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Strategic Planning for Environmental Stewardship at Eastern Kentucky University

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**STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AT
EASTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY**



Submitted by the Eastern Committee on Responsible Environmental Stewardship

May 15, 2007

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2006-2010 Strategic Plan for Eastern Kentucky University, under Strategic Direction 5.4, mandates the formulation of a plan to guide the University toward greater environmental stewardship. The creation and implementation of that plan is the charge of the Eastern Committee on Responsible Environmental Stewardship (ECRES), which was formed in September of 2005. On October 27th, 2006, ECRES hosted a Strategic Planning Workshop. This workshop brought together a wide range of participants, including elected officials, college and university representatives, and interested citizens. The result was a broad consensus in the identification of environmental goals and objectives toward which ECU should strive:

- Create a permanent, administration-level organizational structure to implement environmental stewardship initiatives.
- Foster environmentally responsible citizenship among all sectors of the ECU community.
- Improve environmental sustainability in energy production and energy efficiency within the campus infrastructure.
- Improve transportation efficiency on campus.
- Adopt environmentally sound purchasing practices.
- Adopt environmentally sound land use practices, with improvements made in land – health connections.
- Collaborate with existing University programs, centers, and institutes to integrate sustainability principles into University outreach programs.
- Ensure safe, healthy, and efficient living and work spaces.
- Improve environmental performance in office practices.

Eastern Kentucky University can best realize these goals and objectives through the creation of a new Office of Environmental Stewardship. As proposed herein, this office will be headed by a Campus Sustainability Director, a person with skills and experience in planning, grant writing, environmental building design, and with knowledge of “best environmental practices.” The Director will be a vice-presidential administrative position; the Director and Office will reside in the ECU organizational system on par with Facilities Services, Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Financial Affairs.

ECRES will become part of this new Office of Environmental Stewardship. As the organizational position is solidified, short-term and medium-term tactical work plans, with corresponding Key Performance Indicators, will follow.

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ECRES Committee 2006/07

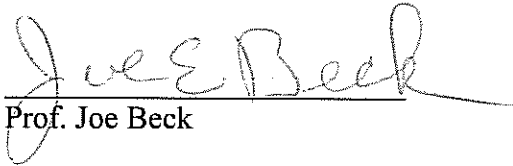
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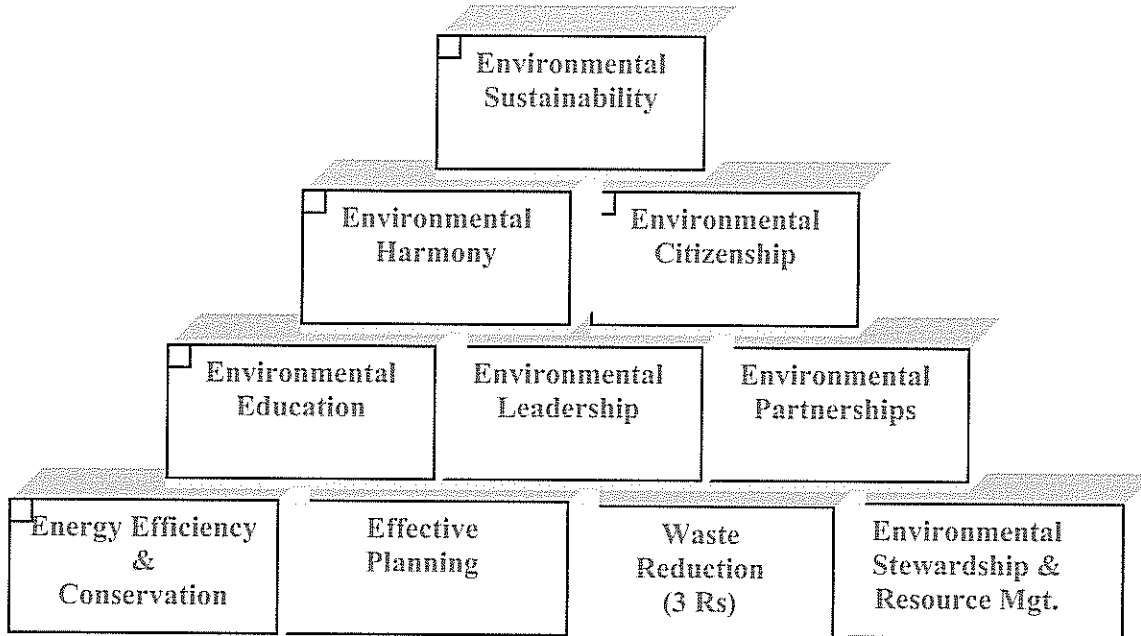
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STRATEGIC VALUES



Environmental Values Platform

The role that values play in the planning process and decision-making is similar to a "fulcrum" in heavy lifting. Where it is placed in the process increases or decreases the difficulty by considerable magnitudes. This platform demonstrates the makeup of the fulcrum used for decision-making in this plan. We feel that these values should always be used at an early stage in any decision-making.

