

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**LAKESIDE LABORATORY STRATEGIC PLAN, PROPOSAL, AND BUDGET**

**Actions Requested:** Consider recommending the following to the Board:

1. Approve the 2007 – 2012 Lakeside Lab Strategic Plan.
2. Approve the proposal to restructure and expand Lakeside Lab to become the Lakeside Lab Regents Resource Center.
3. Approve the 2006-07 budget for the Lakeside Lab Regents Resource Center.

**Executive Summary:** For almost 100 years, Lakeside Lab has provided educational opportunities to the state of Iowa. The Regent universities offer science-based courses that allow students to study nature first-hand. The Regent Enterprise recognizes that its educational offerings can address a number of statewide needs, including lifelong learning, especially for place-bound individuals; economic development; and entrepreneurship. Therefore, the Board of Regents directed the Board Office and the Regent universities to develop a model that could be replicated to address educational needs across the state. The Board determined that the Lakeside Lab would be used as the underpinning for the model and adopted a resolution in August 2005 to develop a strategic plan for Lakeside Lab.

During April 2006, an inter-institutional team, which included representatives from the Regent universities, the Board of Regents, and the Board Office, responded to the Board's resolution and developed a strategic plan for Lakeside Lab (Attachment A). The Strategic Plan defines the mission, vision, and values for the Lab, as well as short- and long-term objectives.

The Strategic Plan provided a springboard to expand the opportunities available through Lakeside Lab (1) to meet the educational needs of northwest Iowa through the following key functions – scientific research, lifelong learning, entrepreneurship, and community involvement; and (2) to develop a model that can be used throughout the state. The proposed name of the expanded entity would be Lakeside Lab Regents Resource Center (Center).

In response to the Lakeside Lab proposal discussed during the June 2006 Board of Regents meeting creating an executive director position which would report to the Board, the Board directed the Board Office to work with the universities to develop an alternative reporting structure at one of the universities. The current proposal assigns administrative, including budgetary, oversight responsibility for the Center to the University of Iowa through the Associate Provost and Dean of Continuing Education.

The proposed 2006-07 budget of \$842,074 for the Center includes an increase in Regent university allocations from \$553,000 to \$600,000. These funds would be used to support the operation of the Center as well as Lakeside Lab, including the Center executive director, the Lakeside Lab academic director, and other positions needed for the operation of the Center.

**Background:**

Iowa Lakeside Lab Background

- ◇ The Lakeside Lab campus, established in 1909, is a residential facility located on the shores of West Okoboji Lake. The campus includes more than 140 acres, most of which is a nature preserve used as an outdoor classroom.
- ◇ From 1909 to 1936, the Lab was operated by the Iowa Lakeside Laboratory Association of the Alumni and Friends of the University of Iowa.
- ◇ In 1936, the Association deeded the property to the State of Iowa Executive Council under provision of the Trust Agreement of April 30, 1936. A critical paragraph in the Trust Agreement indicates, "In case of diversion of the property to users other than those set forth in said Trust Agreement, the title shall revert to the grantor herein." The agreement also states that the Lab shall be used for "the accommodation, promotion, support, and maintenance of scientific studies and research in the field of biological sciences."
- ◇ From 1936-47, the Lab was administered by a Board of Managers representing the State Conservation Commission (now DNR), the State Board of Education (now Board of Regents), Iowa Lakeside Association, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the University of Iowa.
- ◇ In 1947, the Board of Regents assumed responsibility for the Lab; since then, it has been run cooperatively by Iowa State University, the University of Iowa, and the University of Northern Iowa through the Board of Regents.
- ◇ In December 2004, the Board of Regents approved a Business Plan for the Lab which focused on increasing the availability of educational offerings, including providing year-round activities.
- ◇ In September 2005, an executive director was approved by the Board of Regents to serve as the director of academics and research.
- ◇ During the past ten years, the credit enrollment at the Lab has ranged from a high of 185 students in 1997 to a low of 83 students in 2005 and 2006. An analysis of the enrollment decline has revealed that the lack of substantial scholarship and grant funds has prevented students and faculty from participating more fully at the Lab.

