



For Immediate Release

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Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival & Conservation Summit Announces 2018 Leadership

JACKSON, WYO. - Feb. 12, 2018— As the Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival & Conservation Summit enters its 27th year, the organization announced the election of a new Board Chairperson, Treasurer and Executive Committee members.

CEO and founder of Off the Fence Productions **Ellen Windemuth** will Chair the Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival Board. A seasoned executive producer, distributor and conservationist, Windemuth succeeds former Chair **Michael Rosenfeld**, Vice President of National Productions for Twin Cities PBS, who will remain on the leadership team as Chairperson Emeritus.

Geoff Daniels, Executive Vice President and General Manager for National Geographic WILD will assume the office of Treasurer. They are joined on the Executive Committee of the Board by Officers, **Paul Baribault**, Vice President of Disney Nature and Animation Marketing at Walt Disney Studios and **Carole Tomko**, General Manager and Creative Director of Vulcan Productions.

“We are extremely fortunate to have Ellen’s experience and talent in this leadership role right now,” Executive Director Lisa Samford said. “It’s a dynamic time, and the board is taking on a much deeper engagement. We have more and more urgent needs with the species and habitats around our fragile planet, so we are dramatically expanding our efforts to amplify the amazing work of those on the front lines of nature and conservation storytelling.”

Windemuth established the independent production and distribution company Off the Fence Productions in 1994. Specializing in nonfiction, Off the Fence has since acquired, produced and co-produced over 6,000 hours of content, with Windemuth herself producing more than 400 hours to date. Off the Fence has won over 90 awards including two Emmy nominations.

Over the last 10 years the Festival has dramatically expanded its mission to amplify the impact of media in the nature and conservation sectors, launching three core initiatives. The Jackson Hole Conservation Summit is presented in tandem with the Wildlife Film Festival, and the Science Media Awards and Summits is hosted in partnership with WGBH, in Boston during alternating years. With

support from the National Science Foundation, the Festival has expanded its commitment toward nurturing diverse new voices in science, nature and conservation through a new fellows program.

The year 2018 is expected to be an exciting and industrious one for the Jackson Hole team. The organization has expanded partnerships with the United Nations/CITES and U.S. State Department, and the team is initiating global partnerships for the Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival and WILD on Tour screening events.

“Jackson Hole is far more than a festival and industry conference. Its initiatives are very close to my heart,” Windemuth said. “We will continue to strengthen and accelerate close working relationships between the NGOs doing the heavy lifting in the field, and producers, broadcasters and digi-nets to create a new raft of high impact films. Lisa and this board are the most dedicated people one could wish for as we amplify the important science and conservation work underway to save our planet. Now is the time.”

Recognized as the premier conference of its genre, the Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival & Conservation Summit is considered the Oscars of the nature filmmaking world. An unparalleled biennial industry gathering and film competition, the event is hosted in Grand Teton National Park, where more than 750 international delegates participate in a slate of leading-edge equipment presentations, seminars, screenings and awards.

During alternating years, the Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival joins WGBH in Boston to co-host a conference for science communication professionals. SMASH (Science Media Awards & Summit in the Hub) is slated for September 25-27, 2018. www.jhfestival.org

[Board members](#) include: Animal Planet, BBC Natural History Unit, Disneynature, Fujifilm Optical Devices/Fujinon Lenses, Gorongosa Restoration Project, HHMI/Tangled Bank Studios, International Fund for Animal Welfare, Media Alliance, National Geographic Partners, National Geographic Society, Nature/WNET, Off the Fence Productions, PBS, Science Channel, Smithsonian Channel, Sony Electronics, SVT/Swedish Television, The Nature Conservancy, Terra Mater Factual Studios, Universum/ORF, Vulcan Productions, WGBH Boston and World Wildlife Fund-US.

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