



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

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **50 years after its founding, American Museum of Fly Fishing to join Johnny Morris' Wonders of Wildlife National Museum and Aquarium in Springfield, Missouri**

*Longtime steward of fly-fishing history joins unprecedented collection of national conservation partners dedicated to celebrating hunters and anglers*



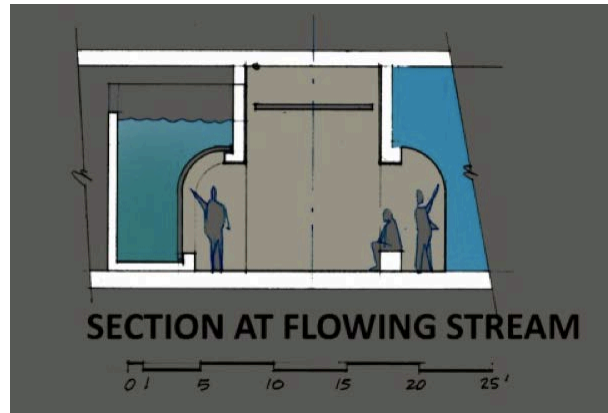
*Preliminary artist rendering envisioning the new American Museum of Fly Fishing coming to Wonders of Wildlife in Springfield, Missouri.*

**SPRINGFIELD, Mo.** — Officials from the American Museum of Fly Fishing in Manchester, Vermont, together with noted conservationist and Bass Pro Shops founder Johnny Morris, today announced plans to establish a new permanent exhibition as part of Johnny Morris' Wonders of Wildlife National Museum and Aquarium in Springfield, Missouri. Fifty years after its founding, the American Museum of Fly Fishing will join several prominent conservation organizations that have created galleries within the massive not-for-profit conservation attraction located in the heart of Missouri's Ozark Mountains.

The American Museum of Fly Fishing is dedicated to preserving the rich heritage of fly fishing. Established in 1968 by a group of passionate and enthusiastic anglers who believed the history of angling was an important part of American culture and tradition, the Museum was created to research, preserve, and interpret the treasures of angling history. Today, the Museum serves as a repository for the world's largest collection of fly fishing and angling-related items including more than 22,000 flies; 1,400 rods; 1,200 reels and more than 700 prints and paintings. With artifacts dating back as far as the sixteenth century, the expansive collection documents the evolution of fly fishing as a sport, art form, craft and industry in the United States and abroad.

A significant portion of the Museum's rich collection of artifacts, many of which will be publicly displayed for the first time, will fill the all-new and expanded gallery within Wonders of Wildlife.

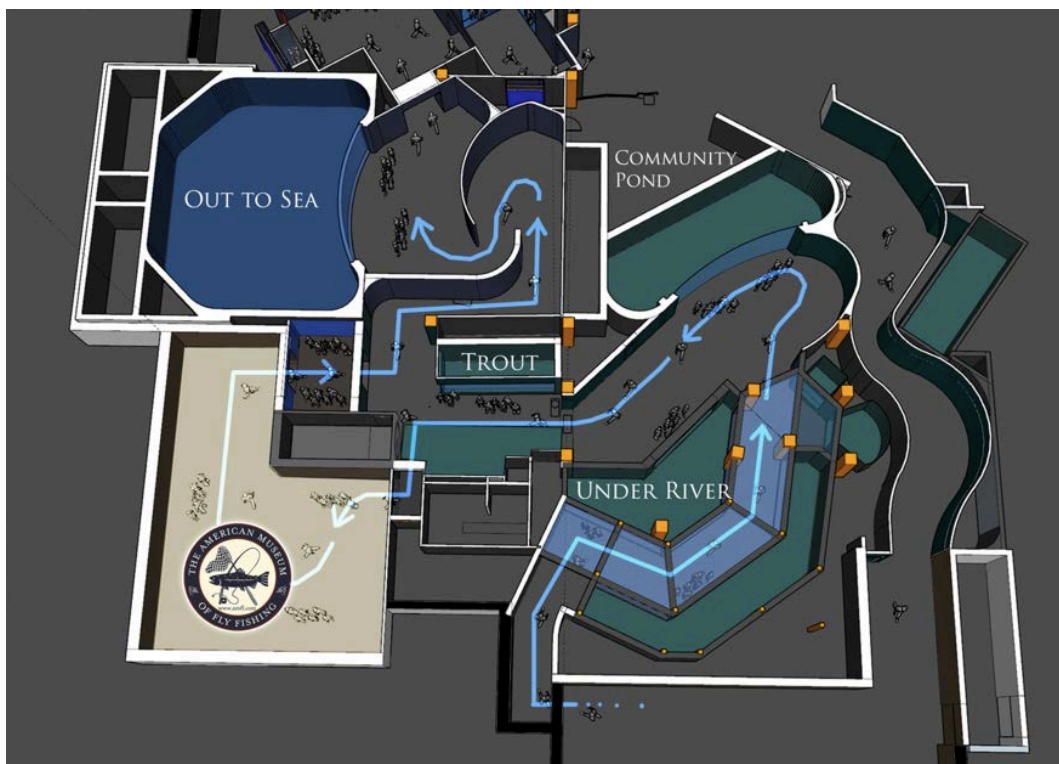
**The display will feature a dramatic new "under-the-river" walkthrough aquarium featuring a flowing trout stream** enveloping guests as they enter the new space. The goal of the partnership is to expose future generations to fly fishing.