Proposal to Restructure and Expand Lakeside Lab

- ◇ Change the name of the expanded entity from Iowa Lakeside Laboratory to Iowa Lakeside Lab Regents Resource Center (Center).
- ◇ Set the institutional allocations to support the Center through the Board Office.
- ◇ Assign administrative, including budgetary, oversight responsibility for the Center to the University of Iowa through the Associate Provost and Dean of Continuing Education.
- ◇ Create an executive director position to manage the Center.
- ◇ Create an academic director position to manage the Lakeside Lab.
- ◇ Increase the Regent universities' total allocation to the Center from the current level of \$553,000 to \$600,000 per year and cap it at that level for a five-year period. These funds would be used to support the operation of the Center as well as Lakeside Lab, including the Center executive director, the Lakeside Lab academic director, and other positions needed for the operation of the Center.

- ◇ The Center would encompass the following functions:
  - ☑ Scientific field research. The purpose of this function would be to continue the Lakeside Lab as a field station that supports the science programs, including education, research, and outreach, of the Regent institutions and the Lakeside Consortium. Classes offered to area elementary and secondary schools, as well as other postsecondary institutions, would be on a full cost recovery basis.
  - ☑ Lifelong Learning. The purpose of this function would be to provide needed learning opportunities to the citizens of northwest Iowa. The Center executive director would work with the programmatic and distance education administrators at each of the Regent universities to determine need for programs/courses in northwest Iowa. The universities would provide the instruction and faculty. Other postsecondary institutions seeking to offer distance education courses at the Center would work through the Center executive director to ensure that there is no conflict of interest and that a full-cost recovery process is applied. Cultural offerings that support the liberal arts mission of the Regent universities would be provided as appropriate on a full-cost recovery basis. Services that support the Regent universities' programs in social work, health, and similar areas would be provided through the Center on a full-cost recovery basis.
  - ☑ Entrepreneurship. The purpose of this function would be to expand the entrepreneurial educational opportunities for Regent university students. The Center executive director would be responsible for working with the Regent universities to provide entrepreneurial workshops at the Center. All events would be on a full-cost recovery basis.
  - ☑ Economic Development. The purpose of this function would be to address the Board of Regents' role in economic development in partnership with the Iowa Department of Economic Development, the community college system, private colleges, local governments, and regional economic development organizations. This approach would create a model for cooperative rural economic development through educational opportunities and collaborations with other community resources that can be replicated throughout Iowa.
  - ☑ Community Involvement. The purpose of this function would be to obtain community support for the Center that would result in endowment funds for the long-term operation of the Center, including tuition assistance for students, housing assistance for students, faculty research grants, housing assistance for faculty, and acquisition and maintenance of a specialized equipment pool. The immediate goal for the endowment would be \$600,000.
- ◇ Conduct an in-depth evaluation during the fourth year by the Board of Regents Executive Director or designee and the Regent universities to determine both the continued viability of the Iowa Lakeside Lab Regents Resource Center and the ability to replicate the model throughout the state.

Details of the Proposed Budget<sup>1</sup> (Does not reflect staffing increase that might result from the proposed expansion of Lakeside Lab.)

IOWA LAKESIDE LAB REGENTS RESOURCE CENTER	FY 05 Actual	FY 06 Budget	FY 06 Actual	FY 07 Budget Same Allocation	FY 07 Budget Increased Allocation
REVENUE (Does not include tuition)					
Carry forward <sup>2</sup>	\$105,233	\$98,651	\$98,651	\$142,074	\$142,074
Regent university allocation	\$420,406	\$553,773	\$557,138	\$553,773	\$600,000
Room and board	\$81,869	\$80,000	\$87,269	\$80,000	\$80,000
Lakeside Lab revenue	\$29,777	\$126,820	\$18,020 <sup>3</sup>	\$20,000	\$20,000
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$637,285</b>	<b>\$859,244</b>	<b>\$761,078</b>	<b>\$795,847</b>	<b>\$842,074</b>
EXPENDITURES					
Salaries and benefits	\$278,650	\$473,693	\$339,536 <sup>4</sup>	\$412,722 <sup>5</sup>	\$445,472 <sup>6</sup>
Travel and hospitality	\$42,684	\$55,000	\$55,269	\$50,000	\$50,000
Supplies, utilities, maintenance, and repairs	\$128,701	\$184,000	\$169,168	\$184,000	\$184,000
Equipment	\$29,194	\$28,000	\$32,855	\$40,000 <sup>7</sup>	\$40,000
Marketing	\$0	\$15,000	\$5,162 <sup>8</sup>	\$10,000 <sup>9</sup>	\$15,000
Debt service	\$17,014	\$17,014	\$17,014	\$17,014	\$17,014
Operational Planning	\$42,391	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$538,634</b>	<b>\$772,707</b>	<b>\$619,004</b>	<b>\$713,736</b>	<b>\$751,486</b>
<b>NET BALANCE<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>\$98,651</b>	<b>\$86,537</b>	<b>\$142,074</b>	<b>\$82,111</b>	<b>\$90,588</b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes both general and restricted funds.

