

Chris Aielco Oral History

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Location: Port Orford, OR

Length of Interview: 46:59

Interviewer: SC – Sarah Calhoun

[Conversation started during walk upstairs to interview room; recorder started after a few minutes of talk]

CA: Sorry, I don't mean to be frustrated with you, but it takes me so long to make those points, to connect all the dots. That if you asked me to repeat that, I can't do it because once I think of it in a very flowing, free, you know... as my experience has taught me through 30 years of the mismanagement of fish policies that when I try to do it in a formal way, I get all tangled up and stumble, so anyway. Okay, we'll see how good... and I don't mean to be challenging in this, but depending on the questions you ask me is going to tell me whether or not you're actually asking me the right questions and whether I can even give you answers that are going to be helpful, so.

SC: So part of this is, it's an oral history project, which means I'm really interested in hearing about how you got started in the fishery, what it was like then, what it's like now, why those changes have occurred and what can we do about it? Where is there hope? Is there a resolution?

CA: See I understand that, but if you'd turned that thing on 12 minutes ago I would have told you what I thought, I've already told you what I think is wrong with it. Now I have to go back through it and it's going to be a... free-flowing memory, and I probably can't give you particular dates, but I can give you certainly within a few years of when these things happened. In my experience as a commercial fisherman, first I'll give you a little background: I'm not from the West Coast, not of Curry County [OR], over-inbred [laughs], that's just my sense of humor. Um, in that I was supposed to become a doctor, lawyer Indian chief, but I hate working with Italian jacket, Wall Street, it's just not me. I can't be indoors. I've always been an outdoorsman. So I had some friends who lived on the West Coast and said, well just come out and hang out for a while. I was done with the East Coast at that time, and I said, sure what the heck. So I came here and did just odd jobs, you know, around, and became friends with some commercial fishermen. And because you're just hanging out, I would just go over to the commercial shop, you know a guy, captain had a shop, and I'd just hang out, show up when I wanted, leave when I wanted. All I knew about fishing... I knew how to tie a cleat that was it. But hanging out with those guys for 6 weeks, I've learned how to tie gainings and a few other things. My guy popped in and said, I need somebody to go fishing right now. So they all pointed to me and said, this guy shows up and nobody even pays him, but I was just hanging out. And I was asked, do you want to go? I said, sure, I'll go. So we went on a 3-day black cod trip, longline and back then it was an automatic baiter, but believe me just because it was an automatic baiter didn't mean it was easier, it was still a lot of hard work. But I made \$670 dollars in 3 days, because I was a subcontractor employed by myself, I got all that money. Well my east coast jobs, summer jobs, whatever, I was in college, I graduated with a BS in management, and I'll say, NYU. I mean, I wasn't the best student there, I wasn't the worst student there, kind of like my commercial fishing career, but I was making take-home, 6-days a week, as a laborer, because that's what you do when you're working in college, you go get whatever job, I was taking home \$167 dollars a week after taxes. [Phone ringing] Excuse me... [Some chatter over the phone] So here I am, I made 3 times the amount of money in 3 days as opposed to 3 weeks. And I said, wow! It was outdoors, it was exciting, it was a lot of hard work, but man this is the life for me. And I've been commercial fishing ever since. Anyway. Well-being that, you don't know anything, you're a deckhand first 3-4 years. I was a deckhand, I knew we were in a specific spot, during a specific fishery, but I didn't know why we went there, you know, I just didn't know anything. So after 3 years of doing that, I got uppity and decided, well I can do this, you know. So I actually borrowed money, and I built a boat, about a 100 grand investment. And that was 1980, and if you know anything about the commercial fishing financing at the time. Pacific Credit, no, PCA, Pacific Credit Association, I think that's what it was. Anyway, they were making loans to commercial fishermen to get into the business, to buy crab pots, does whatever. And back then it was a floating interest rate, but it was, I forget what it was, 3-5%, whatever it was. Then we went into this hyperinflation period with Nixon to where they actually had to put in price controls. The last, the third year, where I actually went belly up, I paid 25,000 dollars in the interest payment, where it was down in the 7-8,000 in the first year, went up a

