

Submitter: Erinne Goodell

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire

Measure: SB1590

Dear Chair Golden and Committee Members,

I feel strongly that you should oppose SB 1590, introduced by Senator Mark Meek. As a person who cares about the health of the river and as a nonmotorized recreational boater, I oppose reversing the protections for this stretch of the river. At the end of the day, this bill is anti-Willamette River!

This bill undermines critical protections that guard against artificial waves on the Willamette River. Wake boats generate large, artificial waves that impact the river's fragile ecology in the nearshore areas of the river. Eliminating the 5,500 lb weight restriction will unleash significant impacts to these nearshore areas, which have so recently received protection from this harmful activity.

The nearshore areas are, in essence, the nurseries of the river, critical areas for juvenile spring Chinook salmon and many other species that use the very areas where these artificial waves have their biggest impact.

This bill fights a commonsense Oregon law that limits the weight of towed water sports boats for the good of the environment and the community. Oregon should not reverse course now!

As a kayaker, I also know firsthand the effect of things like wake boats on my ability to enjoy the river. They are exceedingly disruptive, making it unpleasant at best and dangerous at worst to paddle the river at the same time. There are so many other ways to enjoy the river, we do not need to allow these large, unnecessary boats on the river to support the recreation economy. Indeed, their prohibition supports greater recreation opportunities for more users.

Please reject this unnecessary roll-back of protections for the Willamette River and river-users.