<sup>2</sup> These are restricted funds.

<sup>3</sup> Lakeside Lab revenue was lower than projected because Outreach Director was not hired and programs were not implemented. A possible source of additional revenue for FY 07 might be increase in fees for Lab use by outside groups.

<sup>4</sup> Actual salaries for FY 06 were less than budgeted because of open positions.

<sup>5</sup> Includes budget for full-time executive director, ½ time academic director (current position is ¾ time), and no information technologist.

<sup>6</sup> Includes budget for full-time executive director, ½ time academic director, and \$15,000 for information technologist during the summer term.

<sup>7</sup> There is a need to replace materials related to the housing operation and to purchase equipment for academic classes.

<sup>8</sup> Marketing expenses for FY 06 were lower than budgeted because of the unfilled positions.

<sup>9</sup> Marketing would be reduced if the Regent university allocation remains the same.

**IOWA LAKESIDE LABORATORY STRATEGIC PLAN  
2007 – 2012**

**Mission**

The Iowa Lakeside Laboratory is a field station that supports the science programs, including education, research and outreach, of the Regent institutions and the Lakeside Consortium. The primary research endeavors will focus on the diverse ecosystems that surround Iowa Lakeside Lab, with special emphasis on studies that relate to water quality and the biodiversity of pristine and restored environments.

**Vision**

The Iowa Lakeside Lab will be recognized internationally as the premier regional site for the study of the environment in a natural setting, with sufficiently abundant resources to encourage new engagements that support scholarship and continuing education.

**Values**

- ◇ Conservation
- ◇ Water quality
- ◇ Integrated research and education
- ◇ Unique immersion learning opportunities in a natural setting
- ◇ Collaboration through partnerships
- ◇ Historical preservation
- ◇ Focus on field work
- ◇ Advocates for the implementation of the most advanced science available in the creation of public policy in the areas of biological sciences and natural resources

**Strengths**

- ◇ One-hundred year history
- ◇ Strong research reputation
- ◇ Unique field work opportunity
- ◇ Community support
- ◇ Information technology access
- ◇ Strong leadership and staff
- ◇ Board of Regents support
- ◇ Valuable land
- ◇ High biodiversity of ecosystems exist in the surrounding area

### **Weaknesses**

- ◇ Competition for State of Iowa resources
- ◇ Deferred facility maintenance
- ◇ Some outdated research equipment
- ◇ No marketing, outreach or secretarial staff
- ◇ Distance from the three Regent institutions
- ◇ No Lakeside Lab champion at the Regent universities
- ◇ Negative perception of current University funding ratio (tax)
- ◇ Lack of a detailed database of past, current and future users of the facility
- ◇ Summer classes not full
- ◇ Limited outreach activities
- ◇ Potential research and outreach constraints due to trust provisions
- ◇ No recreation design for use of lake, boardwalk
- ◇ Perception of insufficient value for money spent
- ◇ Consortium has not reached its potential
- ◇ Limited grants/outside funding
- ◇ Lakeside Lab has limited visibility within the Regent institutions, the State of Iowa and the local lakes region
- ◇ Struggle with community over the mission of the Lakeside Lab

### **Opportunities**

- ◇ Increased field work interest
- ◇ Strong feeling regarding water quality
- ◇ Potential to attract national faculty
- ◇ Increased availability of volunteers
- ◇ Engaged local individuals and organizations.
- ◇ Diatom, restoration ecology, wetland ecology and water shed research
- ◇ Links to other departments (e.g., bio-ethics, public health, other science departments as well as arts, creative writing, etc.)
- ◇ Providing access to space on a rental basis
- ◇ The potential for fall and summer courses
- ◇ Potential of increased outreach programs

### **Threats**

- ◇ Visitors disturbing the virgin wilderness
- ◇ Competition for activities, e.g., conferences
- ◇ Ability to provide continued state support
- ◇ Struggle with the community regarding the mission and administration of the Lakeside Lab
- ◇ Transportation issues during the summer
- ◇ Student ability to pay for lodging, fees, etc.

