
National Park Service
Cultural Landscapes Inventory

2018



Road to the Beach
Cape Lookout National Seashore

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Cultural Landscapes in the Cultural Resources Inventory System:

The Cultural Resources Information System (CRIS)

CRIS is the National Park Service's database of cultural resources on its lands, consisting of archeological sites, historic structures, ethnographic resources and cultural landscapes. The set of CRIS records for cultural landscapes is referred to as CRIS-CL. CRIS-CL records conform to a standardized data structure known as the Cultural

Landscapes Inventory (CLI).

The legislative, regulatory and policy directions for conducting and maintaining the CRIS are: Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act, NPS Management Policies (2006), Director's Order 28 (Cultural Resources) and Director's Order 28a (Archeology).

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI)

The CLI is the data structure within CRIS used to document and evaluate all potentially significant cultural landscapes in which NPS has, or plans to acquire any enforceable legal interest.

Each CRIS-CL record is certified complete when the landscape is determined to meet one of the following:

- Landscape individually meets the National Register of Historic Places criteria for evaluation; or,
- Landscape is a contributing element of a property that is eligible for the National Register; or,
- Landscape does not meet the National Register criteria, but is managed as cultural resources because of law, policy or decisions reached through the park planning process.

Cultural landscapes vary from historic sites, historic designed landscapes, historic vernacular landscapes to historic ethnographic landscapes, but may also fit within more than one type. Those eligible for the National Register have significance in the nation's history on a national, state or local level, as well as integrity or authenticity.

The legislative, regulatory and policy directions for conducting and maintaining the CLI within CRIS are: *National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (16 USC 470h-2(a)(1)). Each Federal agency shall establish...a preservation program for the identification, evaluation, and nomination to the National Register of Historic Places...of historic properties...*

Executive Order 13287: Preserve America, 2003. Sec. 3(a)...Each agency with real property management responsibilities shall prepare an assessment of the current status of its inventory of historic properties required by section 110(a)(2) of the NHPA...No later than September 30, 2004, each covered agency shall complete a report of the assessment and make it available to the Chairman of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Secretary of the Interior...

Executive Order 13287: Preserve America, 2003. Sec. 3(c) Each agency with real property management responsibilities shall, by September 30, 2005, and every third year thereafter, prepare a report on its progress in identifying... historic properties in its ownership and make the report available to the Council and the Secretary...

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Federal Agency Historic Preservation Programs Pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act, 1998. Standard 2: An agency provides for the timely identification and evaluation of historic properties under agency jurisdiction or control and/or subject to effect by agency actions (Sec. 110 (a)(2)(A) Management Policies 2006. 5.1.3.1 Inventories: The Park Service will (1) maintain and expand the following inventories...about cultural resources in units of the national park system...Cultural Landscape Inventory of historic designed landscapes, historic vernacular landscapes,... and historic sites...

Cultural Resource Management Guideline, 1997, Release No. 5, page 22 issued pursuant to Director's Order #28. As cultural resources are identified and evaluated, they should also be listed in the appropriate Service-wide inventories of cultural resources.

Inventory Unit Description:

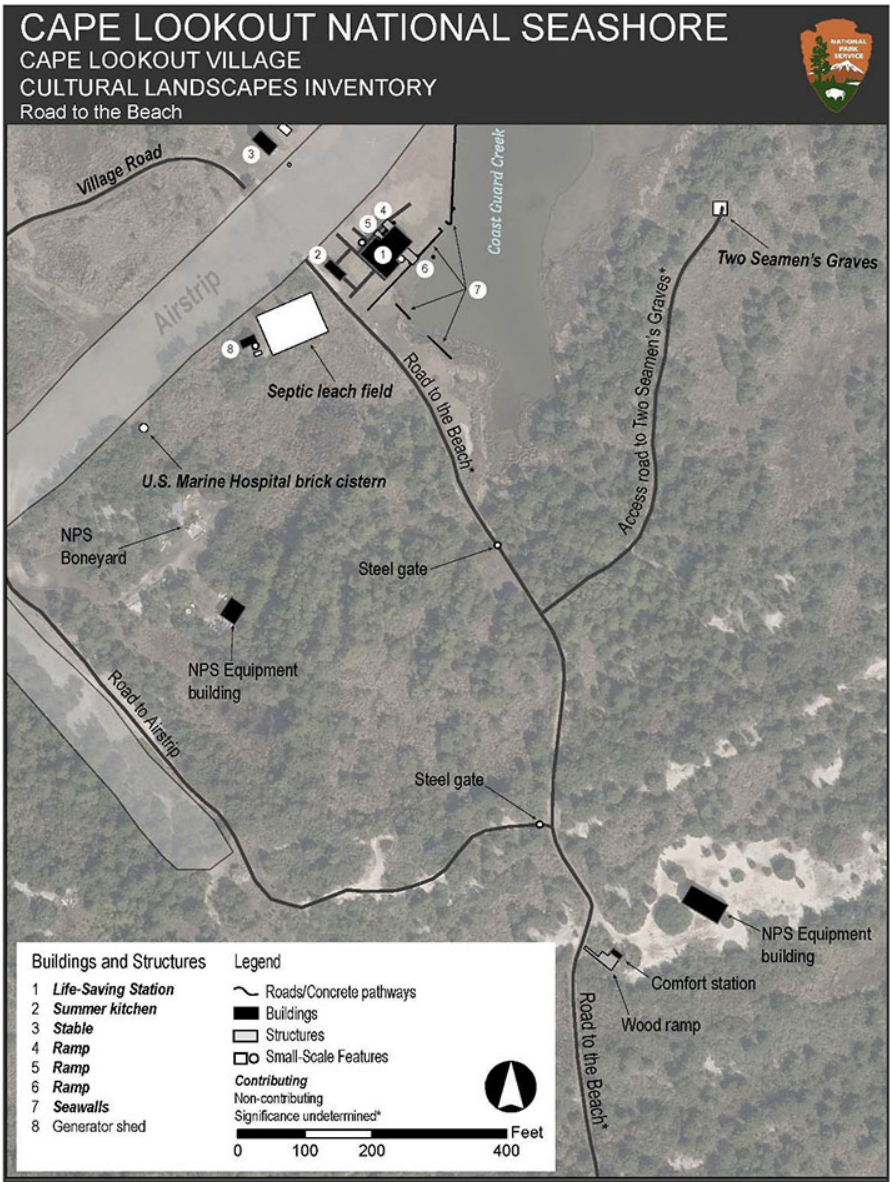
Portsmouth Village is a National Register of Historic Places district located on the northern end of Cape Lookout National Seashore, Carteret County, North Carolina. Cape Lookout National Seashore was established in 1966 “to preserve for public use and enjoyment an area in the State of North Carolina possessing outstanding natural and recreation values” (U.S. Congress, 80 Stat. 33, approved 10 March 1966). Portsmouth Village is the sole surviving village on the Core Banks south of Ocracoke Island. The district contains several dozen historic buildings and structures, associated circulation features, tidal creeks, sandy hammocks, vegetation communities, and a range of small-scale features, in addition to other related cultural landscape features.

The period of significance for the Portsmouth Village Historic District begins in 1753 and concludes in 1971, encompassing the establishment of the community through the time when the last permanent residents left the island. The district is significant at the state level under Criteria A, C, and D of the National Register of Historic Places, in the areas of social history, maritime history, military history, architecture, and archeology. The site retains sufficient integrity to convey the associations of its period of significance to the visitor.

Within Portsmouth Village is the Road to the Beach component landscape. The component landscape contains the Road to the Beach which travels from the Portsmouth Life-Saving Station to the south/southeast. Other circulation features includes an access road to two seamen’s graves, the 1940s airstrip, and a road to access the airstrip from the Road to the Beach. In addition to the resources associated with the Portsmouth Life-Saving Station, the component landscape includes a U.S. marine hospital brick cistern, large septic leach field, the graves of two seamen, and modern NPS additions including equipment storage buildings, comfort station, and a boneyard.

The majority of extant cultural features survive from the early to mid-twentieth century and the Portsmouth Village Historic District landscape most closely reflects its character as it evolved during this time. Surviving resources represent the continuation of the earliest patterns of construction, land use, and way of life. No buildings exist from the initial eighteenth century development period and only a handful of structures remain from the nineteenth century. The site lacks integrity for this early period. Other modifications to the historic district include changes in circulation, vegetation, and alterations to accommodate the administration of Cape Lookout National Seashore.

Site Plan



Site plan for Road to the Beach

Property Level and CLI Numbers

Inventory Unit Name:	Road to the Beach
Property Level:	Landscape
CLI Identification Number:	976094
Parent Landscape:	976096

Park Information

Park Name and Alpha Code:	Cape Lookout National Seashore - Road to the Beach - CALO
Park Organization Code:	5210
Park Administrative Unit:	Cape Lookout National Seashore

CLI Hierarchy Description

The Portsmouth Village parent landscape contains five component landscapes: Haulover Point and West Portsmouth Village, Doctor’s Creek and East Portsmouth Village, Portsmouth Life-Saving Station Complex, Road to the Beach, and Schoolhouse Environs

Concurrence Status

Inventory Status: Complete

Completion Status Explanatory Narrative:

The information in this CLI was derived from the Portsmouth Village Cultural Landscape Report, which was signed by acting Superintendent Michael McGee on November 13, 2007. Further fieldwork was completed by the Southeast Regional Office in June 2017 to update the district's existing conditions for this CLI.

Concurrence Status:

Park Superintendent Concurrence:	Yes
Park Superintendent Date of Concurrence:	08/08/2018
National Register Concurrence:	Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination
Date of Concurrence Determination:	11/29/1978

National Register Concurrence Narrative:

The Portsmouth Village Historic District nomination was determined to meet the National Register criteria by the SHPO and was entered in the National Register of Historic Places on November 29, 1978.

Concurrence Graphic Information:

Attachment File Path

Resource Management Categories

Management categories are hierarchical, and are based on the significance, use, condition, and location of the resource as it relates to the National Register criteria. The below-listed management categories function for both the LCS and CLL. This hierarchy is represented by four Management Category Codes as described below:

Category A: Resources that **MUST** be Preserved and Maintained

A resource meeting any of the following criteria must be classified in Category A:

- the resource's preservation is specifically legislated;
- the resource is related to the park's legislated significance;
- the resource is nationally significant as defined by the National Historic Landmark criteria (Category of Significance Ia);
- the resource is less than nationally significant, but contributes to the park's national significance (Category of Significance Ib);
- the resource is prehistoric.

Category B: Resources that **SHOULD** be Preserved and Maintained

A resource must individually meet all of the following criteria to be placed in Category B (failure to meet any of the conditions moves it to a lower category):

- the resource may meet the National Register criteria individually or as a contributing element of a site or district (Categories of Significance II and III);
- the resource is not incompatible with the park's legislated significance;
- the resource has a continuing or potential use based upon design and location.

Category C: Resources that **MAY** be Preserved or Maintained

A resource that meets either of the following conditions must be placed in Category C:

- the resource may meet the National Register criteria individually or as a contributing element of a site or district, but because of condition, location, or other factors does not qualify for Category B;
- the resource does not meet the National Register criteria, but a decision has been reached through the planning process to manage the structure as a cultural resource.

Category D: Resources that may be or have been disposed of, altered for some other management purpose, or have been destroyed by natural forces or accident

A resource that meets any of the following criteria may be placed in Category D:

- the resource is an irreparable hazard to public health and safety;
- the resource has lost its historical integrity;
- the resource is a physical or visual intrusion on the park's legislated significance;
- the resource has been disposed of by planned action or destroyed by natural forces or accident.

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CULTURAL LANDSCAPES INVENTORY
CONDITION ASSESSMENT CONCURRENCE SHEET – 29 JUNE 2017

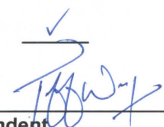
Park Information

Park: Cape Lookout National Seashore
District: Portsmouth Village Historic District
State: North Carolina
Counties: Carteret

Cultural Landscape Information

Inventory Name	CLI Id #	Condition	Condition Date
Portsmouth Village HD	550012	Good	6/29/2017
Haulover Point to Post Office And T.T. Potter Environs			
Doctor's Creek and East Portsmouth and Village Environs	976090	Good	6/29/2017
Portsmouth Life-Saving Station Complex	976092	Good	6/29/2017
Road to the Beach	976094	Fair	6/29/2017
Schoolhouse Environs	976096	Good	6/29/2017

Park Superintendent Concurrence

Concur ☒ Do Not Concur ☐


Superintendent Date 8/8/13

Superintendent Signature

Road to the Beach
Cape Lookout National Seashore



United States Department of the Interior



IN REPLY REFER TO:
1.A.2 (SER - CRD)

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Southeast Regional Office
Atlanta Federal Center
1924 Building
100 Alabama St., SW.
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Memorandum

To: Superintendent, Cape Lookout National Seashore

From: Division Chief Cultural Resources, Research, and Science - Southeast Region 

Subject: Certification of List of Classified Structures (LCS) and Cultural Landscapes
Inventory (CLI) records

In our continuing efforts to update cultural resource data as directed by the WASO Park Cultural Resources Program we seek your concurrence on the condition assessment and management category for records in the LCS and CLI databases.

Attached herewith is documentation related to the condition assessment and management category for the recently reassessed CALO LCS structures and the Cape Lookout Village Historic District and Portsmouth Village Cultural Landscapes Inventories. Staff of the Cultural Landscapes program, Margaret (Meg) Frisbie and Mary Scales English, prepared this documentation in consultation with Curtis Rintz of your staff. Please review the attached documentation, indicate your concurrence by signing the forms, and return a copy to our office. If you have any questions or wish to make changes to the information, contact David Hasty, Senior Historical Landscape Architect, Cultural Resources Division at 404-507-5780 or David_Hasty@nps.gov.

