



## About The Ocracoke Foundation

In 2003, a group on Ocracoke Island formed to focus on saving the Historic Berkley Manor and its harbor-front greenspace. Approved by the Hyde County Commissioners, the Berkley Steering Committee was formed. The goal was to save the property from development and utilize the greenspace and historic structures for community needs and tourism activities. As interest in the project developed, it became clear that no entity existed on Ocracoke that could facilitate, apply for and administer funding, and aid community-based projects.

The answer was to create such an entity, and thus, the Ocracoke Foundation was formed. By assisting local non-profits, addressing critical infrastructure issues through data and research, seeking opportunities, and obtaining funds, the Ocracoke Foundation fosters the development of projects on the island that benefit the community economically, socially and environmentally.

### Mission of OFI

The Ocracoke Foundation (OFI) pursues projects and initiatives that benefit our remote, unbridged island community. We focus on environmental stewardship, historic preservation, education and responsible economic development. Our key past projects and initiatives include:

#### *Saving Ocracoke's Last Fish House*

In the spring of 2006, Ocracoke watermen learned that the last operating fish house would not re-open and was for sale. Individually, no waterman would be able to afford the \$325,000 price tag plus \$407,000 in renovation costs. These 20+ watermen required ice, a commercial truck, a warehouse and a retail market. Without them, fishing as an industry on Ocracoke would die. The Ocracoke Foundation worked with the watermen to develop the Ocracoke Working Watermen's Association (OWWA), which is housed under the OFI umbrella. The Ocracoke Seafood Company was then established as a for-profit subsidiary where revenues can be re-circulated within the fishing industry. Partners included Golden LEAF Foundation, Hyde County Economic Development, The NC Rural Center and The Conservation Fund Resourceful Communities Program. Today OWWA has 42 watermen, and in 2014, the project was selected to be the United States example by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations as *"A case study of collective action in small-scale fisheries."*

#### *The Ocracoke Community Radio Station*

In July of 2007, a small group of Ocracoke residents, understanding the need and value of a local radio station, researched the steps involved in acquiring an FCC license. A rare opportunity was available. The FCC opened a one-time filing window from October 12, 2007 to October 19, 2007 which was set aside for applications from non-profits that were seeking non-commercial, community-focused radio licenses. Only 250 permits would be issued. The newly forming Ocracoke Community Radio Project approached OFI to request fiscal and technical support. The OFI Board enthusiastically approved supporting this effort. The role of OFI was to write and administer grants, as well as apply for and hold the FCC permit, until the group established itself. In 2013 when the Ocracoke Community Radio Project completed a business plan, established a diverse Board and organizational structure, OFI transferred the FCC permit.

#### *Conduct Research and Provide Data*

A primary obstacle for any project or initiative is having current data and research. Regardless of high coastal land values and being a tourist mecca, Ocracoke is a rural community in Hyde County where 1000+ year-round residents contend with community issues, such as lack of affordable housing, maintaining water quality, preservation of key architectural assets and financially supporting non-profits that provide essential services for the island. Between 2010 and 2013, OFI focused on producing research and data on affordable housing, needs of local non-profits, and public restrooms, that would provide a basis for creating a better quality of life for island residents. The most significant research:

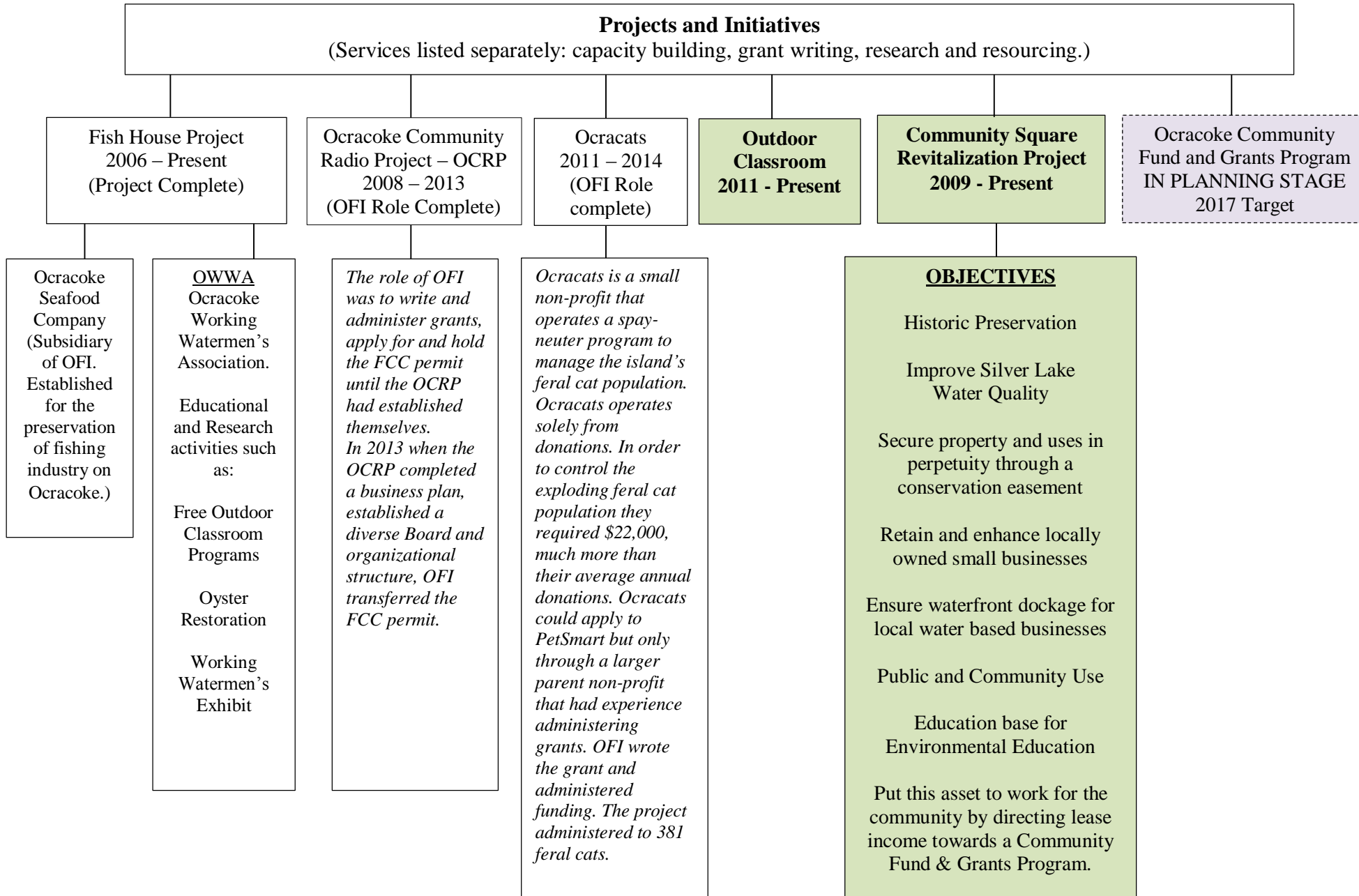
#### *Water Quality*

2010-2013 OFI partnered with NCSU Soil Science Department, Hyde County Government and NC Coastal Federation and Ocracoke School Science Teachers to perform and analyze water samples taken throughout the island over nine months. The objective was to identify sources of pollution in Silver Lake Harbor so that stormwater and wastewater improvements can be accurately addressed. The goal is to improve water quality, with initial efforts now underway through Hyde County Government and Ocracoke Civic and Business Association.

Over

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## OCRACOKE FOUNDATION MISSION POINTS

*Be a resource and partner for the community on the path towards becoming a sustainable community.*

**Preservation of Assets – Historic, Cultural and Natural**

**Economic Diversity**

**Education**

**Dedicated Income Stream for Community Needs**

**Cleaner Local Environment**

**Improved Civic Engagement**



[www.ocracokefoundation.org](http://www.ocracokefoundation.org)