Zarin Mohammad Rahimi , who acted as a technical advisor during production , appears as an elderly shepherd who discovers the four @-@ man SEAL team during the mission ; Nicholas Patel and Daniel Arroyo play the goat herders who assist the shepherd .

= = Production = =

= = = Development = = =

Following publication of Marcus Luttrell and Patrick Robinson 's nonfiction book Lone Survivor ( 2007 ) , producer Barry Spikings met Luttrell 's attorney , Alan Schwartz , who was interested in

adapting the book to film . Schwartz suggested that Spikings 's son @-@ in @-@ law , Akiva Goldsman , write the screenplay . Goldsman however did not believe he was the right screenwriter for the project ; he suggested that Peter Berg write and direct the film . Spikings and Goldsman passed the book on to Berg 's producing partner Sarah Aubrey . Berg first learned of Lone Survivor while filming Hancock , and after Aubrey had read the book herself . After Berg had read the book , he and Aubrey arranged several meetings with Luttrell to discuss a film adaptation . Luttrell also viewed a rough cut of Berg 's then @-@ upcoming 2007 film The Kingdom , and was impressed by Berg 's direction . " [ Berg ] caught me with his attention to detail , " he said , " and how he portrayed the enemy in the film . "

The film rights to the book had become the subject of a bidding war among a host of established film studios , including Warner Bros. , Sony Pictures Entertainment , Paramount Pictures , DreamWorks and Universal Pictures . Universal eventually secured the rights in August 2007 for more than \$ 2 million . The studio had also acquired the United States distribution rights as part of a negative pickup deal with the film 's producers . Berg however chose to direct Battleship ( 2012 ) for Universal before resuming production on Lone Survivor .

When Mark Wahlberg read the script and expressed an interest in portraying Marcus Luttrell , he and his manager Stephen Levinson pitched the concept to producer Randall Emmett , the co @-@ founder of Emmett / Furla Films , during the 2012 filming of 2 Guns ? another film starring Wahlberg and produced by Emmett . After reading Berg 's script , Emmett traveled to Los Angeles , where he met with Berg and Aubrey to discuss production of Lone Survivor . After Universal secured the rights to distribute Lone Survivor in the United States , executive producer Mark Damon 's independent film company Foresight Unlimited took Berg and Emmett to the 2012 Cannes Film Festival to secure worldwide pre @-@ sales for the film . The film attracted \$ 30 million in worldwide pre @-@ sales to distributors in 40 international markets .

Lone Survivor had an estimated production budget of \$ 40 ? 50 million ; three production companies , Emmett / Furla Films , Herrick Entertainment and Envision Entertainment , collaborated to co @-@ finance the film . In addition , as part of the negative pickup deal with Universal , Lone Survivor 's producers ? Berg , Aubrey , Spikings , Goldsman , Emmett , Wahlberg , Levinson , Norton Herrick and Vitaly Grigoriantz ? contributed at least \$ 1 million each to finance production costs . To avoid further production costs , Berg directed Lone Survivor for the minimum salary allowed under Directors Guild of America rules ? \$ 17 @,@ 000 a week ? and was able to convince several cast and crew members to lower their asking prices .

Berg had discussed the project with Wahlberg , Taylor Kitsch , Emile Hirsch and Ben Foster years earlier . Universal held an open casting call in Los Angeles , aiding in the filmmakers ' search for supporting actors , extras , photo doubles and stand @-@ ins . In August 2012 , it was announced that Alexander Ludwig and Eric Bana had joined the cast .

Although Wahlberg , Kitsch , Hirsch and Foster had physically trained for their roles prior to filming , Luttrell organized a three @-@ week training regimen at a bootcamp in New Mexico , where the actors were trained by elite military personnel in weapons , as well as military communications and tactics . Military advisor Mark Semos trained the four actors in live @-@ firing exercises so that they could feel the physical impact of firing military rifles . They also practiced " shoot move cover " drills that would improve their muscle memory and enable them to react convincingly as Navy SEALs during filming .

