

I am writing in support of SB 857.

This bill is necessary to protect the small section of the Willamette River known as the Newberg Pool from environmental damage caused from massive unnatural high energy waves created by heavy wake boats.

These wakes are threatening endangered salmon habitat along the banks of the river and eroding the soft silt banks of this sensitive section of the river.

There is plenty of strong science backing the need for this legislation. Scientists from Oregon State University and the University of Portland have testified to the problems in the Newberg Pool and stressed action is needed NOW.

The Newberg Pool is only 500 to 600 feet wide. The situation will get even worse this summer with the Oregon State Marine Board closure of the Lower Willamette, which is 1,000 to 1,400 feet wide with rocky shorelines and/or sea walls. This will create additional boat traffic in the Newberg Pool which accelerate damages to the environment and property in this narrow stretch of river.

My riverbank has been pounded by these waves and we have lost over 8 feet of river bank due to slides. Our ramp to our dock, that stood solidly for 50 years and was well maintained, was eroded and collapsed from damage caused by the large wakes. When we replaced the ramp, our contractor who works on docks up and down the Newberg Pool, said the damage came from wake boats and he is overwhelmed with work up and down the river caused by these large heavy wake boats.

The wakes from these boats also create terrible turbidity and this is what is choking the summer spawning grounds for salmon and other endangered fish. We are also seeing new strange aquatic growth in the river from invasive species we have never see before.

SB857 is a reasonable compromise to protect the sensitive river environment within the Newberg Pool and allow recreation.

Please pass SB 857. This bill will ensure that the Willamette Greenway is protected from increasing environmental damage as a result of massive, high energy waves, which are not natural or sustainable in the Newberg Pool.

Sincerely,
Darby Collins
Newberg Pool resident
Wilsonville OR