



**BIG CEDAR® GOLF**



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**Sept. 17, 2021**

**Bass Pro Shops and Johnny Morris set a total new standard  
for sustainability in the golf world**

**Big Cedar becomes first resort in the world to receive  
unprecedented Audubon International Signature Sanctuary  
status certifications on all five golf courses**



**RIDGEDALE, Missouri** – [Big Cedar Lodge](#) today announced that it has become the only resort in the world to have all five of its premier golf courses designated as Audubon International Signature Sanctuary locations. The independent certification from Audubon International, a global not-for-profit conservation leader, ensures that all Big Cedar courses meet the highest standard of conservation-minded course design and sustainable operation.

Receiving this designation is no easy feat for one golf course, let alone five, with a rigorous certification process that takes years and includes several onsite visits from Audubon

International staff. The achievement aligns with the vision of noted conservationist and Bass Pro Shops founder Johnny Morris, who created Big Cedar Lodge to connect more people to nature and each other and has gone on to become one of America's conservation leaders. In 2019, another well-known environmental organization, The National Audubon Society, awarded Johnny with its prestigious Audubon Medal for his lifelong efforts to protect wildlife habitats and connect more people to the great outdoors.

Morris and Big Cedar Lodge first received Signature Sanctuary status for its Jack Nicklaus-designed Top of the Rock course 15 years ago, making it one of fewer than 100 courses in the world to earn the distinction at the time. With the addition of the Buffalo Ridge, Ozarks National, Mountain Top and Payne's Valley courses – Big Cedar Lodge has gone on to earn a global reputation as a world-class golf destination with a steadfast commitment to conservation by showcasing the rugged natural beauty of the Ozarks.

"We hold conservation close to our hearts and feel an obligation to protect the land and surrounding wildlife for future generations to enjoy," said Johnny Morris. "All of us at Big Cedar are very grateful to the experts at Audubon International for their time and commitment to help lead us and others to the very highest standards."

### **Rigorous requirements throughout certification process**

The certification process involves a rigorous and highly technical comprehensive evaluation to ensure sound land management practices and appropriate land use based on scientific management. The process began with an on-site assessment conducted by Audubon International staff to evaluate existing natural resources. To achieve certification, the Big Cedar team implemented and follows a site-specific Natural Resource Management Plan (NRMP) that addresses wildlife conservation and habitat enhancement, water quality monitoring and management, integrated pest management, water conservation, energy efficiency, waste reduction and management, and green building products and procedures. Once those conditions are met and an environmental audit is passed, Audubon International conduct multiple site visits and provide supplemental training and education to operational personnel.

"Audubon International Signature Sanctuary certification represents the highest standard of conservation-minded design in the world of golf," said Christine Kane, CEO of Audubon International. "Attaining certification for every course is an unprecedented achievement that speaks to the strong commitment to conservation from Johnny Morris and the entire Big Cedar team."

From soil creation to implementing a linen reuse program, the environment is top of mind in everything Big Cedar Lodge does. Between 75 - 80 percent of fertilization is done using organic fertilizer, a nature-friendly method that grows exceptional turf grass while utilizing natural carbons. Big Cedar also uses a special water recirculation system to help reduce unwanted chemical run-off during cleaning. The courses also use moisture meters on the industrial spray and irrigation rigs to control how much water is used.

### **America's Next Great Golf Destination**

Johnny Morris combined his passion for conservation and connecting people to nature to create an unparalleled golf experience. Big Cedar Lodge has attracted visitors and widespread acclaim

from around the world, further establishing his reputation as “The Walt Disney of the Great Outdoors.”

Payne’s Valley, Tiger Woods and TGR Design’s first public golf course in the U.S., is the latest to join the existing world class courses at the resort, which in addition to Buffalo Ridge (designed by Tom Fazio) and Ozarks National (Bill Coore and Ben Crenshaw) includes Mountain Top (Gary Player) and Top of the Rock (Jack Nicklaus), in a grouping of some of the most decorated and respected golf course designers in the world.

[Golf Digest](#) recently announced that [Ozarks National](#) and [Buffalo Ridge](#) are the only two public golf courses on the 2021-2022 [Best Golf Courses in Missouri](#) list. Ozarks National was named the best course in Missouri as part of GOLF’s [Best Public Golf Courses in the Midwest](#) ranking. On Golfweek’s [Best Public Golf Courses You Can Play, State by State list](#), Ozarks National and Buffalo Ridge topped the Missouri roundup at No. 1 and No. 2, respectively.

For more information or to book a tee time at any of Big Cedar Lodge’s award-winning courses, visit [bigcedar.com/golf](http://bigcedar.com/golf).

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### **About Big Cedar Lodge**

Located in the heart of Missouri’s Ozark Mountains, [Big Cedar Lodge](#) is America’s premier wilderness resort. A passion of Bass Pro Shops founder Johnny Morris, the 4,600-acre lakeside retreat connects families to the outdoors with a variety of nature-based experiences including fishing, boating, hiking, spa and wellness offerings, hosting 2.4 million guests annually. Signature attractions include Top of the Rock, home to world-class golf, dining, and entertainment; and Dogwood Canyon Nature Park, a 10,000-acre nonprofit wildlife nature park. Named “Number One Resort in the Midwest” by the readers of Travel + Leisure, the resort offers genuine Ozarks hospitality and a convenient location just south of Branson. Learn more at [www.bigcedar.com](http://www.bigcedar.com).

### **About Audubon International**

Audubon International is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in Troy, NY. In addition to golf courses, Audubon International also provides programs for businesses, schools, communities, and new developments with the purpose of delivering high-quality environmental education and facilitating the sustainable management of natural resources. For more information, call Audubon International at 1-844-767-9051 or visit [www.auduboninternational.org](http://www.auduboninternational.org)

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