



The
UNIVERSITY
of **VERMONT**

RUBENSTEIN SCHOOL
OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES



RUBENSTEIN ECOSYSTEM
SCIENCE LABORATORY

Rubenstein Ecosystems Science Laboratory Strategic Plan 2018-2020

Mission

We engage in the study of ecosystems in the Lake Champlain basin and around the world and the education of students from primary to graduate levels. We address complex aquatic issues locally, nationally, and globally, and inform a dynamic network of scientists, educators, policy makers, and stakeholder communities.

What We're Facing---Our Challenge

The Rubenstein Laboratory is centered within a dynamic lake ecosystem at the nexus of a diverse and influential set of partners, representing public, private, and not-for-profit sectors. Lake Champlain has one of the largest watershed to lake area ratios in the world, spans international boundaries, and is uniquely fragmented into diverse lake regions. Our location on the shore of Lake Champlain offers an unmatched opportunity to conduct research on, and educate the public about, the most pressing aquatic issues facing the world today in dynamic and entrepreneurial ways. However, the limited space within the Rubenstein Laboratory, and the limited support staff dedicated to the Laboratory's mission, preclude our ability to effectively bring this rich array of opportunities and partners together along the research-education-outreach continuum. To achieve a new level of collaborative interdisciplinary excellence, we must realize a new and compelling vision.

Vision

NextGen Rubenstein Lab: An Internationally-Recognized Leader in Research, Education and Outreach in Aquatic Sciences

Over the next three years, we will create the intellectual and physical blueprint to become an internationally-recognized hub of scientific exchange, public outreach, and education to address critical aquatic issues at local to global scales. Central to our plan is creating the necessary space and support to engage in active and dynamic collaborations and interactions with the public, the academic community, research partners, government agencies, and not-for-profit groups. We will develop the plan for a renovated, expanded, and fully-staffed facility to enhance the volume and diversity of research we conduct, the education we deliver, and the communities we impact.

Strategies

To realize our vision, we will:

1. Design and acquire a state-of-the-art hybrid propulsion research and teaching vessel, and establish an endowment to support its operations and maintenance in perpetuity
2. Define a broad-scale plan that aligns with our vision for the NextGen Rubenstein Lab as an internationally-recognized leader in research, education, outreach, and partnership in aquatic sciences
3. Establish a network of interested partners who share and want to be part of the plan
4. Create a compelling conceptual blueprint for renovated facilities, platforms, and operations
5. Create a fundraising campaign plan to renovate the Rubenstein Laboratory and its capabilities, and provide long-term funding to support intended growth, including operations