

HB 2555 is not fair.

The topic at hand is the use of public property by the general public, for different uses.

HB 2555 is the effort of a small apparently well organized and connected set of special interest groups that do not represent the broader population and seeks to eliminate several groups of users of the Willamette River.

If two options were put forward to the general public: 1) apply multi-use regulations and guidelines for public property or 2) eliminate one set of users to maximize the use by the smaller groups the former would be likely to prevail. Most reasonably fair minded people would select the latter.

The 4,000-pound weight limit stated in the bill is a very well researched number, it is slightly less than most multi-sport boats, thereby banning the family multi-sport boat most often used by families from towed water sports.

Last year in the Newberg pool, additional boat fees and a towed river certification was put in place and not well communicated catching many boaters by surprise. I personally did not feel as if my interest was represented. The general public should not have to be politically astute, organizing, funding and influencing to access and use public properties designated for public use.

We live in a desired area of the country with an ever increasing population. All of our resources are under more demand. Our trails are designated by use, hiking, horse, mountain bike, motorcycle, overnight camping...and it works.

The Newberg pool of the Willamette was sectioned into zones by use, moving much of the towed water sports to sections of the river where there are no houses or docks. It seemed to have worked. It takes time and education for changes to reach maximum effectiveness.

The claim that the waves impact the shoreline, yes they do. It is not determined that it impacts them negatively. The health of the Willamette has increased in the last several years. The water volume and debris during the course of the winter has a much higher impact on the Willamette erosion profile.

It is not fair from a multi-use perspective to effectively eliminate a group and several of the uses enjoyed by the public from public property. There is no evidence of a negative impact of activity on the health of the river.

I rely on our representatives to legislate fair use of public resource. I request that HB 2555 not be moved forward and that a broader multi use solution be pursued.