

Submitter: Windsor Layne

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire

Measure: SB1590

The popularity of water sports like wakeboarding, wake surfing, and tubing has been challenged lately, but there are multiple reasons why they should not be banned or restricted. Firstly, they offer an excellent opportunity for families and friends to bond and spend quality time together. Secondly, wake sports can be enjoyed safely if proper guidelines are followed, and organizations like the Oregon State Marine Board help ensure that boaters are informed about safety measures, wave management techniques, and operator responsibilities.

While some suggest that boat wakes contribute to erosion, research shows that homeowners' clearing of vegetation on shorelines is a much greater contributor. Vegetation is crucial in stabilizing shorelines, and when removed for aesthetics, soil is left exposed and vulnerable to erosion. Clearing vegetation can increase erosion rates by up to 50%, and studies show that residential development is the leading source of human-caused erosion in many bodies of water.

Boat wakes have a minor impact on shoreline erosion, and when boats are operated at least 200 feet from shore, their wakes do not carry enough energy to cause significant erosion. Efforts should be focused on restoring vegetation to shorelines and preventing further clearing. By doing so, we can help to reduce erosion and protect our shorelines for future generations.