

My name is Paige Stoyer and I am strongly opposed to SB 1589.

I have spent the last few years working to bring all river user groups together. Early on, about 3 years ago, I introduced myself to Renee Morgan of the Calm Water Coalition and Darby Collins of ORSPA, who was leading these efforts to ban wake sports on the upper river. We met at a home on the river and they told me they were in the process of doing a study on the upper around erosion issues. I told them I was very happy to hear that, that we needed the facts, and we discussed that the study would of course need to look at all impacts on the river.

I was told later that they didn't move forward with the study because the head of the Marine Board told those few homeowners pushing for the towed sports ban, if they did that study it would show that their impact on the banks of the river was the central cause of erosion issues.

That fact has been confirmed by numerous homeowners and the experts hired to help stabilize their banks, who have testified the erosion was not due to boat wakes. To now claim that asking for a study to get to the facts, is simply a "delay tactic" is disingenuous. They know we have been asking for a study for a number of years now, because we want the facts and we love our river as much as anyone, and we want to fully understand and have accurate information about all of the impacts on the river. It should be huge red flag to legislators that those pushing this bill have refused for years to do those studies. If they believed the claims they were making they would have done these studies already to back up their claims.

According to the National Marine Fisheries Service latest report degraded habitat conditions due to land use, predation, hatchery practices, and dam passage - not boat wakes - are the primary concerns affecting fish population. Boat wakes are not even on their list.

Members of our community spoke to the author of the NOAA fisheries letter who said it was never intended to try to restrict or ban any boats, only to suggest boat impact in general should be looked at. Again, we fully support studies to do just that.

Instead proponents of SB 1589 continue to make illogical statements. The claims about wake boats violating the endangered species act were first made on the lower river, with the suggestion being that wake boats

specifically were violating the Endangered Species Act (ESA), but other boats making the same size or bigger wakes were not. Some legislators now seem willing to make that same claim, but you don't have to know anything about this issue to know that makes no sense at all. And if legislators use that ESA claim to push SB 1589 through, they would have to then at least ban all other boats over 5000 lbs. on the river, or by their own argument they would be knowingly allowing ESA violations. The fact is there is no evidence that any boats are violating the ESA. NOAA fisheries said in an email that it would be a real long shot to try and claim any boat wakes are violating the ESA.

As an environmentalist myself, a long-time member of Environment Oregon and someone who once worked for Greenpeace, I would certainly want to know if I and my family were violating the ESA. Instead I am alarmed at the way in which false ESA violation accusations are being used to try to push what is a personal biased agenda of a small group of people. If those threatening to sue the state really believe their claims, let them sue because the remedy should the court feel an investigation into the claims is warranted, would under the ESA order a scientific study to get the facts. Which is what we all should want.

I served on the Oregon State Marine Board's citizen rule committee and I can tell you that the Marine Board reached out to both the DSL and Fish and Wildlife and asked them if they wanted to participate in the rule making process, if they had any concerns about boat wakes that needed to be addressed or felt the need for any new boating restrictions, and they did not. I can also tell you that safety claims such as those made by Senator Kennemer were shot down numerous times by Portland Fire and Rescue, who oversee safety on the river and said that there are very incidents related to boat wakes. Numerous reports by the Marine Board also make it clear that most safety incidents are not boat wake related.

Despite claims to the contrary It's impossible to deny that this bill would have a devastating impact on our river community, families and many local businesses and employees. At least half of the boats registered for the towed sports endorsement on the upper river would be banned under this bill. And 100% of wake surfers are being banned with this bill, even if they had a boat under 5000 lbs. That is another very clear indication that this is a targeted attack on people who do towed sports, especially anyone who

wake surfs, instead of any type of objective rule on boat weights across the board.

Hundreds of families who recreate on the upper Willamette alone would no longer be able to do so. Generations of Oregonians have grown up doing towed sports here. Wake surfing because of the slow boat speeds and being easier on our bodies is, as the 70 year old Grandfather testified last week, the only towed sport he can do with his family. This is true for me also, having broken my neck 25 years ago. This bill would shut down an adaptive wake surf program that operates for the disabled on the upper river. It would restrict access to the river for many when we should be expanding those opportunities instead.

Please vote no on SB 1589 and instead help pursue the necessary studies to properly investigate these issues, get the facts, so we can better come together as a community to take care of our public river and safely share it.

Thank you very much, Paige Stoyer