

The INDEPENDENT

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Opinion

Ballot measures in the upcoming May primary

Measure 77 (Constitutional Amendment) is a corrective action for a legislative error made in 1977 while drafting Measure 50. Instead of reducing property taxes, the error increased them in Linn and Deschutes Counties and the City of Sweet Home. No other areas are affected by the measure.

Vote YES on Measure 77.

Measure 78 (Constitutional Amendment) would lengthen the number of days allowed to verify signatures on initiative and referendum petitions. The present 15 day period would be doubled to 30 days. The extra time is reasonable, particularly with the increase in initiative measures.

Vote YES on Measure 78.

Measure 79 (Constitutional Amendment) would increase the number of signatures required to place an initiative on the ballot, if it would amend the constitution. The only people who would be served by this measure are those who can afford to pay others to gather signatures. It would put the initiative procedure under greater control of those with deep pockets.

Vote NO on Measure 79.

Measure 80 (Constitutional Amendment) would authorize the use of fuel taxes to increase law enforcement on highways, rest areas, etc. Currently, fuel taxes may not be used for policing. While more police presence may be desirable, it's not a good way to use funds needed for road construction, maintenance, etc.

Vote NO on Measure 80.

Measure 81 (Constitutional Amendment) would allow the legislature to limit damages in civil actions. This measure would allow elected officials to decide in advance what damages you would be allowed in any civil suit you brought to court. For example: If, at the age of 40, you develop a cancerous right kidney and your doctor accidentally removed your left kidney, it's very possible that the legislature could have put a cap on malpractice damages and your young family would be left without recourse. An extreme example? Yes. An extreme measure? Yes.

Some people in volunteer positions such as city councils, fire boards and school boards, have been scared by the threat of uncontrolled liability suits. This fear is unfounded because it is Federal law that protects such volunteers; state law isn't needed. Do you really want the legislature deciding your suit for breach of contract? or any other law suit?

Vote NO on Measure 81

Measure 82 would repeal the truck weight-mile tax and increase fuel taxes. This measure has little chance of passing because too many people really don't think the trucking industry would be supporting it unless it decreased their costs. Nevertheless, the reason local governments support the measure is obvious: They really need road funds and this would increase the amount going to cities and counties. All aspects of this measure are important.

No recommendation on Measure 82.



Ike Says . . .

By Dale E. Webb, member Izaak Walton League, Nehalem Valley Chapter

Kayaking continues to be a major joy in my life and I have hit the river as often as I can find a kayaking partner. Troy Horton of Fishhawk Lake has been a steady partner and we have explored the Nehalem River from river mile 100 (just below Clear Creek) down to Birkenfeld (river mile 65). Our longest trip has been 11 miles, and we both could feel the fatigue in our muscles at the end of the four-hour trip.

The upper stretch of water is a bit more technical than from the junction of Rock Creek down. There are many tight corners that try to throw you into the bank or debris piles. I found my fourteen-foot sea kayak just a bit too long. Water height can also be a concern in this section, and I would advise that the water should at least be on the gauge at the swimming pool on Rock Creek...any lower and you will be in the rocks in many locations.

We found a major log jam at the top end of the old Weed place (river mile 97), and anybody planning a drift boat trip in this section might want to seriously reconsider since portage of a drift boat will be extremely difficult. There was one more blockage below the Weed place, but above Vernonia Golf Course, created by a large cedar tree that has fallen completely across the river, with just its limbs straining through the water. Luckily, the water was not fast in this section, and we found a slot that our kayaks could fit through. Again, a drift boat could not get through this location.

We found several areas with good standing waves and had a lot of fun surfing on them. The best spot is at Sunnyside, just

at the bottom of the huge cut bank, visible from the highway. It was amazing to see how the water could suck you through the large standing wave and plant your bow on the soapstone shelf that is causing this large wave. Using our paddles as rudders, we could zoom back and forth on the wave, and if you got your bow too far around, the wave would shoot you up and over the wave, which is about two feet tall. I can only imagine what riding a six foot wave would be like. Someday!

The section of the Nehalem from Anderson Park to Big Eddy Park starts out with a fun play spot after a short paddle upstream to limber up your muscles. At the green steel bridge there is another play spot with a good standing wave. Both Troy and I felt the power of the river when we allowed our kayaks to get parallel with the trough in the wave caused by the concrete cap over a pipeline in the river bed. We stayed dry but we had elevated adrenaline levels. The rest of the paddle is a cruise through flat water punctuated with small rapids. Caution is needed in a tight spot in the river just upstream of the bridge on Highway 47 before the old Crown Zellerbach office. There are several large pieces of woody debris that mandate some quick maneuvering. The water level was low at the Rock Creek gauge and, though we were able to squeeze through, there is easy portage at this place. This trip covered nine miles and took us over three hours with a lot of playing.

The trip from Big Eddy to Mist is about eight-and-a-half miles and also take around three hours with time to play. The Nehalem gets steadily bigger as you move downstream and tributaries enhance the

flow. There was some action above Natal and just above Mist, but we had a harder time finding good standing waves in this section.

The Mist to Birkenfeld section start off with a bang. We encountered the biggest rapids on the upper Nehalem, so far, just downstream from Vivian's bridge (Longview Fibre Mainline). We could tell something was coming because we could hear the water before we could see it. The water was fairly turbulent for this novice, but we thoroughly enjoyed playing in the rapids. I am still amazed at how easy it is to paddle up through a rapid like this; there always seems to be a dead zone that you can shoot through.

The river becomes deeper and slower here, with fewer rapids than on the upper sections. There is an interesting spot, though, at a rapids upstream from the bridge before the road that goes to Olympic Forest Products mill. The river is divided by an island and forms a deep pool at the head of the preferred route, the right hand channel. There is a lot of large woody debris in the river here and it requires some maneuvering, but nothing that would impede passage of a drift boat. One area of concern is at slides that have dumped large wood in the stream upstream from Birkenfeld. We encountered no problems with our kayaks, but we saw submerged wood that could be a problem at lower flows. This was another three hour trip with time to stop and play.

I haven't taken any more swims in the river, but I can't say that for Lake Vernonia. I was down playing around the other day, practicing leaning on my side while sculling with my paddle, when I felt myself starting to roll over. I tried to pop

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