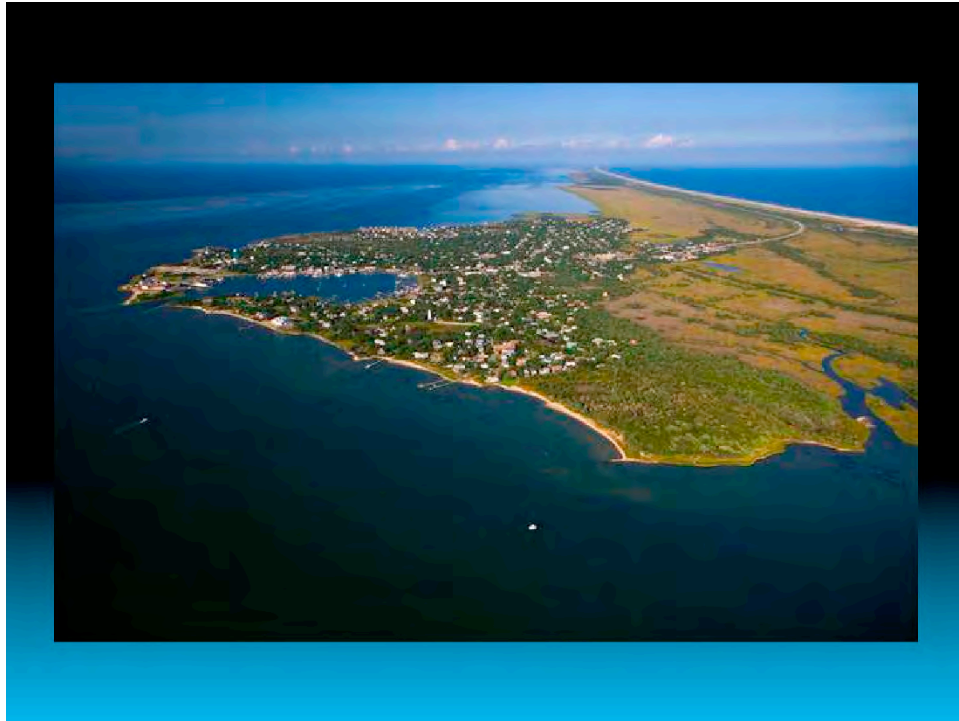




Ocracoke Island, North Carolina

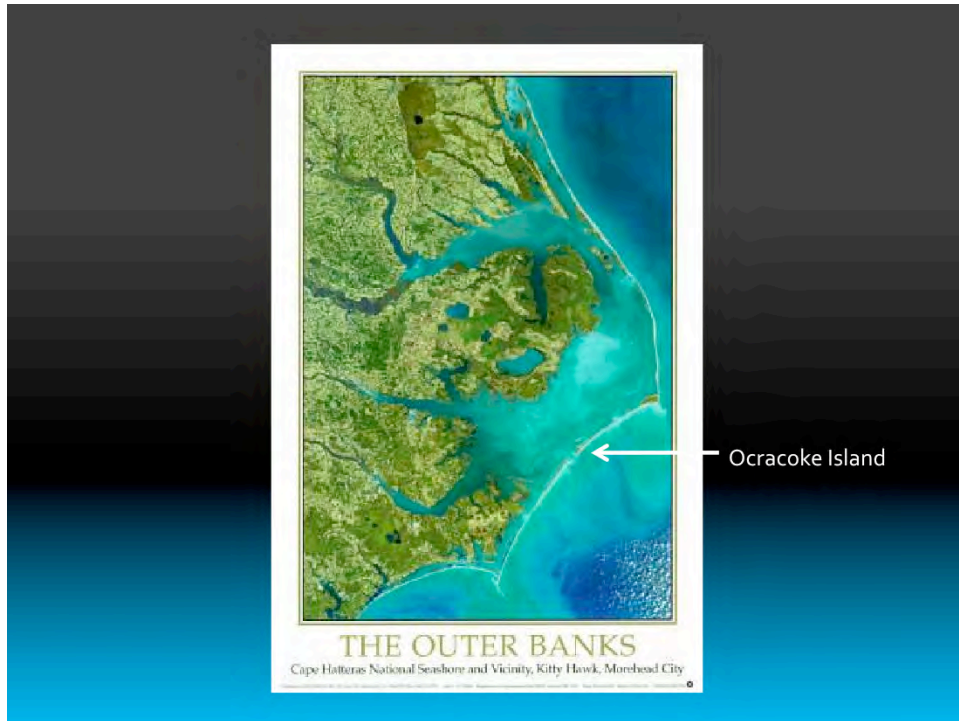
Presentation by Hardy Plyler, fisherman and member, Ocracoke Working Watermens' Association and Ocracoke Seafood Company, Ocracoke, NC

