

Governor appoints 23-member Willamette Locks commission

Next Willamette Falls Locks Commission meeting is scheduled for June 6 at West Linn City Hall

Tuesday, June 05, 2018

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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 from 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 2011 due to failing gate anchors and expensive repairs.

The governor's appointed commission will work to advise 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-vice chairs.

The Commission will meet several times over the next two 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 6 at West Linn City Hall.