



Upper Minnesota Film Office Keeps the Reel Going

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Under the leadership of Riki McManus, the [Upper Minnesota Film Office](#) (UMFO) continues to support innovative and creative film projects across northern Minnesota. Thanks to its long track record, both local and outside filmmakers can shoot in northern Minnesota’s vivid landscapes and unique buildings, and receive valuable support that helps turn their ideas into reality.

UMFO recently completed the 8th annual Duluth Superior Film Festival, which saw consistently strong attendance at screenings at venues across Duluth. The five-day event also featured discussion panels, a series of related events and festivities, and two screenings in Cook, where one of the films was shot. UMFO showed off some of the area’s amenities to out-of-town filmmakers “Gritty and Pretty Filmmakers Tour,” which brought them out of the theaters and into the city of Duluth and beyond. The festival opened eyes to the area’s unique assets for filming, from Lake Superior shorefront homes to old industrial spaces, and from massive mine pits to a wilderness of lakes and forests. This exposure helps spur additional project leads, thereby feeding into a cycle of continued growth for the local film industry.

Recent developments in St. Paul affect UMFO as well. UMFO has maintained its current level of funding and the Minnesota Film & TV Board was funded for the next biennium, which will allow operations to continue as expected. UMFO was disappointed, however, to see the budget for the Snowbate incentive program cut to \$1 million. Despite lacking this tool that has helped spur numerous successful projects and help grow the regional economy, UMFO will continue its long-running efforts to promote filmmaking across the region. McManus is exploring additional funding sources to support projects that create jobs and generate economic activity in northern Minnesota.

