

March 4, 2025

Thank you Co-Chairs Helm and Owens, Vice Chair McDonald, and members of the Committee:

I am asking you to support House Bill 3314 with the “- 1” amendment, to fund design and permitting for a solution to mitigate the harmful cyanobacteria bloom in Ross Island Lagoon.

I have been a floating home resident for 20 years in Sellwood, and I serve as Coordinator for *Calm Water Coalition*, a 1,200-member volunteer organization of boating, rowing, and paddling sports, Dragon Boat teams, the Willamette Riverkeeper, Waterfront Organizations of Oregon (WOOO), and floating home communities and marinas on the Portland Willamette. As a coalition, we worked together for four years for regulations to protect the river ecology, as well as reducing heavy wake and promoting safety and access for all users. Working with the Oregon legislature and Oregon State Marine Board, we have achieved safety regulations that are effectively reducing wake-related accidents and damage, increasing nonmotorized boating access, sailing, SUPing, kayaking and swimming in the Willamette River.

In the past few years, however, we are experiencing a new and alarming threat – blue-green algae, or Cyanobacteria bloom, which can cause human and canine illness and harm our fish and wildlife populations. The blooms have seasonally invaded the Ross Island Lagoon, moved into the Holgate Channel, drifted downriver, around the island, and into the main channel near the Ross Island Bridge.

If an algae bloom travels downstream toward the race area in the Tom McCall Bowl, during the Portland Rose Festival Dragon Boat Races, they could be threatened by cancellation. Cancellation would affect hundreds of race team participants, our Sister City, Taiwan, and hundreds of tourists, as well as sponsoring organizations, hotels, restaurants, and other tourism activities.

Some Ross Island events have already been cancelled, postponed or moved to other waterways due to the toxic algae blooms. These Waterway programs, funded by grants since 2019, provide paddle sports and experiences on the water for low-income youth, and Indigenous families, as well as individuals with physical and/or developmental challenges.

We don't want to see anymore events cancelled, beaches closed or fear of bacteria in the Willamette. There are answers to this prevent this invading bacteria. We have learned that there is a solution under development by a team at Oregon State University that is based in sound engineering. Please help save our river, fish, wildlife, and recreational opportunities by supporting HB 3314.

Thank you,
Renee Morgan



CALM WATER COALITION
Oaks Park Community Boat House
Lewis & Clark College Rowing
Portland Kayak and Canoe Club
Willamette Rowing Unlimited
Wasabi Paddling Club
Station L Rowing
Rose City Rowing
Portland State University Rowing
Portland Kaohsiung Rose Festival Dragon Boat Races
Willamette Riverkeeper
The Landing Boat Club
Human Access Project
RiversWest Small Craft Center
Waterfront Organizations of Oregon (WOOO)
Portland Rowing Club
Oregon Yacht Club
Macadam Bay Moorage