

March 8, 2021

My name is Klaus Gibson. I live in Wilsonville. I am a 77-year-old grandfather and a long time responsible boater. My boating days with my children and grandchildren are over.

I have very fond memories, though, of family fun tubing on the river. I remember when passing oncoming boats, which also towed kids, and all kids waving and screeching with joy.

In both HB 2555 and 2725, I strongly oppose the requirement of a towed water sports endorsement for ANY TOWED WATER SPORT within the Newberg Pool.

I fear these two bills are intermediate ratchet legislation and a step towards future elimination of all towing and motorized watersports, including tubing and waterskiing, in the Newberg Pool. This is the same process that was used by the Oregon State Marine Board on January 27th of this year to eliminate all towing between the Hawthorne Bridge and Waverly Marina.

Last year's revised ORS 830.649 already requires this endorsement for wakeboarding and wakesurfing.

Water skiing and tubing are being lumped in the same category as wake surfing and wake boarding. The 2018 HB 4099 Willamette River Wave Wake Study determined it takes 4x for a wakesurfing wake and 3x for a wakeboard wake to dissipate in comparison to a ski boat wake. The wake damage caused by wake surfing and wakeboarding is not comparable to water skiing and tubing.

Yes, riverfront homeowners need protection from large swells damaging their docks. Yes, paddle-boarders, kayakers, and canoers should have access to sections of the river with calm waters. However, families with low power boats should also have the right to enjoy tubing on our public river.

To that end please develop a comprehensive strategic policy. A commission is needed to create an equitable use of the River in the Newberg Pool. Please create legislation that 1) protects against dock damage (eliminate high HP boats), 2) provides areas of calm waters for canoers and paddleboarders (no wake sections of the river), and 3) allows tubing and waterskiing with low HP boats.

Please, don't deny for generations to come, thousands of kids the joy of tubing.

The Willamette River is a precious PUBLIC jewel. Let's keep this waterway accessible to future generations of children and parents to enjoy family boating fun.

I and many boating families ask you to exempt water skiing and tubing from this and future legislation.

Thank you,
Klaus Gibson