= = = Writing = = =

While the book Lone Survivor chronicles Marcus Luttrell 's 1999 enlistment and training , as well as his 2005 deployment to Afghanistan , Berg decided that the film adaptation would focus mainly on the events of the failed United States Navy SEALs mission Operation Red Wings , as well as the bonding and camaraderie of Luttrell and his fallen teammates . Prior to writing the screenplay , Berg met with the families of the deceased . ? My research started with meeting the families of the SEAL teammates who were killed , " he said . " I went to New York and met the Murphys . I went to Colorado and met the Dietzes , and I went to Northern California and met the Axelsons . After

spending time with them , you realize that these kids were the best and the brightest ; they were the stars of the families . The grief and the wounds are still very raw . You would have to be inhuman to not feel the responsibility when that kind of grief gets shared with you . " Berg also expressed that he was motivated by the families to make the story as realistic as possible ; his goal was " to put [ the viewer ] into the experience of what these guys went through . And it was obviously a traumatic and violent and exhausting experience " .

To provide authenticity , Luttrell moved into Berg ' s home for one month while Berg was writing the script . Luttrell acted as a consultant , detailing to Berg his eyewitness account of the events that unfolded during Operation Red Wings . Berg later embedded with a Navy SEAL team ? becoming the first civilian to do so ? and lived with them for a month in Iraq while he continued writing the screenplay . In re @-@ enacting the injuries and deaths of the fallen Navy SEAL servicemen , Berg relied on Luttrell ' s eyewitness accounts from the book , as well as autopsy reports of the deceased and after @-@ action reports . The United States Navy provided incident reports related to the mission , as well as archival military training footage , which is shown during the film ' s opening credits sequence . Still photographs shown during the opening credits sequence were taken from Richard D. Schoenberg ' s war photography book *The Only Easy Day Was Yesterday : Making Navy SEALs* . During filming , there were some dialogue changes in comparison to Berg ' s script , as the filmmaker occasionally encouraged the actors to improvise their lines .

= = = Filming = = =

= = = = Principal photography = = = =

Filming for *Lone Survivor* was scheduled to start on September 15 , 2012 . Principal photography commenced in October 2012 and concluded in November after 42 days ; filming took place in New Mexico . The production received a 25 % tax credit for filming in the state . Berg shot *Lone Survivor* with creative autonomy as Universal did not fully oversee the film ' s production . " Not having the studio there every day ... I respect Universal and get along great with them , but we were on our own completely , and in many ways , it was a more autonomous experience " .

With *Lone Survivor* , Berg continued his trademark of having war veterans as part of his film crew . Luttrell , along with several other Navy SEAL veterans , acted as technical advisors during the production . In addition , senior military advisor Harry Humphries , a former Navy SEAL who had worked with Berg on *Hancock* and *The Kingdom* , served as an associate producer . Berg explained , " I always looked to hire vets . And not just because I ' m a generous person . But selfishly , vets have turned out to be some of the hardest working people . It ' s self @-@ serving " .

Filming first took place at the Sangre de Cristo Mountains of the Santa Fe National Forest . Eight days were spent on mountains ranging from 11 @,@ 000 to 12 @,@ 000 feet ( 3 @,@ 400 ? 3 @,@ 700 m ) . In recreating the Hindu Kush mountain range that stretches between Afghanistan and Pakistan , the film crew shot at 10 separate locations in the national forest . Stunt coordinator and second unit director Kevin Scott was tasked with depicting the four Navy SEALs tumbling down rugged terrain with sixty @-@ degree inclines . Scott did not choreograph the stunt work , nor did he have the stunt performers use wires or dummies ; he told them to fall 15 to 20 feet ( 4 @.@ 6 ? 6 @.@ 1 m ) off cliffs and avoid looking at the ground until right before impact . ? We had to say , ? Jump off the rock , land however you land , and go with it , ? ? he said . ? When you ? re doing that on a true hillside , you don ? t have a choice . Gravity takes over . The only thing stopping the stunt people from dropping another thousand feet down the hillside was padding set up just outside of the shot . ? Several stunt performers were injured after falling from the mountains , as the falls proved too difficult to control . Berg recalled , " Some guys got hurt , some guys got bumped up and ribs were broken , a lung was punctured , some concussions , but these guys were determined to try and do everything they could to capture what Marcus described in the book . "

Production moved to Chilili , New Mexico for two weeks of filming . The location ? s wooded areas were used to film several battle scenes , and the art department built sets to create an Afghan

village occupied by Ahmad Shah ( Yousuf Azami ) and his Taliban insurgents , as well as a Pashtun village where Luttrell ( Mark Wahlberg ) is rescued . Filming then moved to Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque , New Mexico , which doubled for scenes set in Bagram Airfield , a U.S. military base in Afghanistan . Principal photography concluded on soundstages at I @-@ 25 Studios in Albuquerque . The production occupied two 26 @,@ 000 square feet ( 2 @,@ 400 m2 ) stages in the facility for interior scenes and bluescreen work . The art department built the character Gulab 's house , as well as interiors for Bagram Airfield 's patrol base Camp Ouellette . The bluescreen work involved scenes depicting a CH @-@ 47 Chinook in a gimbal , and a 4 @-@ foot scale model of a Hindu Kush mountain cliff built by the art department team in Los Angeles , California .