- ◇ Scientists don't perceive the study of Iowa is attractive
- ◇ Perceived administrative structure – slowness of decision-making

## **Objectives**

### **Three-Year Objectives (2007 to 2010)**

- A. Academic programs
  - Diversify the course offerings at the Lab.
  - Seek scholarships for students to attend summer programs.
  - Increase the number of year-round classes that can be scheduled at the Lab.
  - Create on-line programs at the educational institutions that feature attendance at the Lab in the fall and spring months.
  - Establish outreach programs aimed at K-12 students and adults interested in the environment.
  
- B. Research Activities
  - Distribute to the faculties of the Regents institutions and the consortium the list of research conducted and research opportunities in the region.
  - Develop at each institution a "Lakeside research champion committee" to discuss and create new research activities.
  - Create a research advisory board, composed of current research representatives of the "research champion" committees, to advise the executive director and staff regarding research activities.
  - Provide each Lakeside researcher a supportive environment for scholarship.
  - Develop a grant writing program for the underwriting of research activities at the Lab.
  
- C. Financial Stability
  - Create a realistic yearly budget with the goal of breaking even by year three (assuming a specific level of fixed support from the institutions).
  - Seek grants that will enhance the ability of students and faculty to conduct their research at Lakeside Lab.
  - Create a program of outreach that will support the overall activities of the Lab.
  - Negotiate with the institutions the indirect costs charged on research grants and contracts.
  
- D. Organizational Effectiveness
  - Market the Lakeside academic and research strengths to the appropriate faculty at the Regent and consortium institutions.
  - Increase the membership in the Lakeside consortium by at least ten educational institutions within three years.
  - Develop a staffing plan that will meet the Academic, Research, and Financial stability goals articulated above.
  - Prioritize the hiring of new staff and the replacement of those who will be retiring within the next three years.

- Establish a program aimed at motivating and increasing the morale of Lakeside Lab employees.
  - Create an organizational structure that simplifies Lakeside director's reporting relationships with the BOR institutions and permits more rapid decision-making.
  - Develop and maintain a database of organizations, students and individuals who have used Lakeside Lab over the past five years.
- E. Infrastructure Development
- Prioritize the maintenance needs of the site.
  - Assess the facilities and equipment needs of educators and researchers and to develop a plan to meet those needs.
  - Develop a grounds management plan, including assessing the current land use and prioritizing actions to achieve desired use.
- F. Partnership Development
- Work with Friends of Lakeside Lab to define their role in supporting the Lakeside programs.
  - Strengthen partnerships with environmental research and monitoring groups in the region (Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, etc).
  - Strengthen partnerships with non-profit environmental and educational groups in the region (Iowa Natural Heritage Association, Nature Conservancy, Lakes Associations, water quality groups).
- G. Financial, Human, and Physical Resources
- Increase and cap the institutional allocations at \$600,000 per year for the next five years.
  - Prepare a business plan for the five-year period.
  - Employ an Executive Director for the Lakeside Labs and the Okoboji Economic Development Institute. A portion of this person salary would be paid by the Iowa Economic Development Department. This person's role would include fund raising, outreach activities and marketing.
  - Employ an academic manager to be in charge of the Lakeside Lab academic and research activities.
  - Outsource most of the physical plant maintenance.

### **One-Year Goals**

- A. One-year specific goals will be written for each year and for each activity under the seven long-term objectives listed above.
- B. The yearly review of the Lakeside Lab activities against these goals will be the basis for the five-year evaluation of the Lakeside Lab's success.
- C. The yearly goals will be written in terms of the outcomes that are to be achieved at the Lakeside Lab.