

I'm writing to oppose this bill as it creates multiple issues for those that enjoy the river for recreation. I have grown up boating on the Willamette River. I have so many memories from the time spent there with family and friends. This bill that is targeting certain user groups, by special interest groups, would result in the type of recreation that I and so many enjoy each summer to no longer happen in our area. It creates a huge safety hazard on other waterways in our area as they become overcrowded due to regulation being implemented on the river. The Willamette from Newberg down stream has already had unreasonable regulation (additional licensing, restricted tow use, no wake zones, etc) added to allow boating in this area and has pushed boaters upstream into other areas that do not have the same restrictions. In the 30 years I have boated on the river I have never seen it as busy as it was last year once these regulations were implemented. This bill will certainly add to the congestion up stream as well as on other areas that are overcrowded such as Hagg Lake. Recreation in Portland area is already overcrowded during the summer. Traffic to the beaches are packed. Trailheads are packed. State Parks are packed. Eliminating recreation that is close to the city is a poor idea and leads to other areas being overcrowded. As Oregonians we enjoy our access to recreation, especially during the summer months. Why reduce our access to recreation that is convenient.

The special interest groups proposing this legislation most likely are pointing towards erosion as the reason to implement this regulation. A few things in this regard. Have they actually provided solid research? They used to dredge the river to eliminate sediment build up. Have they take into account that dredging has stopped? Sediment build up continues. The water will go somewhere. The banks aren't being eroded by the 4 months out of the year that the majority of boats are on the river. Erosion is why the river is there. Erosion happens when the level of the river increases in the months that boating isn't happening. Boating is not the issue. Maybe we should go back to dredging??

I appreciate your time and hope that you oppose this legislation to allow the continue recreation that has happened for so many years on the river that we all love and enjoy.

Sincerely,
Jason Haslam