= = = Cinematography = = =

Lone Survivor was director of photography Tobias Schliessler 's fifth collaboration with Berg , as well as Berg 's first film shot with digital cinematography . Schliessler intended to shoot Lone Survivor with Arri Alexa cameras , but instead shot the film with Red Epic digital cameras , using Fujinon and Angénieux lenses . Schliessler chose the Red Epic camera " due to its compact size and lightweight body . "

In preparing to shoot Lone Survivor , Schliessler was inspired by British @-@ American photojournalist Tim Hetherington 's war photography book Infidel , which details a single U.S. platoon assigned to an outpost in the Korengal Valley during the war in Afghanistan . The book 's images became a guide to creating the overall look of the film after Schliessler had shown them to Berg , as well as the art and costume departments . Prior to filming , Schliessler and Berg shot test footage with the digital cameras and brought it to digital colorist Stefan Sonnenfeld at post @-@ production facility Company 3 for color grading .

The Santa Fe National Forest 's rocky terrain and steep inclines proved difficult for conventional camera equipment ? such as cranes and dollies ? which resulted in much of the film 's scenes being shot by the camera operators , who were rigged to aerial ski lifts above the action . " The location we picked was on top of the ski area above 12 @,@ 000 feet in Santa Fe , and the high altitude made it extremely physically demanding , " Schliessler explained . " All our equipment had to be hand @-@ carried into some of our remote locations , which meant we had to limit ourselves to the bare minimum ... No one ever hiked to the set empty @-@ handed , including our producers . It was one big team effort that made us a close film family . "

Digital cinema post @-@ production facility DeLuxe supplied the Lone Survivor production with a 40 @-@ foot trailer , known as the EC3 ( a joint venture between Company 3 and EFILM ) . The equipment enabled Schliessler to overlook every shot of the film in the EC3 trailer . He also collaborated with colorist Adrian Delude in changing the exposure for all cameras used which , according to Schliessler , " would have been more difficult when shooting on film . " Digital imaging technician Jeff Tomcho was tasked with ensuring that the Red Epic cameras were properly set up and successfully capturing the filmed footage . Company 3 carried out the digital intermediate .

= = = Design and effects = = =

To produce the many injuries received by the four @-@ man SEAL team , the filmmakers recruited KNB Effects team Gregory Nicotero and Howard Berger . To aid Nicotero and Berger in recreating the injuries of the fallen servicemen , Berg provided autopsy reports of the deceased . The film 's special effects supervisor Bruno van Zeebroeck created RPG explosions and bullet hits for the battle sequences that occur in the roads around Gulab 's home . Multiple branches of the United States Armed Forces supplied the Lone Survivor production with military vehicles . The United States Air Force provided two Sikorsky HH @-@ 60 Pave Hawks from Kirtland Air Force Base , both of which were manned by military personnel and used to depict a combat search and rescue . The United States Army provided the production with two MH @-@ 47 Chinooks and two Boeing AH @-@ 64 Apaches from Fort Hood , Texas . The United States Marine Corps provided thirty Marine Corps reservists for scenes set in Bagram Airfield and Jalalabad .

=== Costume design ===

Costume designer Amy Stofsky ensured that the military wardrobe seen in the film reflected the 2005 time period . According to Stofsky , what the fallen servicemen wore back then is no longer current issue , as the United States Armed Forces stopped manufacturing the uniforms in 2006 . While researching the time period , Stofsky met with the fallen servicemen 's families , as well as Navy SEAL teammates . Stofsky and the wardrobe department collaborated with the Hollywood @-@ based costume facility Western Costume to find the right fabric for the military uniforms . She and her team manufactured uniforms for the film 's lead actors , extras , stunt and photo doubles , and military personnel who were also acting as extras . Stofsky noted that a total of " 36 cookie cutter uniforms " were produced for Mark Wahlberg 's character Marcus Luttrell .