Mission Statement:

The Eastern Committee on Responsible Environmental Stewardship will guide Eastern Kentucky University toward greater environmental sustainability in as many phases of its operation as is possible.

Vision:

By 2010, the end of ECU's current strategic planning cycle, the following vision will be achieved:

EKU is an active and productive living and learning community where environmental sustainability is a core value. The University models best practices in all of its planning, design, operations, and learning endeavors. This core value is reflected in the University's use of all energy and materials. The University maximizes the use of renewable natural resources, replicates natural systems, and acts as stewards of those resources. ECU fosters environmentally literate and responsible citizenship through its teaching, scholarship, and service. Through community partnerships, research, education, and technology transfer, the University acts to improve environmental sustainability throughout the region.

Goals and Related Objectives

Eastern Kentucky University, through ECRES and the Office of Environmental Stewardship, will:

- 1 Finalize and adopt a University-approved organizational structure, focused on the creation of an Office of Environmental Stewardship, as described in Appendix A. This Office will lead and coordinate various environmental initiatives on campus and will support and/or arrange for appropriate feasibility studies and environmental stewardship audits, in order to realize the goals and objectives included in this Plan, which together will foster the attainment of the Vision.
- 2 Foster environmentally responsible citizenship (faculty, staff and students), by:
 - a) Recognizing that all faculty, staff and students have a responsibility to assist the University to meet these commitments. Empower staff to minimize our environmental impacts through generating staff awareness, encouraging participation, and rewarding and recognizing outstanding behavior and accomplishments.
 - b) Engaging in continued dialogue with the University community and the larger community, through public forums, webpage development, and media communication (e.g. *The Eastern Progress* and *EKU Update*).
 - c) Including environmental education in the General Ed curriculum and promote interdisciplinary environmental education as an integral part of the curriculum.
 - d) Creating projects to educate the EKU community about environmentally sound and best management practices.
 - e) Developing and marketing a set of environmental principles that will guide EKU educational endeavors.
 - f) Providing incentives for faculty, staff, and student involvement in developing and implementing environmentally responsible behavior.
- 3 Improve energy efficiency, conservation, and operational effectiveness throughout the campus facility infrastructure. Critical steps in addressing energy production and energy use include:
 - a) Conducting "environmental stewardship audits" that prioritize improvements and investment potential; these can be implemented in a similar fashion as the existing utility energy audits completed for identifying investments and achieving conservation.
 - b) Accelerating efforts to achieve low-carbon emissions; this will happen by, for example, reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with the heating system on the Richmond campus.
 - c) Reviewing building envelopes and implement measures to make them more energy efficient.
 - d) Ensuring that all future building construction include LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) concepts in order to demonstrate how the University can serve as a model for urban design, environmental harmony, and integration of community with environment.

- e) Incorporating state-of-the-art energy efficiency measures and maximizing use of renewable energy in new construction and major upgrades.
 - f) Conducting feasibility studies of the capital, fuel, and operation and maintenance (O&M) costs of producing electricity and heating and cooling campus buildings.
 - g) Seeking out, evaluating, and gaining funding for projects involving on-campus energy production (e.g. solar, wind, geothermal).
- 4 Improve transportation efficiency. Possible initiatives include:
- a) Ensuring maximum and effective utilization of the transportation "fleet" to avoid purchasing vehicles that do not deliver transportation services in an efficient and sustainable fashion. Investments in hybrids and other fuel efficient vehicles, or those using non-petroleum fuels such as electric cars should receive priority over non-fuel efficient vehicles.
 - b) Exploring transport alternatives, such as car-pooling and improved shuttle services on campus.
 - c) Reducing automobile traffic; evaluating and adopting methods that might include:
 - i) Reduced fees for students not bringing cars to campus or increased fees for parking tags for those who do.
 - ii) Partnership with local government on public transportation.
 - iii) Bicycle co-op on campus.
 - iv) Construction of tunnels and overhead pedestrian crosswalks.
- 5 Adopt environmentally sound purchasing practices in all units, by:
- a) Practicing the "3 Rs": reduce, reuse, and recycle. Develop performance measures in partnership with the recycling program located in Facilities Services.
 - b) Negotiating procurement and vending contracts that require easily recyclable containers.
 - c) Implementing a policy of purchasing devices with excellent energy efficiency ratings.
 - d) Buying locally whenever feasible in accordance with environmental values.
 - e) Minimizing packaging on products purchased and shipped by EKU.
 - f) Exploring book rental programs or other mechanisms for reducing book wastes as well as lowering student costs of acquiring an EKU education.
- 6 Adopt land use practices that are environmentally sound, including:
- a) Exploring landscaping alternatives to minimize mowing & preserve green space.
 - b) Exploring alternatives to parking lot expansion and sprawl.
 - c) Exploring the link between land use practices and health, to enhance health outcomes through diet, exercise, and wellness programs.
 - d) Create campus bicycle paths, walking paths, and alternatives to cars, integrated with transportation, campus landscapes, and building design and investment.
 - e) Explore methods of improving natural resources including wildlife in EKU owned natural areas such as Lilley Cornett Woods and Maywoods.
 - f) Explore implementation of state-of-the-art sustainability practices in the food / animal husbandry operations, such as Meadowbrook farm.

