

**From:** info@gfp.sd.us  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 07, 2019 4:56 PM  
**To:** baumbergersteve@gmail.com  
**Cc:** Comes, Rachel  
**Subject:** Petition for Rule Change Form

**South Dakota - Game, Fish, and Parks**

## **Petition for Rule Change**

A new form was just submitted from the <http://gfp.sd.gov/> website with the following information:

**ID:** 66

**Petitioner Name:** Steve Baumberger

**Address:**

**Email:** [baumbergersteve@gmail.com](mailto:baumbergersteve@gmail.com)

**Phone:** 605-789-9988

**Rule Identification:** Missouri River System – smallmouth bass between 14" and 18" must be released, with one fish over 18" allowed in daily limit.

**Describe Change:** The quality and quantity of smallmouths on Lake Francis Case and Lake Sharpe is declining, and with no size restrictions it will only get worse. The change would allow the average South Dakota angler, who has limited time to fish, to enjoy catching more and varying (larger) sizes of smallmouth bass, and possibly a trophy. The change allows for harvest of fish, but at the same time creating a viable sport fishery for those who enjoy catch and release.

**Reason for Change:** South Dakota has no closed fishing seasons for bass. Smallmouth bass are members of the sunfish family and build nests to spawn. Big females are vulnerable to harvest in May and early June when guarding the nests and when anglers from every state in the Midwest are here fishing. Once a female is removed from the nest, those 300,000 plus eggs or fry are history. Up and down the system, ramp parking lots are full most of the spring and summer, which means fishing pressure is high. Another reason is that anglers are now targeting smallmouth for food. Guide Services especially put a lot of pressure on smallmouths and walleye, some 50-100 guide services across the state, and some with fleets up to 12 boats, it doesn't take long to remove the largest fish from a system. They communicate with each other while on the water when schools of fish are located, and can quickly remove the largest fish from schools before moving on to new locations. Guide services use bragging boards (pictures) to promote their business to nonresident clients, so the more fish posted the better their service appears. Anglers don't come from all over the Midwest to go home empty handed, catch and release is seldom practiced. Another reason for the change is that hardcore walleye anglers, some being guides, believe smallmouths compete with walleyes for food, thus removing smallmouth will create a better walleye fishery. This is a false accusation, I've seen smallmouth regurgitate shad, crawdads, and mayflies, but never smelt or other young fish that walleye prefer. I believe South Dakotans come first in regards to hunting, fishing, and camping rights within our state, and the change I've proposed above will benefit everyone who enjoys this great species.