Upon receipt of the signed concurrence forms, the LCS and CLI databases will be updated accordingly. Please return the signed concurrence forms to the address below by **24 August 2018**.

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List of Classified Structures – FY18 Recertification Documentation

This review of LCS structures coincides with the recent reevaluation of structure conditions at CALO, which is completed on a 6-year cycle, and supports the maintenance of “complete, accurate, and reliable” records in the LCS database. Reassessment of structure condition (Good, Fair, Poor, Unknown) will be solicited in future correspondence based on the 6-year cycle of reassessment, or when circumstances warrant. LCS listings for individual parks are generally not all reassessed at the same time due to workload, date of original LCS listing, and date of most recent assessment.

As stated in the LCS technical guidance for assessing condition, historic structures listed on the LCS will fall into one of four condition categories, Good, Fair, Poor, or Unknown as described below.

Good: For historic structure purposes, structures listed on or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places are in good condition when,

- a) the structure possesses integrity of location design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to the historically significant period(s) based on the National Register Criteria for Evaluation (36 CFR 60.4), and,
- b) the structure and important features are intact, structurally sound, and performing their intended purpose.

For prehistoric or historic ruined structures listed on or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, the assignment of condition should be based on the goal of maintaining the structure’s integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and stability of the structure as acquired, excavated, or existing.

Structures managed as a cultural resource based on legislation or the park planning process are in good condition when the structure and important features are intact, structurally sound, and performing their intended purpose.

Good condition, as defined for GPRA Goal 1a5 and LCS listing, is NOT the same as good condition as defined for facility management purposes. DO NOT use the Facility Condition Index (FCI) results when reporting LCS condition, as the FCI does not take into consideration the integrity of the location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Fair: The structure is in fair condition if either of the following conditions is present:

- a) There are early signs of wear, failure, or deterioration though the structure and its features are generally structurally sound and performing their intended purpose;
- b) There is failure of a significant feature of the structure.

Poor: The structure is in poor condition if any of the following conditions are present:

- a) The significant features are no longer performing their intended purpose;
- b) Significant features are missing;
- c) Deterioration or damage affects more than 25% of the structure;

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d) The structure or significant features show signs of imminent failure or breakdown.

Unknown: Not enough information is available to make an evaluation.

Generally, structures that are listed in Fair or Poor condition are those that either require repair or rehabilitation or have permanent structural wear or damage that would be prohibitively expensive or impractical to repair or replace.

Cultural Landscapes Inventory – FY 18 Documentation

There are two parent cultural landscapes at Cape Lookout National Seashore. The first identified cultural landscape is the Cape Lookout Village Historic District, which contains three component landscapes: the Cape Lookout Lighthouse Complex, Cape Lookout Village, and the Cape Lookout Coast Guard Station. Portsmouth Village is the second identified cultural landscape. It contains five component landscapes: Haulover Point and to Post Office and T.T. Potter Environs, Doctor's Creek and East Portsmouth and Village Environs, Road to the Beach, Portsmouth Life-Saving Station Complex, and Schoolhouse Environs.

Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc. and John Milner Associates, Inc. completed the Cultural Landscape Reports (CLRs) for the Cape Lookout Village Historic District and Portsmouth Village in 2005 and 2007, respectively. The CLI effort used information from the CLRs as a basis for their work. In order to update existing conditions for the CLIs, the cultural landscapes team conducted a site visit at Cape Lookout National Seashore from June 27 to 29, 2017. In addition to photographing and documenting cultural resources, the team also collected georeferenced data to create a robust geographic information systems (GIS) database. Combined data has functioned to inform the condition re-certification efforts for the LCS, as well as the establishment of the CLI inventory units.

In order for the CLIs to be considered complete and certified, the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) or Keeper of the NR needs to concur on the eligibility of the property for listing. David Hasty, Senior Historical Landscape Architect, SERO, will submit the CLIs to North Carolina SHPO for review and consensus determination signature. If the CLI condition assessments are agreed upon, please sign the attached approval form and return it to our office to David Hasty by e-mail (david_hasty@nps.gov) or Google docs. If you have any questions, please contact David Hasty by e-mail or phone (404.507.5780).

Cultural Landscape Inventory Condition Assessment

As stated in the Professional Procedures Guide – Section 8 for assessing condition, CLI resources will fall into one of four categories: Good, Fair, Poor, or Undetermined. The following data elements in this table provide information on the current condition of the inventory unit as well as condition reassessments.

Good: Indicates the inventory unit shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The inventory unit's cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

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- Fair:** Indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the landscape characteristics will cause the inventory unit to degrade to a poor condition.
- Poor:** Indicates the inventory unit shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values.
- Undetermined:** This pick can be used during consultation with the park regarding the landscape's condition. Condition must be determined before a record can be approved as complete.

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Road to the Beach
Cape Lookout National Seashore



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Southeast Regional Office
Atlanta Federal Center
1924 Building
100 Alabama St., SW.
Atlanta, Georgia 30303



IN REPLY REFER TO:
H22 (SERO-CRD)

12 July 2018

Ramona Bartos
Administrator and Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office
Department of Natural and Cultural Resources
Office of Archives and History
109 E. Jones St.
Raleigh NC 27601

Dear Ms. Bartos:

Enclosed please find a copy of the Cultural Landscapes Inventories (CLIs) for Cape Lookout Village Historic District and Portsmouth Village Historic District, both located in Currituck County, North Carolina, at Cape Lookout National Seashore.

The CLI is an evaluated list of landscape properties in the National Park System considered eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or that contribute to an existing historic property. In order for CLI data to become certified, National Park Service regulations require concurrence from the SHPO on the eligibility of these properties. We are requesting your review of these CLIs and ask that you sign and return the enclosed concurrence form.

The *Cape Lookout Village Historic District* was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2000, completed by Ruth Little of Longleaf Historic Resources in 1998 and amended by the North Carolina SHPO. The 2000 nomination focuses primarily on historic structures within the district and contains a brief description of the circulation networks and landscape features that emphasize the connection between the natural landscape and built environment. Overall the nomination lacks adequate documentation of landscape features.

The National Register nomination lists the district as significant under Criteria A and C, and Criterion Consideration B, while the cultural landscape documentation expands the criteria to include Criterion D, for data potential as there may be archeological sites that yield important information in prehistory or history. Further, the cultural landscape documentation adds Archeology and Military History as areas of significance to the previously listed areas of Social History, Maritime History, and Architecture (Vernacular). Although few above-ground resources



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associated with this period have survived, the cape was extensively used to defend the coast during World War II, in addition to military operations during World War I and the Civil War.

The cultural landscape documentation suggests that if further research and documentation is completed, the boundaries of the historic district might be expanded to include World War II military-related sites and the 1910s jetty to the west

The *Portsmouth Village Historic District* National Register nomination was completed by Lenard E. Brown of the National Park Service Southeast Regional Office in 1977 and listed on the National Register the following year.

The 1977 nomination contains a historic overview of the district and short descriptions of the extant buildings and structures. Overall the nomination lacks adequate documentation of landscape features and some of the information is outdated. The investigation into the Portsmouth Village cultural landscape suggests an additional significance criterion and a more precise period of significance than the 1977 nomination.

The National Register nomination lists the district as significant under Criteria A and C, while the cultural landscape documentation expands the criteria to include Criterion D, for data potential as there may be archeological sites that yield important information in prehistory or history. Areas of significance for the National Register nomination include Commerce and Social/Humanitarian; the cultural landscape documentation includes Community and Maritime History, Military History, Architecture (Vernacular), and Archeology.

The 1977 National Register nomination lists the period of significance of the village as covering the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This broad period of significance does not reflect the development, evolution, and decline of the village, or any specific dates associated with its history. The cultural landscape documentation suggests a period of significance from 1753-1971 to be utilized in an updated nomination; 1753 is the date at which the village was founded and 1971 is the date at which the last permanent residents left the village.

An updated National Register nomination is scheduled for 2018. Further investigation of the landscape could result in expanding the current 280 acre boundary of the Portsmouth Village Historic District to include the former Middle Community and Sheep Island settled areas. Although these areas do not retain integrity of above-ground resources, they were an important part of the community historically, and archeological information potential appears to exist that supports their inclusion within the district. While some survey and limited subsurface excavation has been conducted, additional investigations are needed to determine the extent to which evidence of these earlier eras survives in the archeological record that may contribute to the information potential of the district.

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Road to the Beach
Cape Lookout National Seashore

With concurrence from your office, the findings become certified in the CLI database. Your concurrence also gives us justification to submit proper additional documentation to you at a future date. If you have any questions about these documents, please contact David Hasty, Senior Historical Landscape Architect, Southeast Region, at (404) 507-5780 or by e-mail at david_hasty@nps.gov. If the findings are agreed upon, the concurrence form can be returned by e-mail to David Hasty.

We greatly appreciate your office's assistance with the project.

Sincerely,



Dan Scheidt
Chief, Cultural Resources, Partnerships, and Science Division
Southeast Region

Enclosures

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**North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources
State Historic Preservation Office**

Governor Roy Cooper
Secretary Susi H. Hamilton

Ramona M. Bartos, Administrator

Office of Archives and History
Deputy Secretary Kevin Cherry

August 24, 2018

Dan Scheidt, Chief
NPS Cultural Resources, Partnerships, and Science Division
Southeast Regional Office
100 Alabama Street, SW
Atlanta, GA 30303

Re: Cultural Landscapes Inventory, Cape Lookout Village Historic District, Cape Lookout National Seashore, Core Banks, Carteret County, H22 (SERO-CRD), ER 18-1796

Dear Mr. Scheidt:

Thank you for your July 31, 2018, submittal of the National Park Service's Cultural Landscapes Inventory 2018 for the National Register-listed Cape Lookout Village Historic District (CR 0266). We find that the inventory report provides a thorough and concise analysis and evaluation of the existing condition of the thirteen landscape characteristics identified for the Cape Lookout Village Historic District *wiz*: archaeological sites; buildings and structures; circulation; cluster arrangement; constructed water features; cultural traditions; land use; natural systems and features; small-scale features; spatial organization, topography; vegetation; and views and vistas.

We have reviewed the inventory report and concur with the findings/recommendations as follows:

- The Cape Lookout Village Historic District retains sufficient integrity to convey the important associations of its period of significance.
- Based upon further research, documentation, and evaluation, the National Register nomination could be expanded to include Criterion D for information potential as intact prehistoric and historic archaeological sites, features, and deposits may exist throughout.
- The National Register nomination could be expanded to include Archaeology and Military History as additional areas of significance.
- Based upon further research, documentation, and evaluation, it may be possible to expand the district boundaries southward and westward to include World War II-era military sites (both terrestrial and under-water) and the 1910s jetty.
- The inventory report indicates that the 2005 Cultural Landscape Report suggests that an end date of 1945 for the district's period of significance may be more consistent with the surviving resources. To date, sufficient documentation to fully support revising the period of significance has not been discovered. Should documentation supporting such a revision be discovered, a revision of the period of significance may be warranted.

Location: 109 East Jones Street, Raleigh NC 27601 Mailing Address: 4617 Mail Service Center, Raleigh NC 27699-4617 Telephone/Fax: (919) 807-6570/807-6599

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- Based on our review of the inventory report, we further recommend that should the nomination for the district be revised, the revised document should include a more thorough documentation of the landscape features.

The above comments are made pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Regulations for Compliance with Section 106 codified at 36 CFR Part 800.

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration. If you have questions concerning the above comment, contact Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, at 919-807-6579 or environmental.review@nps.gov. In all future communication concerning this project, please cite the above referenced tracking number.

Sincerely,


for Ramona M. Bartos

cc: David Hasty, NPS, David.hasty@nps.gov

SHPO Concurrence Signature p. 2

We have reviewed the submitted documentation that identifies cultural landscape features at Portsmouth Village Historic District and Cape Lookout Village Historic District at Cape Lookout National Seashore in Cartaret, North Carolina. We concur with the findings of the Cultural Landscapes Inventories, and understand that these features have the potential to contribute to the existing National Register of Historic Places nominations for the park.



North Carolina State Historic Preservation Officer

8.24.18
Date

SHPO Concurrence Signature p. 3

Geographic Information

Geographic Information & Location Map

State and County:

State:	North Carolina
County	Carteret County

Size (Acres) 55

Land Tract Number(s)

Inventory Unit Boundary Description:

Cape Lookout National Seashore forms a portion of North Carolina's Outer Banks in the easternmost portion of the state. To the east lies the Atlantic Ocean and leeward are a series of named sounds, including Pamlico Sound, Core Sound, and Back Sound. The park includes North and South Core Banks, with Portsmouth Village located at its northern end.

The Portsmouth Village Historic District extends over approximately 280 acres on the lee side of Portsmouth Island. The island is edged by Ocracoke Inlet to the north; Baymarsh Thorofare and Sheep Island, which are in turn edged by Core Sound, to the west; marshes and large expanse of tidal flats-known as Portsmouth Flats-to the east and south; and Warren Creek and shrub savannah to the southwest.

Within the northeast portion of the Portsmouth Village Historic District is the Road to the Beach component landscape. The northwest boundary of the component landscape incorporates the Portsmouth Life-Saving Station and a portion of Village Road. The northern boundary travels along the north side of the Life-Saving Station and across Coast Guard Creek along the north side of the two seamen's graves. The eastern boundary of the component landscape crosses through undeveloped land on the east side of the two seamen's graves south past the NPS equipment building. The southern boundary of the component landscape is south of the comfort station and crosses over the Road to the Beach towards the airstrip. The western boundary incorporates the airstrip and travels back towards the Life-Saving Station. The Life-Saving Station is described in detail in the Portsmouth Life-Saving Station component landscape CLI.

