

# About Us

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The Blackwater River Foundation, Inc. was established in 2002 to fulfill the unmet needs of preserving environmental and cultural resources within the Blackwater River watershed. **There is no other organization focused solely on environmental and cultural education, outreach, and stewardship related to the Blackwater River.**

**Mission Statement:** "Preserving historical, cultural and environmental resources."

**Geographic Area Served:** Blackwater River Watershed - Okaloosa and Santa Rosa counties in Florida, and Conecuh County in Alabama.

## Current Programs and Projects

- Blackwater Watershed Stewardship Program
- Blackwater River Stewardship Guide
- Blackwater Watershed Urban Forestry Program
- Blackwater Watershed Master Planning Project
- Clear Creek Land Management Project
- T.W. Jones House Rehabilitation Project

## Past Programs and Projects

- Bagdad Waterfronts Florida Partnership
- Bagdad Urban and Community Forestry Program
- Mt. Bethel Steeple Restoration Project
- Ollinger & Bruce Shipyard Park Development
- Santa Rosa County Oral History Project

## Developing Programs and Projects

- Blackwater Maritime and Nature Education Trail
- Blackwater Watershed Education Program
- J.B. Turner House Rehabilitation Project

To find out more, please call (850) 665-3400  
or visit

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

# Membership Benefits

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- Invitations to Special Events
- Semiannual Newsletters
- Annual Reports and Calendars

Blackwater River Foundation, Inc.  
P.O. Box 495  
Bagdad, FL 32530  
[www.BlackwaterRiver.org](http://www.BlackwaterRiver.org)



Preserving Environmental  
and Cultural Resources



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# Preserving Environmental & Cultural Resources

The Blackwater River Foundation, Inc. (Foundation) was established in 2002 to fulfill the unmet needs of preserving environmental and cultural resources within the Blackwater River watershed. That same year, the Zarrow Family donated the historic T.W. Jones House (built circa 1880) and 29 acres of surrounding waterfront property to the Foundation. Immediately thereafter, the Foundation entered 19 acres of the property into conservation through a donation to the Northwest Florida Water Management District.

Upon its acquisition, the T.W. Jones House was in extreme disrepair after a decade of abandonment. Funds were secured through grants and donations within the next year to replace the roof on the house. The house was “moth balled” for the next five years until enough funding was secured for a complete and historically accurate restoration.

In 2005, the Jelks Family Foundation donated 80 acres of property to the Foundation along Juniper Creek in the Blackwater River State Forest. The Foundation later sold the property to the State Forest for inclusion in the Juniper Creek Primitive Area. The proceeds from the sale allowed the Foundation to match historic preservation grants to help realize the original goal of restoring the T.W. Jones for use as an education and office center for nonprofit activities. Concurrently, in 2004, the Foundation developed the management plan for the Bagdad Mill Site Park when it was leased by Santa Rosa County from the State of Florida.

In 2005, the Foundation in partnership with Santa Rosa County received a Waterfronts Florida Partnership state designation for the village of Bagdad. The Florida Department of Community Affairs and the Foundation provided seed money over a two-year period to establish a long-term participatory vision plan process for the community. Bagdad’s vision process, facilitated by the Foundation, has been recognized by the Florida Department of Community Affairs as one of the most successful participatory community programs out of its 23 designated communities.

The Foundation sponsored the incorporation of the Bagdad Waterfronts Florida Partnership as a nonprofit organization upon “graduation” from the statewide Waterfronts Florida

Program in 2007. The Foundation still provides technical and limited financial assistance to the program as it meets the needs of long-term planning for the village. The visioning efforts of Bagdad are used as examples throughout Florida.

In 2006, the Foundation established an Urban Forestry Program through a U.S. Forest Service grant. The program sponsors tree education and urban forestry workshops. The program is developing a series of educational podcasts related with urban forestry along the Blackwater River. In 2007, the Foundation sponsored the development of the Ollinger & Bruce Shipyard Park on the Blackwater River in Bagdad.

From 2008 to 2009, the Foundation partnered with The Nature Conservancy, Santa Rosa County, NAS Whiting Field, the University of Florida/IFAS, and the State of Florida to develop a management plan for property along Clear Creek near NAS Whiting Field that had been acquired through Florida Forever conservation funds.

The Foundation also provided financial and technical support for other community projects related with historic preservation and environmental stewardship. For example, the Foundation saved an 1871 historic home (the Mason-Allen House) from demolition by Santa Rosa County by advocating its preservation and relocation.

In 2008, the Foundation established the Blackwater Watershed Stewardship Program. Through a stewardship committee of many stakeholders, the Foundation is currently developing a Blackwater Watershed Stewardship Master Plan, a need that has not been addressed by any other entity. The accomplishments can be viewed on our website.

The Foundation has developed a long-term strategic plan that keeps it focused and motivated to foster new programming and accomplish many more successful projects. Key elements of the strategic plan include development of cultural and environmental educational facilities and programs, recruitment of membership, and development of a land trust.

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## Become a Member

**Yes, I'd like to support the BLACKWATER RIVER FOUNDATION, INC. by becoming a member!**

**Annual Levels of Membership:** \_\_\_ Student (\$5) \_\_\_ Individual (\$10) \_\_\_ Family (\$20) \_\_\_ Supporter (\$100) \_\_\_ Other

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I am interested in helping with activities and/or serving on committees related to the following: (check all that apply)

\_\_\_ Stewardship \_\_\_ Historic Preservation \_\_\_ Educational Programs \_\_\_ Garden Maintenance \_\_\_ Other

**Make checks payable to “Blackwater River Foundation, Inc.” and mail to: P.O. Box 495, Bagdad, FL 32530**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!** All donations are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

Learn more about us at [www.BlackwaterRiver.org](http://www.BlackwaterRiver.org).