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news release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New PBS Western Reserve Nature Series Spotlights Ohio's Wetlands

“By Nature’s Design: Exploring Our Native Wildlife” to Premiere Earth Day

Kent, Ohio — March 24, 2025 — Over 90% of Ohio’s wetlands have been lost, but the tide of conservation has been shifting with the help of dedicated organizations and individuals. This is the subject of the first season of PBS Western Reserve’s new nature docuseries, “By Nature’s Design: Exploring Our Native Wildlife.” The first half-hour episode, “Welcome to the Wetlands,” will premiere on PBS Western Reserve (WNEO 45.1 / WEO 49.1) at 8 p.m. on Earth Day, Tuesday, April 22. Following its premiere, the episode will be available on demand via the PBS Western Reserve [website](#), [PBS app](#) and [YouTube](#).

Created by Sophia Gillespie, associate producer of content, and executive produced by Ryan Donchess, director of content, this new series takes viewers to beautiful landscapes and sits down with local experts to understand the science, get the facts and appreciate the natural wonders worth protecting in the place we call home.

“My goal with this series is to educate and inform our viewers about the wetlands in our own backyards. This ecosystem is so vast across our region, and just as important to nature as it is to humans,” said Gillespie. “This first season will demonstrate how the presence of wetlands in Ohio over the past few years has increased, thanks to policies and passionate groups who are aiding wetland restoration and survival.”

Featured local experts include Eric Saas, the program manager leading the wetland restoration efforts for H2Ohio; Robert Hamilton IV, an associate professor of biological sciences at Kent State University at Stark whose research specializes in freshwater ecology within wetlands; and Lauren Kinsman-Costello, an associate professor of biological sciences at Kent State University and the co-director of Kent State’s Center for Ecology and Natural Resource Sustainability.

This project was made possible with support from PBS Western Reserve viewers. Viewers are encouraged to share their reactions, thoughts and excitement with PBS Western Reserve on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Linked In](#), [X](#) or [YouTube](#). For more information about the wetlands and “By Nature’s Design: Exploring Our Native Wildlife,” visit PBSWesternReserve.org/by-natures-design.

About PBS Western Reserve

PBS Western Reserve is the brand name of Northeastern Educational Television of Ohio, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. A trusted community resource, PBS Western Reserve uses the power of commercial-free television and related services to enrich the lives of people through high-quality programming and educational services that teach, illuminate and inspire. It serves the largest population of Ohio’s eight PBS member stations. PBS Western Reserve (WNEO 45.1 / WEAO 49.1), a service of the organization, is the only broadcast television service that reaches all of Northeast Ohio. It is available to 4.9 million people in the Cleveland and Youngstown designated market areas. In an average month, more than 1 million people tune in. The organization also operates two standard definition channels: Fusion (WNEO 45.2 / WEAO 49.2) and FNX (WNEO 45.3 / WEAO 49.3).

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