Boundary Coordinates:

Source: USGS Map 1:24,000
Type of Point: Area
Latitude: 35.0636730851324
Longitude: -76.0568459231461
Narrative:

Source: USGS Map 1:24,000
Type of Point: Area
Latitude: 35.0649778067535
Longitude: -76.0550861082647
Narrative:

Source: USGS Map 1:24,000
Type of Point: Area
Latitude: 35.0687784715405
Longitude: -76.0555956339115
Narrative:

Source: USGS Map 1:24,000
Type of Point: Area
Latitude: 35.0685962471045
Longitude: -76.0589163848046
Narrative:

Source: USGS Map 1:24,000
Type of Point: Area
Latitude: 35.0670370147241
Longitude: -76.0609032315779
Narrative:

Location Map:



Location of Portsmouth Village Historic District in red circle.

Regional Context:

Type of Context: Physiographic

Description:

Portsmouth Village Historic District is located at the far northern end of Cape Lookout National Seashore just below the Island of Ocracoke along North Carolina's Outer Banks. The historic district covers approximately 280 acres of the lee side of Portsmouth Island. The island is edged by Ocracoke Inlet to the north; the Baymarsh Thorofare and Sheep Island to the west; the Portsmouth Flat marsh and tidal flats to the east and south; and Warren Creek and shrub savannah to the southwest. Middle Community, a former component of the village that no longer includes substantial above-ground evidence of its cultural developments, is located on Portsmouth Island to the west of the historic district. Sheep Island, located across Baymarsh Thorofare, was also traditionally associated with Portsmouth Village, but little evidence of this portion of the community survives. Casey Island is located in the inlet north of the island's primary dock facility at Haulover Point. Wallace's Channel, an important site for lightering in the eighteenth century, is located beyond the historic district to the north and east.

Cape Lookout National Seashore includes Shackleford Banks, Core Banks, Portsmouth Island, and a portion of eastern Harkers Island where the park headquarters and visitor center are located. Portsmouth Village can only be reached by boat. Most of its 2,000 annual visitors arrive from either Cedar Island, located forty miles north of Harkers Island, or by private ferry from Ocracoke Island.

Type of Context:

Cultural

Description:

English settlement of coastal North Carolina began in the 1670s. During colonial times, the Outer Banks were thinly settled and used primarily for grazing stock. Portsmouth Village was initially established by an act of the colonial legislature of North Carolina in 1753 on fifty acres at the north end of North Core Bank. Prior to the opening of Hatteras Inlet in 1846, Portsmouth flourished as one of North Carolina's primary seaports due to its location on the principal access into Pamlico Sound and proximity to other ports across the sound. The federal government established a customs house at Portsmouth in 1806, a marine hospital in 1827, and a post office in 1840. The town reached the zenith of its growth in 1860, with more than 600 residents and 109 dwellings.

Evacuated during the Civil War, Portsmouth never fully recovered its population or its economic vitality, and the customs house was abolished in 1867. As the population declined, the number of residences in the town dwindled as well, falling to fifty-nine in 1870 and forty-four by 1880. By the late nineteenth century, the shifting sands of the Outer Banks had closed Ocracoke Inlet to shipping, forcing a dwindling population to turn to fishing for its livelihood. Many buildings sat abandoned, including the marine hospital, which burned in 1894; those that survived hurricanes and a generally harsh environment were dismantled or relocated as the village slowly contracted. A hurricane in 1913 destroyed the Primitive Baptist and Methodist Churches. The community remained strong enough to support reconstruction of the Portsmouth Methodist Church by 1915, however.

On August 23, 1933, a moderate hurricane swept across Hatteras, bringing heavy rain but not particularly strong winds to Portsmouth. Less than one month later, a much stronger hurricane hit the area, with winds over 100 mph and torrential rain. Most of the island was flooded and many houses were destroyed. So much damage was done that most residents left the island to resettle on the mainland. In 1937, the Coast Guard (Life-Saving) Station was closed, and by 1940, there were only forty-two full-time residents; by 1950 that number stood at fourteen. The post office closed in 1959.

During this period, a number of the old buildings were adapted for temporary use by sport fisherman, especially after World War II. The Life-Saving Station, for example, was used as a sportsmen's club in the 1950s and 1960s. In the twentieth century, the availability of motorboats allowed commercial fishermen to reside on the mainland, leading to the decline of permanent settlement on the Outer Banks, but providing for increased access by recreational users.

In 1966, the Cape Lookout National Seashore was authorized "to preserve and enhance the natural character and recreational opportunities" of the barrier island system. At that time, only a handful of permanent residents remained; those that were interested were offered life leases on their properties. With the death of the village's last surviving male resident, Henry Pigott, in 1971, the only other full-time residents, Elma Dixon and her niece Marion Babb, left Portsmouth. Portsmouth Village was thereafter used seasonally by locals and park visitors.

Type of Context: Political

Description:

Cape Lookout National Seashore is a federally protected unit of the National Park System that has been administered by the NPS since 1966. Portsmouth Island is located within east-central North Carolina's Carteret County. Relatively rural, the county has an estimated population of 60,000 and extends over 532 square miles (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Local residents have traditionally derived their livelihood from farming and commercial fishing; in recent years, however, tourism and real-estate development have become important components of the local economy since the region is a popular destination for summer vacationers. Portsmouth Village itself is inhabited seasonally through a historic lease program. Six of the historic houses are available through the program. Volunteers and NPS personnel are also present at Portsmouth Village periodically throughout the year.

The closest towns are Beaufort (population 3,771), a fishing community and the county seat located approximately forty miles southwest and about four hours travel by boat and car, and Morehead City (population 7,707), a shipping and rail terminus that lies five miles to the southwest of Beaufort along U.S. Route 70 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000).

Management Information

General Management Information

Management Category: Should be Preserved and Maintained

Management Category Date: 08/08/2018

Management Category Explanatory Narrative:

Portsmouth Village meets National Register criteria and is compatible with the park's legislated significance. The historic district was listed on the National Register on November 29, 1978.

Agreements, Legal Interest, and Access

Management Agreement:

Type of Agreement:

Type of Context:

Management Agreement Explanatory Narrative:

NPS Legal Interest:

Type of Interest: Fee Simple

Narrative:

Located in managed wilderness?: Unknown

Public Access:

Type of Interest: Unrestricted

Explanatory Narrative:

While the public can openly access the inventory unit via boat, many of the buildings and structures are closed to the public. Some buildings contain exhibits and are open to the public on select days.

Adjacent Lands Information

Do Adjacent Lands Contribute?	No
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Adjacent Land Narrative:

National Register Information

Documentation Status:

Entered Inadequately Documented

National Register Explanatory Narrative:

Several National Register of Historic Places nominations have been completed for Cape Lookout National Seashore between 1972 and the present day. The Portsmouth Village Historic District National Register nomination was completed by Lenard E. Brown of the National Park Service Southeast Regional Office in 1977 and listed on the National Register the following year.

The 1977 nomination contains a historic overview of the district and short descriptions of the extant buildings and structures. Overall the nomination lacks adequate documentation of landscape features and some of the information is outdated. The cultural landscape investigation into the Portsmouth Village landscape suggests an additional significance criterion and a more precise period of significance than the 1977 nomination.

The National Register nomination lists the district as significant under Criteria A and C, while the cultural landscape documentation expands the criteria to include Criterion D, for data potential as there may be archeological sites that yield important information in prehistory or history. Areas of significance for the National Register nomination include Commerce and Social/Humanitarian; the cultural landscape documentation includes Community and Maritime History, Military History, Architecture (Vernacular), and Archeology.

The 1977 National Register nomination lists the period of significance of the village as covering the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This broad period of significance does not reflect the development, evolution, and decline of the village, or any specific dates associated with its history. The cultural landscape documentation suggests a period of significance from 1753-1971 to be utilized in an updated nomination; 1753 is the date at which the village was founded and 1971 is the date at which the last permanent residents left the village.

An updated National Register nomination is scheduled for 2018. Further investigation of the landscape could result in expanding the current 280 acre boundary of the Portsmouth Village Historic District to include the former Middle Community and Sheep Island settled areas. Although these areas do not retain integrity of above-ground resources, they were an important part of the community historically, and archeological information potential appears to exist that supports their inclusion within the district. While some survey and limited subsurface excavation has been conducted, additional investigations are needed to determine the extent to which evidence of these earlier eras survives in the archeological record that may contribute to the information potential of the district.

Concurrence Narrative:

The Portsmouth Village Historic District nomination was determined to meet the National Register criteria by the SHPO and was entered in the National Register of Historic Places on November 29, 1978.

NRIS Number: 78000267
Primary Certification Date: 11/29/2018
Other Certifications and Date: MM/dd/yyyy

National Register Eligibility

National Register Concurrence: Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination
Contributing/Individual: Contributing
National Register Classification: District
Significance Level: State
Significance Criteria: A - Associated with events significant to broad patterns of our history
Significance Criteria: C - Embodies distinctive construction, work of master, or high artistic values
Significance Criteria: D - Has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important to prehistory or history

Area of Significance:

Area of Significance Category: Social History
Area of Significance Category: Maritime History
Area of Significance Category: Military
Area of Significance Category: Architecture
Area of Significance Category: Archeology

Statement of Significance:

In order for a site to be eligible for inclusion in the National Register, it must possess significance under one of four criteria. The Criteria for Evaluation (Code of Federal Regulations, Title 36, Part 60) state:
The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in

districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or

B. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or

C. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

D. That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

The 280 acre Portsmouth Village Historic District is located on the lee side of Portsmouth Island on the far northern end of Cape Lookout National Seashore. The 1977 National Register nomination lists the Portsmouth Village Historic District as eligible at the state level under Criteria A and C of the National Register, significant in the areas of Commerce and Social/Humanitarian. The cultural landscape research and analysis further illustrate and expand upon the themes established by the National Register nomination. Based on research and survey since the nomination was completed, Portsmouth Village can also likely be considered significant under National Register Criterion D, for the potential to yield important information in prehistory or history. Additional survey is suggested to further understand the archeological record. The National Register areas of significance are Community and Maritime History, Military History, Vernacular Architecture, and Archeology. Although the two communities have somewhat different histories and settings, a description used in reference to Cape Lookout Village applies equally well to Portsmouth: it is one of the last surviving and relatively intact historic settlements on the Outer Banks with an “inextricable connection of the natural landscape and the built environment” (Cape Lookout Village National Register nomination 2000, 19).

The National Register nomination lists the period of significance of the village as covering the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This very broad period of significance does not reflect the development, evolution, and decline of the village, or any specific dates associated with its history. If the significance of the village is considered to be primarily related to its existence and survival as a community, then a reasonable starting date for the period of significance is 1753, the date when the village was founded, and a reasonable ending date is 1971, the date at which the last permanent residents left the village.

The period 1753 through 1971 is also supported by the characterization of Portsmouth Village presented in the 1977 National Register nomination form. The village is significant as a “surviving remnant of the thriving pre-Civil War port that reached its zenith in the decade prior to 1860. Its significance today is as the only existing village on the Core Banks south of Ocracoke Inlet—an existence that can be traced back over 200 years to the 1760s” (Brown, 1977). Although very few built resources that pre-date the 1860s survive, the period of significance is relevant in that archeological remains may exist from the earliest settlement of Portsmouth. Furthermore, the late nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings that do survive represent the continuation of the earliest patterns of construction, land use, and way of life.

Criterion A: Community and Maritime History

The history of Portsmouth Village is directly related to its geography and is eligible under Criterion A of the National Register in association with Community and Maritime History. As with other communities on the Outer Banks, the settlement, development, and historic land use of the town of Portsmouth was closely interrelated with geographic changes and alterations to the inlet and its channels. The village was initially established as a place for lightering and grew into an active village. Edmund Ruffin, an agricultural scientist from Virginia, described Portsmouth in the late 1850s as follows (Ruffin, 1861, 123-124):

The village of Portsmouth owes its existence to the fact of its adjoining the nearest water of Pamlico sound, where vessels must anchor and wait for fair winds and tides to cross the shallow and dangerous bar of Ocracoke inlet—and after passing outward, as usual but partly laden, to wait to receive the remainder of the cargo, carried across the bar by lighters. The occupations of the whole resident population of Portsmouth are connected with the vessels which have to wait here. Pilots, and sailors, or owners of vessels, make up the greater number of the heads of families and adult males—and the remainder are the few, who as shopkeepers, &c., are necessary to minister to the wants of the others. If Ocracoke inlet should be closed by sand, (which is no improbable event,) the village of Portsmouth would disappear—or...remain only for its other use, as a summer retreat for transient visitors, sought for health and seabathing.

While its channels remained accessible, and while other inlets to the north remained closed, Ocracoke Inlet was the key port for shipping of goods from North Carolina. Its shallow entrance and changing channels made the role of marine pilots essential and provided a source of work to inhabitants of Portsmouth for many decades. The village grew up around activities related to the sea, particularly piloting and later the Life-Saving Service. The population peaked at around 600 residents and over 100 dwellings in 1860.

By the mid-nineteenth century, the channel and inlet were becoming unusable for commercial traffic, and the opening of Hatteras Inlet provided an alternate entrance along the North Carolina coastline. Together these factors led to the gradual and steady decline of Portsmouth as a maritime port in the middle nineteenth century. However, the community survived and evolved with an economy based on fishing and recreation into the second half of the twentieth century. Public amenities such as the Life-Saving Station, Portsmouth Methodist Church, Schoolhouse, and Post Office and General Store survived into the period of the mid twentieth century. New construction and development in the early decades of the twentieth century were a continuation of the way of life and cultural landscape of Portsmouth Village.

The village is characterized by informally placed residential buildings and outbuildings, located along narrow roads or grassy lanes. The buildings are sited on high grounds amidst the low salt-marsh vegetation characteristic of the Outer Banks. The relationship of the individual dwellings is typical of early coastal villages. The National Register nomination notes, "Except for these lanes, small cleared building sites and a grass landing strip for light planes, the environment of the district gives the appearance being untouched by the incursions of man" (Ruffin, 1861, 123-134). The features that characterized the village throughout its history—and particularly its relationship to its setting, which governed its evolution—remain intact today.

