

Strategic Goals

During a two-day workshop held in 2018 at the SNARL Page Center, VESR stakeholders articulated their perspective of the unique research, education and public service challenges and opportunities that VESR is uniquely well-positioned to address (see Appendix 5: Strategic Planning Workshops). Integrating these perspectives, VESR will develop financially sustainable methods to make meaningful progress towards achieving our vision for the future by focusing on six interdependent goals, all of which are equally important in support of our mission.

GOAL 1: RESEARCH EXCELLENCE

VESR will provide functional, safe and user-friendly facilities, technologies and expertise that support cutting-edge research for faculty and students from the University of California, and across the globe.

GOAL 2: FIELD-BASED EDUCATION

VESR will facilitate programs that enhance university level, field, experimental and laboratory-based teaching opportunities in the Eastern Sierra. VESR will strive to create an environment of diversity and inclusion in its support of university-level teaching activities.

GOAL 3: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

VESR will broaden its array of science communication and educational programs to engage with surrounding communities on scientific issues of societal relevance, and to provide science and outdoor learning opportunities for students of all ages and backgrounds. VESR will seek new partnerships with local organizations to work collaboratively to achieve this goal.

GOAL 4: DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

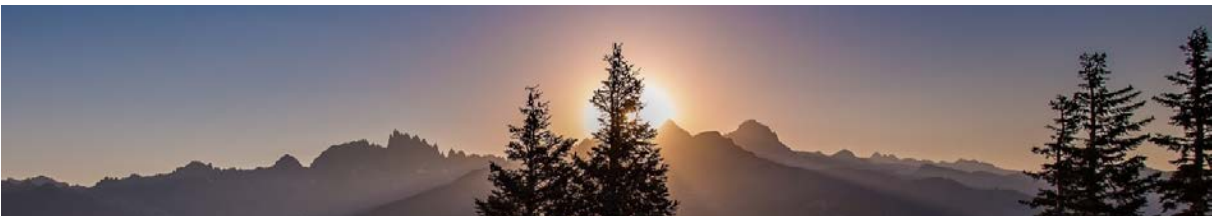
VESR will maintain a socially responsible environment in support of a body of users that reflect the diverse population of the state of California and the communities that the University of California serves. VESR will seek new opportunities, and increase capacity to engage with underserved populations across all programs.

GOAL 5: LAND STEWARDSHIP

VESR will utilize the resources of the field-based research endeavors to steward the lands of the reserves, and in the surrounding Sierra Nevada and Great Basin ecosystems. VESR seeks to achieve science-based and responsible stewardship of the regional biodiversity for the purposes of supporting both social and ecological well-being.

GOAL 6: SUSTAINABILITY

VESR will continue to work towards environmental sustainability by decreasing energy demands and reducing consumption of waste and other resources. VESR will aim to serve as a model of sustainable operations in the region.



Strategic Investments

To achieve these goals, we have identified priorities for strategic investment in three areas: **1)Programs, 2)People, and 3)Infrastructure**. The priorities have been identified largely through the strategic planning process utilizing outputs from the stakeholder workshops, steering committee meetings and decision-making of the VESR leadership.

With these strategic investments, the VESR community will work vigorously to ensure sustainability in all its dimensions. A diverse portfolio to fund these investments and support core operations will be vital to our success, as will active participation of local community members and others who contribute to the vitality of VESR and the vision we share for the future. We will actively continue efforts to seek funding for these investments through grant-writing as well as development efforts to expand our base of donors, and grow our endowment.

Strategic Investment 1: Programmatic Areas of Focus

Programmatic investments will focus on enhancing the research, education, and engagement activities of resident and visiting scientists, post-doctoral researchers, graduate and undergraduate students and VESR administrative and educational staff. They will be well aligned with the VESR's strategic goals and vision, and support VESR's role as a regional leader in research, education and public engagement in the Eastern Sierra region.

