



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **EMMY AWARD CONSIDERATION FOR LOCALLY-PRODUCED *MYSTERIES OF THE DRIFTLESS* FILM**

LA CROSSE, WIS. – The Chicago/Midwest Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences released its Master List of Emmy Entrants, revealing that it is giving Emmy Award consideration to the locally-produced documentary film *Mysteries of the Driftless*. It's one of only five films entered in the category of "Outstanding Achievement for Documentary Programs – Topical" for an award to the producers. The four film producers being considered are Rob Nelson, Dan Bertalan, Tim Jacobson and George Howe.

The National Academy, Chicago/Midwest Chapter, will announce formal nominations at the nominations party in Chicago on Tuesday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, an event hosted by CBS 2 Chicago's Megan Glaros and Erin Kennedy.

Tim Jacobson, executive producer, said, "I'm thrilled to have our documentary and our work as a film producers considered for such a prestigious award." Jacobson added, "People living in the Upper Midwest should be exceptionally proud to see how the film showcases our stunningly beautiful landscape, amazing natural and archaeological treasures and mysteries surrounding us in the Driftless Region. Audiences around the region have been blown away by what they see."

The documentary film, a joint production of Untamed Science and Mississippi Valley Conservancy, features a team of explorers and scientists as they reveal the majesty and allure of the Driftless Area using a stunning combination of filmmaking and genuine adventure. The film was shot entirely in southwest Wisconsin, northeast Iowa, and southeast Minnesota.

What strange forces spared one isolated region along the Upper Mississippi River from the repeated crushing and scouring effects of massive continental glaciers during the last couple million years? What pre-Ice Age throwbacks survived here in this unique refuge that holds more Native American effigy mounds, petroglyph caves, strange geological features, and rare species than anywhere in the Midwest? A team of science filmmakers explores these questions and more in this captivating adventure documentary about the Driftless Zone.

The documentary was directed by two award-winning filmmaking scientists: biologist Rob Nelson and geologist Dan Bertalan. Bertalan is a previous recipient of an Emmy Award for other science television projects. Executive producers Tim Jacobson and George Howe conceived of the idea for the project, identified the shooting locations, recruited on-camera talent, and provided oversight and guidance for editing the film. Jacobson led the fundraising efforts to cover production costs, while Howe was on camera leading some of the exploration of the Driftless landscape. Jacobson continues to manage marketing and distribution of the film.

Others starring in the film include Tim Yager of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, archaeologist James Theler, Ph.D., author/archaeologist Robert Boszhardt, Abbie Church of Mississippi Valley Conservancy, the late UW geography professor Jim Knox, and DNR ecologists Armund Bartz and Darcy Kind.

George Howe, a biologist and environmental educator, expressed enthusiasm about the effectiveness of the film as a teaching tool. “Even long-time residents of the area can learn a tremendous amount from this short film, and they can have a lot of fun at the same time! Learning should be fun,” Howe continued. “We made this a true adventure of exploration for the viewer, and we injected plenty of humor. I’m proud of this film and very interested in exploring ways that we can use it to draw people toward deeper ecological knowledge and caring for the environment.”

Rob Nelson, CEO of Untamed Science said, “I’ve lived in a lot of pretty places— Hawaii, Australia, Miami, Montana, Colorado—places people go to for beautiful scenery. In those places you have certain expectations. The great thing about the Driftless is that it catches you by surprise. People don’t usually think to go to southwest Wisconsin for amazing, rugged scenery. I think that makes paddling down a river like the Kickapoo that much better—you think, ‘Boy, I just found a hidden treasure.’”

Filmmaker Dan Bertalan said, “If there’s one thing that impacted me the most in making of this film, is the sheer amount of natural wonders the Driftless has that lay hidden with the region. It’s just a matter of knowing where to look and what to look for. In fact, it’s almost embarrassing as a filmmaking scientist living in Wisconsin that I’ve traveled the Driftless Area for years, just skimming over the veneer, never realizing all the genuine natural and historical mysteries that lay concealed within the high ridges and deep valleys there. And each natural mystery that we tried to unravel during the expedition only generated more questions about what happened here over the past couple million years. This film will definitely open people’s eyes with some startling revelations.”

The film has aired multiple times over the past year on Wisconsin Public Television, and broadcasts are planned for this autumn on Twin Cities Public Television. It’s been an Official Selection at the Julien Dubuque International Film Festival; the Oneota Film Festival in Decorah, Iowa; the Flyway Film Festival in Pepin, Wisconsin; the Driftless Film Festival in Boscobel, Spring Green, Mineral Point and Baraboo, Wisconsin; and the Frozen River Film Festival in Winona, Minnesota. *Mysteries* also has been accepted into the upcoming Twin Cities Film Festival. DVDs of the film can be purchased from Mississippi Valley Conservancy.

In addition to the lead production and science roles of Mississippi Valley Conservancy and Untamed Science, a number of other organizations, businesses, and individuals have supported this film, including the La Crosse Community Foundation, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, Coulee Region Trout Unlimited, The Prairie Enthusiasts, Riverland Conservancy, Wenonah Canoe, Radisson Hotel La Crosse, the D.B. Reinhart Institute for Ethics in Leadership, NewGround, Inc., Visjonær Communications, Dairyland Power, American Transmission Company, Warren Loveland, and John Reinhart.

***About the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, Chicago/Midwest Chapter***

As part of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, the Chicago/Midwest Chapter is the standard bearer for excellence in the television broadcasting industry and the gatekeepers of the prestigious Emmy Awards in our region. The Chapter was founded in 1958 after an expansion call by then National President, Ed Sullivan. It is one of the largest and most senior local chapters in the country, with a proud history of innovation and excellence in the field of broadcast television and beyond. The Emmy Entrants Master List can be found at <http://chicagoemmyonline.org/awards/2014-emmy-nominations-party/master-list-of-2013-2014-emmy-entrants/>

More information about the documentary can be found at [www.untamedscience.com/mysteries-driftless-zone](http://www.untamedscience.com/mysteries-driftless-zone)