

# Trap takedown



COURTESY PHOTO FLORENCE STEP

Florence Salmon Trout Enhancement Program (STEP) members recently removed the steelhead trap from Whittaker Creek with the help of a crew from Camp Florence as part of STEP's ongoing efforts to foster the annual salmon returns each year. The trap, used for temporarily keeping salmon for egg-gathering and counts, will be placed back at the creek next season.

## As boating season begins, State Marine Board urges boaters to plan ahead for safety

SALEM — There are dozens of boat types on the market and many opportunities to explore Oregon's waterways. Regardless of what's calling you to the water and the type of boat you're in, be sure to plan ahead, pay attention and share the water so everyone can have a fun time.

The Oregon State Marine Board (OSMB) invites boaters to explore the interactive Boating Oregon Map, where you can find a boat ramp near you, plan for a weekend escape to places less-frequented or find a waterway in the center of all the action.

"This season is off to a great

start," says Ashley Massey, Public Information Officer for the Marine Board. "Take time to plan ahead. Check the weather forecast, water levels or tides, see if there are any reported obstructions, and have the right gear for the activities you're doing," Massey adds.

Boaters can check the Marine Board's website to find out what equipment is required based on the size of the boat and rules for operation which vary by waterbody.

Massey also emphasizes paying attention to your surroundings, continually scanning port to starboard and keeping a close eye on what's ahead.

"Brush up on the rules-of-the-road, start out slow because of debris in the water from this past winter, and whatever you do, don't text and drive. In 2017, there were 17 collisions from distracted driving.

"Social media, taking pictures and texting can be fun, but the operator needs to maintain focus and awareness to what's going on around them," says Massey. "High water levels in the spring cover many wing dams (also known as pile dikes) on rivers and bays and are just below the surface. Boaters need to keep their distance from the shoreline up to several hundred feet out from shore so they don't inadvertently hit one of the piles."

Boaters are encouraged to learn where the wing dams are

located based on the waterbody where they're boating from NOAA Charts. The navigation charts can be downloaded for free.

With Oregon's population increasing and many people wanting to boat in their own backyards, think about taking a "dispersion excursion" to lesser-known waterbodies, especially for people new to paddle-sports or seeking more solitude.

There are 96 waterways where motors are prohibited and 50 designated as electric motor only.

The Marine Board also recommends boaters play it safe by:

- Not using marijuana, drugs or alcohol. Instead, take along a variety of non-alcoholic beverages and plenty of water.

Impairment can lead to a BUII arrest. Drugs and alcohol impair a boater's judgement and coordination which every boat operator needs. Swift currents, changing weather and debris require boat operators to be focused and skilled to avoid an accident.

- If feeling tired, take a break on land and return to the water when you are re-energized and alert.

- Continually monitor the weather because it changes quickly.

- Operators and passengers should wear properly fitting life jackets. Learn more about life jacket types, styles and legal requirements. Anyone rafting on Class III Whitewater Rivers is required to wear a life jacket, and all children 12 and under

when a boat is underway.

- Never boat alone — especially when paddling. Always let others know where you are going and when you'll return. Print out a downloadable float plan to leave with friends and family.

Be courteous to other boaters and share the waterway. Congestion is a given in many popular locations, especially with nice weather.

In Oregon, all boaters must take a boating safety course and carry a boater education card when operating a powerboat greater than 10-horsepower. The Marine Board also offers a free, online Paddling Course for boaters new to the activity.

For more information about safe boating in Oregon, visit [www.boatorregon.com](http://www.boatorregon.com).

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