



## Oregon State Marine Board

### SB 26: Boating Infrastructure Grant Program

**Purpose** This legislation modifies Chapter 830, Small Watercraft, to specifically authorize the Marine Board to provide grants from funds received from the US Fish & Wildlife Service through the federal Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) Program. BIG grants provide funding for infrastructure improvements that meet the needs of recreational boats that are 26' in length and longer.

In addition, this concept would modify Chapter 830 to allow federal agencies, such as the US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management, to apply directly to the Marine Board for grants instead of having to apply through an Oregon county.

**Background** In 1995, the Marine Board was authorized by amendment to ORS 830.137 to make grants from funds received through the Clean Vessel Act, which was newly enacted by the US Congress. Subsequently, in 1998, Congress also passed the Sportfishing and Boating Safety Act, which established a new Boating Infrastructure Grant Program. At the time, it was the interpretation of the agency that ORS 830.137 relating to its "power and duty" to make grants of funds received through the federal Clean Vessel Act also extended to this new program since it falls under the same umbrella law (Sportfishing and Boating Safety Act) in the U.S. Code as the Clean Vessel Act.

ORS 830.150 lists the entities that are eligible to apply to the Marine Board for grant funds. The original language did not identify federal agencies, such as US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management, as eligible applicants. However, these agencies manage hundreds of public boating facilities in Oregon. In order to apply to the Marine Board for grant assistance, federal agencies must apply through an Oregon county. This practice, which has been in effect for years, has become an added burden to budget-challenged counties, who must use county staff and resources to process applications, secure approval by county commissioners, and process grant funds from the Marine Board to the participating federal agency. This can result in an unnecessary diversion of county staff time and other resources.

**Summary** This LC proposes to amend two sections of ORS Chapter 830:

- Authorizes the Marine Board, under the Clean Vessel Act and Boating Infrastructure Grant programs to receive funds and make grants under each authority (program) separately.
- Adds federal agencies as eligible applicants for boating facility grants to the already approved list of "state, city, county, water improvement district, and recreation district or port."

**Fiscal Impact** This measure seeks no additional funds.

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