

Below are two articles, from the Eugene Register Guard, in favor of banning gas motors on Waldo Lake, followed by a rebuttal by seaplane pilot, Bill Wainwright.

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EDITORIALS

A lake unlike any other

Gas motor ban shows respect for Waldo Lake

Many arguments have been advanced in support of a ban on gas-powered boats on Waldo Lake, high in the Cascades southeast of Eugene: the risk of pollution to a lake whose waters are among the purest in the world, the abundance of other lakes nearby that are well-suited for motorized recreation, the incompatibility of noisy motors with the silence and solitude in the lake basin. All those arguments are sound, and we've advanced all of them in this space for many years.

But there's one overriding reason why the Oregon State Marine Board

made the right decision Thursday to ban gas motors on Waldo: It's a lake unlike any other. Its depth and clarity are unsurpassed anywhere in the world. It's big, with a surface area of 6,298 acres, and high, at an elevation of 5,414 feet. Access is relatively easy, but the lake retains its wild character — the shores aren't dotted with marinas and vacation cabins.

Such a gem must be treated with the utmost respect and care. Oregonians a century hence should find Waldo Lake much as it is today. The Marine Board's decision, broadly supported by the public, will help ensure that nature's legacy is preserved.

Waldo Lake gas motor ban is fair

I have some thoughts on the Oregon Marine Board's decision to ban gas motors on Waldo Lake. During my tenure as forest supervisor of the Willamette National Forest, 1970-74, we proposed a ban, but it was deemed a county responsibility. So it has been under consideration for at least three decades.

I have served since the early 1990s on Oregon boards and commissions and am currently active on a governor's appointed commission. Unlike the contention of the Marine Board, I have never witnessed pressure from the governor's office to vote one way on issues, many of which were quite controversial and on which the governor had a public position. I always voted my personal conscience after considering the matter, and I felt no pressure to vote otherwise.

The Waldo motor ban is a fair and equitable decision. I disagree with those contending that it is a small minority imposing limits on the motor interests.

Decisions, when considering the interests of all, should not reduce every matter to its lowest common denominator. There are few accessible, large high Cascade lakes where one can escape the negative effects of noise on the quiet and tranquility of such a natural setting. There are many lakes and reservoirs that are available to motors of various sizes, needs and activities. Big Lake at the Santiam Summit is an example of how compromising motors can be to some of the other amenities limited to such settings. Everybody should have a fair share.

ZANE SMITH
Springfield

Waldo Lake gas motor ban is NOT fair.

I am responding to the opinion piece by Zane Smith published in the Register-Guard on Jan 18th, 2010 "Waldo Lake gas motor ban is fair." Mr. Smith acknowledges that he has been since the early 1990's and is currently serving on a Governor's appointed commission. As such I feel he is more than just a private citizen and as such his comments are subject to scrutiny. His associations speak to me of him being on the inside track and part of the lobby that had influenced the Governor to propose and direct the Marine Board to make this rule. Why wouldn't he defame the Marine Board accusations, Ted is his buddy.

In his article Mr. Smith questioned the Marine Board being directed to vote for approval based on pressure from the Governor. I can only say that I was at the meeting on January 14th and saw firsthand the expressions of dismay and words of disdain on how this rule was presented to them first through a MOU that directed an outcome and their references to veiled threats if the rule wasn't adopted.

Mr. Smith went on to say "The Waldo motor ban is a fair and equitable decision." It's fair and equitable if you are on the winning side, so why would you want to acknowledge any impropriety in its implementation. He is welcome to "disagree with those contending that it is a small minority imposing limits on the motor interests." I don't see it as an issue of motor interests at this point; I see it as a rule brought about by a flawed process or a "tragedy for the democratic process," to quote one member of the Board.

This rule was guided by the "Forest Service's desire to create a "social experience", or sanctuary. That is a noble cause but it has no place in statute and there are many ways to get there that weren't explored that could have allowed more diversity of access; however, throughout the whole process there was no consideration of how to work out a solution that would accommodate anyone except those in a totally gas free environment. Seaplanes, it seems, were included in this ban for no reason that was ever qualified in the Forest Plan Amendment No. 47 other than they had engines and therefore they just didn't want to see them.

Mr. Smith refers to Big Lake at the Santiam summit as being compromised by the presence of motors. Well what he doesn't tell you are that Big Lake has no speed limit as did Waldo Lake at 10 MPH. So I see it as a poor example. He goes on to say and close "Everybody should have a fair share." Well, I ask, where is my fair share? This isn't just any lake. Waldo Lake, one of the "purest gems in the State" (their words) is now off limits to me in my seaplane, to those who own sailboats needing a gas motor for safety and maneuvering and, yes, those who would act responsibly utilizing a 4 cycle gas motor and observe the speed limit when fishing, picnicking, camping or sightseeing on Waldo Lake. We can't go anywhere else and have the experience that is now reserved for paddle boaters and electric motors only at Waldo Lake. They have picked the biggest plum and they aren't sharing.

BILL WAINWRIGHT, Seaplane Pilot
January 27, 2010