RESOLUTION NO. 1214

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE REOPENING OF THE WILLAMETTE FALLS LOCKS

WHEREAS, On January 1, 1873, the Willamette Falls Locks opened to allow passage around the waterfall at Oregon City, thereby providing access to a one river system; and

WHEREAS, in 1915, the Army Corps of Engineers purchased the Locks from the private operator, thereby ensuring free public passage through the Locks; and

WHEREAS, in 1974, the Willamette Falls Locks were listed on the National Register of Historic Places; it was the first significant facility built to improve navigation on the Columbia-Snake River Inland Waterway system and through 1939, the most important; and

WHEREAS, in 1991, the Willamette Falls Locks were designated as a State Historic Civil Engineering Landmark by the American Society of Civil Engineers; and

WHEREAS, in 2006, Governor Kulongoski designated the Willamette Falls Locks as an Oregon Solutions project, and the Willamette Falls Locks Oregon Solutions Task Force was formed, which continues to the present as the One Willamette River Coalition coordinated by the Willamette Falls Heritage Foundation to preserve the Locks and support its continued operation; and

WHEREAS,, from 2006 through 2010, funding provided to the Army Corps of Engineers from the Oregon Department of Transportation, Clackamas County and the U.S. Congress allowed for seasonal operations and selected structural upgrades, including $2.2 million in funds from the American Recover and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (PL 111-5); and

WHEREAS, in November 2011, the Willamette Falls Locks were placed into "non-operational" status and on short notice were closed to vessel passage based upon an engineering assessment that identified safety concerns of potential failure; and

WHEREAS, closure has placed a severe hardship on commercial, recreational and tribal river users; and

WHEREAS, in March 2012, the National Trust for Historic Preservation declared the Willamette Falls Locks as one of the most threatened National Treasures, thereby providing technical assistance; and

WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation League of Oregon (now Restore Oregon) named the Willamette Falls Locks as one of its 10 "Most Endangered Places;" and

WHEREAS, an application is being prepared for designation of the area surrounding the Locks as a National Heritage Area by the National Park Service; and

WHEREAS, in September 2014, ECO Northwest, under contract with the Willamette Falls Heritage Foundation, published the *"Willamette Locks Economic Potential Report,"* providing information on potential operating costs and community benefits of reopening the Locks; and

WHEREAS, the non-operational status of the Locks has rendered the Willamette river non-navigable above Willamette Falls; and

WHEREAS, the Locks are a primary historic asset under application being prepared for designation of the areas at the Willamette Falls as State and National Heritage Areas; and

WHEREAS, the Cities of West Linn, Oregon City and Wilsonville have adopted formal Resolutions Supporting the Reopening of the Willamette Falls Locks;

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Canby as follows:

1. The City of Canby urges the Corps of Engineers to expedite the needed rehabilitation of the Willamette Falls Lock and reopen the Locks to the general public and commercial, recreational and marine traffic.

2. The City of Canby supports creation of a State Task Force to work with the Corps of Engineers to develop a plan for sustainable operations of the Willamette Falls Locks.

3. The City of Canby urges the Oregon Congressional delegation to support the expedited repair and reopening of the Willamette Falls Locks.

4. The City of Canby supports the rehabilitation of the Locks as an integral part of the State and National Heritage Areas at Willamette Falls.

This resolution shall take effect on May 20, 2015.

ADOPTED by the Canby City Council at a regular meeting thereof on May 20, 2015.

Brian Hodson
Mayor

ATTEST:

Kimberly Scheafer, MMC
City Recorder