

Submitter: Eric Finch

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Environment and Natural Resources

Measure: SB1589

I strongly urge you to vote NO on SB 1589. As a relatively new boat owner and life-long Democrat, what Oregon doesn't need are more bans alienating people from family activities. Banning tow boats in the Newberg Pool on the Willamette River should only be a last resort.

Key Point:

It doesn't make sense to extend the Newberg Pool to include the length from the Tualatin River inlet to Willamette Falls. This section is relatively unused by tow boats (I have videos showing this), both banks are very rocky (no sandy shores), the river is deep, there are no private docks, and only a handful of houseboats very near the Falls. It's a long, safe area for both Wake Surfing and Wake Boarding. Non-motorized users stay in the area of the Tualatin Inlet and South, where the Willamette is shallow.

Residential development, not summer boat wakes, is the primary human-caused source of erosion. There is broad agreement that the lack of native vegetation and homeowner mismanagement of native trees has caused the majority of the erosion. Furthermore, natural occurrences such as last winter's storm have a much greater impact on river health than boating. Non-stop, high river levels 9+ months of the year do more erosion than 3-4 months of waterskiing, wakeboarding or wake surfing.

There is no empirical evidence or peer-reviewed study that links lowering the current boat weight limit or banning wake surfing to having any positive effect on fish populations in the Newberg Pool. Wake sports largely take place in the summer, outside of key migratory or spawning months. Scientific studies show that waves from wake boats, when operated at least 200 feet from shore, do not carry enough energy to have a significant impact on most shorelines.

Possible and Reasonable Alternatives:

1. Do not extend the Newberg Pool from Tualatin River inlet to Willamette Falls!
2. Zones for power or paddler only.
3. Odd/Even day usage to allow both paddlers and power boats water fun time.
4. Time restrictions when certain sports aren't allowed (i.e., wake surfing 12pm to 5pm M-F, 10am-3pm S/S, or some reasonable alternative).
5. Increase education requirements for all Willamette waterway users.
6. Increase registration fees for all users to allow for additional enforcement patrols.

PLEASE consider the alternatives!!! There are vastly more river/lake alternatives for non-motorized sports enthusiasts than just the Willamette River. Please don't take this wonderful waterway away from families!

I respectfully urge you to vote against this bill and all future bills like it.