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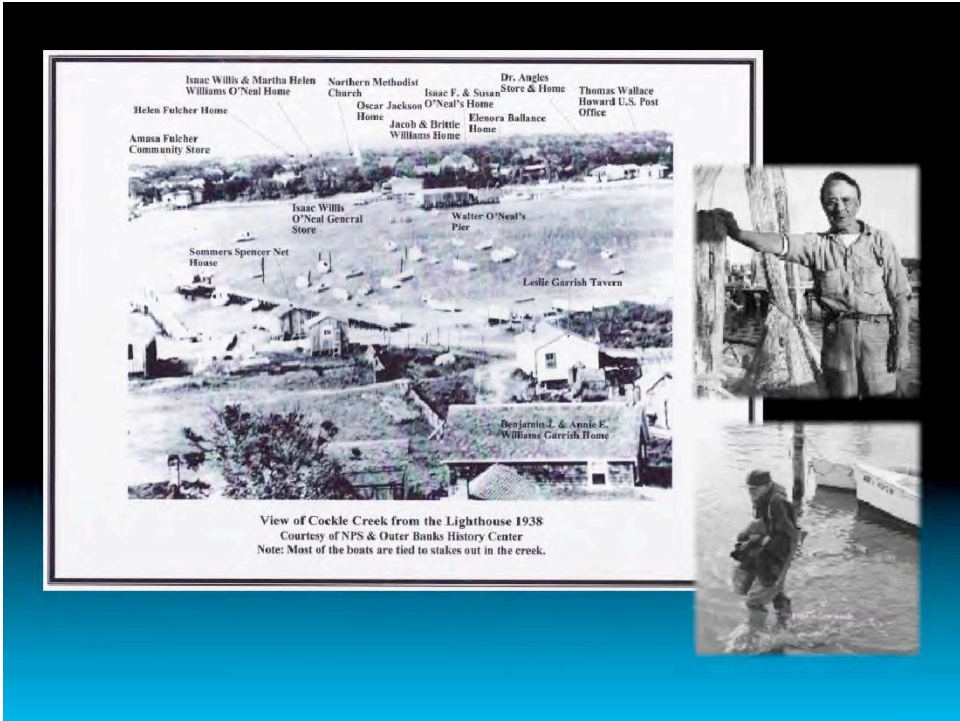
Ocracoke/ un-bridged island /Settled in the early 1700's – a maritime community who fished to put food on the table.

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Located on the Outer Banks of North Carolina. We are the place the Weather Channel comes to look for hurricanes. That puts us on the ocean where we fish for species of finfish in the ocean that supports both recreational and commercial fishing.

We are also at the mouth of Pamlico Sound, the second largest inland body of water on the East Coast (Chesapeake Bay the largest) with miles of estuaries fed by creeks, rivers and marshes which is the feeding ground for shrimp, oysters, clams, crabs, scallops and many species of finfish.



Commercial fishing has been the mainstay of this community for generations. Our culture and our economy has historically been grounded in this way of life. We are working to make sure it stays that way.

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Talk about the realities of the fishing industry and the parallels with farming

We help feed the world. Even though the large majority of the seafood eaten in this country is imported, the 20% (and growing) that is harvested domestically is what we bring to the table.

