Institute of Natural Resource Sustainability Library Advisory Task Force Charge

Background:
When the State Scientific Surveys were transferred from the Department of Natural Resources into the University of Illinois as the Institute of Natural Resource Sustainability (INRS), the Executive Director asked INRS staff to consider and make recommendations to consolidate library services. Initial considerations have included:

• retirement without replacement of the Illinois State Water Survey (ISWS) Librarian and eventual closure/merger of the ISWS library as a cost saving measure;
• contribution of 10 hours per week to staffing the Illinois Natural History Survey (INHS) Library by the Illinois Sustainable Technology Center (ISTC) Librarian (as of September 2008), and eventual closure of the ISTC Library and physical transfer of its collection;
• reduction of hourly support staff at the INHS Library;
• assignment of the INHS Librarian to serve as librarian for the ISWS (as of November 2008) and allocation of ISWS funds for hourly help for that librarian;
• contribution of 4 hours per week to staffing the INHS Library by the Illinois State Geological Survey (ISGS) Librarian (as of March 2010);
• reduced allocation for new materials acquisitions at the ISTC, ISWS, and ISGS Libraries; and
• internal search for INRS Head Librarian open to librarians within INRS1; INRS Head Librarian named (December 2009).

The INHS Library collection has been property of the University Library and is supported with funds from the University Library, the INHS, and a charitable endowment fund. The other Survey Library collections have been supported by and are the property of the individual Surveys and have never been part of the University Library collection. Consolidating Survey library collections involves not only technical aspects of cataloging and physical transfer of materials, but also the matters of collection ownership, future administration and management, staffing, and funds to support new acquisitions. Consolidation of the libraries will affect INRS staff and the University Library, and input from all stakeholders is needed to ensure the best possible outcome given the resources available. A short list of issues still to be resolved follows:

1 Until February 2010, only Illinois Natural History Survey, Illinois State Geological Survey, and Illinois State Water Survey, and Illinois Sustainable Technology Center were part of INRS; the Illinois State Archaeological Survey (ISAS) joined INRS in February 2010.
• Administrative home(s) of librarians and library staff in INRS units
• Contribution of INRS units to staffing of a public INRS Library service point
• Ownership of library collections of INHS, ISGS, ISTC, ISWS and ISAS
• Permanent locations of INHS, ISGS, ISTC, Illinois State Archaeological Survey (ISAS) and ISWS library collections
• Core services to be provided by INRS Libraries and their delivery
• Contribution of INRS and its divisions to continued support of the INRS Library's services and collections to meet the changing needs of researchers.

**Charge**

The INRS Library Advisory Task Force is charged with engaging staff in all divisions of the INRS and other stakeholders on planning for the future of Library services for INRS, making recommendations specific to the integration of the Survey Libraries with each other, and defining their relationship to the University of Illinois Library while sustaining a high level of service to INRS staff members. The task force is charged with providing a report of its assessment and recommendations to the INRS Executive Director by June 1, 2010, which shall cover the issues outlined below. Thereafter, the Task Force will serve as a steering committee to assist the INRS Library in implementing recommendations.

**Assessment:**

• Consult broadly with staff, particularly scientific staff, at all Surveys to develop an understanding of their existing and emerging library and information needs, as well as preferred delivery mechanisms.
• Identify core and emerging areas of research and study within INRS and at the University of Illinois that are served by the collections and expertise of the INRS libraries.
• Identify needs of other constituencies, including state government and citizens.
• Assess the overlap and gaps in library and information services to INRS staff at all Surveys.
• Evaluate the available information on library use. Assess whether services offered match patterns of use. Assess whether available data are sufficient for decision-making.
• Explore the models of other service areas within INRS, and models for library services in similar units or departments on campus and beyond.
• Establish communication as appropriate with relevant University Library units and committees to facilitate awareness of changes within the University Library that affect INRS, and to identify areas of possible collaboration.
• Identify the services available from the University Library (e.g., cataloging, barcoding, remote storage) to execute library consolidations and mergers if such are recommended.
• Assess the existing plans to close and move the ISTC and ISWS Libraries and to integrate their materials into a combined INRS Library in the Forbes Natural History Building (the current INHS Library) with respect to the impact on library services to staff at all Surveys as well as individual Survey budgets.
• Examine the present operations of the ISGS and ISAS Libraries and consider means of improving those operations via collaboration with the INRS Library at Forbes Natural History Building.
• Assess the impact on INHS and its staff of a combined Institute Library occupying the FNHB space, with respect to both space for collections, delivery of services to INHS staff, and functions now performed by the INHS Library for INHS.

Recommendations:
• Consider the relationship of the library at FNHB with those of the ISGS and ISAS, and recommend an appropriate structure for the INRS Library, that includes those satellite locations.
• Identify how and where to provide the most effective library services and access to information resources.
• Make recommendations for the hours of operation, staffing, location(s) and physical footprint(s), and service programs that would enable the INRS Library (at all locations) to meet the needs of INRS staff, as well as serve the campus and community in a manner consistent with the INRS mission and mindful of available resources.
• Recommend a plan for assessing the effectiveness of changes in staffing, hours, etc.
• Recommend a mechanism for allocating funds for future materials acquisitions to support the research of INRS staff and the public engagement mission of INRS, operating budget (including budgets for closure of libraries and movement of materials if such is recommended), and professional development for library staff.
• Ensure that plans for library collections and services are sustainable and address the needs of both current INRS units and are adaptable to changes, such as the addition of units and programs.
• Provide a timeline for implementing changes in public hours and staffing models for the public service point.
• Recommend an ongoing advisory structure for the INRS Library which is flexible enough to accommodate new units and programs as they are added.
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Others may be consulted as deemed necessary by the Task Force, subject to the approval of the
    INRS Executive Committee.