

Testimony on SB-602
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Oregon is usually a really great state. It has a history of being progressive, and we go to great lengths to be an all inclusive state. In so many ways, we go the extra mile to accommodate people of all different walks of life. We bend over backwards not to discriminate or show bias in our laws or public policy. With one peculiar exception....recreational preference for Waldo Lake.

Everyone, with or without motors, who has ever used or been to Waldo Lake loves it. However, some users seem incapable of accepting or tolerating any users that don't share their way of boating. For reasons that escape me, the debate over access to Waldo Lake has turned into an either/or, win/lose proposition for the supporters of banning motors on this lake. There is no compromise, no accommodation, no tolerance. The bias is at odds with Oregon's tradition of being inclusive, accommodating, and nice. This bill even bans clean electric motors, that make no noise or pollution.

The issue before you is whether Oregonians can or should share this huge lake, even in some small way. Why can't we share access to Waldo Lake? Even a little bit? Can't we protect the access for a minority of lake users who love and enjoy Waldo as much as everyone else. Why can't share a 9.8 sq. mi. lake?

Based on my knowledge as Director of the Marine Board when this issue hit the fan, here are a few facts and thoughts for your consideration.

In the 2007 survey of use, there were only 758 user/days with motors, and 508 of those were with sailboats. Sailboats accounted for 67% of the motorized use and they only used motors to navigate when not under sail. Sailing on Waldo is about as benign a use as you can possibly find. Spread over a 5 month season, the chance of being there while a motor was operating were slim. Kicking sailboats off this lake is simply wrong.

With the existing 10 MPH limit, there were no issues with high speed boats, waterskiing, jet skis, etc. Use was limited to sailboats using small auxiliary motors and people who used a small motor to cruise around the lake. At 10 MPH it takes all day to cruise around this massive lake.

There are no issues with water pollution. Despite their best efforts, the US Forest Service couldn't document any science to support limitations based on water quality or environmental harm. When you peel back the debate, it's about perceptions, emotions, aesthetic preferences and bias. None the best basis for policymaking.

The best solution would be an amendment to leave the 10 MPH limit, and add a limitation for only EPA approved 4 Stroke, clean technology engines with a maximum 25 HP. This fairly answers any issues of noise or potential pollution. This allows access for sailboats and people that can't or choose not to paddle, but who want to go slow cruising with quiet, clean engines. Waldo Lake is big enough for users to share. Let's rise above bias. Let's be accommodating and all inclusive in our policy decisions regarding public access to this lake that is loved by a variety of users. Compromise. This doesn't need to be a win-lose solution.