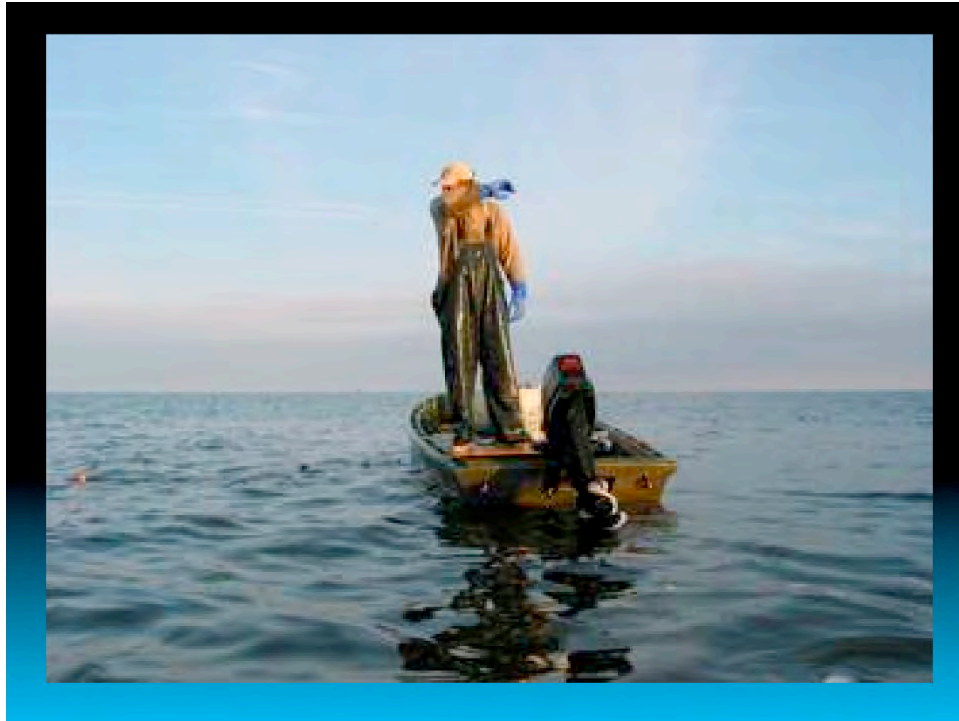


Fewer farmers/fishers –

they are aging, and young folks with families, even though they want to be fishermen they need steady incomes. Most of our young fishermen have wives with regular jobs and insurance to support the family. Fishing can be profitable, but it can also be a total loss.

it's tough to get young people started into the industry because of the initial costs (boats, gear, equipment, need for a place to dock their boat, a support system for getting their seafood to market)

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it is also a hard way to make a living; most folks have to be born into it



Fishermen have become educators as well as fishermen. Most folks assumed because they were eating seafood at the coast that it was fresh and local but that wasn't the case. Now the public is much more aware of the need to ASK for local seafood and restaurants are responding with providing more fresh-caught local seafood.



The local foods movement has provided fishermen with a ready audience to learn more about the source of their seafood. The Catch groups (Ocracoke Fresh, Carteret Catch, Outer Banks Catch and Brunswick Catch) were formed to help develop a plan to “educate” consumers of the quality of fresh local seafood in our coastal counties. These programs are community-based marketing efforts that are now coming together to form a statewide promotional program. The NC Department of Agriculture and the NC Rural Center are working with us to develop a non-profit to support these local efforts.



Tami Gray, Captain of the Hatteras Concierge

We also wanted consumers to understand the connection between the fishermen and the seafood product. Much “know your farmer” we want them to “know their fishermen” and that has helped support the development of CSFs – Community Supported Fisheries

