

# **The decision to sell the Luther Dell property FAQ's**

## **What was the process you went through to come to this decision to sell Luther Dell?**

In 2016 we assembled a highly invested group of 14 individuals to work on a Strategic Design Task Force for our organization. The Task force consisted of the Executive Director, Associate Director, the Board President, and another 11 whom were carefully selected from across our constituency and our community, each with an area of expertise that added immense value to the process. The task force dedicated 12 months to this evaluation process that included an external assessment, internal assessment and individual site assessments. It was the recommendation of the Strategic Design Task Force to sell the Luther Dell property. Since this initial recommendation, continued conversations occurred with camp staff and our Board of Directors. Unanimously, all have come to the decision to sell the Luther Dell property.

## **What is the camper registration history at Luther Dell?**

Summer registrations at Luther Dell have been in decline for many years. From 2009-2014 it dropped 31%. Registrations for the summer of 2016 were so low that we projected to incur a \$100,000 loss. This loss, coupled with over \$1,000,000 in losses from the past, is no longer sustainable. This loss affects the whole LWLBC system and does not allow us to be good stewards of our resources.

## **Who are the users of Luther Dell?**

Initially, one of the main reasons we agreed to take on ownership of Luther Dell was to accommodate more campers, which would ease up demand at the Wapo site. It was soon discovered that the Luther Dell setting, with around 80-100 camper capacity, was ideally suited for confirmation camps. Churches would bring 80-100 people and share in the programming duties. Over the years, confirmation camp requirements have changed in churches. It is worth noting that by not offering programming at Luther Dell during the 2017 summer season, we were able to re-direct about 80% of LD users to opportunities at Wapo, WCB and Ox Lake. The feedback on this has been mostly positive, with users eager to hear about plans for more buildings and programs at Ox Lake.

## **Isn't it worth just keeping the property because you already own it?**

Although the property is beautiful, there are several maintenance issues and unsafe structures that pose concerns to guests at Luther Dell. The internal assessment sub-team of the Strategic Design Task Force, documented many of these problems. Because of the budget constraints of the site, there aren't funds available to address these issues.

## **Why don't you just open Luther Dell in the summer?**

The fixed costs to open Luther Dell for a shorter season do not significantly differ from running the camp for a full summer. Whether the camp is open for a week or a summer, a summer site director, maintenance staff, counseling staff, cooks, year round administration, and upkeep remained relatively fixed.

## **Can we use GoFundMe or a similar crowd fundraising effort to keep Luther Dell?**

In exploring this option, we know that Luther Dell has not had a large donor base of individuals or congregations that support it financially. In addition to financial support, we haven't been able to identify any congregation(s) that can support operations through consistent and long term usage. If we were to raise a very large one-time sum of money to bring necessary updates to the site, there still is not a significant usage pattern that would sustain the operation of the site.

## **What will you do with the proceeds from the sale?**

We will invest in the ministry that God has called us into. We have many deferred maintenance projects at Wapo, Ox Lake and Wilderness Canoe Base to consider. We also see many areas for growth and building that could occur on all three sites, which are incredibly exciting to consider. We certainly value the history and opportunities that have played out at Luther Dell over the years, but we are absolutely convinced that there will be new opportunities for growth to come.