In designing the costumes for the Pashtun people and Taliban forces , Stofsky aimed to create a visual distinction between the villagers and Taliban fighters . " Luttrell survived because of the age @-@ old tradition of the Pashtun culture in providing hospitality and safety to those that enter their home , " she explained . " We dyed the Taliban 's costumes black , charcoal , wine , and indigo and kept the villagers light . Their humanity prevails . This is what we hoped to get across . " Stofsky utilized a North Hollywood @-@ based Afghan vendor , Moe Noorzai , for traditional Afghan clothing including vests , pants , dresses and Kashmir scarves . Stofsky also had a New Mexico @-@ based tailor produce all of the turbans featured in the film . Zarin Mohammad Rahimi , an Afghan refugee who fled to the United States to avoid the Taliban , and his sons , Muhammad Nawroz Rahimi and Nawaz Rahimi , were hired to act as technical advisors during production . The Rahimis collaborated with Stofsky , as well as the wardrobe and casting departments , to help them understand the language , customs and fighting methods of the Pashtun villagers and Taliban fighters . The eldest Rahimi also played the role of an elderly shepherd in a crucial scene .

=== Post @-@ production ===

=== Editing ===

Editing and post @-@ production work on Lone Survivor took roughly seven months to complete . Colby Parker Jr. served as editor , having previously worked with Berg on editing Battleship . Parker spent six months editing Lone Survivor at the Lantana Entertainment Media Campus in Santa Monica , California . The editorial department used four Avid Media Composer systems to edit the film . Parker edited Lone Survivor during principal photography , but was not on location . " I like to blast through the footage to keep up with the camera . This way I can let [ Berg ] know if any extra coverage is needed , " he explained . " Often I 'll get word to the 1st [ assistant director ] and he 'll sneak in extra shots if the schedule permits . Although I will have a first assembly when the production wraps , Peter will never sit through a complete viewing of that . He works in a very linear manner , so as we start to view a scene , if there 's something that bothers him , we 'll stop and address it . "

The first cut of the film was two @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half hours long . Parker then cut the film down to two hours when he realized there was a way to further trim the film . " There were a number of scenes that paced well when we intercut them rather than letting them play as written in a linear fashion . For instance , we wanted to let the mission briefing scene play normally ? this is where the SEAL team is briefed on their target . That scene was followed by a scene of the target beheading a local . We realized that an actual briefing is very technical and rote , so intercutting these scenes helped keep the audience engaged . "

Sound editing and mixing work took place at Todd Soundelux , with Wylie Stateman serving as the supervising sound editor . Stateman recorded on @-@ location sound during filming , placing microphones on the actors ' backpacks and clothing " so [ the viewers ] would hear explosions and bullets going by as though [ they ] were with these guys as they were being attacked . " In creating

sound effects for the environment of each scene , Stateman relied on foley design , rather than traditional sound effects .

= = = Visual effects = = =

The two visual effects companies for Lone Survivor were Industrial Light & Magic ( ILM ) and Image Engine , with overall supervision by Jesper Kjölsrud and Grady Cofer . In total , the film has over 400 visual effects shots . ILM was responsible only for creating a helicopter crash sequence in the film . Berg requested that the sequence be done by ILM , who had also worked on his previous film Battleship . Image Engine 's effects work consisted mainly of set extensions and location enhancements ; scenes were supplemented with computer @-@ generated mountains , buildings and backgrounds , as well as muzzle flashes for firearms . Film editor Colby Parker Jr. explained , " The sets of the villages were only one or two huts and then Image Engine built everything around those . Same for the SEAL base . There were only a few real buildings and from that they built out a larger base . "

= = Music = = =

American post @-@ rock band Explosions in the Sky scored the film with music composer Steve Jablonsky . The band had previously scored Berg 's 2004 film Friday Night Lights , and Jablonsky had previously scored Battleship . Jablonsky said of the collaboration , " It was great . I didn 't work directly with them because they 're in Austin , Texas and I 'm in L.A. I spoke to them on the phone and I think sixty , sixty ? five percent of the scores is them . We ended up doing our own things . We tried to not have two totally different sounding scores . "

Berg said , " [ Jablonsky ] did the last reel ; the band Explosions in the Sky did pretty much did everything else . They have an emotional , tender quality to their music , even when it gets aggressive . I didn 't want the score to be overly aggressive , I wanted it to be haunting and emotional . Steve Jablonsky came in at the end to do something more traditional , but when Steve does ? traditional , ? it ? s not the usual strings . He created a wonderful sound at the very end . " Songs featured in the film include " Canned Heat " by Jamiroquai , and " Heroes " performed by Peter Gabriel and the New Blood Orchestra , which is played at the end of the film during a four @-@ minute montage that features actual photos and videos of the fallen servicemen .

