



### **Bass Pro Shops Announcement Strengthens Western Kentucky's Position as a Premier Travel Destination**

**PADUCAH, KY – Feb. 12, 2026** – The Paducah Convention & Visitors Bureau applauds the announcement that Bass Pro Shops, North America's premier outdoor and conservation company, will open a new 70,000-square-foot destination retail location in Paducah, Kentucky. Adjacent to the Kentucky Oaks Mall along Interstate 24, the store is expected to open in late 2026 or early 2027 and will serve as a powerful new draw for travelers already heading to one of the country's most celebrated outdoor recreation corridors.

Paducah sits at the crossroads of four major rivers and within easy reach of Kentucky Lake, Lake Barkley, and Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area—a 170,000-acre outdoor playground that draws over a million visitors each year for fishing, boating, hiking, camping, and wildlife viewing. The addition of Bass Pro Shops gives those travelers a reason to extend their stay and explore a city that is a destination in its own right.

“Bass Pro Shops and Western Kentucky are a natural match,” said Alyssa Phares, President & CEO of the Paducah Convention & Visitors Bureau. “Paducah sits at the heart of some of the best fishing, boating and outdoor recreation in this part of the country. Whether visitors come to explore Kentucky Lake, paddle the region's inland waterways, or gear up for their next adventure, this is one of the many ways to experience our region. We're thrilled to welcome a brand that helps more people discover Paducah and Western Kentucky.”

#### **A Weekend Where the City Meets the Outdoors**

For visitors traveling to the lakes region, Paducah offers something rare: a vibrant, walkable city with a creative soul just a short drive from world-class outdoor recreation. The CVB encourages travelers to turn a day trip into a full weekend by pairing time on the water with time in Paducah's historic downtown.

A day in Paducah might begin along the Ohio River waterfront, move through the Wall-to-Wall floodwall murals that tell the city's story, and wind into the National Quilt Museum—the nation's only congressionally designated museum dedicated to the art of quilting. Visitors can dine at renowned culinary hot spots, stay in preserved historic spaces, and take in the kind of authentic, one-of-a-kind experiences that have earned Paducah features in outlets like National Geographic and Southern Living. A second day can take visitors south to Kentucky Lake and Land Between the Lakes for fishing, boating, hiking the North-South Trail, or visiting the Elk & Bison Prairie—with a stop at Bass Pro Shops to stock up on gear along the way.

It's a combination that sets Western Kentucky apart: the culture, history, and hospitality of a true destination city paired with some of the best outdoor recreation east of the Mississippi.

### **Strengthening the Regional Connection**

The announcement has generated enthusiasm across Western Kentucky's tourism community. Elena Blevins, Executive Director of the Kentucky Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau, states, "The Kentucky Lake CVB congratulates our neighbors in Paducah on this exciting announcement! This type of outdoor-focused retail investment aligns directly with our core visitor markets and strengthens the natural connection between Paducah, Marshall County, and legendary Kentucky Lake. We see this as an opportunity to increase regional traffic, inspire more people to get outside, and further elevate West Kentucky as a premier destination for fishing, boating, and outdoor recreation. Growth like this benefits our entire region and reinforces West Kentucky's identity as a hub for outdoor adventure."

Paducah's location along Interstate 24—a key travel corridor connecting Nashville, St. Louis, and the broader Midwest—already makes it a natural stop for road trippers and outdoor enthusiasts. Bass Pro Shops' reputation as a destination retail experience is expected to bring additional visitors to the region who may be discovering Western Kentucky for the first time.

The new store will also create more than 115 local jobs and add to a growing commercial corridor that serves both residents and the region's tourism economy.

### **About Paducah, Kentucky**

Paducah is a UNESCO Creative City located at the confluence of the Tennessee and Ohio Rivers in Western Kentucky. Known for its thriving arts scene, historic riverfront, the National Quilt Museum, and the vibrant LowerTown Arts District, Paducah is a city of many ways to connect—with culture, the outdoors, and each other. Just a short drive from Kentucky Lake, Lake Barkley, and Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area, Paducah serves as the

gateway to one of the nation's premier outdoor recreation regions. Learn more at [www.paducah.travel](http://www.paducah.travel).

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