

Willamette Deserves Science, Not Special Interest Speculation.

Thank you for your time and I am against SB 857.

As a homeowner on the Willamette River for the past 9 years, it is alarming to see special interest groups converting the river into a “country club” purely dedicated their activities, excluding other groups without validated research specific to the Willamette River. Equally egregious are a select group of greedy river homeowners that are working with these special interest groups to further privatize and expand their backyard real estate, removing boats and families having fun and exercise on the river. I have witnessed unsubstantiated claims, undocumented photography and blatant false statements presented by these groups to create their “fear-driven” but false narrative. A couple of false statements they use frequently:

1. Reduced salmon populations. **ODF&W’s Deputy Chief Bruce McIntosh stated,** *“But do wake sports really impact salmon and steelhead populations, and, if so, to what degree?” Bruce replied, “While there is evidence to support the former, the latter depends on which government agency you ask. **Our perspective is they have little to no effect.**”*
2. Increase in erosion. The “erosion campaign” is self-proclaimed by these groups with no actualized research on the Willamette River. Here is an image of my neighbor’s recent riverbank erosion where ZERO wakes occur, only paddlers and kayakers:



Removing the rights and alienating Oregon boaters that pay for the river’s management via fees and licensing is completely disheartening, especially when it’s predicated on such depth of false information.

I ask that you align with the Oregon House of Representative recent ruling on this matter that more research is needed before removing citizen rights and killing boat servicing businesses.

Let’s STOP the assumptions and work as a collective river community to bring a resolution that works for all.

Thank you again,
Levi Patterson