

Submitter: Jared Carkin

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Environment and Natural Resources

Measure: SB1589

Senators,

Please keep our waterways open for all citizens to share and enjoy, people who responsibly use our natural resources are our best way to share the love of nature and they are much more likely to pass along traditions of fun on the water with responsible environmental considerations for sustainability.

Residential development, not boat wakes, is the primary human-caused source of erosion. There is broad agreement that the lack of native vegetation and homeowner mismanagement of native trees has caused the majority of erosion. Furthermore, natural occurrences such as last winter's storm have a greater impact on river health than boating.

There is no empirical evidence or peer-reviewed study that links the proposed restrictions to having any positive effect on fish populations. Wake sports largely take place in the summer, outside of key migratory or spawning months. Studies show that wake boats waves, when operated at least 200 feet from shore, do not carry enough energy to have a significant impact on most shorelines.

This bill fails to address the primary causes of declines in salmon and steelhead abundance in the Willamette Basin. According to the National Marine Fisheries Service latest report degraded habitat conditions due to land use and development activities, predation, hatchery practices, and dam passage - not boat wakes - are the primary concerns.

The Newberg Pool is already one of the most regulated bodies of water in Oregon. Wake surfers are subject to a weight limit, required to obtain a special safety certification and only allowed in two small zones with no adjacent homes or docks.

This bill not only exacerbates safety issues, but it also fails to solve a primary issue – enforcement. The state has already struggled to enforce the extensive laws and rules we have, and the bill does not address how to deal with the worst offenders who make the river dangerous for everybody.

Please do not pass this bill, which benefits only a few rich, private property special interests groups only!

Sincerely,  
Jared W. Carkin