

Submitter: Barb Grover

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire

Measure: SB1590

I feel strongly that you should oppose SB 1590, introduced by Senator Mark Meek. This bill would undermine recent legislation that protects the Willamette River for a broader array of users: swimmers, kayakers, SUPers, and wildlife!

Please consider the following before taking any action in your Committee on SB 1589.

1. Wake boats are built for ONE thing, to generate artificial waves on inland waters. These artificial waves impact the river's fragile ecology in the nearshore areas of the river. Eliminating the 5,500 lb weight restriction will unleash significant impacts to these nearshore areas. The nearshore areas are, in essence, the nurseries of the river. Here one can find juvenile Spring Chinook salmon in the spring and summer, utilizing the very areas where these artificial waves have their biggest impact. A range of other species utilize the nearshore habitat, and can be significantly affected by artificial waves from wake boats.

2. This issue is brought on by an industry that has decided it should have zero accountability, for their impact on other users and fragile river habitats and is therefore fighting Oregon's common sense law that limits the weight of towed water sports boats. Wake boats are a problem in not only Oregon, but across the country. Oregon demonstrated real leadership when it passed a law to institute the weight limit and related certification program in Oregon. It should not flip back now!

3. Wakeboats do affect EVERYONE ELSE on the river when they are used. Their 4ft waves slam into kayakers, swimmers, the shoreline, the fragile nearshore habitat, private docks, other power boats and more. Such waves are absolutely not natural to the Willamette River. Since the common sense law was passed, there have been far more SUPs, canoes, kayaks, swimmers, and water skiers on the Newberg Pool stretch of the Willamette. Removing wake boats has made the river much more attractive, and has enabled a far higher number of people to safely recreation. That has indeed democratized, and increased access to the river!

I oppose this bill and I hope you will join me in opposing and not advancing this bill. Keep the Willamette River a safe place for a wider variety of users.

Thank you