

**CFAES**

# Future of Waterman

## **TASK FORCE REPORT**

November, 2018



**THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

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## The Waterman Promise

The Waterman Agricultural and Natural Resources Laboratory, on The Ohio State University Columbus campus, is a top priority for the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (CFAES) and a unique university asset, where the emphasis is placed on learning by doing. Waterman expands the classroom from four walls to the entire outdoors and allows the university and community to engage in addressing many of the challenges facing the world today.

We have identified four grand challenges as a central focus for our work in CFAES. These challenges should also influence our vision at Waterman:

- Food Security, Viable Production, and Environmental Sustainability
- One Health (which encompasses human, animal, plant, and environmental health)
- Rural/Urban Interface
- Preparing Future Scientists and Leaders

Waterman is positioned to serve as a premier hub for teaching, research, and community engagement around these grand challenges. Waterman will also serve as a center to help inform and educate a broader audience.

There is much we want to accomplish with the 261 acres called Waterman. I charged the Future of Waterman Task Force with planning and leading a process to develop a comprehensive and long-term vision for Waterman, a physical master plan (working with Physical Planning and Real Estate at Ohio State), and a proposed governance structure. With this work as a foundation, Waterman will become a vital tool in helping our college achieve its mission: We Sustain Life.



Cathann A. Kress  
Vice President for Agricultural Administration and Dean

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## From the Future of Waterman Task Force

On behalf of the Future of Waterman Task Force, we are pleased to present a summary of data and recommendations regarding Waterman.

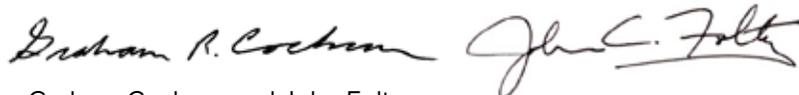
We collected information from a broad range of stakeholders, from previous reports, and from other facilities that have attributes we are hoping to include.

This report encompasses the following:

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Task force members include Carol Anelli, Julie Fox, Andy Gurd, Brian Hanna, Elizabeth Hawkins, Tracy Kitchel, Dewey Mann, Jim Metzger, Terry Niblack, Ken Scaife, Kathy Smith, and Suzanne Steel.

Sincerely,



Graham Cochran and John Foltz  
Future of Waterman Task Force Co-Chairs

Waterman, an oasis in an urban landscape, is a **showcase** and a **hub of experiential learning** and **innovative discovery** in the areas of **food, agricultural, and environmental sciences**, where people **build community** and **connect to trusted information**.

### THE FUTURE OF WATERMAN WILL INCLUDE:

- expanded opportunities for Ohio State students to engage in hands-on learning, thus preparing the future workforce.
- cutting-edge, interactive displays of research around food, health, agricultural production, and sustainability.
- the breadth of Ohio agriculture—spanning rural and urban, and farms large to small.
- public engagement in agricultural and environmental education, broadly defined. The general public will connect more easily with where their food comes from; young people will explore agricultural careers; volunteers will learn and provide service as Master Gardener Volunteers; and adults will learn more about everything from food safety to nutrition to turfgrass to pollinators.

