

Date: 20 February 2022

To: Rep. Pam Marsh-Chair, Rep. Zach Hudson-Vice Chair, Rep. David Brock-Smith-Vice Chair, and House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources members:

From: Stan Halle, 21 year-Oregon resident & riverfront farm & homeowner since 2013

Re: Favorable Support for SB1589 – Please Vote YES

I have a simple math problem for the Committee to solve. The Newberg Pool is 580 feet wide on average. The question is, if a wake boat is traveling at the center of the river, what distance is left for the wave to dissipate before hitting the shoreline. The answer is 290 feet. It has been shown by extensive study that 400-to-500 ft is the minimum distance these high-energy wakes need to dissipate, not 290 feet. The take away from this math question is that it is not possible in the Newberg Pool for 3-to-4ft high waves to dissipate before hitting the shoreline and grinding into the river bottom, habitat, and property.

Therefore, as a property owner, I am stuck watching the waves from wake boats carve out our property and others, including the State of Oregon's property along the Newberg Pool. I can't emphasize enough that this stretch of the river is simply not wide enough to accommodate wake boats and their destructive waves, ever growing in size (aka displacement).

Just as Formula 1 race cars are not allowed to use I-5 as a speedway, or Boeing 747s are not allowed to land at the Chehalem Airpark, **there is a proper place for wake-sports** – and it is **NOT the Newberg Pool**. Far better places for wake sports include: the Columbia River, Detroit Lake, Foster Reservoir, and Hagg Lake.

Also, insistence that the Willamette River is a public waterway and that "*we have every right (aka freedom) to use it for recreation any way we see fit*" ignores the impact it has on all other users – who are in far greater numbers. This includes: motorized craft (fishing, skiing, touring, tubing, ...) or non-motorized (paddleboards, kayaks, canoes, swimmers, etc.). Statements that it will bring economic collapse to the boating industry in Oregon are grossly overstated. This industry needs to adjust to the necessary & safe uses for their products. Frankly, trying to recreate ocean-surf conditions on an environmentally delicate, narrow river is simply not right. The cost of ignoring this will lead to irreversible damage to the Willamette's delicate fish & wildlife habitats.

The Water Sports Industry has repeated misrepresented the facts: Here are a few of the tidal wave of misinformation that has been blasted at the Salem Legislature:

- Misrepresentation #1 This bill represents a ban on all towed water sports on the Willamette. Wrong, in truth, the bill limits boats to 5,000 lbs or less on a narrow and environmentally-sensitive river habit and shoreline.
- Misrepresentation #2 There is no or insufficient science. Wrong, in truth, there have been many studies and hours of verbal & written testimony from scientists,

researchers, and State-experts. We do not need more data – it is just another stall tactic allowing the sale of more & heavier high-energy wake boats.

- Misrepresentation #3 We need a work group to study this. Wrong, in truth we've already did this in 2019, with participation from all parties.
- Misrepresentation #4 Support for this bill is only by a small number of homeowners with special interests. Wrong, in truth, this statement is intentionally misleading. When you add up the membership represented by more than 12 organizations who support this bill, it is in the 10's of thousands, all of whom are Oregon voters. (see my spouse's written testimony which provides a list of these organizations).
- Misrepresentation #5 Having a paid surveyor by the Water Sports Association spend a half-day photographing Newberg Pool shorelines and 'concluding' that these were caused by homeowner actions or neglect is pure bunk. These slides were caused by big-energy boat wakes that tear at the shore and undermine vegetation.
- Misrepresentation #6 Shoreline mitigation and dock damage are caused by natural forces and the mismanagement of shoreline vegetation by homeowners. We have previously submitted a sample of detailed dock and shoreline damage mitigation costs that exceeded \$750,000. If these were due to natural causes – river current, wind, winter cs. summer river depth, we would not see the plethora of damage that has exponentially increased in the past several years – directly proportional to the increasing #'s & weights of wake-surfing boats.

Our so-called 'special interests' are centered on environmental impact of high-energy wakes (often over 4-feet in height) on fish & wildlife habitat, shoreline erosion, property loss & damage, and public safety. Our collective goal is to preserve the fragile Willamette River for generations to come.

Finally, the current 10,000 pound limit set by the OSMB has NO basis or justification. **OSMB staff have openly admitted that this was based on a max.-weight for boat launch ramps and intended to ensure that virtually all wake-boats would continue to be allowed on the River.**

As a native New Yorker, I was attracted to Oregon by the strong sense of environmental stewardship. This is in jeopardy by inaction which allows these behemoths to grow in size and numbers. I firmly believe there are places for all forms of water-recreation to occur. I am not anti-boating or anti-family. We are asking you to please pass SB1589 because it will bring a better balance between protecting this precious waterway and creating sustainable boating practices in the Newberg Pool. **PLEASE VOTE YES on SB1589.**