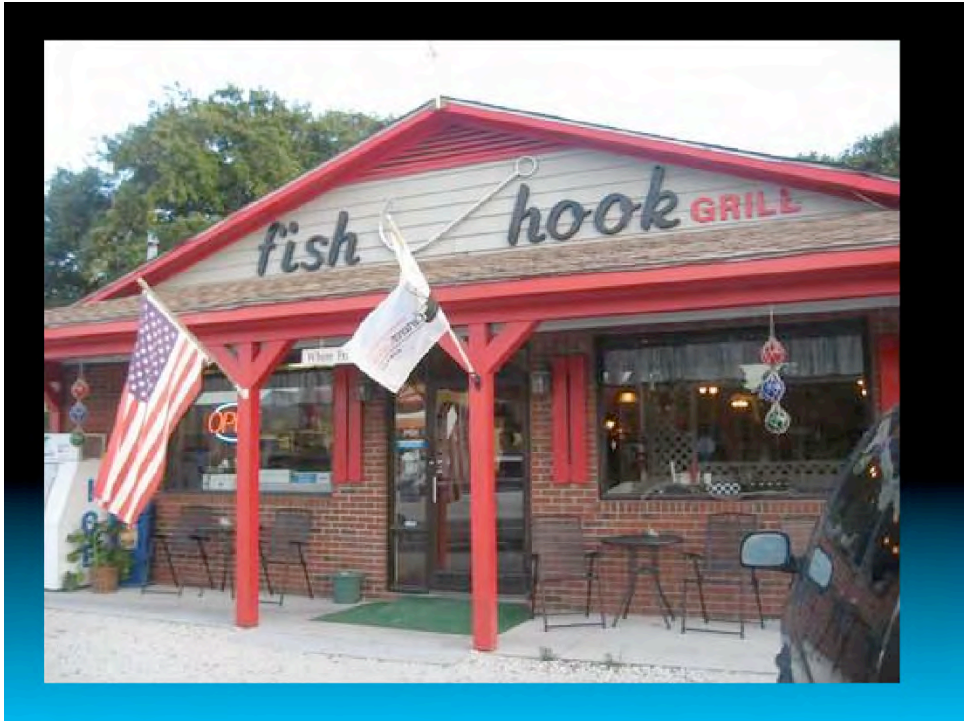


where fishermen and processing (cleaning, filleting) regular deliveries of fresh seafood to inland counties. Right now, Core Sound Seafood and Walking Fish are delivering weekly to Carrboro, Raleigh, Durham and other locations are being added to get our NC fresh seafood to our inland areas. Just like the agricultural model, the varieties vary with the season so that in the fall the deliveries are mostly of fish, scallops and oysters. In the summer it is shrimp, clams, fish and crab. Just like w/ the CSAs, not only are the shareholders getting fresh local seafood but they are getting to know the fishermen, usually their families (who help w/ deliveries) and a relationship is being built. They will never look at imported shrimp the same way!

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In 2006 we learned that our only remaining fish house would not open and was put up for sale.

Fishermen need bulk ice, a facility to unload their catch and a truck to haul off island. No fish house meant the fishing industry would die.

There were about 32 of us. Some part time some full time. We began holding meetings to discuss our future. What started out as an effort to save jobs became also an effort to preserve our maritime community and the roots of many native families, a way to continue to put fresh fish on the table, a way to enhance our local economy.



We worked with volunteers in the community, local nonprofits, Conservation Fund's Resourceful Communities Program, legislators, state agencies and funders; we identified our needs and our goals; looked at benefits to community, environment and economy; identified awareness through education as a key objective. First we needed to build an infrastructure.



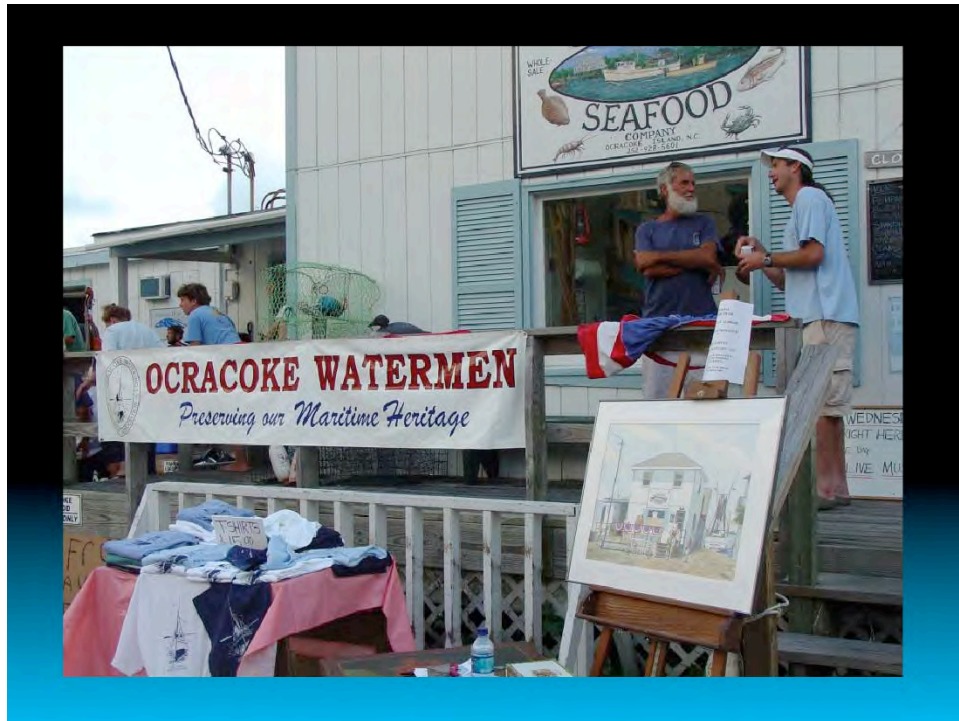
The biggest questions – what type of ownership and business structure could be developed and How would we obtain funding to purchase business \$325,000 which included long term 99 year lease and an additional \$350,000 in needed renovations. Our homework on needs and goals showed two main focuses – (1)education/ research and (2)need for a for-profit business.