### TO ACHIEVE THIS VISION, WE WILL:

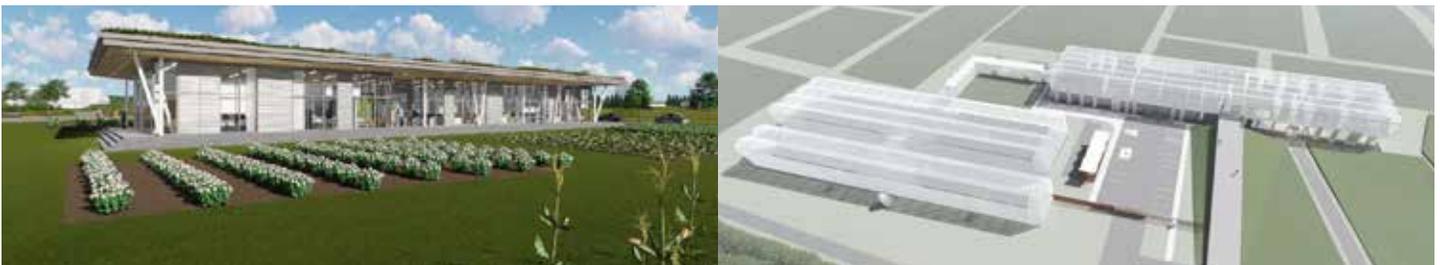
- address the grand challenges in society: Food Security, Viable Production, and Environmental Sustainability; One Health (which encompasses human, animal, plant, and environmental health); the Rural/Urban Interface; and Preparing Future Scientists and Leaders.
- engage students and the public in hands-on, experiential learning.
- boost awareness around food systems and environmental stewardship throughout campus by creating opportunities for all Ohio State students to visit Waterman.
- make agriculture visible so that people will learn about advances and modern practices in the food, agricultural, and environmental sciences.
- provide state-of-the-art, modern technology and infrastructure to prepare career-ready graduates and informed members of society.
- communicate complex issues and research findings related to the grand challenges in clear and engaging ways, leading to improved understanding by students, the public, media, alumni, and elected officials.

# About Waterman



Waterman's 261 acres, on the Columbus campus, offer a wide variety of natural features and ecosystems that support research, outreach, and education (e.g., production agriculture, animal sciences, crops, entomology, and natural resources). Waterman holds a Turfgrass Foundation Research and Education Facility, a dairy, the Rothenbuhler Honey Bee Research Lab, and a headquarters building. Diverse, natural features include tillable land, pasture, a forested woodlot, and a stream. Waterman also houses a student-run farm, the Garden of Hope, and many research plots.

The land was originally owned by Joseph Waterman, a prominent pioneer and agricultural figure in Franklin County. Joseph's widow, Anna, titled the property to Ohio State on July 2, 1923. Since then, four additional parcels have been added to the site.



*Renderings of the Kunz-Brundige Franklin County Extension Building (left) and the Controlled Environment Food Production Research Complex (right).*

## **CFAES is poised to invest nearly \$50 million in three new facilities:**

- The \$5 million Kunz-Brundige Franklin County Extension Building is under construction, will open in 2019, and will bring staff from the Franklin County office of Ohio State University Extension and their Extension/outreach programming to Waterman. The new building will feature large, multifunctional meeting spaces and a demonstration kitchen.
- The \$35 million Controlled Environment Food Production Research Complex, with a state-of-the-art greenhouse, is targeted to begin construction in 2019 and will include expansion opportunities in phenotyping, vertical farming, and aquaponics.
- A \$15 million multispecies animal learning center will bring people and animals together for hands-on learning, public events, and Extension programming. Construction is targeted to begin in 2019.

# Current State of Waterman

The Future of Waterman Task Force synthesized data from a variety of stakeholders to describe what is currently working well at Waterman and what improvements would optimize the use of this unique asset.



## STRENGTHS

- Waterman is located on the Ohio State campus in Columbus, the 14th largest U.S. city, and is easily accessible from State Route 315.
- Waterman offers an opportunity for interdisciplinary collaborations within the university, as well as partnerships with external stakeholders in government, private businesses, and organizations.
- Waterman's diverse landscape features managed and unmanaged ecosystems, allowing for a mixture of activities as well as the preservation of undeveloped green space.
- Waterman provides the opportunity to offer experiential learning and engagement to Ohio State students and other learners across their lifespan.
- Agriculture, broadly defined, is visible at Waterman, providing an opportunity to help consumers understand how food is produced and bridging the knowledge gap at the rural/urban interface.

## CHALLENGES

- There is a lack of transportation/accessibility from campus, as well as a lack of physical accessibility on-site.
- The public relations, signage, web presence, marketing, and communications—all minimal—have created a lack of awareness of Waterman's purpose and an uninviting atmosphere.
- The absence of a communicated strategic plan has created a lack of vision and focus, limiting Waterman's potential.
- The void of a strategic approach has led to compartmentalization and decisions based on a narrow, short-term vision.
- The outdated facilities, equipment, and technology affect both public perception and the ability to conduct cutting-edge discovery and outreach.
- Waterman does not fully leverage college, university, or community interdisciplinary partnerships.



