

For Immediate Release

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IS IT TIME FOR A *NEW NEW DEAL*?
WNET.ORG PRESENTS **BLUEPRINT AMERICA**

Unprecedented multi-platform initiative brings together PBS and public radio programs and the Web to shine a light on America's dangerously crumbling infrastructure. Will fixing it, fix the economy?

Los Angeles, January 7, 2009 -- The proposals are coming fast and furious from Washington: fix the economy *and* generate jobs by repairing and rebuilding the nation's crumbling infrastructure. And the critics are out in full force: more big-government spending is the last thing America needs in this time of crisis. *Blueprint America*, a unique, multi-platform initiative is harnessing the power and reach of public broadcasting like never before — on-air and on-line — to separate the facts from the hyperbole on what's fast becoming one of the most important stories of our time: the fragile state of America's infrastructure — its highways, public transit, water, power, airports, seaports — and how we neglect their importance to our lives and our economy at our own peril.

Produced through Thirteen/WNET New York, and with major support from The Rockefeller Foundation, the year-long initiative is creating a unique portfolio of dramatic and compelling programming through newly-sewn partnerships with some of PBS' most prestigious and most-watched news and public affairs programs including *NOW on PBS*, *The NewsHour With Jim Lehrer*, *Worldfocus*, and *Exposé* on *Bill Moyers Journal*, as well as public radio outlets such as *American Public Media* and *Weekend America*. These partners have already produced news stories and magazine-length features, and are gearing up to produce even more programming in 2009.

Two original, primetime PBS documentaries also are in the works — the first scheduled for May 20th. We'll introduce the visionaries — be they engineers, scientists, activists or politicians — who believe they know what can and should be done about it, not only today, but in the future when the earth has

warmed, the population doubled and natural resources like oil and water are scarce. And we'll explore whether infrastructure investment is a panacea for the economy, or a potential bridge to nowhere.

At the same time *Blueprint America's* highly sophisticated Web site is fast becoming the "go to" site for infrastructure stories, even as infrastructure becomes a bigger story every day. It's a "virtual meetinghouse" for citizens to share stories, videos and information about roads, bridges, sewage and similar challenges in their cities and towns, as well as an aggregator of print and video content, including all *Blueprint America* reports. Check it out on www.pbs.org/blueprintamerica.

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About WNET.ORG

New York public media company WNET.ORG is a pioneering provider of television and Web content. The parent of Thirteen/WNET, WLIW New York and Creative News Group, WNET.ORG brings together respected and innovative producers in arts and culture; news and public affairs; science, nature and history; and children's programming in the pursuit of a single, overarching goal — to create media experiences of lasting significance for New York, America and the world.

About *Blueprint America*

Blueprint America is a year-long multi-platform media initiative that will present a unique portfolio of current affairs reports under the *Blueprint America* umbrella, including original documentaries, individual segments produced in partnership with PBS' most prestigious and most-watched news and public affairs programs, public radio outlets and a comprehensive Web site at www.pbs.org/blueprintamerica. The project is being supported with a major grant from The Rockefeller Foundation.

About The Rockefeller Foundation

The Rockefeller Foundation was established in 1913 by John D. Rockefeller Sr. With assets of more than \$4 billion, the Foundation attempts to harness the creative forces of globalization by supporting breakthrough solutions to 21st-century challenges. This helps ensure that the tools and technologies that have significantly improved the human condition in many locations over the past half-century are accessible to more people, more fully, in more places — and that poor and vulnerable people are equipped to seize them. Visit www.rockfound.org.

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TCA Panelists:

- **Stephen Segaller**, session moderator and Vice President, Content, WNET.ORG
- **Kathy Hughes**, executive producer, *Blueprint America*
- **Ray Suarez**, senior correspondent, *The Newshour With Jim Lehrer*
- **Politician**, TBD