*Expanded river aquarium illustration.*

"We are elated to share the sport of fly fishing with future generations at Wonders of Wildlife," said Karen Kaplan, President of the American Museum of Fly Fishing. "There is no better place to showcase the heritage and convey the excitement and proud history of the outdoor sport we love. We are grateful to Johnny Morris for his vision to establish a national destination of this magnitude and partnership to help expose more people to fly fishing and the outdoors."

The potential to reach a significantly wider audience and inspire new generations to discover the sport was a key motivation in the board's decision to form a partnership. Located in the heartland of America within a day's drive for half the population, Wonders of Wildlife welcomed 1.6 million visitors in its first year alone and has been voted as "America's Best Aquarium" and "America's Best New Attraction" by *USA TODAY* readers.



*Overhead rendering depicting how guests will experience the American Museum of Fly Fishing at Wonders of Wildlife*

The American Museum of Fly Fishing joins an extraordinary collection of exhibits and galleries that showcase national conservation organizations within a single “must-see” destination experience – telling the story of hunters and anglers conserving wildlife and the outdoors. Other partner galleries include the International Game Fish Association (IGFA) Fishing Hall of Fame, National Bass Fishing Hall of Fame, Boone and Crockett Club’s National Collection of Heads and Horns, the NRA National Sporting Arms Museum, National Audubon Society, and the National Archery Hall of Fame.

“We are deeply honored to welcome The American Museum of Fly Fishing to help us expand our mission to celebrate people who hunt, fish, and act as stewards of the land and water,” said noted conservationist Johnny Morris. “Fly-fishing is a beautiful American tradition that plays an important role in conservation, and we couldn’t be more excited to share this with our guests.”

The new gallery will be located on the lower level adjacent to The National Bass Fishing Hall of Fame. Construction is expected to start later this year. Access to The American Museum of Fly Fishing exhibition will be included with general admission.

The announcement marks the third significant expansion for Wonders of Wildlife since its grand opening in September 2017. In addition to the immersive Penguin Cove exhibit that opened in December 2017, the Museum is constructing a 10,000-square-foot exhibition hall to host the Windland Smith Rice International Awards and its annual Nature’s Best Photography exhibition.

The American Museum of Fly Fishing will continue to operate out of its Manchester, Vermont, location, offering onsite and traveling exhibitions, educational programming, access to the Gardner L. Grant fly fishing library, and production of the *American Fly Fisher* journal (one of the greatest benefits of AMFF membership). AMFF will also continue to present the annual Heritage and Izaak Walton Awards, and remain stewards of the sport through collecting, preserving, exhibiting, studying, and interpreting its artifacts, art, and literature.

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### **About Johnny Morris’ Wonders of Wildlife National Museum and Aquarium**

Johnny Morris’ Wonders of Wildlife National Museum and Aquarium consists of an all-new 1.5-million-gallon Aquarium Adventure showcasing 35,000 live fish, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and birds, and immersive Wildlife Galleries that bring visitors eye-to-eye with the greatest collection of record-setting game animals ever assembled. Created by noted conservationist and Bass Pro Shops founder/CEO Johnny Morris, the 350,000-square-foot experience celebrates those who hunt, fish, and act as stewards of the land and water. Located next to Bass Pro Shops National Headquarters in Springfield, Missouri the campus is a centerpiece of America’s Conservation Capital in Missouri’s Ozark Mountains. Wonders of Wildlife has been voted “Best New Attraction in America” and “America’s Best Aquarium” by the readers of *USA TODAY*. For more information, visit [www.wondersofwildlife.org](http://www.wondersofwildlife.org).

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