

South Dakota

South Dakota was admitted to the Union as the 39th State on 02 November 1889, the only day US history which saw two states admitted on the same date.

There have been several designs throughout the years and the final design was not approved until 1966. The final design is listed first, followed by the first two designs. A detailed explanation of the history is included in the paragraphs which follow.



South Dakota State Flag of 1909 (obverse)

Courtesy: South Dakota Historical Society



1963 South Dakota Flag

Courtesy: South Dakota Historical Society

In 1871 and 1872 territorial senator Seth Bullock was helping to create Yellowstone National Park. In 1873, he was serving as sheriff of Lewis and Clark County, Montana. In 1876, he and Solomon "Sol" Star opened a hardware store in the notorious Deadwood, South Dakota, banking on lucrative business in that gold rush town.

At the time, Deadwood was a rowdy, lawless mining town. In fact, Wild Bill Hickok was shot the day after Seth Bullock opened his hardware store, the "Office of Star and Bullock, Auctioneers and Commission Merchants."

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With business interests in Deadwood, Seth Bullock responded to a call for enhanced law enforcement in town and accepted a position as the town's sheriff. His tenure established a semblance of stability in the wild and wide-open Deadwood.

Bullock brought his wife and daughter to town and bought a ranch at the junction of the Redwater Creek and the Belle Fourche River.

When their hardware store burned down in 1894, Bullock and Star built Deadwood's first hotel where the store had stood. A good friend of Theodore Roosevelt, Bullock, earned the rank of captain in the Rough Riders.

On November 2, 1889, South Dakota attained statehood and Seth Bullock was appointed to the position of U.S. Marshall.

Former territorial senator, sheriff, hardware store owner, and Roosevelt Rough Rider, U.S. Marshall Seth Bullock approached State Senator Ernest May, of Deadwood, about a State flag. Senator May consulted with the Secretary of the State Historical Society, Doane Robinson.

The following was reported in the *Wi-iyohi* (Volume II, November 1, 1948), a monthly bulletin published by the State Historical Society.

"In 1909 Senator Ernest May of Deadwood came into the Historical Society office. Seth Bullock wanted a state flag. May asked Doane Robinson about it and was told by Robinson that Ida Anding, now Mrs. McNeil, former operator of KGFX radio of Pierre, who was then a stenographer in the Historical offices, would design him a flag. She did. It was a blazing sun, on an azure background. May liked the design, Senate Bill 208 was introduced. On the floor later, he moved that 'on the reverse of the blazing sun shall appear the Great Seal of the State of South Dakota in dark blue.' This was adopted and the bill passed. Money to buy two flags was appropriated. One went to the Secretary of State, and Seth Bullock of Camp No. 1, United Spanish Veterans of South Dakota, got the other."

The state flag was designed by Ida M. Anding, legislative librarian, in 1909 according to the following specifications:

"The Flag of South Dakota shall consist of a field of blue, one and two-thirds as long as it is wide, in the center of which shall be a blazing sun in gold, two-fifths as wide in diameter as the width of the flag. Above this sun shall be arranged in the arc of the circle, in gold letters, the words 'South Dakota' and below this sun in the arc of the circle shall be arranged the words in gold letters, 'The Sunshine State', and on the reverse of the blazing sun shall be printed in dark blue the Great Seal of the State Of South Dakota. The edges of the flag shall be trimmed with a fringe of gold, to be in proportion to the width of the flag. The staff shall be surmounted by a spearhead to which shall be attached cord and tassels of suitable length and size."

This official flag, displaying on the obverse side the "blazing sun in gold" and the [Great Seal of the State of South Dakota](#) on the reverse flew over the Sunshine State for many years. Unfortunately, a flag with a

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different design on each side was more expensive to produce than a flag with the same design on each side and, as the price tag rose, fewer and fewer flags were in evidence in the state.

In 1963, Representative William Sahr of Hughes County introduced House Bill No. 503, proposing that the flag be modified to display the Great Seal on both sides. This measure would significantly reduce the cost of manufacture and presumably increase the flag's presence in the State. House Bill No. 503 was signed into law by Governor Archie M. Gubbrud on March 11, 1963. The law now stipulated:

55.0108 State flag. The state flag or banner shall consist of a field of sky blue one and two-thirds as long as it is wide. Centered on such field shall be the Great Seal of South Dakota made in conformity with the terms of the Constitution, which shall be four-ninths (4/9) the width of the said flag in diameter; such seal shall be on a white background with the seal outlined in dark blue thereon, or in the alternative shall be on a sky blue background with the seal outlined in dark blue thereon; surrounding the seal in gold shall be a serrated sun whose extreme width shall be five-ninths (5/9) the width of the said flag. The words 'South Dakota' symmetrically arranged to conform to the circle of the sun and seal shall appear in gold letters one-eighteenth (1/18) the width of the said field above said sun and seal and the words 'The Sunshine State' in like sized gold letters and in like arrangement shall appear below the said sun and seal. Flags designed of such material as may be provident for outdoor use need no fringe, but for indoor and display usage shall have a golden fringe one-eighteenth (1/18) the width of said flag on the three sides other than the hoist.

All state flags made in conformity with state law prior to the effective date of this act shall remain official state flags, but the creation of a state flag from and after the effective date of this act, other than in conformity herewith, is prohibited."

In the South Dakota legislative session of 1966, legislation approved February 3 created a revolving fund known as the "Special State Flag Account" in the office of the State Treasurer. The law also required the Bureau of Administration "to keep on hand at all times a sufficient quantity of the South Dakota state flags as specified in § 1-6-4, for distribution, loan, or sale, as it may determine, in order to meet the demand therefore from various public, semipublic and private organizations or persons."

A third change to the flag was made in 1992 when South Dakota adopted "[The Mount Rushmore State](#)" as its official nickname and "The Sunshine State" was replaced with the official State nickname on the State flag.

Long promoted as "The Sunshine State" because of the multitude of sunny days that graced South Dakota each year, the legislature ceded "The Sunshine State" to Florida and adopted a nickname that would forever remain unique.

Source: http://www.netstate.com/states/symb/flags/sd_flag.htm