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Based on those 2 focus points we (1) Establish the Ocracoke Working Watermens Association (OWWA) under a nonprofit to manage research and restoration projects and all educational efforts. (2) Establish a for profit business Ocracoke Seafood Company.



With a plan in place we applied for grants and received \$325,000 from the NC Rural Economic Development Center to purchase the business and \$407,710 from NC Golden LEAF Foundation for needed renovations, equipment, marketing, oyster restoration tools and equipment.



Our renovation was completed in 2009.

We have challenges BUT the model is working and shows sustainability at work. We are putting fresh food on the table/watermen have ownership in the process/people are working together/the community is proud of the effort/we provide education to the public/money changes hands in the community at multiple levels/and as a community we are involved in planning for our future.

OCRACOKE SEAFOOD COMPANY - 2010 END OF YEAR SALES REPORT					
	Fresh Seafood brought into the Fish House		Total Seafood Purchased From Fishermen	End of Year Total Retail & Wholesale (includes T shirts, condiments, ice etc.)	# of Fishermen Working Out Of Fish House
	Ocracoke Fishermen	Non-Ocracoke Fishermen			
2005	N/A No Fish	House Available	\$00.00	\$00.00	0
2006	\$263,591.15	\$31,135.95	\$294,727.10	\$383,589.92	31
2007	\$288,041.55	\$113,721.88	\$401,763.43	\$557,622.61	22
2008	\$125,446.58	\$105,656.30	\$231,102.88	\$543,495.24	32
2009	\$280,402.14	\$80,303.11	\$360,705.25	\$587,733.96	39
2010	\$550,290.40	\$77,290.40	\$627,580.00	\$921,454.33	41



In 2005 the chart shows 00.00 In December 2010 Ocracoke Seafood Company did \$921,000 with 41 fishermen plus 3 fish house employees.

Infrastructure – we have a secure base of operations from this point we can springboard to value-added seafood products. We can deliver fresh seafood direct to consumers, and possibly build a local commercial kitchen for prepared seafood dishes that can be sold retail or wholesale.



What we're doing through OWWA –
Educational outreach efforts teach the public about tradition of fishing on the island,
history and help raise awareness of the benefits of eating fresh locally caught.

The Ocracoke Working Watermen's Exhibit was created to show how fishing – past
and present – plays an important role in connecting community, environment,
traditional workplace and the local economy.



Conduct tours of the fish house for school children from other NC counties

Speak at seminars for the NC Center for the Advancement of Teaching



Regularly have exhibits at public events such as the Annual NC Seafood Festival



Our oyster restoration project is focused on restoring oysters to areas too shallow for large state owned vessels to work access. Ocracoke Island is surrounded by historic oyster reefs, which were major producers for the New Bern market at the end of the 19th century. However, over-harvesting stopped regeneration and the region has seen very little or no oyster production for many years. Ocracoke oystermen use tongs – we do not employ mechanical methods for oystering or clamming. Oysters play a role in clean water, promote fish habitat and supply local restaurants with fresh oysters. We are also going to establish a named scholarship fund for high school graduates wishing to pursue study in the marine based field – whether it is fishing or research.

- a) the role that funders / grantmaking has played in advancing the programs and infrastructure that are part of the current seafood systems
- b) other ways that grantmaking could help advance what is being done.

Golden LEAF and the Rural Center investing in buying the business and renovating the fish house; Golden LEAF investing in Outer Banks Catch and what they are doing to market more broadly.

If there are aspects of CSFs that could be strengthened with grant dollars, we should include those; and raise the issue of funding for purchasing working waterfront property assessments (need to secure dockage for watermen), purchase of development rights, establishing trade school for marine based education, commercial kitchen, etc. It will be especially important to acknowledge the in-kind contributions that have been leveraged by the fishing community families through the fundraisers, the work on the fish house, etc.