



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **Johnny Morris, Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's donating more than 55,000 rods and reels across North America in challenge to get more kids outside**

***Largest donation ever kicks off Gone Fishing with free in-store events and community partnerships introducing more kids and families to fishing***

**SPRINGFIELD, Mo.** – Noted conservationist and Bass Pro Shops founder Johnny Morris is challenging families everywhere to put down their digital devices and head outside to discover the joys of fishing this summer. Morris, Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's are donating more than 55,000 rods and reels to not-for-profit partners that help kids from all backgrounds connect to the great outdoors to kick off *Gone Fishing*.

The nationwide movement is part of an annual call-to-action that aims to introduce the sport to millions of kids. Activities include donations, nonprofit partnerships and a variety of free in-store activities at all Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's locations the weekends of June 8-9 and 15-16. Since the program's inception, Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's have donated more than 400,000 items to youth-focused nonprofit organizations across North America.

"The most special memories in life come from spending time in nature with those you care about. For me, it all started with fishing," said Johnny Morris, who spent his boyhood summers fishing with his family on the beautiful rivers in Missouri's Ozark Mountains. "We want to help as many kids as we can discover the joy of fishing – on the ocean, in a lake or on a stream – so we're donating thousands of fishing poles, inviting families to catch their first fish at Bass Pro Shops and encouraging everyone to take someone they love fishing this summer."

### **National Donation Day**

*Gone Fishing* kicks off with a national donation day on Thursday, June 6, with Morris, Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's donating more than 55,000 rods and reels to nonprofit organizations that connect kids to the outdoors and help get more kids outside. Customers brought in gently used rods and reels this spring in exchange for discounts on new gear; each piece is refurbished to ensure they are fish-ready for kids. This year marks the largest donation in the event's history.



*Noted conservationist and Bass Pro founder Johnny Morris fishing with his son John Paul.*

## Free Family Activities

Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's locations across the U.S. and Canada are hosting free activities and special giveaways during *Gone Fishing* designed for anglers of all ages and skill levels. Family-friendly events hosted on these consecutive June weekends (June 8-9, June 15-16) include:

- **Free Catch-And-Release Ponds:** Kids can experience the excitement of fishing at in-store catch-and-release ponds and earn a free "First Fish Certificate" from FLW (Fishing League Worldwide) to celebrate their achievement. (1-4 p.m. local time)\*
- **Free Fishing Seminars:** Learn the basics from a knowledgeable staff during in-store, informative sessions.
- **Free Fishing 101 Guide:** Free copies of *Nibbles & Bites* teach the fundamentals of fishing. The informational guide is available while supplies last.
- **Free Door Hanger:** The first 75 catch-and-release pond anglers at each location receive a commemorative *Gone Fishing* door hanger to let friends and family know a fishing trip is happening.
- **Free Kids Craft Tables:** Kids can enjoy free crafts tables and make a hanging bobber craft to get in the summer spirit. (1-4 p.m. local time)
- **Video Game Trade-Ins:** Trade-in a video game and receive \$5 off a new youth starter rod and reel combo for \$19.99 or more. Collected video games will be donated to local nonprofit charities. Limit one coupon per customer.

In addition, someone will win a 2019 Toyota Tacoma TRD Off-Road pick-up truck--total value \$38,000. Enter the *Gone Fishing* Sweepstakes while visiting the store or online at [www.basspro.com/gonefishing](http://www.basspro.com/gonefishing) or [www.cabelas.com/gonefishing](http://www.cabelas.com/gonefishing).

## Get Involved

To share memories from the great outdoors, anglers of all ages are encouraged to join the movement by posting a fish selfie to social media using the hashtag *#TakeAKidFishing*, challenging friends to post their catches and pledging to take someone fishing this summer.

## A Conservation Leader

*Gone Fishing* is one of the many ways Johnny Morris guides Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's to inspire everyone to enjoy, love and conserve the great outdoors. The premier outdoor and conservation company is a leader in protecting wildlife and habitat, and connecting new audiences to the outdoors. [Johnny Morris' Wonders of Wildlife National Museum and Aquarium](#), located on the Bass Pro Shops National Headquarters campus in Springfield, Missouri, is a gift to the sportsmen and women of America from Johnny Morris. Wonders of Wildlife was voted America's Best Aquarium and America's Number One Best New Attraction by readers of *USA Today*. Larger than the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History, the not-for-profit attraction is the world's grandest tribute to the conservation movement and the adventurers, explorers, outdoorsmen and conservationists who helped discover, develop and preserve the nation we love.

For more information about *Gone Fishing*, visit [basspro.com/gonefishing](http://basspro.com/gonefishing).

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*\*Locations in Abbotsford (British Columbia), Anchorage (Alaska), Barrie (Ontario), Calgary (Alberta), Edmonton (Alberta), Halifax, Nova Scotia, Moncton (New Brunswick), Nanaimo (British Columbia), Ottawa (Ontario), Regina (Saskatchewan), Saskatoon, (Saskatchewan), Springfield (Oregon), Tualatin (Oregon), Vancouver (British Columbia) and Winnipeg (Manitoba) will host a casting challenge pool in lieu of the catch-and-release pond. Participants receive a special Casting Challenge certificate.*

### **About Bass Pro Shops®**

Bass Pro Shops is North America's premier outdoor and conservation company. Founded in 1972 when avid young angler Johnny Morris began selling tackle out of his father's liquor store in Springfield, Missouri, today the company provides customers with unmatched offerings spanning premier destination retail, outdoor equipment manufacturing, world-class resort destinations and more. In 2017 Bass Pro Shops acquired Cabela's to create a "best-of-the-best" experience with superior products, dynamic locations and outstanding customer service. Bass Pro Shops also operates White River Marine Group, offering an unsurpassed collection of industry-leading boat brands, and Big Cedar Lodge, America's Premier Wilderness Resort. Under the visionary conservation leadership of Johnny Morris, Bass Pro Shops is a national leader in protecting habitat and introducing families to the outdoors and has been named by Forbes as "one of America's Best Employers."