little bit second year, by the time we had reached the prime rate, it had reached 23%, none of us could make those payments, we could barely make the interest payments. And it all fell apart over the next year and a half, two years, lots of guys lost out. And that's the kind of cleansing, which I guess, you know, supposed to happen, but I think it was a misguided, first of all, loan program from the federal government and it was also, didn't have a staying power because it was so ill-conceived. It didn't really look at what the potential, it's kind of like what we just went through since '08, you know there's money down, floating interest rate, it's I mean, and believe me those bankers, those guys took the boat back and took whatever, you know, they didn't lose any money. I mean, they lost maybe some, but the people who had worked so hard, made all the payments in between, that made down payments, they're the ones who lost their equity. Banks don't generally lose equity, and that's a lesson we have to learn as the lower 90%. So the fisheries were kind of in a middle ground, the crabbing wasn't very good, the salmon had collapsed by '83, and there was no salmon. I had 100 fish on the boat and it was barely \$300 dollars and I had 100 fish on the boat. So you just couldn't survive it, and the other thing I realized was that maybe I didn't have enough experience. Which I gained over the next... I was in and out over the next 4-5 years. I bought back in almost on nothing, I meant on nothing. In '86, a boat that had sunk twice before I bought it, but that's what made it so cheap, it was \$12,000 dollars, \$2,000 dollars per year, payments, which salmon had recovered by '86-'87, some of the best seasons in history, I think. As a matter of fact, I'm sure they were. I was able to make my boat payments, caught enough fish, both crab and fish, mostly salmon, but crab hadn't really... actually on the south coast, south coast is not a very good crab area so to speak. North coast of Oregon is much better. And you can look at the landings and see that. But this is where I had found my wife, I had a kid, I was, you know she's never going to leave Port Orford, Curry County. So moving to Coos Bay or Newport was just not really an option. I didn't really care to, this is a hellhole, Port Orford, excuse my French, to fish out of. We have no water, we can't even get out of the water, we have to crash, I've got waves breaking on my stern as I'm trying to deliver, I mean 5-foot waves breaking, I mean this place is nuts. But this is where I learned how to fish and I was always comfortable with it and didn't like it so much, but. Anyway, so it was a real struggle with a young family, but we made enough, and one rule that my wife and I followed was that whatever is for money we had, we'd always invest in it until we basically made that money back, and then whatever was left over from that, whatever demands were going to be made from the business, buying more crab pots, replacing salmon gear, new wire, whatever it was, upgrading the boat, which was a real piece of junk because it sank twice before I bought it. Well, anyway, doing those upgrades, whatever was left after that would be disposable income. And there was just enough one year, about 5 years, '89, and I had two children by that time, we would build a small extension on this really small house, um, [0:10:00] in that my wife is a commercial fisherman also. She's one tough lady in which you're going to have an interview tomorrow with her. She's a very honest, straightforward... she's not an intellectual so to speak, but she's brought up in Curry county her whole life and has literally a life-long experience as a commercial fisherwoman. And I don't think there's 5 of them in Oregon that have that kind of experience. Especially small-boat experience in the south coast. You're not going to find anybody who's got the information that she does. So, you know, that got us through the late '80's, we struggled, then we bought 100 more crab pots one year because we had that much more disposable, not disposable, but it was always to buy the materials and the stuff we needed to make it a little better each year. Which was really a good plan, but my wife she didn't want a credit card, didn't know what one was. That's what I mean about being unsophisticated. You know, she didn't want to go shopping, you know, at K-mart, nothing. We just put together a business through all those years and so we expanded it until The Rebecca (FV) fell apart on me, that was the name of the boat. And I had all this top grade mechanics on the boat, but the hull failed, there's a plywood hull and it just, I couldn't keep it together. I tried everything to keep this hull from falling apart. So that was a major decision, was whether or not to strip it and stay in this business or do something really crazy like become a truck-driver. Because, I've been out of school for so long, my skills have deteriorated so to speak to begin with, plus, once you're out of school for 5-6 years, the whole, you're so far behind in just the terms of the sophistication of whatever your studying, biology, it's just moved on so far, you can't catch up. They aren't going to hire you for that. So I just decided to take one more chance and just replace the hull, I built the boat that I've fished for now 17 years, it's a fiberglass hull. And I've been fishing it ever since and just slowly building up my equity. I live on damn near nothing, you know it's hard to believe, but this day and age, you can live well and live on nothing. If you just can, you know, control yourself so to speak. So just put in my time, I was never a hi-liner, never a low-liner, I just put in my time and I don't want to take, I know guys that can catch a fish in a... I don't know if I can say it this way... in a whirlpool. You know, that

