

Boating Access Facilities on Lower Missouri River and Boating Below Oahe Dam Closed Due to High Water Flows

PIERRE, S.D. – To protect the public and limit additional damage to homes and other private property along the flooding Missouri River, Gov. Dennis Daugaard has closed boating access facilities in South Dakota below Gavins Point Dam in the Yankton area, effective immediately.

The Governor has also banned boating on Lake Sharpe, from immediately below Oahe Dam to the downstream Antelope Creek area.

The restrictions will be in effect until rescinded by the Governor.

State law gives the Governor authority to prohibit or restrict recreational use or navigation on any portion of a river, lake or stream in order to protect the public peace, health, or safety, according to Jeff Vonk, Secretary of the State Department of Game, Fish and Parks.

“Record discharges through the mainstem dams on the Missouri River are creating hazardous conditions for boaters and anglers. In addition, boat operation on these waters can cause unnecessary and additional damage to homes and other private property affected by flood waters,” Vonk said.

Notices of the closures of the boating access facilities will be posted at those sites along the Missouri River. A violation of the public waterway restriction is a Class 2 Misdemeanor, punishable by up to 30 days in jail, a \$500 fine, or both.

“Fishing and boating are popular spring and summer family activities in South Dakota,” Vonk added. “In addition to these closures, we are asking boaters and fishermen who plan to recreate on the Missouri River to focus their activities to those reservoir areas above the mainstem dams where boating safety risks are reduced and impacts to private property are more limited.”