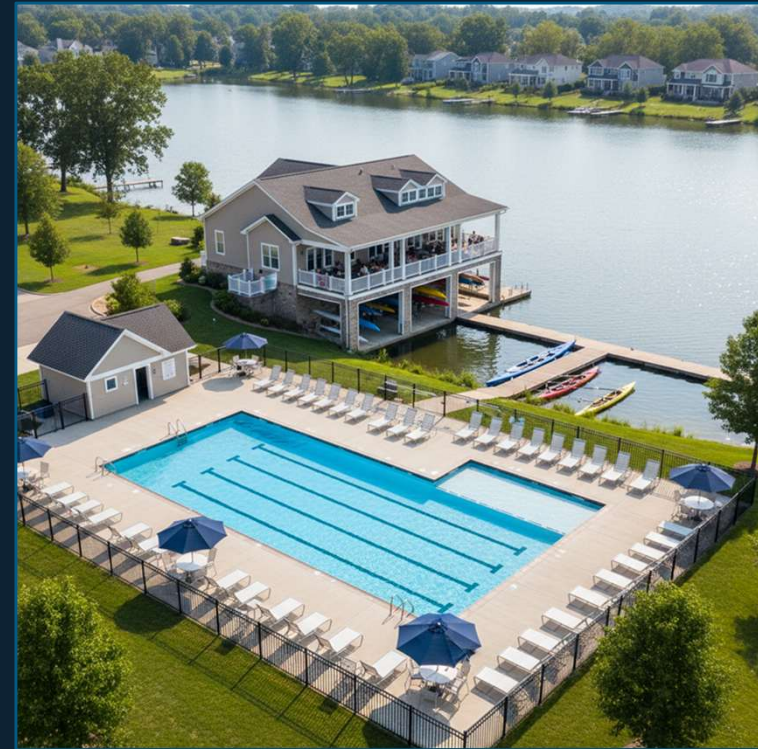


KOSCIUSKO LEADERSHIP ACADEMY



Kosciusko Aquatic & Rowing Initiative

A 10-Year Vision for Water Culture, Community, & Economic Strength



The Vision: From Lakes to Legacy

Kosciusko County's lakes already generate \$313M in annual economic impact — but broad **community** access to structured and equitable water recreation remains underdeveloped. This initiative proposes a phased, 10-year strategy to improve lake access through aquatics into a signature community asset: starting with a rowing club, growing into a public boathouse hub, and ultimately delivering a competitive aquatic center.



Phase 1 (0–36 mo.)

Launch rowing club at Winona Lake or Pike Lake. Essential equipment, storage, coaching, and community events (~\$60K fully operational club).



Phase 2 (Yr 3–6)

Build permanent boathouse & lakefront hub. Multi-use, event-ready. Comparable builds: \$550K–\$9M.



Phase 3 (Yr 6–10)

Construct aquatic center w/ competition pool. Built only after Phase 1–2 proves demand & operations.

THE PROBLEM

Lakes Without Organized Access



No repeatable pathway for structured, skill-building water recreation youth-to-adult



Indoor pool capacity exists (YMCA) but no dedicated competition/aquatics destination



Fairgrounds site is politically sensitive — requires trust-building and careful sequencing (Winona Lake design option)



Aquatic facilities typically require ongoing subsidy (40–70% cost recovery nationally)

The Core Challenge

*It's not whether the county has water.
It's whether it has a repeatable pathway for residents & visitors to participate safely, equitably, and consistently.*

Without action, lake usage remains limited — scenic but not systematically productive for **all** residents of Kosciusko county.

A \$313M Engine Ready to Shift Gears



\$313M

Annual Lake
Economic Impact

\$298M in business revenue + lake-influenced
property taxes



\$187M

Visitor Spending
in 2024

2.1M visitors • \$20M in state/local tax revenue •
2,145 jobs



\$5M

CAP Grant Program
Available Now

K21-managed, up to \$500K/project with 50%
match — Phase 1–2 ready

Three Strategic Pillars

01 **Equitable Lake Access = Improved quality of life.** Improved water access is a **growth strategy**, not niche recreation.