- 7 Through collaboration with existing University programs, centers, and institutes, integrate sustainability principles & practices into all areas of University community service and outreach, including:
 - a) Infusing environmental opportunities into student co-ops and internships.
 - b) Supporting initiatives in research to achieve best environmental practices.
 - c) Encouraging entrepreneurship to develop, market, and increase market share of environmentally beneficial products.
 - d) Supporting and incubating environmental initiatives throughout the University's service region, including those by businesses, educational institutions, and home and land owners.

- 8 Ensure safe, healthy, efficient living/work spaces, by:
 - a) Conducting comprehensive environmental, energy, and stewardship audits on all campus buildings, including indoor air quality and energy use.
 - b) Contracting with architectural, engineering, and general construction firms that can meet or exceed LEED standards (though not to require LEED certification).
 - c) Replacing or retrofitting buildings deemed not to provide safe, healthy, productive and efficient space.
 - d) Developing lighting/security/noise reduction plans to utilize solar lighting and passive solar design to reduce pollution, thereby improving the value of the space for various occupant uses.

- 9 Support the local economy by Improving efforts to support sustainable agriculture, by:
 - a) Working across campus to increase the purchase of local foods, particularly in dining services.
 - b) Promoting purchase of organic fruits and vegetables.
 - c) Purchasing grass finished beef and local pork and chicken meat products to supplement or replace products that are either raised in large confined animal feedlot operations (CAFOs) or originate in locations far away from our campuses. This will have a positive impact on sustainable agriculture in the region.
 - d) Support Kentuckians efforts to transition away from growing tobacco to create viable family farms.

- 10 Strive for continual quality improvement in office-based environmental performance, by:
 - a) Reducing the paper intensity of office operations for both educational and administrative purposes.
 - b) Reducing the amount of waste produced in offices, and maximizing the amount reused and recycled.
 - c) Reducing water consumption by replacing toilets, faucets, water heaters, etc. with conservation-orientated models.

2 Proposed structure

- a) An Office of Environmental Stewardship, at an organizational level on par with Facilities Services, Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Financial Affairs.
- b) A Director of Environmental Stewardship, referred to as Campus Environmental Planner, who shall have skills and experience in planning, grant writing, environmental building design, and best environmental practices.
- c) Sufficient support and administrative staff.
- d) ECRES, continuing in its current form, to serve as an Advisory Board to the Campus Environmental Planner.

3 Tasks of the Office of Environmental Stewardship:

- a) Lead and form cooperative linkages between ECRES and partners within the University, including, among others, the new Regional Stewardship Office.
- b) Form a network of decision makers within ECU's Richmond campus to improve infrastructure and implement plans.
- c) Prioritize and enact, through appropriate measures, both the strategic values shown above, in the strategic values pyramid, and the goals and related objectives outlined below.
- d) Supporting and helping to arrange various environmental stewardship audits
- e) Hold an annual conference with representatives from facilities, procurement, housing, student life, and other relevant organizations on campus to coordinate projects, discuss expectations, and work out obstacles.
- f) Select several long-term, mid-term, and current environmental stewardship initiatives and pilot projects to demonstrate the net benefits of environmental sustainability.
- g) Communicate our environmental performance through regular reporting, such as an annual ECRES Environmental Sustainability Report.

Appendix B

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