



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

State Marine Board

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May 13, 2015

The Honorable Chris Edwards (Chair), Alan Olsen Vice-Chair), Senators Michael Dembrow, Floyd Prozanski, and Chuck Thomsen.



RE: Testimony for HB 2463 -A

Dear Committee Chair, Vice Chair(s) and Members,

The Oregon State Marine Board is the state's recreational boating agency. One of our responsibilities is to fund the removal of vessels that are derelict and/or abandoned, and deemed a hazard to navigation or have the potential to contaminate a waterway.

The agency's biennial budget is \$150,000 for abandoned and derelict vessel removal. The Marine Board is statutorily limited to funding 75-90 percent of the total for removal costs; therefore, our agency relies on matching funds from local governments and state agencies to help us accomplish these important removal projects that contribute to the safety of boaters and protect the environment from sewage, oil, gasoline, or other hazardous chemicals.

The Department of State Lands has been one of the most important partners with the Marine Board in removing abandoned and derelict vessels from our waterways. Combined, our agencies have partnered on projects in Coos Bay, Bandon, Yaquina Bay, Klamath Lake, Cleawox Lake, and on over a dozen projects on the Columbia and Willamette Rivers. These removal projects are expensive. The average boat removal project costs around \$8,000 and the removal of abandoned boathouses and floating homes can cost ten-fold that amount. For example, three years ago, the derelict "Vancouver Yacht Club," a float house that broke free from the Washington side of the Columbia River, cost the Marine Board and Metro nearly \$90,000 to remove and dismantle. We would not be able to afford to remove two similar structured like the Vancouver Yacht Club in one biennium. Last year, Clatsop County reported a derelict floating home that was adrift and had collided with a county bridge. The tow, removal, and disposal cost was close to \$10,000. The Department of State Lands stepped in and picked up the match requirement since the county did not have the required matched funds. Had State Lands not stepped in, this removal project may not have happened. State Lands have also provided the matching funds for Multnomah County, Columbia County, and several ports in the same situation.

The creation of the Submerged Lands Enhancement Fund will complement the Marine Board's Abandoned/Derelict Vessel Fund and allow our agencies to continue to partner on addressing the growing problem of abandoned vessels. Furthermore, it will allow the Department of State Lands to remove derelict structures other than boats. The Marine Board, for instance, isn't authorized to remove old pilings; however, removing abandoned piles will significantly enhance boating safety.

The Marine Board supports the creation if the Submerged Lands Enhancement Fund, which will allow for more proactive management of state-owned waterways.

Sincerely,

Rachel B. Graham
Policy and Environmental Program Manager
Oregon State Marine Board