Criterion A: Military History

The historic district is also eligible under Criterion A in association with Military History. From the Revolutionary War, when the British landed at Portsmouth and Ocracoke to attack New Bern in 1777, to the War of 1812 when a British fleet attacked Portsmouth and Ocracoke, and the Civil War when Union forces landed and took control of Cape Hatteras, Cape Lookout has been a part of several military operations. In 1915 the U.S. Life-Saving Service was merged with the Merchant Marine to form the U.S. Coast Guard that took over the operation of the Life-Saving Station. In 1937, the Coast Guard decommissioned the Portsmouth station as part of a consolidation of resources, although it was reactivated for a brief period during World War II. Cape Lookout played a role in coastal defenses from the start of U.S. involvement in World War I in 1917 through World War II, when soldiers were stationed at Cape Lookout to defend the harbor. While no significant aboveground features associated with the early military history of Portsmouth Village remain, the area played a role in several campaigns associated with coastal defense of the United States for two hundred years.

Beyond the historic district boundary along the island's eastern beach front in the vicinity of the mud flats, two garrisoned fortifications were established to protect the mouth of Pamlico Sound. The first was provided for by the same act that established a town at Portsmouth Village in 1753. Known as Fort Granville, the complex included a fascine battery, garrisoned with forty men and equipped with eight, 18-pound guns facing the Ocracoke bar, and twelve, 12-pound guns trained on the harbor. These fortifications were used for coastal defense during the French and Indian Wars, and rebuilt for use during the War of 1812 and the Civil War, but subsequently abandoned. During the War of 1812, 500 British soldiers attacked Portsmouth and Shell Castle Islands. Soldiers pitched tents on the banks, and Admiral Sir George Cockburn set up his headquarters at David Wallace's house. The British army destroyed much property on the island and appropriated hundreds of head of livestock, indicating that the raising of livestock was a primary agricultural pursuit of island residents at the time.

The inlet was blockaded during the Civil War. Confederates first established outposts in the area at Fort Morgan on Beacon Island in the Ocracoke Inlet and Fort Washington on Portsmouth Island. Five hundred troops were stationed at Portsmouth in barracks on the beach, and the fort was armed with thirty-pound guns. Union forces destroyed the Confederate garrison in August 1861 and maintained control of the region for the remainder of the war. One of their strategies was to block the inlet with sunken vessels.

While there are no aboveground resources associated with the island's early military history within the district boundaries, the island played important roles in several military campaigns from the mid-eighteenth century

through World War II. Further investigation into the military history of Portsmouth Village is suggested for the planned National Register update.

Criterion C: Architecture

The Portsmouth Village Historic District is eligible for listing under Criterion C for embodying the distinctive characteristics of architectural types, in association with Vernacular Architecture adapted to the coastal environment. In the 1977 National Register nomination, the buildings at Portsmouth Village were not recognized as having architectural significance. Based upon information obtained as part of the present study, consideration should be given to the significance of the Life-Saving Station as an example of federal architecture in the Shingle Style and to the residential buildings as examples of mid-nineteenth-century coastal vernacular types.

During the 1870s and 1880s a series of small picturesque life-saving stations were built along the Outer Banks. The Portsmouth Life-Saving Station, completed in 1895, was one of twenty-one stations constructed with similar designs. Of the ten surviving stations, the Portsmouth station is the least altered of the group. These stations survive at Cape Lookout (1888), at Portsmouth Village (1895), and at Oak Island (1891).

Several of the privately-built houses of the village are surviving examples of mid-nineteenth-century vernacular construction adapted to the coastal environment. These include the Washington Roberts House and the Walker and Sarah Styron House, both of which date to circa 1850. Residential buildings in the village are generally vernacular wood-frame houses of a consistent type. Although lacking individual significance, collectively these houses can be considered significant as examples of the particular vernacular dwelling type tailored to the Outer Banks environment. The houses are typically supported on piers or pilings that lift the structure off the ground and allow storm surges and shifting sand to move underneath. The houses are conventionally wood framed using dimensional lumber. Roofs typically have a very low pitch, a structurally desirable configuration for a hurricane-prone area. Although most of the buildings are simple and unadorned, a few buildings include decorative details relating to popular architectural styles of the time, such as the Craftsman-style front porch of the Harry and Lida Dixon House. Similarly, the Portsmouth Methodist Church incorporates Gothic Revival details but can mainly be considered a vernacular structure.

Criterion D: Archeology

The district has the potential to yield archeological information about prehistoric and historic habitation on the cape. Specific subject areas of potential interest for archeological investigation include prehistoric settlement, early settlement, Revolutionary War-era activities, and Civil War-era activities. Underwater surveys near the shoreline and offshore investigation could be performed to identify vessels from shipwrecks along the coast.

Recent archeological investigations by staff of the NPS Southeast Archeological Center (SEAC) and as part of the present study suggest that areas outside of the historic district boundaries at Middle Community and Sheep Island contain numerous archeological resources, such as gravesites, ruins, road traces, and probable house sites. The existing village historic district also contains numerous known house sites and ruins with archeological potential.

In 2008, pedestrian survey was completed in Portsmouth Village and the Middle Community area. Much of the Middle Community area was overgrown with dense vegetation, but one shovel test pit was excavated near the Middle Community Schoolhouse. Dense vegetation limited overall survey efforts and additional fieldwork was recommended to further consider the archeological potential of the site.

The 2015 Cape Lookout National Seashore Archeological Overview and Assessment completed by SEAC recommended more detailed subsurface testing be conducted at Portsmouth Village and the nearby Middle Community to identify early historic sites. The historic district can be considered eligible under this criterion due to its clear archeological potential, and this criterion suggests that the boundaries of the district could be revised based on the findings of further systematic survey.

Chronology & Physical History

Cultural Landscape Type and Use

Cultural Landscape Type: Historic Vernacular Landscape

Current and Historic Use/Function:

Primary Historic Function: Outdoor Recreation

Primary Current Use: Functional Landscape

Other Use/Function	Other Type of Use or Function
Beach	Current, Historic
Coast Guard Facility	Historic
Equipment/Vehicle Storage	Current,
Interpretive Landscape	Current,
Scenic Landscape	Current,
Vehicular Circulation	Current,
Water-Related-Other	Historic

Current and Historic Names:

Name	Type Of Name
Portsmouth Village	Both Current And Historic
Portsmouth	Both Current And Historic
Core Banks	Both Current And Historic
Portsmouth Village Historic District	Current

Chronology:

Year	Event	Annotation
CE 1828	Established	The government contracted with Dr. John W Potts to establish a marine hospital at Portsmouth
CE 1842	Established	Federal appropriation was made for a new marine hospital near the site of the original rented building
CE 1845	Purchased/Sold	The property was purchased by the government to construct a hospital. The property contained a two-story house built by Otway Burns in 1842

Year	Event	Annotation
CE 1847	Built	October 1. The new marine hospital opened. It was a large, two-story building with piazzas on the north and south sides and a picket fence to keep out grazing livestock. Around this time, the hospital cistern was constructed
CE 1850	Established	1850s. Otway Burns House was used as a dwelling for the marine hospital physicians
CE 1852	Established	The hospital served 100 patients
CE 1853	Altered	A brick cistern replaced a wood one at the marine hospital
CE 1854	Established	The hospital served 288 patients
CE 1860	Abandoned	The marine hospital was discontinued (though it did provide treatment to Union soldiers during the Civil War)
CE 1871	Established	Congress established the U.S. Life-Saving Station to rescue vessels in distress
CE 1876	Established	A weather observation station was established at Portsmouth in the former marine hospital
CE 1878 - 1883	Established	Many new Life-Saving Stations were along the Atlantic Coast, including three stations on the Core Banks
CE 1878 - 1888	Established	A Life-Saving Station at Cape Lookout was authorized in 1878, but did not begin operation until 1888
CE 1883 - 1885	Abandoned	The weather observation station in Portsmouth was closed. It reopened briefly in early 1885, before being abandoned in May 1885
CE 1893	Planned	The new proposed Portsmouth Life-Saving Station is visible on a survey at the northeast corner of the hospital property
CE 1894	Built	The Portsmouth Life-Saving Station was completed by June 1894 and manned by Ferdinand G. Terrell. Two outbuildings – a privy and an oil and coal storage shed were built along with the station. A brick cistern may have been constructed this year but is not documented until 1903
CE 1896	Built	A stable associated with the Life-Saving Station was constructed. This building was later destroyed in a hurricane
CE 1903	Established	The Life-Saving Station crew saved 421 people from the Vera Cruz VII during a nor-easter
CE 1908	Built	The Life-Saving Station kitchen was constructed
CE 1915	Established	The Revenue Cutter Service and the Life-Saving Service merged to form the U.S. Coast Guard
CE 1926	Built	The Lionel and Emma Gilgo House was constructed on the site of the marine hospital
CE 1928	Built	A Life-Saving station stable (also called the Life-Saving Station shed) replaced an earlier stable destroyed in a hurricane. An associated shed and cool house were constructed in the 1920s

Year	Event	Annotation
CE 1938	Abandoned	Portsmouth Coast Guard Station was deactivated
CE 1940	Abandoned	Core Banks Coast Guard Station was deactivated
CE 1942	Altered	The Life-Saving Station kitchen was extended to include a dining room addition to the east
CE 1945 - 1949	Purchased/Sold	The former Life-Saving Station was sold to a private sportsmen's club and a landing strip was built
CE 1950 - 1960	Purchased/Sold	1950s-1960s. The state of North Carolina began to acquire land from private owners
CE 1960 - 1969	Altered	The Life-Saving Station stable was altered
CE 1966	Established	Cape Lookout National Seashore was established
CE 1978	Established	Portsmouth Village was listed on the National Register of Historic Places
CE 1978 - 1984	Rehabilitated	The Life-Saving Station kitchen was rehabilitated by the NPS
CE 1980	Restored	The National Park Service undertook stabilization and restoration efforts in Portsmouth Village
CE 2006	Established	Fieldwork for the Portsmouth Village Cultural Landscape Report was completed
CE 2007	Established	The Portsmouth Village Cultural Landscape Report was certified
CE 2017	Established	June. Fieldwork was completed for the Portsmouth Village CLI

Physical History:

Ocracoke Inlet and the Founding of Portsmouth

As with other settlements on the Outer Banks, the development of the town of Portsmouth was closely interrelated with geographic changes and alterations to the inlet and its channels. Portsmouth existed primarily as a place for lightering, a process in which cargo was removed from ocean-going vessels to warehouses until they were light enough to cross the bar at Ocracoke Inlet. Goods were stored for trans-shipment inland. Departing vessels were reloaded outside the bar, with the cargo carried across the inlet by small boats known as "lighters."

In 1753, an act was established "laying out a Town on Core Banks, near Ocacock Inlet, in Carteret County, and for appointing Commissioners for completing the Fort at or near the same place." The commissioners were instructed "to lay out fifty acres of land on Core Banks, most convenient to the said harbour, adjoining the said Banks, for a town, by the name of Portsmouth, into lots of half an acre each, with convenient streets, as they may think requisite" (Stick, 1958, 40). The same act provided for establishment of a fortification to be known as Fort Granville.

By 1770, Portsmouth Village was one of the largest settlements on the Outer Banks. Collet's map of North Carolina, published in 1770, shows Portsmouth shaded to indicate settlement. Henry Mouzon's map, published in 1775, also shows Portsmouth having eight structures, one of which may be a church.

Marine Hospital

In 1828, the government contracted with Dr. John W. Potts to establish a marine hospital at Portsmouth (Olson, 1982, 71). Potts rented a small house which one writer, Joseph Hurtow, described in 1831 (Hurtow, 1831):

A small house has been rented and occupied for the purpose at \$30 to \$40 per year. The house stands about two feet above the level of the ocean and not too far from its margin, upon the Portsmouth Banks and on the naked sands, without the benefit of shade. The house itself is 16 to 18 feet by 20 or 22 feet in size, without plastering or as I believe glass windows. About six cots, a pine table or two and a few benches or chairs, and the furniture of the hospital has been described. There being no cistern to contain fresh water, the water used is gotten out of a hole about a foot depth in the sand. . . .

Hurtow likely exaggerated the conditions at this first hospital, as he proposed to personally take over the hospital contract and move the location to his home in Ocracoke village. Collector Joshua Taylor wrote to the Secretary of the Treasury on March 14, 1831, saying that the hospital was well situated and consisted of three rooms upstairs and two rooms downstairs.

Before his two-year contract was up, Potts left the position and by was succeeded by Dr. Samuel Dudley, who would serve as physician intermittently for more than thirty years and become one of the wealthier men in Portsmouth. Dudley had been born in New Hampshire around 1790. Records show that he owned seven ships in the 1830s, and he provided the land on which the first Methodist church was constructed. Dudley's home was located along a creek that became known as Doctor's Creek. Dudley treated local inhabitants as well as sailors (Cloud, 2006, 7; Olson, 1982, 71-72).

In 1842, a federal appropriation was made to construct a new marine hospital near the site of the original rented building. Inadvertently, the property purchased by the government in 1845 included the two-story house built by Otway Burns in 1842. Burns was the captain of the U.S. privateer *Snap Dragon* and a hero of the War of 1812. He also served in the North Carolina General Assembly and chose to retire to Portsmouth. Burns died in 1850, and the government then took possession of the house, which was used as a dwelling for the marine hospital physician in the 1850s (Olson, 1982, 71-73).

