



National Association of Wetland Managers

“Dedicated to the Protection and Restoration of the Nation’s Wetlands”

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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National Association of Wetland Managers Launches ‘Wetlands: Changing the Narrative’ Digital Storytelling Series in Tennessee on World Wetlands Day

Portland, ME - Tennessee’s wetlands are essential for clean water, flood protection, and wildlife - but they’re disappearing. To raise awareness and inspire action, the **National Association of Wetland Managers (NAWM)** is launching **Wetlands: Changing the Narrative**, a **new digital storytelling series**. Today’s kick-off of this multi-year, multi-media campaign is focused on the relationship between Tennesseans and their wetlands.

“**Wetlands: Changing the Narrative**” showcases the invaluable role of wetlands in **protecting Tennessee’s communities, economy, and natural heritage**. Wetlands help:

- **Reduce flood damage**, protecting homes and infrastructure.
- **Recharge aquifers and rivers**, providing drinking water for millions of West Tennesseans.
- **Filter pollution**, keeping our rivers and streams clean.
- **Support biodiversity**, serving as habitat for Tennessee’s unique plant and animal species.
- **Offer recreation and outdoor spaces**, enhancing quality of life.

Tennesseans have already lost up to 60% of their wetlands and cannot afford further loss of these critical ecosystems. While wetlands remain under pressure from development and deregulation, public awareness is shifting, with more Tennesseans recognizing their importance.

The *Wetlands: Changing the Narrative* launch in Tennessee, features inspiring stories of local landowners, scientists, and businesses working to protect and restore wetlands. The first round of stories will spotlight:

- [Terry Hamby](#): duck hunter, landowner
- [John & Bill McEwen](#): anglers, landowners
- [Zac Fox](#): businessman, brewer
- [Kristen Cecala](#): educator, scientist

About the Project

Wetlands: Changing the Narrative is an outreach campaign spearheaded by the National Association of Wetland Managers (NAWM) in partnership with creative agencies and organizations across the country. The goal of *Wetlands: Changing the Narrative* is to bring diverse and hopeful stories about America’s wetlands to American audiences through a range of traditional and new media avenues. The multi-year, multimedia campaign

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will shine a light on the people who are reshaping the natural world. Hunters, anglers, ranchers, and small family farmers all depend on healthy wetlands for their way of life. From the most remote bison wallow in the Great Plains to the edges of the Everglades and beyond we'll discover seemingly ordinary people making extraordinary impacts on their local wetlands through a mix of landowner stewardship, science, engineering, and sheer determination. Their stories, insights, and passion will be the conduit through which the wondrous natural history of our wetland heritage is presented to our viewers.

This initiative is made possible by a generous grant from the Water Foundation, multiple individual donations from wetlanders around the nation, and the creative teams at Wide Awake Films and Platte Basin Timelapse. Tennessee project partners include Harpeth Conservancy, Tennessee Wildlife Federation, Ducks Unlimited, and Southern Environmental Law Center.

For more information on Wetlands: Changing the Narrative and to stay updated on new stories, visit <https://nawm.org/nawm-campaigns/changing-the-narrative-campaign.html>.

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The National Association of Wetland Managers (NAWM), founded in 1983, is a nonpartisan, nonprofit membership organization whose mission is to build capacity for state and Tribal members and foster collaboration among the wetland community of practice by encouraging the application of sound science to wetland management and policy, promoting the protection and restoration of wetlands and related aquatic resources, and providing training and education for members and the general public. NAWM's membership is open to everyone, and includes professionals who work at all levels of government, the private sector, nonprofits, universities, and more.

Wide Awake Films (Kansas City, MO) For more than 20 years the team at Wide Awake has produced award winning films for television, museums, streaming, and commercial clients. Their clients run the gamut, including PBS, John Deere, The National Park Service, and the Congressional Medal of Honor Society.

Platte Basin Timelapse (Lincoln, Nebraska): Since 2011 PBT has used film and multimedia to bring the stories of our nation's waterways to a wider audience. Known for their timelapse nature photography and keen understanding of river systems and watersheds, PBT stands ready to lend their expertise to whichever watery habitat we choose to film.

Harpeth Conservancy (Brentwood, Tennessee): Founded in 1999, Harpeth Conservancy is a science-based non-profit conservation organization. Harpeth Conservancy's mission is to restore and protect clean water and healthy ecosystems for rivers in Tennessee by employing scientific expertise and collaborative relationships to develop, promote, and support broad community stewardship and action. Harpeth Conservancy's success is driven by working with landowners, businesses, community, local, state, and federal decision-makers, and members to foster solutions that reduce pollution and maintain healthy areas.

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