

Cain, Brad. "Governor prioritizes cleaning Willamette River." Associated Press 15 Apr. 2004. (published in *Statesman Journal* 4/18/04) (Reviewed by Jessica Miller)

Cain's article focuses on the two-day river trip Kulongoski took earlier in the week to see for himself how bad the pollution is. The Governor said that the efforts for cleanup need to be all along the river; from the headwaters at Waldo Lake to the Columbia River in Portland.

The article goes on to discuss the chemical pollutants in the river, the history of the pollutants, the sources of pollution, and the funding for the cleanup efforts. Finally, the article touches on some of the human health effects expected with such pollution. Cain claims that one of Kulongoski's hopes is that the water will continue to be (or, if too late, will return to being) a safe place for people to fish and swim. However, state health officials respond with the acknowledgement of environmental worries, yet deny that there are currently any health concerns with recreation in the river.

Critique

"Governor prioritizes cleaning Willamette River" basically updates readers on the current status of Governor Kulongoski's attempts to return the river to its previous clean state. While the article summarizes a variety of topics including history, pollutants, and cleanup funding, it also addresses the human health concerns of many readers.

The Willamette River does not serve as a drinking water source for most Oregonians within the Willamette Valley. However, there are still many health concerns associated with recreation. Many people enjoy, or at least used to enjoy, fishing, swimming and boating on the river. With increasing environmental concerns being publicized, it is no surprise that health concerns are too being expressed.

However, the article quotes state toxicologist Dave Stone as saying "Recreating on the Willamette is something that we certainly wouldn't discourage people from doing" and "Chemical pollutants in the water column itself are so low that it would be highly unlikely to have an adverse health effect."

While this article does not give specific details about potential health risks, it provides a source of accurate information to set recreaters minds at ease. Many sources about Willamette River health effects are bogged down with scientific data too complex for the average person who simply wants to know if they can go swimming. Furthermore, this article does provide the reader with some names of officials whom could be contacted if the reader desired follow-up information.

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