



NEWS RELEASE – For Immediate Release  
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**“DECODING THE DRIFTLESS” RACKS UP MORE THAN A DOZEN  
INTERNATIONAL FILM AWARDS**

LA CROSSE, WI – Over the past three weeks, prestigious recognition for the locally-produced nature documentary, *Decoding the Driftless*, has come from international competitions based in London, UK, and La Jolla and Los Angeles, California, bringing the total number of international awards for the film up to more than a dozen.

On January 29, 2020, the Los Angeles Cinematography AWARDS named the Midwest-produced nature documentary, *Decoding the Driftless*, “Best Documentary Film.”

Just a few days earlier on January 24, 2020, IndieFEST Film Awards in La Jolla, California, conferred a “Humanitarian Award of Distinction” on *Decoding the Driftless*. Previously, in November 2019, IndieFEST bestowed upon the film an “Award of Excellence - Special Mention” as a Documentary Feature, and a separate Award of Excellence in the category Nature / Environment / Wildlife.

Earlier this month on January 9, 2020, producers George Howe and Tim Jacobson walked the red carpet at the Regent Street Cinema in London, UK, where *Decoding the Driftless*

was a semi-finalist at the annual Gold Movie Awards ceremony, having been named “Best Documentary” for August 2019. See [www.goldmovieawards.com/monthly-selection](http://www.goldmovieawards.com/monthly-selection)

“Walking the red carpet in both Hollywood and London for our film, and now receiving a humanitarian award, have been tremendous opportunities to draw positive attention to critically important landscape conservation issues,” said film producer George Howe. He added, “This is what we only dreamed of accomplishing.”

“It’s not just the *number* of international awards that’s significant,” said film producer, cinematographer and Sustainable Driftless, Inc. president Tim Jacobson. “It’s the varied types of awards, too. We’ve been recognized for top-notch content, an engaging story, the artistry of the cinematography, and for the positive humanitarian impact in promoting care for our precious earth.”

As an example of the breadth and weight of recognition for the Driftless Region feature film, according to the IndieFEST announcement, “The goal of the Humanitarian Award is to honor filmmakers who are bringing awareness to issues of Ecological, Political, Social Justice, Health and Wellness, Animals, Wildlife, Conservation and Spiritual importance combined with excellence in filmmaking craft. The winners are hand picked by the judges and staff from hundreds of entries throughout the year.”

In winning a Humanitarian award from IndieFEST, Sustainable Driftless, Inc., along with the film’s Director Jonas Stenstrom and Producers Rob Nelson, Tim Jacobson, and George Howe, join the ranks of other high-profile winners of this important award such as Oscar-winner Jeff Bridges for *Living in the Future’s Past*, Oscar-nominee Liam Neeson for *Love Thy Nature* documentary, Peabody Award winner Leon Lee for *Human Harvest*, Julia Louis-Dreyfus for *Generosity of Eye*, and many more.

Rick Prickett, who chairs The IndieFEST Film Awards, had this to say about the Humanitarian winners: “It takes great talent to tackle the world’s most pressing issues with film

and do a great job. It takes an even greater heart. IndieFEST helps set the standard for Humanitarian filmmaking worldwide. The goal of IndieFEST is to help winners achieve the recognition they deserve for the incredible job that they do.”

The Humanitarian Award is one part of a long line of accolades for *Decoding the Driftless*. The documentary has been honored as either “Best Picture” or “Best Documentary” by Los Angeles Independent Film Festival Awards in Hollywood, Gold Movie Awards in London, UK, Festigious International Film Festival in Los Angeles, Filmmakers Connect Awards, Los Angeles Cinematography AWARDS, Iowa Independent Film Festival, and Red Cedar Film Festival in Menomonie, Wisconsin. Both the Los Angeles Independent Film Festival Awards and the New York Film Awards selected it for “Best Cinematography.” Also, the film was honored for “Outstanding Excellence” by the Docs Without Borders Film Festival, was named a Finalist by the Florence (Italy) Film Awards, reached the Final List of Semi-Finalists at the jellyFEST Film Festival (Los Angeles, CA), is an official selection in the Accolade Global Film Competition (La Jolla, CA), and was recognized at the 2019 Wisconsin Governor’s Conference on Tourism in Wisconsin Dells.

“The first time I traveled from Sweden to visit the Driftless Area, I knew it was a special, magical place,” said Untamed Science, Inc.’s Jonas Stenstrom, the film’s director. “Capturing the scenic beauty and mysteries of the landscape on film has been a true joy.” He added, “We’re thrilled that our cinematographic efforts to encourage conservation in the ruggedly beautiful and precious Driftless Region landscape are being recognized internationally, again and again.”