is a bottomless pit, they can catch a fish in a tornado so to speak. I have to work at it. I was never lucky catching a fish. I don't want to take anything away from these other guys have this natural ability, they work very hard too, but I was never that lucky. I always had to work as hard as I could. And then became an average commercial fisherman through my whole career. Never a hi-liner, never a low-liner. And that's where I've reached the point at the end of my career, I've amassed a well-permitted boat, that's well-designed to suit its purposes, still a little small boat, 30-foot, but it can pack a lot of crab, it can pack a 10,000 pounds of crab, pack 75 crab pots, given pretty good weather. But in terms of that small boat business profile, it has four permits, and I'm looking to pass it on as a business entity to maintain, you know family-wage jobs for the captain and its crew. I'm still committed to that, though I don't... this is what I mean about a lack of support in terms of our commercial fishermen. It's really not there in terms of developing loans, which can make all of us comfortable. The person making the loan, like the federal government do with the PCA, or the people who are accepting the loans that over a 15-year period... you need grace periods for bad seasons and it has to be, you have to educate the commercial fishermen to manage this as a business so that he doesn't overspend. He has a contingency fund, and I think if it was done properly that you can keep the diversity of the fleet where basically it is now. Because we have lost, I would bet since 1980, the fleet is not even half its size that it was. Across the board, whether it be draggers, shrimpers, you know, salmon troller, those permits may exist, but actual participants, I'm sure it's not even half of what it was. So in these small communities, if you want to hang on to anything besides minimum-wage jobs, or welfare, there needs to be support both from the state and federal government to give these, especially these, I know I'm going to use this word wrongly, but when you have a myopic economy like Port Orford, there's only, there's commercial fishing here or minimum wage jobs, that's it. You would think that it would be in the state's interest to support those family-wage jobs in an intelligent way. Because if you let it collapse, that's an industry, Port Orford has no other, it doesn't have a Rogue River to depend on for diverse income. Bandon's its own special case also, where the river, but uh, Brookings is a diversified economy, Coos Bay is a diversified economy, so when you come to small ports, there are ports coast, well not coast-wide, but country-wide that are specifically commercial fishing dependent. And if you can come up with ways to support that, through intelligent loans and proper business education, it's far cheaper than it would be to let those go by the wayside and then all you've got is minimum-wage jobs and you know, no diversified economy. So I'm sure there's a couple more details I'd like to get into over that, that's spanned the ups and downs, the disappointments in terms of being involved in trying to understand fish management and going to all the meetings over 30 years. And learning my lesson about the public meeting. The public meeting is really only there to satisfy statute. Is that they have to go to the public to, you know, get their input, whatever. Well when it really comes down to it, it's left to the... Once you get to middle management, even upper management, they make the final decision and it's one or two non-elected people, you know, and it's more of an eat it. And the first 15 years of my career, I started understanding, these people aren't here to listen, to include me, they're here just to fulfill that public requirement, of public hearing. And it got a little disillusioned at that point, and then found through the next 15 years, Port Orford Ocean Resource Team (POORT), and still tried to be involved in a very constructive, creative way to where we try to involve ourselves into that fishery management policy. But even that, it's beyond my, my career. The change of bureaucracy like that, other than through someone like you, who wants to start, you know, studying something that interests you, that is not into their overall management mold is maybe, through that kind of education and interest we can start making the management, develop the science, to the point where you're actually managing these fish through data as opposed to, you know, well it's too hard of an environment, we don't have the money. Especially over these last 10 years, and this is kind of funny, because I don't know, I just... one of my nicknames is [? Aleiatoria] because it relates to the Iranian crisis back when Carter was there and I first moved here, I got several nicknames because I'm Mediterranean. My ethnicity, so they all thought I was an Arab. Well I'm Italian, but you don't talk skin... Well anyway, shoot what was my point... that was a small joke. Now I can't remember what the point is I was going to make, Jesus Christ [laughs]. Well anyway, let me think just for a minute here. Oh, and until we start developing that data that's scientifically accurate, [0:20:00] one thing I worry, not worried about, one thing I don't understand is, as we start to include ourselves, whether it be environmental groups or an organization like Port Orford Sustainable Resource Team, why we're suspected of wanting, of having an agenda that's... We're just commercial fishermen, although I do know a few of them, only because of their ignorance and their lack of experience in their careers, they've only been in for 5-10 years, that's nothing in this business, in terms of really understanding both policy, fish management, and then the resources themselves. Is that, I need fish to be here. I don't want to kill

