

NEWS

Oregon State Marine Board
Boat Oregon



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Marine Board adopts rules for towed watersports in the Lower Willamette River, takes other actions

The Oregon State Marine Board conditionally approved a boating facility grant for Westport in Clatsop County, accepted a rulemaking request for Crescent Lake, adopted rules for a slow no-wake zone on Prineville Reservoir, and approved new rules for the Lower Willamette River in Multnomah and Clackamas Counties. Their quarterly meeting was held virtually on January 27, 2021.

Clatsop County has been working with agency staff for more than a decade on improvements to the Westport boating facility and applied for a construction materials grant. The County is requesting to purchase precast concrete boat ramp planks, boarding docks, short term tie-up docks, a floating kayak dock, gangway, and precast concrete restroom. Increased lead time is needed to fabricate materials due to COVID restrictions and materials must be on-hand prior to the in-water work window. The Board approved \$452,299.87 in Boating Facility Grant funds, \$125,000.00 in Waterway Access Grant funds, and \$62,700.13 in federal Boating Infrastructure Grant funds, combined with \$258,900.00 of applicant match, for a total project cost of \$898,900.00. These improvements will help provide mixed use access to boaters for decades to come.

The Board opened rulemaking for Crescent Lake in Klamath County to create a slow no-wake zone for roughly 14 water acres in a small cove of the 4500-water acre lake. The request was brought forward by the Klamath County Sheriff's Office after identifying a risk to public safety in the cove, which is popular with swimmers, beachgoers, and both motorized and nonmotorized boaters alike. The cove has an undeveloped boat launch that is one of the most widely used access points on the lake during certain times of the year. The agency will develop rule language and solicit written public comment.

In another action item, the Board adopted rules that create a slow no-wake zone on Prineville Reservoir in Crook County from May 1 and October 1 within a marked area encompassing the Prineville Reservoir State Park Marina and extending to the opposite shore. The rulemaking was initiated via a petition from the Crook County Sheriff's Office with support from Prineville Reservoir State Park. This zone will be clearly marked with buoys in the upcoming boating season.

In their final action, the Board adopted new rules for the Lower Willamette River in Clackamas and Multnomah Counties. This action culminates a 15-month rulemaking process that included considerable input from hundreds of boaters, advocacy groups, state and local officials, and other stakeholders. Under the new rules, a seasonal pass through zone will be in place from May 1 through September 30 from the Hawthorne Bridge upstream to the southernmost moorage in Waverly Marina – a distance of approximately 3.9 miles. All watercraft may pass through the zone without reducing speed, however no person shall operate a motorboat pulling a water skier, wake surfer, or other towed device in this zone. Also, no person shall operate a personal watercraft in continuous operation above 5 mph in this area, except to transit directly through the zone. Additionally, rules were adopted for boating activities from Waverly Marina upstream to Willamette Falls. New buffer zones will be in place around all on-water public and private infrastructure, including docks and boat houses. These buffers include: (a) Slow no-wake zones within 100 feet of docks and other structures. (b) Waterskiing permitted outside of 100 feet from docks and other structures. (c) Towing inflatable devices and wakeboarding is restricted within 200 feet of docks and other structures. Wake surfing, meaning the activity of propelling a person forward with a boat's wake, will be prohibited due to the high dock density and narrow river widths in the stretch of river from Waverly Marina to Willamette Falls. These rules will go into effect May 1 for the 2021 boating season. An implementation plan is in development with marine law enforcement, facility operators, and other partners, and part of this plan will include signage at local access facilities.

View the agency's [board report](#) with background and recommendations. Other meeting materials can be found on the agency's [Public Meetings](#) page.

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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 boat.oregon.gov.*