

Submitter: Lindsey Hutchison

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire

Measure: SB1590

Dear Chair Golden and Committee Members,

I believe that you should oppose SB 1590 which would remove restrictions this legislature put on wake boats a few years ago. This bill undoes important environmental legislation and will harm the Willamette River and the species that depend on it.

Wake boats generate artificial waves on inland waters, that is the sole purpose of these kinds of boats. These artificial waves impact river ecology and the riparian areas along the rivers. Eliminating the 5,500 pound weight restriction will significantly impact the nearshore areas of the Willamette River where these boats would be allowed under this bill.

The shallow waters and riparian areas of the river are vital for fish spawning. These are the areas where you will find redds and juvenile spring Chinook salmon. These areas are the most impacted by the artificial waves caused by wake boats. The legislature passed the restrictions this bill hopes to overturn, in part to protect these federally-listed species.

Wake boats do not just affect the fragile river ecosystems and habitat for threatened species, they also harm kayakers, swimmers, private docks, other power boats, and more when the 4-foot waves slam into them. The Newberg Pool is an area that is heavily used for recreation and since restrictions were placed on wake boats in the Newberg Pool there has been a significant increase in non-motorized recreation such as stand up paddling, canoeing, kayaking, and swimming. These restrictions are necessary in order to allow for non-motorized recreation to safely continue. These restrictions have increased access to the river and made it a safe place to recreate for all. Wake boaters have different areas of the river they can use and the legislature needs to stick to their original position and keep these restrictions in place.

Please do not advance SB 1590!