The new marine hospital opened on October 1, 1847. It was a large, two-story shingled frame building, measuring 50 by 90 feet, with ten rooms on the first floor and two on the second floor. The building was considered the best built in Portsmouth to that time, and it featured piazzas on both the north and south sides of the building, seven fireplaces, and exterior cypress shingle siding. Shortly after the building was completed, a picket fence was built around the hospital to keep out grazing livestock. A new wharf was built for bringing patients and supplies ashore. The initial staff included one physician, one nurse, and three enslaved persons (Olson, 1982, 74-75; Cloud, 2006, 05). The hospital at first had wooden cisterns, one of which was replaced with a brick cistern in 1853. The brick cistern, which still exists, was 8 feet deep and 10 feet in diameter, and included piping to run water directly to the hospital kitchen (Olson, 1982, 75). The hospital served 100 patients in 1852 and 288 in 1854, but there were periods when no patients were present. The number of employees ranged from five in 1847 to twelve in 1857, but only six in 1860, the year in which the hospital was discontinued (Olson, 1982, 75). During the Civil War, the hospital provided treatment for wounded Union soldiers (Cloud, 2006, 05).

Late Nineteenth Century through World War II

During the nineteenth century, the federal government expanded its role in ensuring maritime safety with the construction of new and larger lighthouses and establishment of the Life-Saving Service and a U.S. Army Signal Corps weather observation station. These government agencies provided a steady source of employment for residents on the Outer Banks.

Other federal government activities came to the Outer Banks in the latter half of the nineteenth century. In 1874, the U.S. Army Signal Corps established a weather observation station in the lighthouse keeper's dwelling at Cape Hatteras. In April 1876, a similar station was established at Portsmouth in the former marine hospital. The federal government had attempted to sell the hospital without success in the years following the Civil War. Other rooms in the hospital were rented out to local residents.

The weather station was typically manned by a solitary observer. A telegraph connection to the mainland existed from 1881 to 1885. The weather observation station was closed in December 1883. It reopened briefly in early 1885 before finally being abandoned in May 1885 (Olson, 1982, 87-88; Stick, 1958, 307).

In 1871 Congress established the United States Life-Saving Service to rescue vessels in distress. From 1878 to 1883, many new life-saving stations were established all along the Atlantic coast. The Life-Saving Service established three stations on the Core Banks. A Life-Saving Station at Cape Lookout was authorized as early as 1878 but did not begin operation until January 1888. Additional stations were proposed for Portsmouth and a location halfway between Ocracoke Inlet and Cape Lookout, the Core Banks Station (Holland, 1968, 36). The position of the Portsmouth Station was given as Latitude 35° 04' 00" Longitude 76° 03' 05". Although in 1893 the former marine hospital was still standing and could have been used as a life-saving station, local tradition in Portsmouth says that the hospital was deliberately burned in order to force the construction of a new station building (Olson, 1982, 76). An 1893 survey of the site shows the proposed Life-Saving Station at the northeast corner of the hospital property.

The Portsmouth station was completed by June 1894 and manned by the first keeper, Ferdinand G. Terrell, by September 1894. The station was fully manned by November 1894. Two outbuildings—a privy and an oil and coal storage shed—were built along with the station in 1894. A stable was constructed in 1896. A brick cistern was also presumably built in 1894 as part of the original station development, but this structure is not documented before 1903 (Olson, 1982, 89).

The United States Life-Saving Station was a source of employment and influence in the Portsmouth community, with crews made up of local citizens. A nightly guard scanned the waters for vessels in trouble and foot patrols walked the ocean beaches. Rescues were enacted by oar-powered surfboats, taken by ramp from the boathouse to sea, and by rescuers walking out through the water to stranded vessels. One of the most dramatic rescues from the Portsmouth station was the rescue of 421 persons from the Vera Cruz VII during a nor'easter on May 8, 1903 (Holland, 1968, 37; Olson, 1982, 92). As with other areas of the Outer Banks, activities of the Life-Saving Service were an important component of village life. There were at least seven wrecks at Portsmouth between 1899 and 1918 (Stick, 1952, 180-185, 252-254). In 1915, the Revenue Cutter Service and the Life-Saving Service were merged to form the U.S. Coast Guard.

Cape Lookout National Seashore

North Carolina turned to the federal government for assistance in managing this large resource. By 1966, the village had only three permanent residents. Some buildings were used as vacation homes, and the Life-Saving Station served as a seasonal lodge for a hunting and fishing club. Other buildings were unoccupied, and some had fallen into disrepair. The remaining residents were given life estate rights to a home in the village, while most of the remaining properties were acquired by the National Park Service in the late 1960s.

Portsmouth Village was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1978, including the thirty primary structures, and numerous secondary structures and site features. The National Park Service undertook restoration and stabilization work at numerous structures in Portsmouth around 1980. For many structures, this included repainting or repair of historic wood siding and wood windows; removal of non-historic synthetic cladding materials; and replacement of asphalt-shingle roofing with wood shingles. The periodic seasonal occupation of some houses in the village that had begun after World War II continued under the National Park Service historic leasing program in the 1970s and 1980s. Also during the 1970s and 1980s, National Park Service staff began to clear brush and trees that had grown up in the decades after World War II, in part to reduce the risk of fire to the historic structures. Mown turf was established around many of the houses. In 1993, the last former resident with life estate rights in the village passed away (Cloud, 2006, 72).

In late August through early September 1999, Hurricane Dennis came ashore at Cape Hatteras and 19.13 inches of rain fell in Ocracoke. In mid-September 1999, Hurricane Floyd moved northward along the Atlantic coast and brought further heavy rain and severe flooding to North Carolina. During these storms, several buildings were lost, including a barn near the Life-Saving Station stable, which had been dismantled by National Park Service and was to be reconstructed (Personal interview, Mike McGee, Maintenance Supervisor, Cape Lookout National Seashore, 2007).

In 2003, the district was heavily affected by Hurricane Isabel, which made landfall on the Core Banks between Cape Lookout and Portsmouth Village on September 18. The storm overturned more than 400 trees, and damaged fences, outbuildings, cemeteries, roads, pathways, and other historic features. The Life-Saving Station was damaged by the storm. Archeological resources were exposed, and the establishment of new water channels caused loss of land associated with a cemetery. Impacts from subsequent storms, including Hurricane Ophelia in September 2005, led to the loss of hundreds more trees; to date, the cumulative damage from these recent storms has not been fully evaluated or mitigated, and much of the district is in need of stabilization and repair.

In 2006, the fieldwork for the Portsmouth Village Cultural Landscape Report was completed and the following year the document was certified.

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

Portsmouth Village Historic District retains sufficient integrity to convey the important associations of its period of significance to the visitor. The period of significance of 1753 through 1971 has been utilized to compare historic and existing landscape conditions within the district. As discussed previously, this period has been suggested to resolve the imprecise period recorded in the 1977 National Register nomination for the district. Documentation within the Analysis and Evaluation section focuses on the evolution of the community from its earliest establishment in 1753 to the time when the last permanent residents left the island in 1971, including the changes to the physical contexts of the Ocracoke Inlet and the Outer Banks, and the primary economic endeavors of commercial shipping and fishing. To indicate the changes that have occurred over time, the analysis describes the features and characteristics that have comprised the community since its establishment in 1753.

The Portsmouth Village Historic District most closely reflects its early to mid-twentieth century formation and character. The strong connections between the siting of buildings and structures and natural features and processes continue to be expressed in the surviving fabric of the historic district. The historic use of materials dating from the early twentieth century are built upon earlier developments that are no longer present. Important visual and spatial connections also survive to a great degree. Overall, extant cultural features primarily remain from the early to mid-twentieth century.

There are no extant structures from the initial development phase of Portsmouth Village in the eighteenth century and only a limited number from the nineteenth century. The site thus lacks integrity for the eighteenth and nineteenth century period of significance. Additional investigations are needed to determine whether evidence of these earlier eras survives in the archeological record that may contribute to the information potential of the district. The comparative analysis nonetheless includes a discussion of what is known about these early features due to their significance and influence on later development.

This analysis and evaluation section focuses on the Road to the Beach component landscape. The section links extant features to their period of origin and assesses whether they are contributing to the significant historic fabric. Those features that are not associated with the period of significance are identified as non-contributing. Changes that have been made to historic features are noted. Features that are known to have existed during previous periods but are no longer extant are identified as missing. Landscape characteristics are used as the basis for the comparative analysis. These include: Archeological Sites, Buildings and Structures, Circulation, Constructed Water Features, Land Use, Natural Systems and Features, Small-Scale Features, Spatial Organization, Topography, Vegetation, and Views and Vistas.

Landscape Characteristics Summary

The primary organizing element of the former village is a pair of circulation routes that meet near the core of Portsmouth Village. These roads extend north/south from the dock at Haulover Point to the Old Straight Road and east/west from the marsh along Warren Creek to the Portsmouth Life-Saving Station complex and beyond to the beach and tidal flats. Modest wood frame dwellings, the Post Office and General Store, and Portsmouth Methodist Church edge these roads. Various unimproved access roads arise from the primary roads and lead to additional residences. Elevated landforms or hammocks dot the landscape. These have frequently been utilized to site important cultural features such as dwellings and cemeteries due to their higher topography and slight protection against flooding. Ruins of former dwellings are found on many of the hammocks. The landscape around each of the dwelling complexes is maintained in closely mown grasses; some cultural properties also include fencing around the dwelling precinct.

Dwellings and outbuilding structures such as sheds, cool houses, privies, cisterns, and above-ground septic tanks form cultural precincts associated with most properties. Beyond the precincts, much of the landscape is dominated by salt marsh, meadow or grasslands, and shrub savannahs and thickets. In the southern portion of the district and to its south, the landscape is dominated by shrub savannah that is difficult to penetrate and marshes along what is known as the Baymarsh Thorofare. The area around the Life-Saving Station is generally characterized by shrub savannah and grassland, with expansive tidal flats beyond. Between Haulover Point and the Old Main Road, the vegetation is generally a shrub thicket community. The village is edged on most sides by salt marsh, tidal flats, and creeks or Ocracoke Inlet. There is also a pine plantation that edges a portion of the village, including its grass airstrip.

The primary soil type associated with Portsmouth Island is Lafitte-Hobucken-Carteret. This is a poorly drained organic and mineral soil on nearly level land that sometimes includes mucky material formed from herbaceous plant remains over mineral sediments. It also occurs in marshes flooded frequently with salt water. These soils have a seasonal high water table and are subject to frequent flooding. Portions of the island are also associated with Newhan-Corolla Beaches soil. These soils are on dunes near beaches and waterways, and are formed from sandy marine sediments. They are sandy throughout their soil profiles, excessively drained with very rapid permeability, and a low shrink-swell potential. They also have seasonal high water tables, which has the potential to impact septic system.

NPS activities within the historic district include maintenance of the buildings and landscape, in addition to the staffing the Theodore and Annie Salter House, which functions as a visitor contact facility, periodically from April

to November. Exhibits and restrooms are available to visitors here and at the Life-Saving Station. A historic lease program previously afforded opportunities for seasonal use of the village dwellings. In 1982, the General Management Plan noted that there were twelve special use permits in effect for occupancy of structures in Portsmouth Village at that time; there were six in 2006. These permits were intended to help protect the historic structures in the village (Final Environmental Impact Statement, 1982, 54).

When comparing the landscape of Portsmouth Village during its period of significance to present-day conditions, one of the primary differences is the increase in tree and shrub cover. By 1971, few residents remained on the island, and little care was taken to maintain vegetative growth. Much of the island became overgrown by trees and shrubs. More recently, park staff has worked diligently to remove much of this woody vegetation and enhance the legibility of the community's historic cultural resources. Hurricanes and other storms have contributed to this effort, but the tree cover remains more extensive than during the period when the village sustained an active community. Based on review of historic photographs and aerials, the landscape appears to have been even more open before the exodus of residents in the 1940s due to a series of severe storms. Little is known about the vegetative character of the community during the nineteenth century, but it is clear that most residents raised livestock that were allowed to roam and graze freely about the island. This would likely have resulted in very open vegetative cover.

Other changes include the loss of some of the buildings and structures that were present in 1971, which has diminished the extent of the historic community, and the deterioration of the many outbuildings and fences.

The visual and physical connection to Middle Community and Sheep Island, both areas of residential development associated with Portsmouth Village, has also been obscured by vegetative growth, and many of the features associated with these areas have been lost due to a lack of maintenance and a fire that burned many of the residences.

There are some features located within the historic district that post-date the period of significance such as a comfort station and NPS equipment buildings, signage to support visitor use and education, a new dock at Haulover Point, and septic tanks outside of many of the buildings.

Aspects of Integrity:

The Road to the Beach component landscape possesses integrity of location. The circulation, cemetery, and landscape features are in their original locations, supporting the Portsmouth community established to support commercial shipping activities and their navigation through the treacherous shoals of the Ocracoke Inlet remains.

The landscape also possesses integrity of design, materials, and workmanship for the overall layout, including the airstrip, circulation routes, attendant landscape features, and cemetery features. Little has been done since the decline of village population after World War II to alter the architectural integrity, materials, or spatial organization of the surviving resources. Care must be taken in maintenance and repair projects to ensure that the integrity of these properties is maintained.

Integrity of setting is particularly strong within the greater district and individual component landscape due to the community's location on an island with no sites of late-twentieth century development within view of the community. There are a few NPS support structures in the Road to the Beach landscape, but they are largely sheltered from public view. The relationship between the landscape and ocean environment has not been altered and the overall association between the district and the surrounding natural features is vital to the district's setting. The setting of the Road to the Beach landscape is maintained through the cumulative effect of the natural systems and features, building and structures, topography, spatial organization, and views and vistas. The district's relationship to its natural systems and features is vital.

The landscape also possesses integrity of feeling and association for the late nineteenth/early twentieth century due to the presence of the cemetery features, roads, and community buildings that created the Portsmouth community. Dense woody growth currently detracts from the district's integrity of feeling, obscuring the sense of openness, and therefore connectedness that once linked community members. Vegetation, however, inevitably changes over time, and can be considered a reversible condition whereby the integrity of the site can be enhanced by thinning non-historic vegetation and enhancing historic views and spatial patterns.

