



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**Johnny Morris, Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's donating more than 40,000 rods and reels across North America in challenge to get more kids outside**

***Local donations to youth non-profits across North America kick 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 once again donating more than 40,000 rods and reels to hundreds of not-for-profit partners that help kids from all backgrounds connect to the great outdoors to kick off *Gone Fishing*.



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

Many of the recipients engage underprivileged, minority and urban youth who might otherwise not have a chance to get introduced to the sport of fishing.

The nationwide movement is part of an annual call-to-action that aims to introduce the sport to millions of kids. In addition to donating tens of thousands of rods and reels, all Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's stores will host free in-store fishing and casting activities during the weekends of June 12-13 and 19-20. **Since the program's inception, Johnny, Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's have donated more than 500,000 products to youth-focused nonprofit organizations across North America and helped millions of families catch their first fish, with over 150,000 kids participating in free events.**

"If there was a bright spot from this past year, it was the unprecedented interest of families wanting to get outside and go fishing," said Johnny Morris. "The most special memories in life come from spending time in nature with those you care about. For me, it all started with fishing, which is why we're proud to donate thousands of fishing poles to help kids discover the joys of fishing this summer."

### **National Donation Day**

*Gone Fishing* kicks off with a national donation day on Thursday, June 10, with Morris, Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's donating more than 40,000 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.

## 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 12-13 and 19-20) 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 (11 a.m.-4 p.m. local time).
- ***Free Fishing 101 Guide:*** Free copies of *Nibbles & Bites* teach the fundamentals of fishing. The informational guide is available while supplies last.
- ***Free Giveaways & Take-Home Crafts:*** After completing the catch-and-release pond, kids will receive free take-home crafts and giveaways while supplies last.

## Get Involved & Win

To encourage everyone to take a kid fishing this summer, anglers of all ages can post a photo or video fishing to social media using the hashtag #gonefishing and tag @bassproshops or @cabelas. Tag and challenge three friends or family members to take a kid fishing for a chance to win a Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's gift card. For dates and more details, visit [basspro.com/gonefishing](http://basspro.com/gonefishing).

## **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. North America's premier outdoor and conservation company is a leader in protecting wildlife and habitat, and connecting new audiences to the outdoors.

In 2016, Johnny founded and launched The George H.W. Bush Vamos A Pescar™ Education Fund to honor his longtime fishing friend President George H.W. Bush and to support the Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation's (RBFF) Hispanic initiative, Vamos A Pescar™. The fund allows the organization to target new audiences and grow future conservationists through programming that targets Hispanic families in key metro areas of Texas and Florida.

Located on the Bass Pro Shops National Headquarters campus in Springfield, Missouri, [Johnny Morris' Wonders of Wildlife National Museum and Aquarium](#) 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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### **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."