



## Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians

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February 20, 2025

Oregon Marine Board  
P.O. Box 14145  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Marine Board members,

The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians is respectfully submitting a request that the Board take action to prohibit motorized watercraft upstream of Jack Morgan Park on the Siletz River. Not only is the Siletz River located within our ancestral lands and original Coast/Siletz Reservation, it is still the central waterway for fishing among our members and many live along its banks. Coastal fish runs are critical to our Tribal members that rely on them for food and cultural enrichment. As such, protecting this river is in keeping with our mission to care for, protect, enhance, and provide for the wise use of all of the Tribe's natural resources in a manner which will ensure that all generations to come will benefit from these resources. This mission encompasses all lands to which the Tribe is historically tied, including its ancient, aboriginal, ancestral lands, its Coast/Siletz Reservation, and its current and future land holdings.

We recognize several reasons for prohibiting motorboats on the Siletz River: 1) it will reduce bank erosion due to heavy wave action caused by boat motors; 2) it will decrease sedimentation to the river and improve water quality; 3) it will minimize negative impacts to salmonid spawning habitat and egg, alevin, and fry life stages; 4) it will increase safety for non-motorized watercraft; 5) it will alleviate an unfair advantage for motorboat users (primarily commercial guides), and 6) it will ease the heavy boat traffic that is causing increased fishing pressure and harming fish populations.

We feel the Board should also consider the considerable investments the Tribe has put into improving the river, which has resulted in benefits to all users. Our Natural Resource staff has expended considerable time and resources to protect and improve aquatic habitats along the main stem and tributaries of the Siletz River in an effort to increase the size and health of fish populations and improve water quality. These actions benefit all who engage in water-based activities on the river, including non-tribal members, recreational anglers, commercial guides, and those who use it as a drinking water source.

The marine board should also consider the scientific studies that document boat motor usage in rivers can negatively affect sensitive life stages of salmon (Hill & Younkin, 2005; Horton, 1994; Sutherland & Ogle, 1975). These sensitive life stages are fertilized deposited eggs in gravel, alevins, and fry. Studies show boat motors can cause mortality of eggs and alevins in gravel from

intra-gravel movement caused by boat motor acceleration and deceleration (Sutherland, & Ogle, 1975). Mortality of eggs, alevins, and fry can also occur from physical shock and/or impact onto bottom substrate from boat motor acceleration and deceleration (Sutherland, & Ogle, 1975). Increased bank erosion linked to boat motor usage has also been documented in other river systems (Hill, & Younkin, 2005). This is a major concern because boat operations on the river could be expediting loss of riparian habitat by increasing bank erosion rates.

While these studies were not conducted on the Siletz River and tested varying types of boats and motors, they do indicate boat motor usage can have a direct negative effect on the survival of sensitive life stages of salmon and could increase riverbank erosion rates. The use of gas motors between Moonshine Park and Mill Site is already a recognized issue by the Tribe, the Cities of Siletz, Toledo and Newport, Lincoln Soil and Water Conservation District, and the Siletz and Midcoast Watershed Councils due to their potential impact on drinking water sources and aesthetic values. Signs placed at local boat ramps discouraging the use of gas-powered motors have proven ineffective.

In the absence of site-specific research and monitoring, the Tribe is recommending a more conservative approach to water and salmonid conservation on the Siletz River. We strongly urge the Board to prohibit motorized boat traffic on the Siletz River above Jack Morgan Park.

We appreciate your time and attention on this issue. If Board members have any questions or would like to discuss this matter, please contact Natural Resources Director Angela Sondenaa at [angelas@ctsi.nsn.us](mailto:angelas@ctsi.nsn.us) or 541-444-8232.

#### Citations

- Hill, D.F., & Younkin, B.D. (2005). Biological impacts of hydraulic disturbances associated with jet boating on the Chilkat River, Alaska. *Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering: The Pennsylvania State University*.  
<https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/document?repid=rep1&type=pdf&doi=5c14931a92ecca30315e5189545610acaa857db8>
- Horton, G. (1994). Effects of jet boats on salmonid reproduction in Alaskan streams. [Masters Thesis, University of Alaska Fairbanks]. <https://scholarworks.alaska.edu/handle/11122/10019>
- Sutherland, A., & Ogle, D. (1975). Effect of jet boats on salmon eggs. *New Zealand Journal of Marine and Freshwater Research*, 9(3), 273–282. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00288330.1975.9515566>

Sincerely,

  
Delores Pigsley  
Tribal Chairman

Division 20  
LOCAL AND SPECIAL RULES

**250-020-0231**

**Boat Operations in Lincoln County**

(1) Alsea River:

- (a) A person must not use a jet pump drive to propel a boat upstream of Hatchery Creek (RM 12).
- (b) A person must not operate a motorboat in excess of a slow-no wake speed within 200 feet of a dock.

(2) Depoe Bay. A person must not operate a motorboat in excess of a slow-no wake speed east of the Highway 101 Bridge.

(3) Devils Lake and adjacent waters:

- (a) A person must not operate a motorboat in excess of a slow-no wake speed on the water adjacent to the "D" River, known locally as Hostetters Canal.
- (b) A person must not operate a motorboat in excess of a slow-no wake speed on that part of the "D" River which is west of an established marker on the south bank of the river near the outlet from Devils Lake.

(4) Olalla Lake: A person must not use an internal combustion engine to propel a boat.

(5) Salmon River: A person must not use a motor rated greater than 15 horsepower to propel a boat upstream of River Mile 2, as marked, which is approximately 3/4 mile west of the Highway 101 bridge.

(6) Siletz River: A person must not use a ~~jet pump drive motor~~ to propel a boat upstream of Morgan's Park boat ramp.