**Landscape Characteristic:
Archeological Sites**

Limited archeological investigation has been conducted to date at Portsmouth Village. An archeological reconnaissance of Portsmouth Island and a portion of Sheep Island was conducted between February 26 and March 3, 2007, by a two-person crew during the cultural landscape field investigation. The purpose of the reconnaissance was to identify and locate cemeteries and other archeological features outside the boundaries of the established Portsmouth Village Historic District but known to local informants.

An assessment of archeological and historical resources within Cape Lookout National Seashore was completed in 1976, a 2006 archeological survey was prepared by the SEAC, and the previously mentioned pedestrian survey was completed during the cultural landscape documentation in 2007. Results from the 2007 survey are available in the Portsmouth Village Cultural Landscape Report, Appendix A. The 2007 survey encompassed Portsmouth Island and a portion of Sheep Island and concluded that intact archeological and landscape features from past occupations of the island have survived outside of the historic district. The CLR recommended that these features be further surveyed and mapped and could result in the expansion of the historic district boundary.

An archeological survey was undertaken by SEAC in 2008 to investigate historic properties as a result of the recommendation in the 2007 Cultural Landscape Report. Fieldwork consisted of a pedestrian survey and limited subsurface testing. Pedestrian survey was completed in Portsmouth Village and in the Middle Community area. One shovel test was completed near the purported home site of nineteenth century resident Dr. Samuel Dudley and another was completed near the Middle Community Schoolhouse. Ultimately, due to the dense vegetation and mixed results of the survey, additional survey within the Middle Community was recommended.

Further fieldwork was undertaken in 2009 in preparation for completing the Cape Lookout National Seashore Archeological Overview and Assessment, finalized in 2015. Fieldwork included recording several new historic sites on Sheep Island.

A Hurricane Irene Damage Assessment was completed in 2011 followed by further archeological site condition assessments in 2012 including within the Portsmouth Village area.

The 2015 Cape Lookout National Seashore Archeological Overview and Assessment recommended more detailed subsurface testing be conducted at Portsmouth Village and the nearby Middle Community to identify early historic sites. The document contains descriptions of the archeological sites throughout the National Seashore, including detailed descriptions of the individual gravesites in Portsmouth Village.

To date, no individual archeological sites at the Cape Lookout National Seashore have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Landscape Characteristic:
Buildings and Structures**

See Portsmouth Village Life-Saving Station component landscape CLI for information on Life-Saving Station buildings and structures.

Non-Contributing Buildings and Structures

There are non-contributing buildings within the Portsmouth Village Historic District, south of the Life-Saving Station precinct. These include a generator shed south of the Life-Saving Station that was constructed in 1982. A gas storage unit and a solar panel system are on the south side of the generator shed. There is a wooden comfort station that is accessed via a wooden ramp on the Road to the Beach. Additionally, there are two NPS maintenance/equipment buildings, one northeast of the comfort station and the other in the boneyard area south of the Life-Saving Station, that are non-contributing.

**Landscape Characteristic:
Circulation**

Historic Conditions:

Circulation within the Portsmouth Village Historic District that survives from the period of significance includes two primary routes—the Old Straight Road and the Village Road—as well as various secondary, access roads, and the 1940s airstrip. All of these routes existed on the site by the end date of the period of significance.

Circulation routes originally served pedestrians, horses, and wagons, and evolved to support automobile and powerboat traffic. During the period of significance, circulation within Portsmouth Village centered around a primary north/south route extending between Haulover Point and Middle Community—referred to today as the Old Straight Road. The 1866 survey of the community indicates the presence of this route, which survives today both as an extant route along its northern segment and a road trace along its southern segment past the Schoolhouse. Secondary routes are also shown to the west of the Old Straight Road extending to and between various residences. The history and date of origin of the other main route, the Village Road, is currently unknown.

Many of the village dwelling complexes are not shown as connected with the main road in any way on the 1866 survey. There were likely, however, paths and trails that were not developed enough to appear on the document. Additional secondary routes appear in the vicinity of the marine hospital complex, leading to the “Great River” tidal creek, and between one of the properties in the western-central portion of the village and the waterway of Baymarsh Thorofare. Two bridge crossings are also shown at Doctor’s Creek within the Middle Community area across Lawrence’s Creek. A dock extends into the ocean along the northeastern margin of the island near Coast Guard Creek. It is likely that other docks existed at this time but are not represented on the survey.

During earlier periods, there were other circulation routes that appear on historic aerial photographs and maps that are no longer present. These include a route extending from the Village Road to the former Marine Hospital site that parallels the route leading to the Life-Saving Station; and a route leading to the Marine Hospital from the nearby tidal creek.

A road is also shown within Middle Community leading west from the Old Straight Road to a tidal creek labeled as Bay Landing. It provided connections to several houses located in this area. Very little is known about other routes in use prior to 1866. Because much of the cultural development present during this time followed the northern margin of the island, there was likely a route linking this development with the Old Straight Road. Roads mentioned in historic documents dating to the mid-nineteenth century include the Old Cart Road and Main Cart Road, suggesting the type of vehicle use that was predominant at that time.

Some routes present during the twentieth century have since been lost, including a connection between the airstrip and the beach, a route leading south from the Schoolhouse, and various routes leading along the northeastern margin of the island between Haulover Point and the Life-Saving Station complex, including a bridge across Doctor's Creek. A route leading along the northern margin of the island toward Haulover Point from the vicinity of the Frank Gaskill House is also missing, and a dock at the Life-Saving Station located within Coast Guard Creek at the end of the period of significance is no longer present.

Existing Conditions:

At present, there are two primary road systems located within the historic district, and various secondary or access roads that lead to residences. Roads are all generally unimproved and composed of sand surfaces maintained through periodic grading. Circulation features listed on the LCS (LCS 012532) include twelve unimproved roads, described as eight to ten feet wide, with a total length of 8,400 feet, and in good condition. None are mapped or named, however, so it is not clear which of the roads described herein are specifically included on the LCS. The cultural landscape report documentation recorded twelve road corridors within the historic district.

Past the Life-Saving Station on the east side of the district, the Village Road veers south and becomes the Road to the Beach that accesses the beach and tidal mud flats that edge the historic district. This road is variously surfaced with graded sand and mown grass. Past a steel gate to the south of Coast Guard Creek, an access road leads northeast from the Road to the Beach to the two seamen's graves. This access road is generally in good condition.

Additional roads lead off of the Village Road, providing access to various dwellings, and cemetery sites. North of the intersection of the Village Road and Haulover Point Road, an access road heads west from Haulover Point Road and travels along the north side of the Theodore and Annie Salter House towards the Portsmouth Cemetery. The road then travels back south past the Theodore and Annie Salter privy to reconnect with the Village Road. This road has a mown-grass surface. It is generally in good condition.

The 1940s northeast-southwest trending airstrip adjacent to the Life-Saving Station is said to have been built to support access to the hunting, fishing, and gun clubs present on the island. It is no longer in use. It has a mown-grass surface and extends between the edges of the marshland to the north of the Life-Saving Station in a southwesterly direction for approximately 1,600 feet. It crosses between the Life-Saving Station and the Life-Saving Station Stables building. This feature is generally in good condition.

An access road to the airstrip begins north of the comfort station off of the Road to the Beach. The access road travels west and the northwest to connect with the southern end of the airstrip. The road also continues past the southern end of the airstrip, traveling northwest to the south side of the Lionel and Emma Gilgo House. There is an additional small access road on the southeast side of the airstrip that approaches the maintenance boneyard and associated maintenance/equipment building.

There are also several small-scale features related to circulation throughout the historic district (see Small-scale Features). At the comfort station on the Road to the Beach, there is a wood ramp system and flight of steps to access a non-historic comfort station. The ramp system includes handrails at two heights, one for wheelchair accessibility. Vegetation around the ramp is overgrown and the ramp and stairs appear to be in fair to poor condition.

**Landscape Characteristic:
Cluster Arrangement**

See Spatial Organization

**Landscape Characteristic:
Constructed Water Features**

See Land Use

**Landscape Characteristic:
Cultural Traditions**

See Land Use

**Landscape Characteristic:
Land Use**

Historic Conditions:

The principal land uses associated with Portsmouth Village Historic District today are museum, interpretive, and educational, in addition to recreational and cemetery. The recreational and cemetery land uses, in addition to limited residential uses, survive from the period of significance, while the museum and educational uses that take place on the property today post-date the period of significance and are non-contributing.

During the period of significance, the historic district supported many more land uses than are present today. These included full-time residential, industry, coastal navigation and maritime services, agriculture, coastal defense/military, commerce, medical facilities, and educational facilities. Industrial land uses included gristmilling associated with the windmill present during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, a fish processing plant present on the island between 1866 and 1869, and possibly a boat-building enterprise. Coastal navigation and maritime services were supported by the pilots who helped ships pass through the channels, shoals, sand bars, and swash of Ocracoke Inlet, and by the building complex along the southeastern side of the village that was variously utilized as a Life-Saving Station, Coast Guard Station, and Signal Corps facility from 1894 to 1937 and from 1942 to 1945. Historic records indicate that a telegraph line was established and maintained on the island between 1881 and 1885.

Agricultural activities conducted on the island focused primarily on the pasturing of livestock, including cattle, sheep, goats, horses, and fowl. Watering holes were sometimes dug for livestock. Ponies, rounded up biannually for transport to market, were one of the commercially raised species. The horses were driven into a pen established at the narrowest point on the island along Horse Island Channel located just off Portsmouth's north face, which was presumably named for the horses roaming that reef.

Medical uses focused on the U.S. Marine Hospital developed in the 1840s, although this building complex was preceded by smaller medical facilities maintained by an island doctor during the 1820s and 1830s. The marine hospital was decommissioned circa 1866. An educational "academy" is known to have existed on the island during the early nineteenth century. The Schoolhouse that served the local population between the early 1900s and the 1940s survives on the island today.

Historically, hunting, fishing, and gun clubs were present on the island and supported the sporting interests of members and guests. There have been at least two sports clubs on the island to support such recreational pursuits as hunting, fishing, and shooting. The Pillintary Hunting Club existed on the

island during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Czar Nicholas of Russia is said to have visited this club. Franklin Delano Roosevelt is also said to have visited before he became president. The Life-Saving Station was used as a hunting and fishing club after the federal government's departure.

Existing Conditions:

When the island became part of the Cape Lookout National Seashore in 1966, the diversity of land uses began to diminish. Today, the primary land uses of the district are educational, museum, and interpretive. Other land uses associated with the historic district include recreational and cemetery.

The primary land uses associated with Portsmouth Village Historic District are educational, museum, and interpretive. The NPS protects and maintains the historic properties located within the district and makes them available for visitor education and interpretation. There are numerous opportunities for interpretation within the district, particularly in association with exhibits housed within the Theodore and Annie Salter House (used as a visitor contact facility), Life-Saving Station, the Post Office, residences that are open to the public with interpretive information, and information conveyed about many of the other properties through signage and brochures. There was previously a historic leasing program for volunteers to live on the island part-time and today NPS personnel and volunteers periodically staff local dwellings including the Life-Saving Station kitchen. There are thus occasional part-time residential uses within the historic district.

Today, passive recreational uses of the site, such as walking, are enjoyed by visitors. The primary recreational land uses associated with the historic district are the opportunities to walk throughout the village landscape and to the beach, in addition to picnicking, fishing, and viewing wildlife. Cape Lookout National Seashore recorded 458,000 recreational visitors during fiscal year 2016.

There are numerous small cemeteries located throughout the historic district. While there have not been any burials in these cemeteries since the 1970s, it appears that there are no legal restrictions preventing descendants of former residents from being buried in one of the Portsmouth Island cemeteries (Personal communication, Michael Rikard, Resource Management Specialist, Cape Lookout National Seashore, 2007).

Landscape Characteristic:
Natural Systems and Features

The topography at Portsmouth Island is typical of a barrier island. The portion of the island facing the sound consists of stable dunes separated by salt marsh and low, wet ground containing small ponds of fresh water. The dunes are a few feet above sea level, well drained, and covered in long leaf pine and Eastern red cedar trees. The majority of these areas have a dense understory of brush, brambles, and marsh grass; hurricanes have knocked down large numbers of trees. The island is dotted with elevated landforms known locally as hammocks that were the focus of human habitation. At Portsmouth Island these hammocks were often named after the residents who lived on them.

Historic Conditions:

The Portsmouth Village Historic District landscape is generally low-lying, with little of the island extending more than five feet above sea level at high tide. Most of the historic district is currently characterized by marshes, level areas, and small hammocks. It is edged by the ocean at Ocracoke Inlet, Baymarsh Thorofare, and three tidal creeks: Doctor's Creek, Coast Guard Creek, and Warren Creek. These conditions have remained relatively consistent since the community's early establishment and all contribute to the character and significance of the district. Due to the fact that the community is sited on the western or leeward side of the island and away from the ocean surf, it is less affected by littoral drift and erosion than the eastern side of the island outside of the historic district.

There have, however, been modest changes to the margins of the island, including the shape and configuration of Haulover Point and to the northeastern and northwestern shorelines since the

eighteenth century. The land mass of Portsmouth Island is thought to have gradually receded on the north and northeastern faces between 1753 and 1861. Warren Creek is currently in an erosional phase, threatening a graveyard associated with the Sheep Island settlement. It is not known to what degree changes such as these affected the community, although shifting sands in the area of Haulover Point have most likely altered boat docking and other activities numerous times over the years.

Unstable sand in the vicinity of the existing Life-Saving Station is known to have led to the relocation of many dwellings to the west during the early nineteenth century. Dry Sand Point, a regularly inundated sand flat located to the east of the village, was an important area for lightering operations and for horse round-ups during the nineteenth century. This landform is no longer extant.

