

Submitter: Debbi Strand

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment

Measure: SB1589

We support SB 1589 which requires certification that motorboats have loading weights of less than 5,000 pounds ("large motorboats") on the Newberg Pool Congested Zone. By virtue of their larger wake size and associated increased wake energy, unregulated large motorboats significantly impact other users of the river (swimmers, canoers, kayakers, paddle boarders, etc.), have & continue to cause significant damage to homeowner docks & associated property (banks) along the river, and have & continue to cause significant damage to the river habitat & associated wildlife.

My family and I have lived on the Willamette River (north of the I-5 bridge) since 1970, and have been avid boaters for years with a typical ski boat (and a max loading weight <<5,000#). What we observe: Some large boats towing wake surfers do not respect the laws and boat in areas outside of the zoned wake surfing area; at times, these large motorboats come closer to docks/swimmers/unmotorized flotation devices, and the large wave forces can & sometimes do push swimmers into docks, flood kayaks, tip canoers & paddle boarders. Others have submitted testimony about the observed damage to our local habitat by large motorboat wakes. We have experienced dock damage due to large motorboats pulling wake surfers 150 feet from our dock; their large wake size/energy has caused hoop shear and dock frame damage/flotation loss (very costly to repair, \$3k for an emergency hoop repair and \$20k for frame repair & flotation replacement from summer 2019 large motorboat wake damage). Law enforcement is stretched thin and may not always be able to enforce violations. Restricting large motorboat towed watersport/wake surfing activities to river areas wide enough to allow wake size/wake energy dissipation is needed to help prevent injuries to persons using the river in non-motorized capacity, prevent further damage to homeowner property/docks, and prevent further damage to the local riverbank habitats.

See the website "wakesurfguide.com" for sample information related to the ski boat dry weights and loaded weight estimates (<https://wakesurfguide.com/2018/08/02/how-much-does-a-ski-or-wake-surf-boat-weigh/>). It is my understanding that the vast majority of ski boats would still be allowed to boat in the Newberg Pool Congested zone; SB 1589 would only limit the small % of boats whose maximum loading weight was >5,000#. The larger the gross weight of the boat in the water, the larger the wake and the stronger the wake force/wake energy that is at risk of causing damage to persons (swimming or using non-motorized watercraft), homeowner property (docks/banks) and the environment.

I urge the committee to support SB 1589, as it meets the immediate need to stop further unmitigated large motorboat wake damage now, and allows development of a State Marine Board plan for public health & safety as well as environmental health & safety (waterway & associated habitats) via scientific evaluation.

Thank you,
Debbi Strand & Family