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+ AMERICA'S PREMIER WILDERNESS RESORT +



**Johnny Morris, Bass Pro Shops founder and noted conservationist, continues to celebrate and share the beauty of the Ozarks with  
NEW Thunder Ridge Nature Arena at Big Cedar Lodge**



***Thunder Ridge Nature Arena's spectacular natural surroundings in the hills of the Ozarks make it one of the country's most unique and awe-inspiring outdoor venues and will attract some of the biggest artists in the world***

**RIDGEDALE, Missouri (August 16, 2022)** – Heralded as one of the most iconic amphitheaters and arenas in all of North America, the newly expanded Thunder Ridge is set to re-open

in September hosting Thunder Days, a Professional Bull Rider team series competition.

The breathtaking, nature-based outdoor venue is a pet project of noted conservationist Johnny Morris, the founder of Bass Pro Shops and Big Cedar Lodge, and is a natural amphitheater that overlooks Table Rock Lake and the Boston Mountains of Arkansas.

“We are so excited for Thunder Ridge to help showcase the true beauty of the Ozarks to our guests,” Johnny Morris said. “This will be a place for visitors of all ages to come and experience some of the best events and biggest names in entertainment, in a truly awe-inspiring environment, surrounded by nature.”

Located on about 1,200 acres near Ridgedale, Thunder Ridge is adjacent to the Bass Pro Shops Outdoor Academy on land originally purchased by Johnny Morris almost 30 years ago. For the past decade it has accommodated large gatherings including concerts by Hank Williams Jr., Chris Janson, Dierks Bentley, Tracy Lawrence and other major acts.

It also has hosted air shows, hot air balloon shows, the US Open Bowfishing Championship, the US Open National Bass Tournament, the National 4-H Youth Council gathering, rodeos, conventions, symposiums, special events and weddings, and is set to host nature-based activities for all ages and interests for years to come.

The expansion of Thunder Ridge, increasing capacity from 10,000 to approximately 50,000, is the latest in Big Cedar Lodge's proud tradition of hosting world-class hospitality and entertainment experiences that span a variety of recreational markets. These enhancements – which have been done without any tax dollars – will more than double the previous seating capacity, without sacrificing the venue's stunning nature-based charm. It provides another grandiose outdoor venue for a resort that hosts 7 million guests per year, and a Branson community that attracts 10 million visitors every year.

Thunder Ridge land has been set aside as part of the not-for-profit Johnny Morris Conservation Foundation, so all proceeds from events held at the Nature Arena will go to further enhance Thunder Ridge and support conservation. The vision for the future is to host a wide variety of world-class, outdoor events.

### **STUNNING NATURE-BASED ENTERTAINMENT VENUE**

Johnny has personally worked closely with contractors to transform Thunder Ridge Nature Arena, taking inspiration from visits to some of the most well-known outdoor venues across the country, including The Gorge Amphitheater in Quincy, Washington, Red Rocks Amphitheater outside Denver, and to the Cheyenne Frontier Days in Wyoming.

Thunder Ridge immerses guests in nature, with features such as large sloping grass lawns and fire pits for groups of all sizes to enjoy. This expansion provides additional capacity without sacrificing the venue's stunning nature-based character.

Shaped into the hillsides of the Ozarks and overlooking Table Rock Lake, the setting of the arena, near the Missouri-Arkansas border, allows visitors views into the Boston Mountains of Arkansas and to be totally immersed in nature. Even the parking lots are tucked into the hillsides. Crews have been working around the clock to prepare for upcoming major events.



*Thunder Ridge is set to host Thunder Days on Sept. 23-25.*

## **GET THE FIRST LOOK AT BASS PRO SHOPS RED HOT PROFESSIONAL BULL RIDING TEAM, MISSOURI THUNDER**

The host team Missouri Thunder, started by Johnny Morris and coached by bull-riding legends and Hall of Famers Ross Coleman and Luke Snyder, is currently in first place in the standings in the PBR Team Series, which has proven to be a wildly popular addition to the sport.

The area has hosted bull-riding events in the past, but nothing on the scale and excitement that the Missouri Thunder and other PBR teams will generate. This will be the first opportunity for local fans to get a taste of the sport that is surging in popularity.

“Thunder Ridge is one of the most unique and beautiful venues that I have ever seen. It is truly breathtaking,” said Colten Fritzlán, one of the top individual riders in the PBR Team Series. “We can’t wait for Thunder Days to be able to put on a show for our fans, and for bull-riding fans everywhere.”

### **THUNDER DAYS TICKET INFORMATION**

Tickets for Thunder Days are now available for purchase on [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com).

### **NEW CAMPGROUND BEING PLANNED FOR THE FUTURE**

Future plans include the addition of campground space in the area, providing more nature-based experiences and outdoor activities for visitors of all ages to enjoy.

**[See Thunder Ridge Nature Arena video here](#)**

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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 7 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 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.”

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