

June 23, 2020

Mike Houck Amendment to South Reach:

I move that the PSC amend the South Reach Plan to add one Action Item on Page 359, Part 2 of Volume 1: Policies, Objectives and Recommendations. The new Action Item will be R11D, and would be ongoing. Other items I propose, below, to be included in our transmittal letter to City Council.

R11D: Ongoing, *The City of Portland, to address river recreational safety and ecological health of the river, will petition the Oregon State Marine Board to establish a Slow/No Wake Zone between the Hawthorne and Sellwood Bridges and at Powers Marine Park and Elk Rock Island.*

For the Transmittal Letter I propose the following language:

In addition to the new Action Item establishing an expanded Slow/No Wake Zone the PSC urges the City should continue to monitor shallow water habitat and cold water refugia in partnership with USGS and DEQ to evaluate to determine if expansion or additional site-specific Slow/No Wake Zones are needed to protect endangered salmonid species and their habitats, including the potential for a "Pass Through" Zone south to the city limits at Elk Rock Island. We urge the City to work with the State Marine Board to increase signage on the upstream and downstream ends of the Slow/No Wake Zones so the public is aware where the zones are. It will be important for the City to work with the State Marine Board and Multnomah County Sheriff to create and distribute boater education to reduce conflicts among river recreationists and ensure compliance with regulations.

Rationale:

- 1). Three City of Portland bureaus provided feedback to the Oregon State Marine Board advocating for the need of an expanded Slow/No Wake Zone.
- 2). The PSC has received voluminous written testimony from human powered craft regarding impacts on the riverine environment; extreme safety hazards that exist between human-powered craft and motorized craft on the Willamette River; life-threatening events; and property damage associated with high speed, wake-producing water craft among those who have provided written testimony.
- 3). The National Marine Fisheries Service of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has provided input to the Oregon State Marine Board that wake-inducing boats represent a significant threat to endangered fish species on the Willamette, including salmonids. The Bureau of Environmental Services has provided additional data on shallow water habitat, cold water refugia and negative impacts of wake producing boats on the riverine environment.

4). The Oregon State Marine Board does not address state-wide Goals 15, 6 or 5 in their deliberations on boater use of the Willamette River. Goal 15, specific to the Willamette River mandates that the City of Portland address conservation of the riverine environment. Goal, 6 relates to Water Quality. Wake producing motorized craft degrades water quality due to erosion and dispersal of sediment. The OSMB does not address water quality issues. Goal addresses fish and wildlife habitat, which the OSMB does not do. It is within the purview and responsibility that the city to address these issues in the South Reach Plan.

5). The expansion of a Slow/No Wake Zone addresses equitable access to the river in that an increased sense of safety will encourage more people, including those of limited means, to recreate in non-polluting, low carbon modes including kayaking, canoeing, stand-up paddling and swimming.

6). The Slow/No Wake Zone is on a limited reach of the river where the greatest number of conflicts exist in downtown and near downtown between the Hawthorne and Sellwood Bridges. There is significant interest among those who have sent in written testimony to expand the Slow/No Wake Zone from the Sellwood Bridge to Elk Rock Island. There are 30 miles of river between the confluence with the Columbia and the Oregon City falls. Suggestions that expanding a Slow/No Wake zone on this small portion of the lower Willamette River which has the highest level of conflict are unfounded.

7). A Slow/No Wake Zone does not exclude motorized crafts. Motorized craft have access to the entire river. They simply have to slow down to reduce their wake.

8). Suggestions that a Slow/No Wake Zone be seasonal or even change during the day or days of the week would be unenforceable. The recommended Slow/No Wake between two city bridges will make it much easier to educate river users and easier to enforce.

Mike Houck PSC member