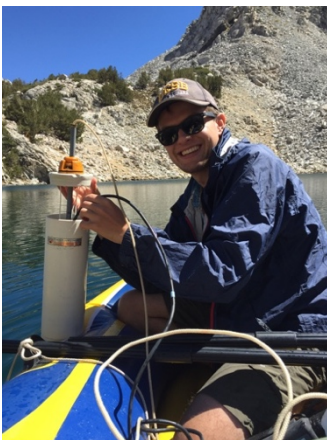
1. Build a vibrant research community at SNARL to serve as a regional center of expertise on Sierra Nevada and Great Basin Ecosystems
 - a. Increase focus on research and communication of science at SNARL
 - i. Sponsor people (Post-doctoral fellows, visiting scholars, K-12 teachers, graduate students via fellowships, undergraduate students via internships, high school students via internships, artists in residence, citizen scientists, science ambassadors)
 - ii. Facilitate science-based, and policy relevant workshops
 - iii. Develop an annual symposium to foster regional science, policy and management interactions
2. Establish and implement a robust data management plan for VESR
 - a. Document and archive existing datasets
 - b. Create web-based portal and map-based interface
 - c. Encourage new users to use and build on existing information
3. Program evaluation – ensure that education and engagement programs align with needs of community
 - a. Work with an experienced educational evaluator to evaluate education programs
 - b. Evaluate public engagement programs – tours, seminar series and adult education classes



Strategic Investment 2: People

VESR includes an outstanding assemblage of staff, resident and visiting researchers, faculty, graduate and undergraduate students, teachers, and philanthropic supporters that comprise the community that is critical to achieving our strategic goals. These people are the substantial asset of the Reserves and are a key component of the 5-10-year strategic planning effort presented herein.

1. Attain adequate staffing to maintain the lands, facilities and programs at VESR
 - a. Support facilities and operations by increasing steward staff
 - b. Expand education and engagement programs by increasing education and communications staff
 - c. Establish and implement data management plan by hiring an information manager
2. Increase diversity of reserve users, visitors and staff
 - a. Assess VESR demographics – who are we reaching, and who are we not
 - b. Publicize and promote opportunities for reserve use across underrepresented communities
 - c. Expand intellectual/disciplinary diversity through increased engagement with the arts and humanities
 - d. Recruit potential students and researchers from diverse populations through various organizations
3. Build Community – Create and enhance interactions and opportunities
 - a. Grow and strengthen our volunteer corps
 - b. Foster a respectful, safe and inclusive environment for all
 - c. Expand programs to engage with the local communities
 - d. Redesign, renovate and build new facilities that are aimed at fostering interactions among people



Strategic Investment 3: Infrastructure

Significant improvements to VESR infrastructure are needed to meet VESR’s strategic goals for the next decade. Since 1972, there have been a significant number of investments at both reserves to support its key programs, including but not limited to the renovation of housing units, classrooms, and laboratory, and the addition of an experimental stream channel complex, and a large classroom and meeting space. To best leverage these investments, a number of short- and long-term facilities needs are evident. Many buildings date from the 1920’s, and even more recent buildings have presented significant maintenance issues. Without significant infrastructure investment in the next 10 years, VESR’s role in research, university level education and education and public engagement will be compromised. The following represent the major infrastructure investments identified to further these goals.

1. Repairs, Improvements and Enhancement of Research Support Infrastructure at SNARL
 - a. Researcher housing – provide small, private accommodations for senior-level researchers
 - b. Housing for university classes – renovate housing at SNARL and Valentine to better accommodate needs of large classes and research groups
 - c. Researcher office, meeting and common spaces – redesign space in SNARL Headquarters to facilitate interactions among SNARL community
 - d. Experimental Stream channels – repair concrete and gates and install remaining 3 channels
 - e. Stream control structures – repair and replace broken concrete structures
 - f. Wet lab – fix broken plumbing and tanks, and update the layout of the laboratory
 - g. Technology and sensor networks – upgrade out-of-date technology and sensors
2. Enhancement of Education and Outreach Infrastructure at SNARL and Valentine Camp
 - a. Facilities to support Outdoor Science and Education Program (OSEP) at SNARL
 - b. Improvement of interpretive trails at Valentine and SNARL
3. Enhancement to the field station infrastructure at Valentine Camp
 - a. Upgrade antiquated water system
 - b. Improve Internet and network capabilities
 - c. Repair and or replace degraded utilities (electric, plumbing) in cabins
 - d. Repair cabin structures (roofs, chinking, floors)
4. Improve safety and security at SNARL and Valentine Camp
 - a. Fuels reduction (forest thinning, defensible space, weed removal)
 - b. Repair and replacement of fences and gates