While little is known about vegetation on the island prior to eighteenth-century settlement, scientists believe that Portsmouth Island was one of the few locations along the Outer Banks to sustain maritime forest. This live oak, loblolly pine, and Eastern red cedar-dominated community type was likely lost to early settlers as the trees were cut for firewood and building material. This vegetation type is generally rare on the Outer Banks. Although scattered remnants of cedar, pine, and oak remain, the historic maritime forest is missing from the landscape today.

It is also likely that a patchwork of grasslands, shrub savannah, shrub thicket, and dune and marsh plant communities was present at the time of settlement; these communities continue to be present today. The island, however, is known to have been heavily grazed by livestock owned by community members. Horses, sheep, and cattle were present in large numbers on the island and allowed to roam free. Grazing by livestock likely had a large impact on vegetation, affecting the composition and health of grasslands, and further diminishing the presence of woody vegetation (Barber and Pikley, 2001).

Shifts in deeper water channels through Ocracoke Inlet have had a profound effect on the community. Sand deposition within the inlet has led to problems for boats trying to gain access to the island since the eighteenth century, although approaches to the island are far more limited today than they were during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Wallace's Channel, which was one of driving forces of commercial shipping through Ocracoke Inlet after it was opened by a hurricane in 1752, almost immediately began to fill with sand. Various measures were taken to keep the channel open through the early to mid-nineteenth century, but it eventually was lost and is no longer an important feature of the inlet. The island of Shell Castle, which supported a thriving lightering business and various industrial endeavors at one time, was heavily affected by various storms, most notably a hurricane in 1933. Today the island is only about ten feet wide.

Various place names associated with the area's historic geography appear on historic maps of the island and surrounding Ocracoke Inlet. While many of these place names continue to appear on contemporary mapping, such as the most recent USGS quadrangle map, others have either fallen out of use, or the sites have been lost. These place names are listed below and annotated to indicate whether they survive. Additional information about these places is provided in the following Existing Conditions section.

Dry Sand Point. This feature is not labeled as such on the USGS map, but is the landform that curves to the east of the historic district.

Brant Shoal Marsh. This occupied a portion of Dry Sand Point. It is not labeled on current USGS mapping as such, but likely survives.

Brant Shoal Rocks. These are not labeled on the current USGS map; they were located northeast of Haulover Point.

Ayer's Rock. This feature is not labeled on the current USGS map; it was located south of Beacon Island in Ocracoke Inlet.

Beacon Island. This feature survives and is labeled on current USGS mapping; it is located northeast of Haulover Point.

Casey Point. This feature is not labeled on the current USGS map.

Casey's Bay. This feature survives and is labeled on the current USGS map. It is located below Baymarsh Thorofare, west of Middle Community.

Baymarsh Thorofare. This feature survives and is labeled on the current USGS map.
Lawrence's Creek. This feature is not labeled on the current USGS map.
White Shoal. This feature is not labeled on the current USGS map.
Haulover Point. This feature survives and is labeled on the current USGS map.
Sheep Island. This feature survives and is incorrectly labeled on the current USGS map as Evergreen Island; Sheep Island is incorrectly labeled to the west of the village.
Sheep Island Creek. This feature is not labeled on the current USGS map; it was located to the southwest of Casey's Bay.
Wallace's Channel. This feature survives and a label on the current USGS map indicates the Wallace Channel Light. The channel is far less prominent than it was historically.
Shell Castle Island. This feature survives and is labeled on the current USGS map. The island is far less prominent than it was historically.
Ocracoke Inlet. The channel is far less prominent than it was historically.
Pamlico Sound. Exists.
Horse Island Channel. This feature is not labeled on the current USGS map, but its location was between the village and the spit of land labeled Brant Shoal Marsh, and a similar feature may still exist. This channel is said to have been named for the horses pastured nearby.
Mount Truxston. This feature is not labeled on the current USGS map; the high point that was referred to as Mount Truxston overlooks the Life-Saving Station and mud flats. It likely still exists and could potentially be located.

Existing Conditions:

Natural resources associated with the Portsmouth Village Historic District include island landforms, tidal creeks, sandy hammocks, and vegetation communities ranging from salt marshes to shrub savannahs. All of the plant communities on the island have been heavily impacted by cultural activities, particularly the raising of livestock, which were allowed to graze over much of the island until the 1950s. Oral histories suggest that vegetation was periodically burned in the past to encourage new growth for grazing (Natural Resource Management Plan for Cape Lookout National Seashore, 1976, 18).

There are several landforms noted on Portsmouth maps. These include Haulover Point, which is a natural extension of the island's landform that is used as a landing area. Mount Truxston is a high point in the eastern portion of the island that appears on historic maps. It is described as a lookout point for the village. The location of Mount Truxston was not identified during this study.

Two tidal creeks extend from the heart of the village to the shoreline. These include Doctor's Creek and Coast Guard Creek. Doctor's Creek is located in the central part of the village below Haulover Point. The Henry Pigott House was constructed along the creek margin to take advantage of the boat access once afforded from this location. A small dock extends from the house precinct into the creek. Pigott was once the mail carrier for the island and received mail deliveries at this dock. The creek has two branches that extend to the main east/west roadway and converge west of the Ed, Nora, and Elma Dixon House. Wooden bridges carry the road over these branches. This tidal creek appears to be in good condition, although sand deposits have made it very difficult to access this part of the island, and the creek likely does not serve boat traffic as well as it did in the past.

Coast Guard Creek extends from the Life-Saving Station to Ocracoke Inlet along the eastern margin of the historic district. This creek was an important consideration in the siting of the Portsmouth Life-Saving Station. While the building is sited far enough inland to be relatively sheltered, access to the coastal waters for the Life-Saving Station rescue boats was afforded via this creek. In 1908, the Life-Saving Station crew dammed the western end of Coast Guard Creek just east of the station and backfilled with sand, which significantly shortened the creek (Jones, 2006, 30). A seawall and ramps were constructed in 1918 along the edge of the creek to facilitate access to the water for rescue boats. Siltation has occurred within the creek, evidenced by the portions of the seawall now embedded in its banks. Otherwise, this tidal creek appears to be in good condition.

Warren Creek is a tidal creek that edges the historic district to the west. The Keeler-Styron Cemetery sits atop a hammock overlooking the creek. This creek also appears to be in good condition.

Ocracoke Inlet is a body of water that extends between Ocracoke Island and Portsmouth Island. The inlet, while currently too shallow for most boat traffic, once served as a primary shipping thoroughfare between Pamlico Sound and the Atlantic Ocean. Casey Island is located to the northwest of Portsmouth Island at the edge of the inlet; Shell Castle Island sits further to the west within Pamlico Sound. Wallace's Channel sits within the inlet and extends outside of the historic district. It can be reached via a pedestrian path that arises from the Road to the Beach. A dock is located along the edge of the channel.

On Portsmouth Island, there are numerous hammocks, sandy landforms that are slightly more elevated than their surroundings, located within the historic district. They have been utilized to site cultural features due to the slight protection against flooding afforded by their elevation. The hammocks generally appear to be stable and in good condition.

Salt and brackish marsh occupies much of the western portion of the district, its southern margins, and the margins of Doctor's and Coast Guard Creeks. These naturally-occurring plant communities arise over areas that are regularly inundated with salt water due to tides. The primary species characteristic of the low marsh are smooth cordgrass and saltwort (*Salicornia perennis*). Other glassworts, sea lavender (*Limonium carolinianum*), and salt grass (*Distichlis spicata*) may also be present. The high marsh is more diverse, and characterized by saltmeadow cordgrass, sea ox-eye (*Borrichia frutescens*), and various rushes (*Juncus* spp.). Brackish marshes are dominated by saltmeadow cordgrass, fimbristylus (*Fimbristylis* spp.), little bluestem (*Andropogon virginicus*), foxtail grass (*Setaria geniculata*), and panic grass (*Panicum* spp.). Shrubby components of the marshes include marsh elder (*Iva frutescens*), silverling (*Baccharis halmifolia*), and sometimes wax myrtle. Needlegrass and sedges (*Scirpus americanus*) are also present in brackish marshes. These communities appear generally to be in good condition. No invasive alien plant species were observed to be threatening these communities during field investigations conducted for this project.

Shrub savannahs and shrub thickets are present over portions of the Portsmouth Village Historic District. These plant communities are characterized by species such as Eastern red cedar, yaupon holly (*Ilex vomitoria*), and wax myrtle but differ in their degrees of woody plant cover. Additional species that may be present include persimmon (*Diospyros virginiana*), poison ivy (*Rhus radicans*), Hercules' club (*Zanthoxylum clavaherculis*), live oak, silverling, marsh elder, beautyberry (*Callicarpa americana*), red mulberry (*Morus rubra*), dogwood (*Cornus stricta*), bamboo vine (*Smilax laurifolia*), Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*), pepper vine (*Ampelopsis arborea*), and muscadine grape (*Vitis rotundifolia*). Savannah communities are characterized by grasslands dotted with open grownshrubs and small trees. Thickets include more woody vegetation, and arise in response to increased protection against wind and salt spray from the ocean and overwashes. Both of these community types generally appear to be in good condition. No invasive alien plant species were observed to be threatening these communities during field investigations conducted for this project.

Also present within the historic district are open grasslands dominated primarily by grasses and forbs. These occur where woody growth is less apt to become established because of winds, salt spray, a lack of available soil moisture, and the potential for overwash or storm damage. Species characteristic of Portsmouth Village grasslands include: saltmeadow cordgrass (*Spartina patens*), water pennywort (*Hydrocotyle bonariensis*), seaside goldenrod (*Solidago sempervirens*), fimbristylis, and purple muhly (*Muhlenbergia capillaris*). The grassland areas serve as habitat for various birds such as the common Eastern meadowlark, mourning dove, boat-tailed grackle, and marsh hawk. This plant community type generally appears to be in good condition. No invasive alien plant species were observed to be threatening these communities during field investigations conducted for this project. Both the shrub and grassland communities generally appear to be migrating toward the tidal flats, forming very clear bands of vegetation. Scientific study is being conducted by local natural resource specialists to determine the cause of this unusual successional pattern.

Landscape Characteristic: Small Scale Features

Historic Conditions:

Little is known about small-scale features associated with Portsmouth Village during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Fencing is indicated on the 1866 coastal survey in association with many of the properties, including the Life-Saving Station precinct. Cemetery headstones are another small-scale feature that has likely characterized the landscape since the early nineteenth century. The small-scale features described below date from the period of significance and contribute to the significance of the historic district.

Two seamen's graves, located on the east side of the historic district, mark the early nineteenth century burial sites of two sea captains. These appear to be in fair condition. In the northern portion of the district is Elijah Gaskill's grave.

Existing Conditions:

Small-scale features generally have a shorter useful life than many other features and are typically more easily replaced. Thus, most of the small-scale features in the district date from after the period of significance and are associated with recreational uses and accommodation of visitors that date from after the establishment of the seashore in 1966. The noncontributing small-scale features located within the district today are primarily signage and other features associated with visitor interpretation and wayfinding and features associated with the adaptive reuse of buildings by the NPS, including more recent septic structures, and picnic tables. There are also numerous small-scale features associated with circulation.

Cemeteries

The headstones associated with Two Seamen's Graves are relatively large and ornate in comparison with others within the district. They include detailed funerary carvings. These gravestones appear to be in fair condition due to deterioration of the inscriptions. The first includes the following epitaph: "To the memory of Captain Thomas W. Greene of Providence, R.I. who died Jan. 17, 1810 in the 32nd year of his age. In thy fair book of life divine my God inscribe my name that may fill some humble place beneath the slaughtered lamb." The epitaph of the second includes the following epitaph: "In memory of Capt. William Marten who died Oct. 4, 1821 aged 36 years 2 months 27 days. Far from my native land my spirit wings its flight to dwell at God's right hand with angels fair and bright."

Fences

A metal gate hung on wood posts along the Road to the Beach south of the Life-Saving Station limits vehicular access to the southeast portion of the historic district. Wood posts with chains are set to the sides of the posts, providing a structure to support the gate when it is open and a means for securing it. This gate system is in good condition. Wood bollards and posts with metal chains are part of the gate system set along the edge of the Road to the Beach in order to prevent vehicles from circumnavigating the gate. These features are in good condition.

Signage

A unified sign system is utilized within the historic district to identify and provide information about historic structures, historic roads, and cemeteries. The signs are approximately two feet tall and composed of a rectangular metal base with an attached rectangular panel at an angle with an inset interpretive panel that includes the name of the structure and interpretive information. The bottom section of the interpretive panel includes an image.

The district previously exhibited signs composed of painted square wood posts and painted wood boards nailed to them that had a rectangular area for text. The rectangular area was oriented with the long dimension running horizontally. The upper left corner was punctuated by a carved extension fashioned to resemble the Portsmouth Methodist Church steeple. The signs were painted white, with a black border and black text.

Brown painted wood signs with routed letters painted white indicate directions around the historic district, such as "To Beach" and "To Schoolhouse". Additionally, there are interpretive waysides located throughout the district.

Cisterns and water boxes:

There are cisterns and water boxes associated with many of the properties located within Portsmouth Village. Although specific dates of construction are not known for many, they all appear to date from the period of significance and are contributing resources of the historic district.

In the eastern portion of the historic district, the U.S. Marine Hospital brick cistern is located adjacent to the airstrip. Reportedly constructed circa 1847, this brick structure is one of the largest cisterns still extant within the district. It measures ten feet in diameter and is eight feet deep. The brick structure is round and open at the top. Standing water is visible within. The cistern appears to be in fair condition; it is evidencing biological growth, efflorescence, and a portion of the brickwork appears to have been repointed with incompatible mortar.

Other Utilities:

Southwest of the Life-Saving Station Kitchen is the generator shed, constructed by the NPS in 1982. This outbuilding consists of a small gable roof structure with a wood shingle roof and unpainted plywood wall cladding. There is a gas storage unit and a solar panel system atop a wood frame on the south side of the generator shed.

