

# NEWS

Oregon State Marine Board  
**Boat Oregon**



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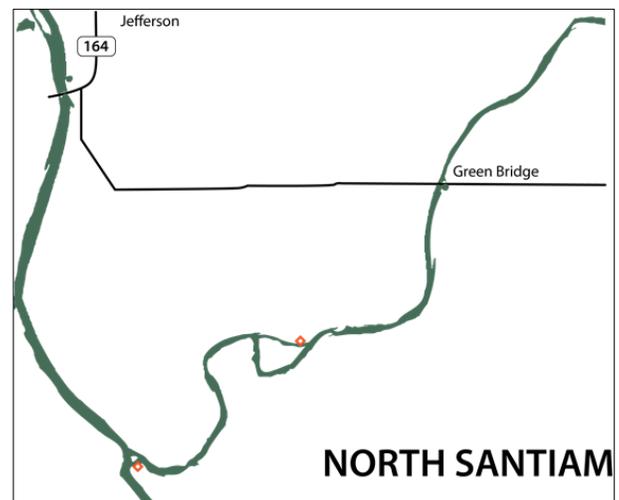
**For Immediate Release**

**Date: Friday, June 26, 2020**

## **Recreation Advisory Issued for Lower North Santiam**

The Marine Board is advising people floating in pool toys, inner tubes, or other inflatable devices and novice boaters to avoid the lower North Santiam River near Jefferson between Greens Bridge and the town of Jefferson. This advisory comes after nearly two dozen rescues and near drownings in the last week.

“The North Santiam is running high, and there are many, many trees in the river right now,” said Randy Henry, Boating Safety Program Manager for the Marine Board. “Tubers, floaters, and novice boaters should avoid this stretch of river or use extreme caution. There is simply no way to remove these trees to make this run safe.”



Henry toured the area with Jefferson Fire District, the Linn County Sheriff’s Office, and ODFW on Thursday. “We want people to be safe and to see if anything could be done,” said Henry. “After seeing all the trees in the river, and the large number of trees that look ready to fall, the only real way to prevent a tragedy here is for people to stay away or float somewhere else.”

Henry said that Jefferson Fire is called regularly for rescues, and Linn County has fielded many complaints as well. “I’m told that many of those being rescued are from the Portland or Albany or other population centers who aren’t familiar with this area. People continue to ignore signage or go unprepared without life jackets, whistles, or shoes. Henry adds, “At this rate, it’s only a matter of time before we have a fatality here.”

The best solution to the problem, said Henry, is to float somewhere safer. “Boats can be steered, tubes cannot. Several channels look inviting but once you’re committed, you will become entrapped. Other channels are so littered with trees and root balls that it’s like traversing a minefield,” said Henry. “There are literally a dozen popped pool toys and rafts hung up on trees in this area. Each one represents a near tragedy.”

The Marine Board advises all boaters and floaters to wear a life jacket, scout ahead, and pay attention to signage -no matter where you play this summer.

View the compelling images and video for this alert:

[Image 9](#) -An example of a tree that is especially dangerous for boats/float craft due to entrapment and could push a person underwater. This obstruction is in what was the main channel in previous years.



[Image 12](#) -Another tree that could easily entrap a floater.

[Image 24](#) (pictured) -Section of the main channel that will be difficult for floaters, especially as water levels recede.

[Image 43](#) & [Image 49](#) -Entrance to a particularly hazards side channel where the bulk of the near-drownings occurred during the weekend of June 19, 2020.

Visit the [Marine Board's Facebook Page](#) for videos showing the obstructions and preferred paths for safer navigation.

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*The Marine Board is directly funded by boaters in the form of registration, title, and permit fees, as well as through marine fuel taxes. No lottery, general fund tax dollars or local facility parking fees support the agency or its programs. Boater-paid fees support the boating public through boating safety services (on-the-water law enforcement, training, and equipment), boating safety education, grants for the construction and maintenance of boating access facilities, and environmental protection programs. For more information about the Marine Board and its programs, visit [www.boatoregon.com](http://www.boatoregon.com).*