

Submitter: Scott Williams

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire

Measure: SB1590

Please please please repeal the ridiculous restrictions in the Newberg Pool that were passed two years ago. I have been boating on that stretch of the river for over 20 years and I would bet I know that stretch of river much more than most Oregonians, and lawmakers. I would gladly take any lawmaker for a tour of that stretch on my boat so you can see for yourself. The restrictions passed were based on lies and it sickens me that the political process has fallen to this level. I have never participated in a political process until two years ago and if this is any sign of what other issues are like, we are in a sad state. I personally testified and watched every public meeting held two years ago when the restrictions were passed, and I watched people literally lie through their teeth about certain stretches of rivers, falsifying pictures and implying certain things that simply were impossible of being true.

Nonetheless, the restrictions must be repealed. What that stretch of river needs is MORE ENFORCEMENT of the prior laws. The prior laws were reasonable and working when enforced. But there needs to be more enforcement. I would even be willing to pay a higher fee to support more sheriff boats on the water to regulate the bad actors.

Furthermore:

SB 1590 will increase public access to towed water sports for hundreds of families along the Newberg Pool. This includes restoring carefully planned zones by the OSMB, shaped with input from diverse river stakeholders including small businesses, environmentalists and homeowners. These zones ensure safety for river users and the environment by limiting towed water sports to suitable areas.

SB 1590 carries forward the Oregon State Marine Board's Newberg Pool Towed Watersports Education Program so boaters remain informed about the latest boater safety measures, effective wave management techniques and operator responsibilities.

Implementing a standardized factory weight limit not only prevents larger boats from towing riders but also streamlines enforcement. The present weight limit (combined factory dry weight and ballast) has no national standard which has posed significant challenges for consumers to determine if their boat is eligible and for the marine board to accurately enforce.

Waves created by boats from a safe distance (i.e. 200 feet+ from shore) do not

significantly impact shorelines according to peer-reviewed scientific studies. Residential development is the leading source of human-caused erosion in the Newberg Pool according to ecological restoration engineer David Gorman. Moreover, natural occurrences such as winter storms have a much greater impact on erosion than boating.

There is no empirical evidence or peer-reviewed study that links the current 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.