



WaterWatch of Oregon
Protecting Natural Flows In Oregon Rivers

HB 2555 and HB 2725
Testimony of WaterWatch of Oregon
By Kimberley Priestley
Submitted to the House Agriculture and Natural Resources
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Founded in 1985, WaterWatch is a non-profit river conservation group dedicated to the protection and restoration of natural flows in Oregon's rivers. We work to ensure that enough water is protected in Oregon's rivers in order to sustain fish, wildlife, recreation and other public uses of Oregon's rivers, lakes, wetlands and streams. We also work for sustainable groundwater management, balanced water laws and policies. WaterWatch has members across Oregon who care deeply about our rivers, their inhabitants and the effects of water laws and policies on these resources.

WaterWatch supports HB 2555 and HB 2725

HB 2555 and HB 2725 would both reduce the maximum loading weight limit of motorboats to 4,000 pounds in the Newberg Pool of the Willamette River. This weight limit will help protect against the effects of wake boats on the river ecology of this section of the Willamette River.

As outlined in the informational hearing before this Committee, wave energy from wake boats is especially detrimental to river edge ecology, and the many plant, insect, wildlife and fish species that grow, feed, migrate through and/or live in these unique habitats. Edge habitat is critical for all fish species that utilize the Willamette River, but is especially important to juveniles. Five species of salmon and steelhead protected under the federal Endangered Species Act are at risk of harm from waves generated from wake boards, as are lamprey and other species. HB 2555 and/or HB 2725 would provide an important tool to protecting these species.

We urge the Committee to support these bills.

Thank you for consideration of our testimony.

Contacts: Kimberley Priestley, WaterWatch of Oregon, kjp@waterwatch.org
Jack Dempsey, WaterWatch lobbyist, 503-358-2864, jack@dempseypublicaffairs.com