Governor appoints 23-member locks commission

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown has appointed a 23-member commission — chaired by West Linn Mayor Russ Axelrod — to oversee the potential recommissioning of the Willamette Falls Locks.

Reopening the Locks is expected to create millions of dollars in transportation and recreation benefits for Oregonians, return navigational access to the upper and lower Willamette River, reduce freight traffic on Portland roadways and increase the region’s resiliency to address future disasters such as the Cascadia earthquake.

Located on the Willamette River in West Linn, the Willamette Falls Locks are owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The Locks opened in 1873, but were decommissioned and given a "non-operational status" in December 2013 due to falling gate anchors and expensive repairs.

The governor’s appointed commission will work to develop a state, local and regional stakeholders on the development and implementation of policies relating to the repair, reopening, operation and maintenance of the Willamette Falls navigation canal and Locks.

Members of the Commission include elected officials, county and city representatives, community members, business owners, representatives from environmental groups and tourism industry leaders, among others.

Clackamas County Commissioner Martha Schrader and West Linn resident Sandy Carter were named co-chairs of the Commission.

The Commission will meet twice a year over the next couple years to determine the best action plan for repair, reopening, operation and maintenance of the navigation canal and Locks.

The next Commission meeting is scheduled for June 4 at West Linn City Hall.

Learn about mosquitoes and how to protect yourself

Clackamas County Vector Control is offering a hands-on workshop for educators on the life cycle of mosquitoes.

Serious diseases such as West Nile virus have been spreading into Oregon, and the workshop will help educators understand how this is happening and how to protect themselves and their students.