With *Decoding the Driftless*, a feature-length documentary released in September 2018, viewers are taken on a wild ride of adventure above, on, and below the Driftless Region through this film of exploration. Soar over ancient, rugged bluffs, skim the surface of primordial rivers, venture deep underground to secret worlds, marvel at sacred archeological treasures, hang

perilously over massive rock cliffs, and travel across time itself to explore and decipher ancient clues of the unglaciated Driftless Region landscape, with its captivating scenic beauty.

“From day one I predicted that this film would blow people’s socks off,” said Rob Nelson, president of Untamed Science and another of the film’s producers. “Based upon the enthusiastic reception from thousands and thousands of audience members and the large number and variety of film festival awards, that has proven to be true.”

*Decoding the Driftless* was produced through collaboration between two nonprofit organizations: Sustainable Driftless, Inc. and Untamed Science, Inc., with a lot of community support and a wide range of sponsoring organizations and local communities. Links to more information about the documentary can be found below:

Website and film trailer:	<a href="http://SustainableDriftless.org">SustainableDriftless.org</a>
Facebook:	<a href="https://facebook.com/SustainableDriftless">facebook.com/SustainableDriftless</a>
Twitter:	<a href="https://twitter.com/SustainDriftles">twitter.com/SustainDriftles</a>

DVDs and Blu-ray discs of the film along with other merchandise can be purchased online at [SustainableDriftless.org/store/](http://SustainableDriftless.org/store/) and in various retail outlets around the region.

Sustainable Driftless is working to release a streaming version of the film for sale, too.

### ***About The IndieFEST Film Awards***

Established in 2008, The IndieFEST Film Awards are unique in the industry. Attracting both powerhouse industry veterans as well as talented new filmmakers it is an exceptional, truly international awards competition, not a traditional film festival – which allows filmmakers from around the world to enter their films in this prestigious competition. The IndieFEST is about helping industry professionals who create fresh, standout entertainment achieve the publicity and credibility they deserve. Each year IndieFEST Film Awards receives thousands of entries. See [www.theindiefest.com](http://www.theindiefest.com)

### ***About Gold Movie Awards***

The Gold Movie Awards were created by Italian director Marco Recalchi, Irish actor and producer Jason Matthewson, and Antony Reolon to showcase the best in upcoming and seasoned filmmakers alike and to give them a place to have their work screened and awarded in a professional setting. Every month, the jury of the Gold Movie Awards selects and awards both main and additional categories. Main categories are "Best Feature Film", "Best Short", "Best Documentary," etc. *Decoding the Driftless* and other winners were invited to attend the annual event in London on January 9, 2020, which took place in the center of London at the Regent Street Cinema, the birthplace of British cinema. See [www.goldmovieawards.com](http://www.goldmovieawards.com)

### **About Los Angeles Cinematography AWARDS (LACA)**

The Los Angeles Cinematography AWARDS is a film festival with monthly film submissions from around the world that demonstrate excellence in the art of cinematography and filmmaking. See [www.facebook.com/cawards.org](http://www.facebook.com/cawards.org)

### **About Sustainable Driftless, Inc.**

Sustainable Driftless, Inc. is a nonprofit organization dedicated to inspiring resource conservation, vibrant communities, and sustainable growth in the Driftless Region. The group believes that the region is an epic natural, cultural and historic treasure. While it is well known among some circles, it is widely unknown to most people outside the area despite having resources that could stand up to very-well-known assets such as Yellowstone National Park and the Smokey Mountains. By promoting its value to the local public, Sustainable Driftless believes it can help strengthen conservation efforts and serve as a catalyst to better ensure that local communities are vibrant and sustainable. And by promoting the Driftless Region's value to the larger (global) public as a premier international geo-tourism destination, we can help ensure the

landscape's conservation by demonstrating its value as an economic engine for its rural communities and its thoughtful, sustainable use.

**About Untamed Science, Inc.**

Untamed Science is a group of passionate scientists, educators, and filmmakers who have come to the conclusion that learning about science should be fun and easy. They have a diverse collection of working professionals, including a production team of award winning science-filmmakers, a team of on camera talent, and a collection of science content writers who are dedicated to helping expand the untamedscience.com outreach portals. Information about Untamed Science can be found at [www.untamedscience.com](http://www.untamedscience.com).

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