

*Johnny Morris*  
**WONDERS OF WILDLIFE**  
**NATIONAL MUSEUM &**  
**AQUARIUM**

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**Johnny Morris' Wonders of Wildlife National Museum & Aquarium to celebrate grand opening on September 21, 2017 commemorating the beginning of National Hunting & Fishing Days**

*National celebration planned with commemorative events honoring positive conservation impact of hunters and anglers*

**Springfield, Mo.** – Johnny Morris, founder/CEO of Bass Pro Shops and leading conservationist, in partnership with noted conservation partners from around the world, today announced the all-new Wonders of Wildlife National Museum and Aquarium in Springfield, Missouri will celebrate its grand opening on National Hunting & Fishing Day, September 21, 2017.

“I am proud and excited that this special facility dedicated to those who love the outdoors will open in the heart of America in our hometown, Springfield, Missouri,” said Johnny Morris. “We are deeply grateful to the many remarkably talented individuals and world-class conservation organizations that have come together for the past nine years to help make this vision a reality. It is our shared hope that the tremendous investment of time, energy and resources will have a profound, positive long-term impact on the future of hunting, fishing and conservation in America.”

**Wonders of Wildlife National Museum and Aquarium will be the largest, most immersive fish and wildlife attraction in the world.**

“Wonders of Wildlife has the opportunity, like no other attraction before it, to have a positive national impact on wildlife and conservation,” said Colin O’Mara, President and CEO of the National Wildlife Federation, a key partner organization. “Johnny’s investment in this not-for-profit facility through the Johnny Morris Foundation will establish one of the most valuable and respected conservation and education centers in the world.”

Wonders of Wildlife consists of an all-new 1.5-million-gallon aquarium adventure showcasing 35,000 live fish, mammals, reptiles and birds, and an immersive wildlife museum that brings visitors eye-to-eye with the greatest collection of record-setting game animals ever assembled. Located adjacent to Bass Pro Shops National Headquarters in Springfield, Missouri, the 320,000-square foot experience celebrates people who hunt, fish, and act as stewards of the land and water.

In conjunction with the grand opening a national conservation summit will highlight a series of celebrations and commemorative events with leading conservation partners, special guests and dignitaries from across the nation. The events will honor the positive role hunters and anglers play in wildlife conservation and help inspire the next generation of outdoor stewards.

## Historic Date

National Hunting and Fishing Day honors the most effective grassroots efforts ever undertaken to promote conservation. More than a century ago, hunters and anglers were the earliest and most vocal supporters of conservation and scientific wildlife management. Recognizing that rapid development and unregulated uses of wildlife were threatening the future of many species, sportsmen and women called for laws restricting commercial harvest, established hunting and fishing licenses, and lobbied for taxes on sporting equipment to fund state conservation agencies. The movement, led by notable sportsman President Theodore Roosevelt, soon helped populations of iconic North American wildlife species recover including white-tailed deer, elk, antelope, wild turkey, wood ducks and many more.

The grand opening coincides with several significant conservation landmarks in September including the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of President Franklin Roosevelt signing legislation establishing an excise tax on firearms and ammunition to fund wildlife conservation. Referred to as the Pittman-Robertson Act, this little-known bill has generated billions of dollars from sportsmen and women to fund vital state wildlife conservation activities. It also marks the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Ducks Unlimited, one of the foremost conservation organizations in the world and a key museum partner. Additionally, September 2017 is the 211<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the completion of the historic Lewis and Clark expedition, which will be one of many milestones featured inside Wonders of Wildlife.

### Key components at Wonders of Wildlife include:

- A 1.5 million-gallon aquarium adventure
- More than a mile of immersive trails and exhibits spanning 320,000-square feet
- 35,000 live fish, mammals, reptiles and birds representing 700 species
- More than 70,000 square-feet of immersive wildlife galleries and dioramas
- The Boone and Crockett Club's National Collection of Heads and Horns
- The International Game Fish Association's (IGFA) Fishing Hall of Fame
- The National Bass Fishing Hall of Fame
- The NRA National Sporting Arms Museum
- The National Archery Hall of Fame
- Partnerships with 34 of the world's foremost conservation organizations

### Additional details to be unveiled soon

Officials are planning to share more details about Wonders of Wildlife including plans for the grand opening celebration events, pricing, hours of operation and key features in the coming weeks and months. For more information visit [www.wondersofwildlife.org](http://www.wondersofwildlife.org).

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