# Trends Influencing Decisions About Waterman



The following global trends will impact agricultural production, the environment, food, health, and sustainability; therefore, they should influence the focus of work at Waterman. Interwoven in these trends are the college's four grand challenges: Food Security, Viable Production, and Environmental Sustainability; One Health (which encompasses human, animal, plant, and environmental health); the Rural/Urban Interface; and Preparing Future Scientists and Leaders.

## GLOBAL TRENDS



.....  
**The disconnect between the general public and production agriculture**  
.....

**The disconnect at the rural/urban interface**  
.....

**Emerging environmental, human, and animal-health issues**  
.....

**The greater access to information and other forms of rich communications via technology, as well as the ease for anybody to create content**  
.....

**The public's heightened interest in the entire food system and the environment, including water quality**  
.....

**The public's concern for animal welfare**  
.....

**The public's distrust of science and the plethora of misinformation**  
.....

**The public's greater interest in health, wellness, and self-improvement**  
.....

**The public's demand for a balance between food and fiber production, and environmental sustainability**  
.....

**Rapid advancements in science and technology**  
.....

**Workforce pipeline issues (e.g., lack of qualified workers in the industry, broadly defined)**  
.....

**The greater access to big data and data analytics**  
.....

**The anticipated increase in world population**

# Process



The Future of Waterman Task Force held its first meeting in March 2018. During the meeting, we mapped out a plan for moving forward.

In April and May 2018, we conducted listening sessions and one-on-one interviews with a broad group of stakeholders, including more than 180 college and university faculty, staff, students, and alumni in Columbus and Wooster; elected officials; Waterman neighbors; industry leaders; friends of the college; and more.

We also reviewed related reports and investigated other benchmark facilities.

We then combed through more than 6,000 data points and found strong consensus in many areas, including that **Waterman should be known as a dynamic showcase for experiential learning in the areas of food, agricultural, and environmental sciences.**



# 186

*Interviews and Attendees at Listening Sessions*

# 6,000

*Data Points*

# 6

*Reports*

# 6

*Benchmark Facilities*

# 11

*Ohio State Colleges and Units Engaged*

# Master Plan Elements



The Future of Waterman Task Force identified crucial elements that must be addressed for the future success of Waterman. These elements and planning guidelines, gleaned from research, are for consideration in development of a master plan.



## PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- Develop a governance structure that is focused on a comprehensive strategic plan aligned with the college's priorities (e.g., grand challenges) and the university's initiatives (e.g., discovery themes); adaptive to changes over time; mission-focused; and managed by an administrative director guided by established governance principles.
- Improve transportation to and within Waterman that addresses parking (while preserving green space), access from campus, and ADA compliance within Waterman.
- Maintain integrity of research initiatives through security.
- Ensure biosecurity for the health and safety of plants, animals, and people.
- Maintain Waterman's agricultural and green space, recognizing the finite nature of its 261 acres.
- Showcase innovation and technologies that will attract visitors.
- Consider an interactive, "museumlike" design including three areas: open access to the public, limited access of "look-but-do-not-touch," and private or restricted access. The open access and look-but-do-not-touch areas should include wayfinding signage and informational displays. Biosecurity hazards and restricted access points should be clearly marked. Art, green landscaping, and aesthetics should be integrated into the final design.

## Next Steps

CFAES and the Future of Waterman Task Force will use this report as a living document to develop a master plan and a governance structure for Waterman in 2019.

### REFERENCES

Animal Facilities Re-Envisioning Committee Report (2014)

College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences Animal Sciences Facilities Study (2016)

College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences Master Plan (2014)

The New Waterman, The Knowlton School of Architecture Class Project (2015)

Waterman Master Plan (1998)

Presentation by Michael Mercil, professor and interim chair, Department of Art (June 4, 2018)

Framework 2.0, The Ohio State University (2017)





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