

Submitter: Darby Collins

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment

Measure: SB1589

Protect the Newberg Pool — Support SB1589

The Newberg Pool in Willamette River is taking a pounding from large heavy wake surfing boats. This section of the river is only 500 to 600 feet wide. It is a slow moving pool (hence the name) and the banks are silt based.

SB1589 will help fulfill the legislative intent of HB2351 and HB2352 that were passed in 2019 and IGNORED by the Oregon State Marine Board when they chose the heaviest boats for the maximum loading weight at 10,000 pounds.

The Marine Board and staff didn't want to anger the wake surf industry so they took the EASY way out and set a weight limit based on current new model boats for sale. NOT what was right to protect the river. NOT what was right for safety. NOT what was the intent of the 2019 legislation.

A peer-reviewed study by the University of Minnesota was released on Feb. 1, 2022 and it recommends that wake boats conducting towed water sports be greater than 500 feet from the shoreline or any structures like docks or other boats.

Most stretches of the Newberg Pool in the Willamette River do not provide that much width. The study makes clear that Wake Boats are not like any other similarly sized craft, and that they produce waves with larger size and energy, which makes them detrimental to river habitat, other river users, and private property. You can read the study [here](#).

SB1589 will reset the weight limit to something closer to what boats weighed when the problems began in the early 2000s.

MOST boats will be still able to recreate in the Newberg Pool because they are under the 5,000 limit. Those exceeding that limit can still use their boats — just not in a way that damages the river or others.

Please support this legislation.

Thank you,

Willamette Greenway Alliance

Boat owners and homeowners supporting responsible recreation on the Willamette

River