Other Small-Scale Features:

There are several wood posts associated with the Portsmouth Life-Saving Station. Within Coast Guard Creek on the east side of the seawall, there are two square wooden posts set into the ground. The posts may be used to secure boat lines and are in good to fair condition. On the northwest side of the Life-Saving Station area four wooden posts. Also on the west side of the Life-Saving Station building area artifacts associated with a boat wreck. The remains are bolted to two wood posts. The exhibit is in good condition.

Remnant wood posts outline the rectangular form of a boathouse structure that once stood adjacent to the Life-Saving Station stable. This structure washed away during one of the early twenty-first century hurricanes that affected the island. These posts are in fair condition.

**Landscape Characteristic:
Spatial Organization**

Historic Conditions:

Over time, the broad patterns of spatial organization within the village have changed as settlement moved further inland. Initial settlement is described as occurring along the edge of the water, but few of these buildings survive today. A large concentration of built features that once occupied the district's high point near the surviving Life-Saving Station is also no longer extant.

The 1753 act establishing the town indicated that the fifty-acre site was to be divided into lots, one-half acre in size, with "convenient" streets. The act noted that those buying lots were required to "build a good substantial habitable framed or brick house or a good substantial warehouse, of not less dimensions than 20 feet in length and 16 feet wide" (Stick, 1958, 40). One of the best primary source documents illustrating the composition of the village during its most populated period is the 1866 U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey Map (see Figure 12). This map indicates a high concentration of buildings south of Haulover Point, along the northeastern shoreline, and in the vicinity of the Marine Hospital. Below Portsmouth Village, there are various houses in the area locals referred to as Middle Community. There are many dwellings shown on the map set within a heavily vegetated landscape indicated as "bushes." Many of the structures are surrounded or enclosed by fencing forming a series of square or rectangular dwelling precincts. Much of the development edges the historic Haulover Point/Old Straight Road alignment. Few other roads are indicated.

Existing Conditions:

Today, the configuration of the village centers on the Haulover Point/Old Straight Road alignment as well as the Village Road that do not appear on the 1866 survey map. The composition of the community and its patterns of spatial organization survive from the period of significance but more closely approximate patterns representative of twentieth century adaptations to the changed economy after the filling of Wallace's Channel.

In addition to the Portsmouth Life-Saving Station complex, there are some dwellings on the island that have been sited to take advantage of proximity to the water. The Henry Pigott and the T.T. Potter houses are the primary examples of cultural features that have direct connections to the water through docks and boardwalks. The relationship between the village and the water is partially obscured today by woody vegetation.

Creating a central village area, many of the features are sited along the Village Road between its intersection with the Haulover Point Road/Old Road and the Life-Saving Station complex (Figure 150). In addition to numerous dwellings, this relatively open streetscape also includes the Post Office and General Store and the Portsmouth Methodist Church. The streetscape of dwellings, the church, and post office is in relatively good condition, but trees sometimes obscure formerly important visual connections.

Many of the dwellings, institutional buildings, and cemeteries located within the historic district have distinct precincts delineated by perimeter fences, closely mown turf, and collections of outbuildings oriented along the same axes as the primary dwelling or building (Figure 151). These precincts are maintained in mown lawn and are relatively legible and therefore in good condition.

Landscape Characteristic:
Topography

Historic Conditions:

The topography of the Portsmouth Historic District is primarily low-lying with wide sandy beaches. During the period of significance, there appear to have been few culturally derived topographic modifications that can be described with certainty. Those topographic conditions and modifications that survive from the period of significance and contribute to the village's significance are described below. The elevated sand mounds referred to as hammocks have been used since at least the nineteenth century to site buildings and cemeteries. The seawall constructed in association with the Life-Saving Station between 1914 and 1918 to facilitate access to the adjacent tidal creek for rescue boats likely involved earth-moving. An airstrip was established near the Life-Saving Station in the 1940s through grading by local residents with hand-held equipment; this endeavor is thought to have disturbed or destroyed archeological evidence of the Marine Hospital.

Mount Truxton, a high point indicated on an 1806 survey of the area, is known to have been used as a lookout for lightering operations as well as the Life-Saving Station and possibly for various coastal defense efforts. This landform was located near the site of the Wallace and Burns houses. It likely survives today but may be obscured by tree growth.

The sand roads within the village are maintained through periodic grading. In the past, this was done with the use of a horse-drawn scraper or by hand using shovels.

Outside the boundaries of the historic district, a dredging machine was used to maintain access along Wallace's Channel for shipping needs. The dredging machine does not appear to survive.

Existing Conditions:

Much of Portsmouth Island is relatively level (Figure 153). Most of the island is only about five feet above mean sea level at high tide. The highest elevation on the island is approximately eight feet above mean sea level, which occurs in two locations overlooking the tidal mud flats outside of the historic district. Within the historic district, the high point is generally considered to be the area where the marine hospital was once sited near the existing brick cistern. Otherwise, the landform of the island gently undulates between lower-lying areas and the slightly higher sand mounds known as hammocks. Ditches have been established to drain some of the lower lying lands, such as the road to Haulover Point, for mosquito control.

Topographic modifications that post-date the period of significance include the establishment of the septic leach field along the airstrip behind the marine hospital cistern and grading of Haulover Point Road.

Although hammocks are only raised slightly above the surrounding elevation, they have traditionally afforded local residents a degree of protection against flooding and overwashes.

An example of man-made changes to the topography includes the airstrip. Personal communication with local residents suggests that the relatively level expanse of the airstrip was established through minor grading during the 1940s (Figure 154). This landscape feature continues to be maintained in mown grass and is in good condition.

**Landscape Characteristic:
Vegetation**

Historic Conditions:

Little is known about cultural vegetation associated with the historic Portsmouth Village community. The soils of the island are not highly conducive to raising crops or growing trees to produce edible fruits or nuts. Shade trees, similarly, may have been difficult to establish and maintain. Poplars within the former Middle Community also generally mark former house sites. Farming is said to have occurred on a limited basis through small domestic gardens. Sweet potatoes were one of the more successful crops grown. Otherwise a limited range of vegetables were attempted. Other attempts to grow fruit and shade trees at the U.S. Marine Hospital are known to have failed due to yearly overflow of salt water.

It is unlikely that the specimens survive from the period of significance, but similar plantings may have existed prior to 1971. There are also limited examples of perennial and ornamental shrub plantings associated with some of the historic dwellings. These plantings generally have been established and maintained by those holding historic leases, but have likely changed over the decades.

Portsmouth Village community descendant Chester Lynn provided information about other ways that local residents acquired food and household goods on the island. Mr. Lynn indicated that sea kale was collected and cooked like collards. Residents also ate birds, fish, and shellfish, including clams, oysters, whales, porpoises, and sea gull eggs. Naturally-occurring bayberry was collected to make candles. The most popular wood used for cooking was oak. The stumps of cut oak trees were left to re-sprout. Ornamental vegetation was found in association with some properties; a popular plant was hydrangea.

Many residents raised livestock, fed on the naturally occurring grasses and shrubs. The island's tree cover is said have been kept closely clipped by free-roaming livestock. The raising of livestock is said to have been of little cost or trouble to owners; fences were not used to pen the animals, and no supplemental food was provided since they ate the native marsh grasses as fodder. The most prominent livestock were sheep, horses, and cattle. Chickens were also raised. No pigs were kept on the island, due to the damage they caused to vegetation.

Existing Conditions:

In addition to the vegetation described under Natural Resources and Systems, there are plantings and maintained vegetative conditions that are specific to cultural properties within the district. Each of the historic properties, for example, is surrounded by a mown grass precinct, while less closely mown grassland and shrubby growth typically edge the precincts. A few former residential properties also include ornamental and shade trees and shrubs or perennial and bulb plantings. There is a plantation of loblolly pines to the northwest of the airstrip.

The grass around most of the historic properties is closely mown, forming an open precinct for visitors to explore. The species of grasses are not currently known, but the lawn areas appear generally to be in good condition. There are Eastern red cedar trees located in association with many of the residential properties within the district. These native evergreens are associated with many of the cemeteries within the district.

Located south of the Village Road between the Washington Roberts House and the airstrip is a loblolly pine plantation. This planting has existed since at least the 1970s. Little is known about who planted the trees, when they were planted, and why, although Boy Scout troops are known to have planted pines elsewhere in the region, including Cape Lookout in the 1960s, and may have been involved in this planting. This plantation appears to be in good condition.

**Landscape Characteristic:
Views and Vistas**

Historic Conditions:

Little is recorded about historic views and viewsheds at Portsmouth Island. Mount Truxston is marked on an 1806 map and was likely used for lookout purposes. The village was generally sited to view Wallace's Channel and the lightering activities occurring there. Earthen fortifications were constructed on the mud flats and beach front to the east of the village to protect Ocracoke Inlet and were likely to have included good views of ocean approaches to the inlet. The Life-Saving Station includes an elevated lookout tower to support lifesaving endeavors (Figure 158). This view survives today.

Existing Conditions:

Views associated with Portsmouth Village include short views within the component landscape, views to Ocracoke Inlet, longer views along road corridors, and expansive views from the Life-Saving Station watchtower. Throughout the Portsmouth Village landscape, groves of Eastern red cedar trees and shrub thickets limit expansive views.

Views include those from the watchtower located atop the Life-Saving Station that affords a 360-degree view of the island and its surrounds. Much of the village is visible from this vantage point. A punctuated view is afforded along the Road to the Beach.

Boats arriving at Haulover Point dock from Ocracoke Island pass along the northern edge of the island. From this vantage point, there are various views into the landscape.

Condition

Assessment Interval (Years): 6

Next Assessment Due Date: 09/30/2024

Condition Assessment and Impacts

Condition Assessment: Fair

Assessment Date: 08/08/2018

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

The Road to the Beach landscape is in Fair condition. The landscape contains several post-1966 NPS support structures including a generator shed, the comfort station along the Road to the Beach, and two NPS maintenance buildings south of the Life-Saving Station. The comfort station ramp is in Fair/Poor condition. The 1853 U.S. Marine Hospital brick cistern is in good condition. The Road to the Beach is in good condition. Overall the landscape characteristics are in fair condition and the site retains sufficient integrity to convey the associations of its period of significance to the visitor and maintains the seven aspects of integrity.

Stabilization Measures:

Impacts

Type of Impact:	Deferred Maintenance
Other Impact:	Neglect
External or Internal:	Internal
Impact Description:	There is evidence of deferred maintenance and/or neglect on several outbuildings and structures including the ramp to the comfort station.
Type of Impact:	Structural Deterioration
Other Impact:	
External or Internal:	Internal
Impact Description:	Deferred maintenance has led to the structural deterioration of several historic buildings and structures. Evidence of deterioration includes deterioration of material and missing materials, among other examples (see Buildings and Structures section for additional details). Small-scale features such as cisterns also show deterioration.
Type of Impact:	Exposure to Elements
Other Impact:	Wind
External or Internal:	Both Internal and External
Impact Description:	Salt water spray, wind, and impacts from storms including hurricanes have impacted the resources. Evidence of exposure to elements within the district include deteriorated small-scale features.
Type of Impact:	Inundation/Flooding
Other Impact:	and Inundation/Sea Level Rise and Erosion
External or Internal:	Both Internal and External
Impact Description:	Due to the proximity to water, the district is subject to erosion, tidal flooding, and larger flooding events. Like flooding, sea level rise is a significant impact to the historic district.
Type of Impact:	Removal/Replacement
Other Impact:	
External or Internal:	Internal
Impact Description:	The district at large and component landscape has lost many historic features including numerous buildings and structures, including the US Marine Hospital. Several structures within the historic district have been demolished or moved during and after the period of significance. Fences have also been removed from landscapes.

Stabilization Costs

Treatment

Treatment

Approved Treatment: Rehabilitation
Approved Treatment Document: Cultural Landscape Report
Document Date: 2007-01-01

Approved Treatment Document Explanatory Narrative:

Based upon the park's need to meet current and projected future interpretive, functional, and management goals, rehabilitation is recommended as the appropriate treatment approach for the Portsmouth Village Historic District landscape, with a strong emphasis on preservation of this unique community that survives with a very high degree of integrity. Because rehabilitation is defined as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property, this approach allows for protection of the site's historic character and resources while carefully addressing the needs for limited enhancement of interpretive opportunities and circulation routes, ecological maintenance and restoration, and the improvement of visitor amenities as outlined in the GMP.

Within the rehabilitation treatment, stabilization, protection, and preservation of historic and natural resources are actions that must occur to allow for the limited accommodation of new uses. As part of the treatment recommendations, those resources and systems within Portsmouth Village Historic District that are to be the focus of stabilization, protection, and preservation are noted. Sensitive habitats and biotic resources, as well as sites of known and potential archeological resources, for example, should be treated with great care. In general, the CLR recommends preservation of archeological resources unless a compelling research question or informational need justifies disturbance or excavation, or mitigation to accommodate unavoidable change is necessary.

In considering the other treatment alternatives recognized by the Secretary of the Interior for the Portsmouth Village Historic District landscape, the Cultural Landscape Report found them inappropriate for the following reasons. Preservation is overly restrictive because it does not allow for the enhanced interpretation and site access recommended in the GMP. Restoration and reconstruction are inappropriate for the Portsmouth Village Historic District landscape because they assume, as a prerequisite, that sufficient documentation exists to accurately portray a lost historic condition. At this time, it does not appear that there are documentary sources detailed enough to support restoration or reconstruction of the Portsmouth Village Historic District cultural landscape.

Approved Treatment Completed: No

Approved Treatment Costs

Landscape Approved Treatment Cost Explanatory Description:

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Bibliography and Supplemental Information

Bibliography

Citation Title:	Please see parent Portsmouth Village CLI for complete bibliography.
Year of Publication:	