02 Tourism infrastructure creates repeat visitation. Event-capable facilities convert day visitors to overnight stays.

03 Community alignment already exists. Planning data shows public support for lakefront public benefit.

Survey Says: The Market is Ready

92%

Live in Kosciusko County

64%

Prefer to exercise outdoors

86%

Engaged in lake recreation in the past 12 months

37%

Do not own any boats

48%

Interested in a rowing club program with kayaks and SUPs
(71% including not sure)

75%

Would pay to access an outdoor pool

Pilot Rowing Club: Start Small, Prove Value



Governance Launch

Steering committee, operating entity (501c3 or park program), fundraising infrastructure



Safety First

USRowing safety standards, certified coaching, AED/safety equipment on the water



Community Programming

Youth-to-adult rowing, paddle programs, open houses, and a visible public event calendar



Site & Access

Secure water access at Winona Lake fairgrounds frontage; align with fair operations schedule

Budget Figures

Pilot Launch **~\$10K**

Full Club Launch **\$50K–\$60K**

Select Details: Rowing & Storage Equipment

Rowing Sculls (5 sculls) **\$20K delivered**

Coaching Launch & safety gear **\$~5K**

Dock & Storage Facility **~\$30K**

Permanent Boathouse & Lakefront Hub

A public-serving lakefront asset intentionally designed as community infrastructure — not a private club.

- ✓ Rowing & paddling storage and launch
- ✓ Multi-use event and gathering spaces
- ✓ Triathlon training support facilities
- ✓ Year-round programming capability
- ✓ Public park/waterfront access integration

Comparable Boathouse Costs

Small Functional
(Steel structure)
(30'x40') **~\$12K**

Mid-Size Multi-Use
Boathouse (pole barn to
more complex design) **\$500K–\$2M**

Large Event-Capable
Multi-use event venue design
(19,000–22,600 sq ft) **\$8–9M**

Scale to community proof of demand from Phase 1

Aquatic Center — The Signature Destination

⚡ Built ONLY after Phase 1–2 validates participation, operational capacity, and community trust.



Competition Pool

Multi-lane pool meeting USA Swimming standards for regional/state meets



Learn-to-Swim

Expanded youth pipeline — critical for safety, health equity, and community development



Year-Round Access

Indoor training when lakes are frozen — sustain the athlete base built in Phase 1–2

Cost & Operating Reality

Outdoor Family Center **\$8M–12M**

Indoor/Outdoor Bundle **~\$16M**

Typical Cost Recovery **40–70%**

Operating Model **Public service asset**

"Success = measurable public benefit within pre-agreed annual support bounds, plus tourism & youth outcomes."

A Phased, Proof-First 10-Year Pathway

Phase 1

Pilot Rowing Club

0–36 Months

Cost Range: ~\$10K–\$60K

- › Governance & steering committee
- › Equipment (rowing sculls & coach launch)
- › Storage (secure boat location & dock)
- › Access agreements (Pike Lake is likely)

Phase 2

Permanent Boathouse Hub

Years 3–6

Cost Range: \$550K–\$2M

- › Public lakefront boathouse
- › Multi-use event-capable facility
- › Paddling, triathlon, community use
- › Year-round programming launch

Phase 3

Aquatic Center

Years 6–10

Cost Range: \$8M–\$12M+

- › Competition pool + program water
- › Learn-to-swim pipelines
- › Event hosting & sports tourism
- › Built only after Phase 1–2 proves demand

Designed for Sustainability

Steering Committee

Decision Authority · Scope · Sequencing



Funding Champion

K21 grant pathways, major donors, philanthropic anchor



Site & Operations Champion

Fairgrounds/Warsaw parks location + parks liaison, seasonal operations coordination



Program & Safety Champion

USRowing safety standards, coaching, risk management



Environmental Stewardship

Lilly Center partnership — lake health + education alignment

Community Accountability Loop: Public updates, annual scorecard, transparent decision gates — the trust engine.

