

June 2, 2021

Senate Rules Committee
Support for SB 857: Protect the Willamette River

I am writing to show my support for SB 857 for the protection of the Willamette River and to increase the safety of people using non-motorized boats.

Studies have shown that an incremental increase in boat weight correlates directly to increased impact on the erosion of river banks. Nonmotorized boaters know, too, that the wake impact on the shoreline has the same impact on paddlers, rowers, sailors, swimmers and property. It is precisely the massive wake boat sizes and weights, along with added ballast and devices, that create ocean size waves and powerful wakes, leading to problems in all areas of the Willamette River.

I have personally seen the impacts of these large wakes on small non-motorized boats as in my 15+ years rowing on the Willamette River – I have been swamped several times by people using these boats. And these people never stop to help when this happens.

I am asking for your help today! SB 857 does not shut down boating in Oregon. It's a reasonable compromise that follows bipartisan legislation passed in 2019 to protect the sensitive river environment within the Newberg Pool and provide a safer river for people in non-motorized boats. All boaters with a towed water sports decal will still be able to participate in towed water sports. Just the heaviest of boats, specifically designed to create massive waves, will be required to travel to wider and more appropriate bodies of water. The Greenway will also be off-limits to the addition of external wake enhancing devices.

I ask you to please support SB 857-1 this session.

Sincerely,

Lyn D. Wylder

Lyn D. Wylder
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