

Support SB857 — Prevent More Damage to the Willamette River

I am a resident of more than 20 years at 12130 SW Riverview Lane in Wilsonville OR which is located about 1.8 miles upstream of the I-5 bridge. My property is on the waterfront with a permitted dock.

I am writing in support of SB857.

The size and frequency of the large wakes produced by heavy watercraft on the river are doing irreparable damage to the Willamette River and its environs.

I have documented the damage to my dock and my shoreline from these boats.

These large wake boats do environmental damage to near shore habitat and species listed under the Endangered Species Act.

The opponents of this bill allege that the damage to the riverbanks is NOT from large wakes pounding the shores. They say it is from homeowner “mismanagement of trees and plants” leading to erosion.

This is blatantly false. The area directly across from my house in the Newberg Pool that runs along Butteville Road has no homes, no irrigation, no landscaping, only natural trees and vegetation.

This land has experienced extensive damage starting in 2004 when “wake-enhancing devices” first appeared on boats weighing between 3,500 and 4,000 pounds. The rate of erosion steadily increased since but became especially severe over the last 5 years as wake-generating boats have gotten bigger and bigger.

To me, it feels like the opponents of SB857 are blaming the victim for their irresponsible behavior. I believe the environmental viability of the Willamette River is threatened in this narrow section of the Newberg Pool by these large wake-producing boats and boating behavior. The river is too narrow and environmentally sensitive to handle this activity from large heavy wake boats.

SB857 will go a long way to helping improve all recreation in the Newberg Pool and reducing environmental damage to the river and its habitat.

I urge you to support this bill to protect safety, shoreline, and property within the Willamette Greenway. Doing so will ensure this treasured recreational resource will continue for a wide range of recreation uses for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Gary A. Grieve

