

Submitter: Brian Peterson

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire

Measure: SB1590

I am writing to you to support SB 1590, which will increase public access to towed water sports in the Newberg Pool. The previous bill is not representative of the community at large, which effectively bans wake boarding and wake surfing.

I have lived on the Willamette River (in the Newberg Pool) for more than 26 years, and my family has owned the property since the early 1960's. I've personally used the river for the last 40+ years. Over the past decade I've seen restriction after restriction, all being pushed by a few individuals with no care for the larger population of recreaters.

I agree these larger waves could be somewhat destructive to docks (granted there are no studies), but the previous rules were perfect for keeping those surfing zones away from the areas populated with docks.

I know the group is pushing for erosion issues and dangers to salmon, but again, there hasn't been a single study done on either point, other than a few pictures of silt being disturbed on the banks. If you want to see silt and erosion, go take a look at the river right now. It sits well above flood stage for most of the winter. Boating only occurs for a very brief 3-4 month period, and mainly on weekends.

As a watersport community, we have tried for years to work with this small but vocal group of people. Using the surf zones created by the Oregon State Marine Board. Obtaining the required "Towed Sport Certification" through additional education and fees, etc. All with no avail, they are not willing to compromise in any direction. And many of these individuals do not even live on the Willamette. We have a list of over 70+ homeowners that live in this section of the Willamette river that support SB 1590.

Our waterway policies should be grounded in solid research and favor the general public, not select waterfront homeowners and paddlers looking to restrict towed water sports for their own personal gain. Real studies should be conducted to determine the best ways to keep the river safe and healthy. Local government agencies, hydrologists, geotechnical and civil engineers, ecologists and arborists all agree the lack of native vegetation and mismanagement of native trees is causing the majority of the erosion on the river, not towed water sports. Furthermore, the Newberg Pool is already one of the most regulated bodies of water in Oregon.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
-Brian Peterson