The motion picture soundtrack for Lone Survivor was released on December 17 , 2013 by record label Metropolis Movie Music .

= = Historical accuracy = =

While based on true events , a number of historical inaccuracies in the film have been noted . Early in the film , the four @-@ man SEAL reconnaissance team is discovered by three goat herders ? an elderly man and two teenage boys . In fact , Marcus Luttrell wrote in his book that only one of the goat herders was a teenage boy , not two .

Also in dispute is the number of Taliban fighters involved in the ambush . In Luttrell 's original after @-@ action report , he stated that he and his teammates were attacked by 20 @-@ 35 insurgents , while his book places the number at over 200 . The screenplay describes ? A solid line of at least fifty Taliban in firing positions on top of the hill above them . " The summary of action for Lt. Murphy 's posthumous Medal of Honor describes the enemy force as numbering " more than 50 , " while the official citation puts the number at " between 30 and 40 enemy fighters . "

The film shows Luttrell ( Wahlberg ) being able to walk after the Taliban 's ambush on the four @-@ man SEAL team . In reality , Luttrell explained that his legs were numb immediately after the ambush , and when feeling did return to them , the pain from the shrapnel in his legs made it too painful to walk ; he had to crawl seven miles looking for water and sanctuary . Luttrell also expressed that he did not witness the MH @-@ 47 Chinook helicopter being shot down , as seen in the film . At the end of the film , the Pashtun villagers fight off a Taliban attack in a firefight that



never actually happened . In reality , the Taliban fighters were outnumbered by the villagers and had no intentions of attacking the village . They did , however , try to sneak in and capture Luttrell in secret . Luttrell also did not go into cardiac arrest after he was rescued , nor was he near death , as seen in the film .

During a briefing , early in the film , an officer states that a SEAL on a previous mission in the Afghan mountains was bitten by a rattlesnake . As the four @-@ man SEAL team are fighting and withdrawing down a rocky slope , one of them encounters a large rattlesnake which is heard rattling before it is seen on screen . Rattlesnakes are found in almost every mainland country of the Americas , from Canada to Argentina , excluding Panama , Ecuador and Chile , but they do not occur outside the Americas . The venomous snakes encountered in the rocky valleys of the Pashtun region would be the Saw @-@ scaled viper ( *Echis carinatus* ) and the Levant viper ( *Macrovipera lebetina* ) , with an outside chance of a rare Persian horned viper ( *Pseudocerastes persicus* ) . The sound of the saw @-@ scale viper rubbing its scales together as a defensive warning is not dissimilar to that made by a small rattlesnake vibrating its tail . It is likely that U.S. troops , upon hearing this sound , would automatically attribute it to the familiar rattlesnake from back home .

= = Release = =

= = = Strategy = = =

Berg first screened *Lone Survivor* to a number of professional American football teams to generate a strong word @-@ of @-@ mouth for the film . He expressed that the screenings were not a marketing ploy , explaining that it was " just a cool thing to do . " *Lone Survivor* was screened to the Dallas Cowboys , Denver Broncos , Carolina Panthers , and Cleveland Browns as well as the University of Alabama Crimson Tide football team . The film received a generally positive response from several football players who took to social media to praise the film . A gala premiere screening of *Lone Survivor* was held during the AFI Film Festival at the TCL Chinese Theatre on November 12 , 2013 . *Lone Survivor* held its red carpet premiere on December 3 , 2013 at the Ziegfeld Theatre in New York City , where the film received a standing ovation . The premiere also doubled as a tribute to the fallen servicemen of Operation Red Wings ; in addition to several cast and crew members , Marcus Luttrell and family members of the deceased were in attendance . Mohammad Gulab , the Afghan villager who helped rescue Luttrell , also attended the premiere , marking his first time in New York City and in a movie theatre .

