

The Honorable Betsy Johnson
Chairwoman
Oregon Senate Subcommittee on Natural Resources
900 Court Street, NE Room H-178
Salem, OR

Dear Chairwoman Johnson,

I am writing in support of Senate Bill (SB) 47, which will provide paddlers with a long-needed way to help fund the infrastructure and other services needed by the burgeoning population of canoeist and kayakers.

NMMA is the leading recreational marine industry trade association in North America, representing 1,500 boat, engine, and accessory manufacturers. NMMA members collectively produce more than 80 percent of the recreational marine products sold in the United States. Recreational boating is a popular pastime in Oregon, with more than 168,000 registered recreational boats. The recreational boating industry contributes \$1.6 billion and almost 6,000 jobs to the state's economy.

Paddlers deserve dedicated launch facilities, safety education tailored to their needs, waterway trails and other opportunities to enjoy time on the water with their canoes and kayaks. However, paddler's needs will go unmet until they have a way to pay into a fund dedicated to their sport. As importantly, the funding mechanism included in SB 47 allows these boaters to meet their obligation to help pay for the cost of services from the Oregon State Marine Board and other state agencies. Demand for on-water policing and rescue have risen dramatically in Oregon, as it has in every other state. The current situation is unsustainable and diverts resources supported by fuel taxes, fees and other revenue from power boaters and sailors.

Safety education and rescue is particularly necessary given that 130 people died in 2017 while paddling a canoe, kayak or SUP. Fatalities attributed to paddlers is the second largest category of boating deaths.

It is appropriate that the of \$8,276,888 received by the Marine Board in FY19 from the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund is spent only on services primarily dedicated to powerboaters. Powerboaters pay the taxes on the fuel and other products that raised the \$650 million distributed to state agencies last year.

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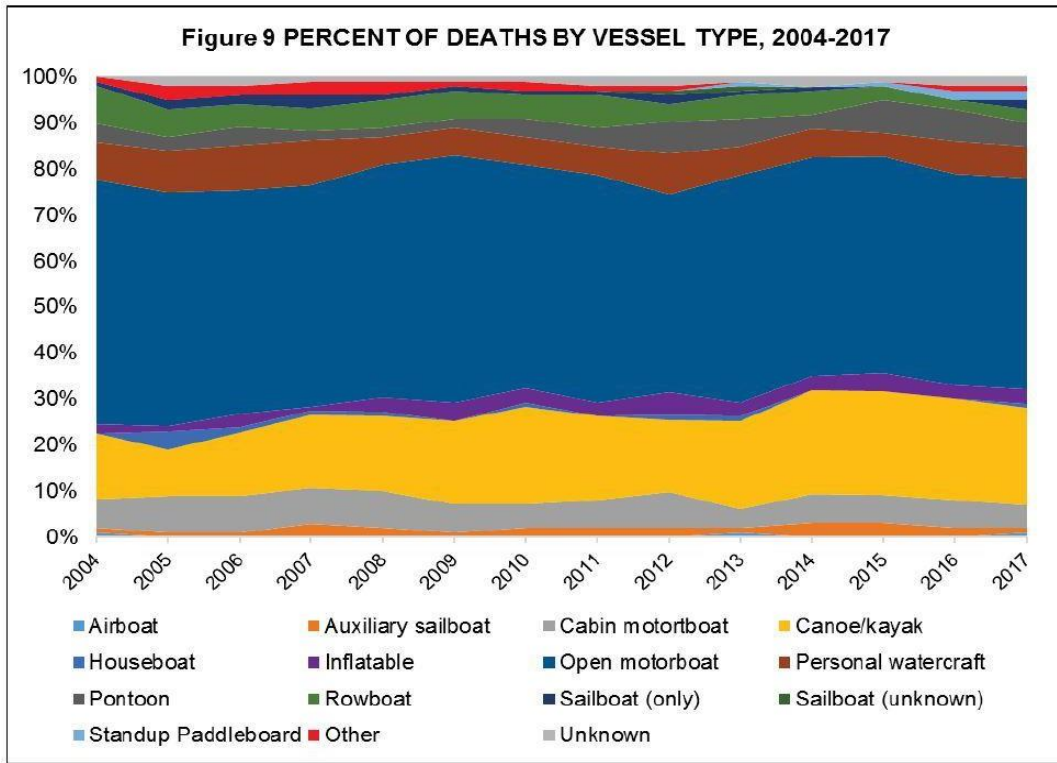
By paying \$5 toward aquatic invasive species (AIS) control and prevention, and \$7 toward a new state access fee, paddlers will be doing their part to support the many services they receive from Oregon agencies.

Some have the perception that paddlers need very little infrastructure or support. Yet, if paddlers access the water through undeveloped trails, they soon create paths for runoff and shore erosion. Roadside parking breaks down the edges of roads. Most paddlers use parking lots and launch areas paid for by power boaters at one time or another. As a boat ramp and parking lot reaches capacity, conflicts can arise.

With paddler-paid Waterway Access Permit dollars, Oregon can build launch sites and other infrastructure dedicated to paddlers. The Marine Board can thereby minimize user conflict. The permit also will raise money needed to support the hundreds of hours spent by Oregon Marine Board staff in the aftermath of a paddler’s fatality. As shown by the chart and colored graph taken from the USCG 2017 Recreational Boating Statistics report, canoeists, kayakers and SUP paddlers made up 23 percent of all boating deaths in 2017. Although they each show the same information, we believe these tragic statistics should be highlighted twice in hopes of demonstrating how safety education funded by access fees from paddlers could help reduce these incidents.

Table 25 • PERCENT OF DEATHS BY VESSEL TYPE, 2004-2017

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Airboat	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Auxiliary sailboat	1%	1%	1%	3%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%	3%	2%	1%
Cabin motorboat	6%	8%	8%	8%	8%	6%	5%	6%	8%	4%	6%	6%	6%	5%
Canoe/kayak	14%	10%	14%	16%	16%	18%	21%	18%	16%	19%	22%	22%	22%	21%
Houseboat	0%	4%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Inflatable	2%	1%	3%	1%	3%	4%	3%	3%	5%	3%	3%	4%	3%	3%
Open motorboat	52%	51%	49%	49%	50%	53%	48%	49%	44%	49%	46%	46%	46%	46%
Personal watercraft	8%	9%	10%	10%	6%	6%	6%	6%	9%	6%	6%	5%	7%	7%
Pontoon	4%	3%	4%	2%	2%	2%	4%	4%	7%	6%	3%	7%	7%	5%
Rowboat	8%	6%	5%	5%	6%	6%	5%	7%	4%	5%	5%	3%	2%	3%
Sailboat (only)	1%	2%	2%	3%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	0%	0%	2%
Sailboat (unknown)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Standup paddleboard	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	2%	2%
Other	1%	3%	2%	3%	3%	1%	2%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Unknown	0%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%



For these reasons, NMMA supports SB 47. If you should have any questions, please contact me at ddickerson@nmma.org.

Sincerely,

David Dickerson
Vice President, State Government Relations