



February 8, 2024

Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire

Re: Eugene Chapter TU opposes Senate Bill 1590 (Towed Watersports)

Dear Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Girod, and Members of the Committee,

Trout Unlimited (TU) is a national organization dedicated to caring for rivers and streams so our children can experience the joy of wild and native trout and salmon. Based in the Eugene-Springfield area, the Redsides Chapter of Trout Unlimited was established in 1998 and has a current membership of nearly 700 individuals and businesses. Our work focuses on conservation and restoration of the McKenzie and Middle Fork Willamette River watersheds as well as community-building and angling education efforts. Redsides members consider ourselves incredibly fortunate to have easy access to these inspiring waterways and fisheries.

As such, the Redsides Chapter of Trout Unlimited opposes Senate Bill 1590.

Healthy anadromous fish populations and high water quality are of paramount importance to Redsides members. Beyond the angling opportunities provided, we highly value the cultural and biological benefits of anadromous fish and pristine water quality. Redsides are keenly aware of the long history of angling for salmon and steelhead and by continuing that pastime, we connect with generations before us. We aim to sustain these recreational angling opportunities for our children and the generations to come. Knowing that the Willamette River, especially the area just upstream of Willamette Falls, is of critical importance to anadromous fish migrations, we urge the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildlife to oppose Senate Bill 1590.

The existing “towed watersports” program is a reasonable regulatory framework that guards against certain recreational boating activities having negative effects on native fish and water quality in the Willamette Valley. We are opposed to this bill because it would unwind that functioning and reasonable program, and ask the Committee to not move it this session.

Thank you for considering this input, and please reach out to me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Jesse L. Robbins
President
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