In what the film industry calls a " platform release " , *Lone Survivor* was released in a small number of theaters before opening wide in other countries ; it opened in New York and Los Angeles on December 25 , 2013 before being released across North America on January 10 , 2014 . Entertainment One distributed *Lone Survivor* in Canadian markets . Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures International released the film in the Philippines on January 8 , 2014 .

= = = Box office = = =

*Lone Survivor* 's limited release in the United States saw it take \$ 153 @,@ 839 ? an average of \$ 45 @,@ 436 per theater ? in its first five days . The film grossed an additional \$ 326 @,@ 685 on the following weekend . Pre @-@ release tracking estimated that *Lone Survivor* would gross between \$ 17 and \$ 28 million during its opening weekend of wide release . Released to a total of 2 @,@ 875 theaters in the United States and Canada , *Lone Survivor* grossed \$ 14 @,@ 403 @,@ 750 on its opening day , and by the end of its opening weekend it had grossed \$ 38 @,@ 231 @,@ 471 , securing the number one position at the domestic box office . *Lone Survivor* 's opening weekend gross made it the second largest debut for any film released widely in January , after the 2008 film *Cloverfield* 's opening weekend gross of \$ 40 @.@ 1 million . With its opening weekend gross , *Lone Survivor* had become the highest @-@ grossing film among recent " post @-@ 9 / 11 war films " , surpassing the 2009 film *Brothers* , which ended its domestic theatrical run with over \$

28 @. @ 5 million .

The film saw a significant drop in attendance during its second weekend of wide release ; it had earned \$ 6 @, @ 665 @, @ 470 , which was a 135 @. @ 4 % increase from its opening Friday . However , by the end of its second weekend , the film earned \$ 25 @, @ 929 @, @ 570 , a 41 @. @ 7 % overall decrease from the previous weekend . As a result , Lone Survivor went from first to second place behind the action @-@ comedy film Ride Along . The film remained in second place during its third weekend , grossing an additional \$ 12 @, @ 900 @, @ 960 , which was a 41 @. @ 5 % decrease from its second weekend . It grossed an additional \$ 7 @, @ 096 @, @ 330 during its fourth weekend , moving to fifth place in the top 10 rankings . Lone Survivor remained in fifth place during its fifth weekend , grossing an additional \$ 5 @, @ 565 @, @ 860 , which was a 21 @. @ 6 % decrease from the previous weekend . By its sixth weekend , the film went from fifth place to ninth , earning \$ 4 @, @ 086 @, @ 435 . By its seventh weekend , Lone Survivor had dropped out of the top ten , earning an additional \$ 1 @, @ 978 @, @ 380 . Lone Survivor completed its theatrical run in North America on April 10 , 2014 after 107 days ( 15 @. @ 3 weeks ) of release .

Lone Survivor grossed \$ 125 @, @ 095 @, @ 601 in the United States and Canada ; coupled with its international take of \$ 29 @, @ 707 @, @ 311 , the film accumulated \$ 154 @, @ 802 @, @ 912 in worldwide box office totals . Outside of North America , the film 's biggest markets were in Australia , the United Kingdom , Spain , Japan , France , South Korea and Germany ; the film grossed approximately \$ 3 @. @ 5 million in Australia , \$ 3 @. @ 4 million in the United Kingdom , \$ 2 @. @ 5 million in Spain , \$ 2 @. @ 2 million in Japan , \$ 1 @. @ 5 million in France , \$ 1 @. @ 2 million in South Korea , and \$ 1 million in Germany . In North America , Lone Survivor is the twenty @-@ fourth highest grossing film of 2013 , and the sixth @-@ highest @-@ grossing R @-@ rated film of that year .

= = = Critical response = = =

Lone Survivor has received " largely positive reviews " from film critics , according to The Hollywood Reporter . The Los Angeles Times reported the critics ' consensus was that " the film succeeds in bringing the mission to life , although it avoids probing the deeper issues at hand . " Review aggregation website Rotten Tomatoes sampled 195 reviews , and gave the film a score rating of 75 % , with an average score of 6 @. @ 6 / 10 . The website 's consensus reads , " A true account of military courage and survival , Lone Survivor wields enough visceral power to mitigate its heavy @-@ handed jingoism . " Another review aggregator , Metacritic , assigned the film a weighted average score of 60 out of 100 , based on 44 reviews from mainstream critics , indicating to be " mixed or average reviews " . CinemaScore polls conducted during Lone Survivor 's opening weekend of wide release reported that male and female audiences gave the film a rare " A + " ( on an A + to F scale ) , with exit polls showing that 57 % of the audience was male , while 57 % was at least 30 years of age or older .

