

It is unfortunate that restrictions are being considered on family recreation, on our Willamette River.

I'm 5th generation native Oregonian and my children are 6th generation and the Willamette has been a resource for family pleasure for over 35 years for myself and my family. The connection I have to the water has been life saving and confidence building through boating, water skiing, tubing and other inflatables that cause some sort of wake. Being able to use our boat to get up on a plane and cause wake is a normal part of boating and recreation and each boat causes a different type of wake that the river has been enduring much longer than I've been around. Our Willamette River is constantly changing, it's part of Mother Nature.

Large vessels have a big wake, the Jet Boats have an enormous wake and are allowed at dangerous speeds that overwhelm smaller vessels and docks all the way up past West Linn boat ramp. If you pick on family recreation, it is short sided to say our family sized skiing/towing boats are the problem.

Recently with COVID, recreational boating while pulling, has been my only access to recreate that was safe and family friendly with my disabilities. Taking the rights away to use the water for family recreation, when all boats cause wake seems terribly restrictive. Not all disabled people can paddle and do it safely with a family.

I believe there was a much higher demand for access to water to recreate last summer and I saw many instances of people violating basic wake restrictions but I didn't see much supervision, so there is a possibility that some boats in general need more education and experience but to just completely ban activity has harsh consequences to law abiding boaters. It might be better to increase jobs on the river to patrol for safety than to restrict access to family boating or increase education and signage. My other concern is that taking large strips of the Willamette and prohibiting activities such as wake surfing, using towables and pulling skiers will require too many boats in one area instead of the natural spread of boats to use different areas. It will become so dangerous if all boats have to head to the same place to pull or wake surf. As a disabled mom, I can't imagine putting small children in a tube in the downtown area of the Willamette and fighting all the congestion of other boaters and their wake because of the new Bills being passed. I grew up on the River Place docks 35 years ago, in a cabin cruiser and we always traveled up river to play in the water and I would never place a skier in that downtown area, especially a child.

I also know that our family spent money in Oregon City and West Linn for gas, food and resources while on the Willamette. We also paid fees to park at the Portland boat ramp. Families who use the ramps to recreate spend money locally but that slows or stops when restrictions are placed. Money will leave these towns further hurting their economies and small business owners.

There maybe a few uneducated boaters that don't abide by the signs and follow the rules around posted wake signs, as I have seen it with my own eyes but these boaters, who don't abide by the laws should be cited instead of penalizing everyone else.

I witnessed boaters within 200 feet of boat ramps creating large wake because they didn't know how to handle their boat and they weren't towing anyone or anything. Making tied up boats slam against the docks. I also was almost over run by a Jet boat with my skier in the water. There was no regard for their wake to my boat or my skier. I witnessed cabin cruisers projecting large wake all along the river all summer. I also witnessed so many wake violations by the Lake Oswego dock making it very dangerous to load and unload passengers but these were just regular boats who didn't abide by the "no wake" zone and they weren't towing.

Please consider all the boaters that will be affected by these Bills.