

Smallmouth Bass in Unimpounded Waters

1 WHEREAS, Missouri is blessed with many miles of rivers, streams and creeks that support viable
2 smallmouth bass (SMB) populations and fisheries that are highly prized by resident and non-resident
3 anglers alike;

4 AND WHEREAS, these fisheries have been managed under the same 12-inch minimum fish length limit
5 coupled with a six-fish daily creel limit since 1974 (except in select sections);

6 AND WHEREAS, these regulations favor the harvest of SMB under a maximum sustained yield
7 approach to fisheries management rather than in a manner that supports a healthy fishery;

8 AND WHEREAS, these current statewide regulations are incongruous with supporting large numbers of
9 adult SMB given their naturally slow growth rates and low densities as predators;

10 AND WHEREAS, a study done by the Missouri Department of Conservation in 1995 on sections of the
11 Gasconade and Jacks Fork rivers went on to prove that increasing the minimum length limit for SMB to
12 18 inches increased fish population and also increased the average size of the fish in those areas;

13 AND WHEREAS, the same study was surveyed, and the results concluded that anglers generally
14 supported a regulation change that would increase the minimum size limit of SMB;

15 AND WHEREAS, the Missouri Department of Conservation recently issued a report documenting the
16 results of the Stream Black Bass Special Management Areas for Smallmouth Bass Project;

17 AND WHEREAS, this report has proven that the implementation of higher minimum length limits,
18 combined with lower daily creel limits, has been successful in increasing average fish size, angler catch
19 rates and proportional stock densities of larger SMB in the fisheries under special management;

20 AND WHEREAS, improving the overall quality of SMB fishing in our rivers, streams and creeks would
21 increase revenues in Missouri by generating non-resident revenue and tax revenues from the state's
22 resident anglers;

23 AND WHEREAS, the costs of implementing revised statewide regulations for the management of SMB

24 in unimpounded waters would not result in an additional tax burden to the residents of Missouri.

25 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Conservation Federation of Missouri assembled at

26 the Lodge of Four Seasons, Lake Ozark, MO, this 27th day of February, 2010, requests that the Missouri

27 Department of Conservation raises the minimum length limit for SMB in unimpounded waters to 15

28 inches. It should also be requested that the daily creel limit for SMB be decreased to three fish per day.