Justin Chang , writing for Variety magazine , gave the film a positive review and called it " the most grueling and sustained American combat picture since Black Hawk Down , as well as a prime example of how impressive physical filmmaking can overcome even fundamental deficiencies in script and characterization . " Alonso Duralde , writing for The Wrap , stated , " The film never makes a grand statement about whether or not the war in Afghanistan is , per se , a mistake , but it does portray war itself as a disgusting folly . Berg sets up the cathartic moments we ? re used to in movies like this , but then he pulls out the rug , reminding us that the cavalry doesn ? t always miraculously show up in time to save the day . " Todd McCarthy , writing for The Hollywood Reporter , described the film as being " rugged , skilled , relentless , determined , narrow @-@ minded and focused , everything that a soldier must be when his life is on the line , " while Scott Bowles of USA Today called Lone Survivor " brutal , unrelenting and ultimately moving . " Leonard Maltin described the film as " visceral , " while praising Berg , the main actors , and the stunt performers for successfully reenacting the events of Operation Red Wings . Maltin concluded that the film " is a tough movie but a rewarding one . It ? s humbling to watch this dramatization of the sacrifices these men make , without hesitation . Peter Berg was determined to do justice to them , and he has

succeeded . " Betsy Sharkey , writing for The Los Angeles Times , praised the overall look of the film : " The production and costume designers have paid a great deal of attention to the details , from the uniforms and tribal robes , to the bullet wounds and blood . It certainly adds to the film 's verisimilitude . "

Several reviewers criticized Lone Survivor for focusing more on its action scenes than on characterization . In his review for The Star @-@ Ledger , Stephen Whitty wrote , " This is the sort of bare @-@ bones story that well served plenty of World War II movies once , and it would work here , if Berg had the sense to develop these men as characters , first . But we don 't really get to know any of them , or what they might bring personally to this life @-@ or @-@ death emergency . " Rafer Guzman of Newsday wrote , " The movie seems more concerned with military @-@ style action than with telling us who these fallen heroes really were . "

One of the film 's strongest detractors was Time Out magazine 's Keith Uhlich , who called the film " war porn of the highest order " . Geoff Pevere wrote in his review for The Globe and Mail , " The sensation of being pinned down and shot apart is so harrowingly conveyed ... that one almost forgives the movie 's failure to be quite as persuasive in almost every other respect . " While praising the film for its visuals and sound effects , as well as Berg 's atmospheric direction , Kyle Smith of the New York Post gave Lone Survivor a mixed review . Smith concluded his review by describing it as " a movie about an irrelevant skirmish that ended in near @-@ total catastrophe , during a war we are not winning . " Film critic Steven Boone , writing for Roger Ebert 's website , compared the film 's violence to that of Mel Gibson 's 2004 film The Passion of the Christ : " What 's in between amounts to The Passion of the Christ for U.S. servicemen : a bloody historic episode recounted mainly in images of hardy young men being ripped apart , at screeching volume . Though Berg 's source material isn 't the New Testament , he often handles Navy SEAL Marcus Luttrell 's account ... with the thunderous reverence Mel Gibson brought to Christ 's crucifixion and resurrection . "

= = = Accolades = = =

Lone Survivor has received various awards and nominations , in categories ranging from recognition of the film itself to its screenplay , direction , stunts and sound editing , to the performance of its lead actor , Mark Wahlberg . Lone Survivor received two Academy Award nominations for Best Sound Editing and Best Sound Mixing , although the film failed to win any of the awards ; at the 86th Academy Awards , the film had lost in both categories to Gravity . In addition to the following list of awards and nominations , the film was named one of the ten best films of 2013 by the Las Vegas Film Critics Society , who also ranked it as the Best Action Film of 2013 .

= = = Home media = = =

Lone Survivor was released on Blu @-@ ray Disc and DVD formats on June 3 , 2014 by Universal Studios Home Entertainment in the United States , and by Entertainment One in Canada . In the United Kingdom , the film was released on both home video formats on June 9 , 2014 .