Funding Sources

CAP Grant (K21)

Phase 1–2

\$5M program, up to \$500K/project with 50% match. Quarterly LOI cycles.

OIRI / READI

Phase 2–3

\$30M state OIRI grant (OrthoWorx steward). READI = quality-of-place match leverage.

Private Philanthropy

All Phases

Lead donors + named spaces. Confidence grows as earlier phases deliver visible outcomes.

LARE / LWCF

Phase 1–2

Indiana Lake & River Enhancement + Land & Water Conservation Fund — lake stewardship grants.

Design principle: Layer private philanthropy, state quality-of-place grants, and competitive programs. Avoid program restrictions that could constrain future land use.

Three Dimensions of Return



Participation & Health

- › Structured outdoor exercise
- › Learn-to-swim pipelines
- › Youth opportunity expansion
- › Aligned with 64% outdoor exercise preference



Tourism & Events

- › \$187M existing visitor spending
- › Event-ready facilities convert day visitors to overnight stays (regattas, swim meets, etc...)
- › \$128B national sports tourism industry
- › Sports events = room nights



Lake Economy Protection

- › \$313M in annual lake economic impact at stake
- › Boathouse hub = stewardship messaging
- › Smart lake usage = maintain water quality
- › Protect and grow the lake economic engine

Planned For — Not Ignored

Stakeholder friction at fairgrounds

Phase 1 designed for reversibility. Governance includes fair-related stakeholders. Align with their calendar and priorities.



Regulatory delays for shoreline work

Early coordination with Indiana DNR (Lake Preservation Act) and USACE/IDEM for dredge/fill permits. Plan as baseline constraint.



Operating subsidy backlash

Define acceptable annual support, growth targets, and revenue strategies upfront. Model capital replacement reserves.



Lake health concerns

Integrate Lilly Center research/education. Use IDEM guidance for public risk messaging. Design safety-forward programming.



Under-programming

Phase 1 explicitly proves programming demand before vertical construction. Sports tourism only when calendar is credible.



Data Needed to Finalize & Launch

01

Parks Department Agreement (Rowing)

Initial conversations with the Warsaw Parks Department indicated a willingness to explore options along Pike Lake. A commitment to progress forward is a required next step.

02

Site Control Documentation (Rowing & Pool)

Lease, easement, or MOU constraints on the fairgrounds (if a feasible path) frontage to responsibly finalize site concepts.

03

Baseline Access Analysis (Rowing)

Inventory of existing public access points, docks/ramps, and rowing-suitable launch areas on Winona Lake/Pike Lake.

04

Aquatic Center Feasibility Study (Pool)

High-level program spec (lane count, seating, recreation water inclusions) to narrow Phase 3 cost ranges.

05

Champion Identification (Rowing & Pool)

Identify funding champion, site/operations champion, and program champion to form the steering committee.

A BOLD CALL TO ACTION

Kosciusko County doesn't need to invent demand for water recreation.

It already exists. The county needs to organize it, make it more accessible, and scale it into a destination-quality system.

If the lakes are already producing \$313M in annual economic value, then building the next layer of public water infrastructure is not extravagance —

it is stewardship, health infrastructure, and a generational investment in community strength.

Plan Outline

1

Launch steering committee with champion model — funding, site/ops, program, accountability.

2

Secure site access at Winona or Pike Lake and initiate Phase 1 pilot with \$10K investment.

3

Apply to CAP grant program through K21 to fund Phase 1–2 enabling infrastructure.



Kosciusko C O U N T Y

Kosciusko County Aquatics:
Rowing & Outdoor Pool as a Growth Strategy

