

I live less than a mile from the Stark Boat Ramp. I frequent local parks throughout the area, including the Stark Boat Ramp, to access water and to enjoy the outdoors close to my home. One of the best reasons for living in the Portland area is the accessibility to outdoors.

I had two interactions with nearby neighbors where I felt an interference and harassment regarding my family's legal use of the Stark Boat Ramp. One incident was in July of 2020 while the other was on August 23, 2020. Both times I was with my 6-year-old son. We knew our legal rights with regards to the use of this ramp, as we researched it prior to visiting. We are respectful when we are there and picked up fishing line and a minor amount of garbage left by others. We were there within the hours of operation. The individuals that confronted my family were angry and hostile. We were fishing, which is 100% legal to do at this location. Our 6-year-old son had recently become fascinated with fishing, so we decided to try this spot to introduce him to the sport. We do not intend for this to be our only fishing spot – just one to get us acquainted. One of the aggressors that confronted us told us we were not allowed to fish there. When we told this person that we were indeed allowed to fish there, she kept pressing us, interfering with our use of the river access. I eventually told her to stop engaging with us and that if she felt she was wronged, to call the police.

I adamantly do not agree with any suggestion that neighboring individuals should be policing this location. They cannot do so without being angry, hostile or truthful of the laws and ordinance. It is not safe for the neighbors or the visitors to allow this action. No one should have to deal with the behaviors that I have experienced while using this boat ramp. I have talked to others who have experienced the same treatment by these surrounding neighbors, so I know I am not the only one.

I adamantly disagree with disallowing swimming at the boat ramp. This is a river. Yes, yes, yes to swimming. Why does this continue to be petitioned when the Oregon Marine Board has said over and over again – you cannot interfere with swimming, fishing, picnicking, and other activities below the high-water mark?

With regards to COVID-19 safety, the woman that confronted us on August 23, 2020 was NOT wearing a mask as she came within 6 feet of us. In general, my experience here is not one where COVID-19 safety is a concern. People generally accommodate each other by moving aside to allow for 6 feet distance.

I ask for the following changes:

- 1) Keep the gate open during hours of operation
- 2) Issue a statement upholding public access and condemning the intimidation, harassment, menacing and interference of people using the boat ramp
- 3) Install a Stark Boat Ramp sign and consolidate all the signage to the Stark sign
- 4) Conduct a survey of the boat ramp property lines and install a 6 ft fence to give neighbors and ramp users privacy
- 5) Reverse the neglect of the ramp by removing invasive vegetation and planting native riparian, low maintenance vegetation and installing erosion mitigation on the upstream bank
- 6) Install angled parking on the eastern and southeastern flanks of Lloyd Minor Park and contract a temporary porta potty in the park during the months of highest usage, May-September
- 7) Councilor Lahsene should be abstain from all voting activities related to the boat ramp based on conflict of interest in serving as a city councilor regarding this matter.

Katie LaValley