the last one, but I guarantee you, unless we start doing this on a scientific criterion, we are taking a real chance with it. There will be a tipping point to where there will be no commercial fish left. And I just find that unacceptable. You know, that we at Port Orford Resources team have something, have some hidden agenda, this is my livelihood we're dealing with. And I couldn't do any worse. Leesa and I went up and saw the governor about 5-6 years ago, before he was running for re-election and I suggested to him at that time, you know, if the idea that the local knowledge is very important in terms of sustaining it economically, like Port Orford, and setting fish harvest rates on a scientific, you know, understanding, that his job as governor and through the state agency should be giving... we have a community advisory board here, it's 27, it includes everybody, that's why Port Orford is supposedly the poster child, we're inclusive of everybody. You can just live in town and you have a representative on that board. And it's interesting to, I know I'm dictating here, but I don't care because I'm going through the whole history here. It's interesting that at the very beginning, these, oh what do they call themselves, the watershed councils, when they first started, they didn't have [unintelligible words], just like OPAC has no, to this day, no charge of a very serious coast-wide issue. They didn't have two dimes to rub together, but now, organizations like the resource councils that are in each county, you know, are funded by the state for their [unintelligible words] individual groups because they showed the ability to manage those local resources correctly to where now they were the go-to agency and they let them do it for themselves and the point I was making with the governor was: is that what you should be doing if the idea from NOAA and everybody else is to give local control, at least allow legitimate input in fish management design that you would go ahead and just give us the expertise, I've been arguing for POORT to get status fishes, to get more [unintelligible word], to get scientists so we can have the same language as those who speak that scientific language go in and make reasonable arguments and just have to look at the statistics and their arguments and the way that they present it and be ignored, because I can't speak that language, but we can go there and make representation with our scientific data and our idea of what that scientific data actually represents and then be inclusive that way. Well until we get that legitimacy in the fishing management, to where we do get proper funding, to where we're not begging for \$10,000 dollars here or \$100,000... this is \$500,000. To do this correctly at the local level, especially because you're the poster child, which we are, in terms of the marine reserves here. We were supposed to develop the policies for coast-wide marine reserves, we didn't get anything. I mean we got some, but it was .10 cents on the dollar. It didn't originate from the state, ODFW (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife), which I find almost... borderlines on negligence on their part because the people of the state consider them to be doing a good job and they're not. So through these ten years, formally we've tried to, you know, get better at what we do, have better representation, better understanding of the statistics that we were able to gather through the state agencies and involve ourselves in a more creative and inclusive development of fish management. But like I said earlier, I will not see the day to where it gets to where it actually needs to be. So that's 30 years of the economic and struggle history, except for one little story where, it was only about 5 years, was about '84-'85 because I started fishing in '78, um, I went through a Northwest storm off of San Francisco that I didn't think we were going to live through. 30 hours of 25-foot seas, blowing 60 out of the Northwest, not a cloud in the sky. And from '78 from when I first started, I couldn't believe it, I made \$670 dollars in 3 days to that moment, I couldn't believe people actually paid me to do this. But when I went through that, and I was scared, literally scared. Two boats sank, ten boats lost their windows, but somehow, even though my lack of experience, because that was '83 when that happened, I said man, this is dangerous, hard work. I do this to make money. I enjoy it, but this is a living, this is not a game. And in that, I became much more serious in terms of everything. Trying to deal with the problems we were seeing, collapse of the salmon, which has happened 4 times, in my career. We've had no salmon to fish, 4 times in 30 years. So does that tell you we're doing a good job managing salmon? It's the canary of the ocean as I kind of represent it. No, it's a complete failure. And the only thing that does bring it back is nature. Well, we don't, everything that lives in this world that is basically governed by nature, and unless we start interacting with it. In fact, we've learned to in terms of the logging industry, they've got some screwed up rules there too. There will be a tipping point, there won't be this resource anymore. One of the things I heard about a year ago was, and it's becoming more and more true, is that they're ready to write off salmon in California and the lower 48 because if it's over fish and people, people are going to win every time. And are you really, do the people of the west coast really understand what that means? No more salmon on the west coast. Now that's still 20, 30, 50 years away, but we are so close to losing it. Whereas you used to have 1000 rivers producing salmon on the west coast, now you have 5. You have 5 major rivers that are severely dependent on hatcheries. To think that you're going to be able to have wild

salmon, there's no such thing as wild salmon, hasn't been for 57 years. Because the farmers had been screwing around, everybody's screwing around, but if you're going to interact with a natural resource like that, you had better do it well. Because to think that it's going to survive in this man-dominated, you know... We dump a lot of things in that ocean, to this day, that we shouldn't be doing. And we don't even understand the scientific, um, effects that we're having. And believe me, it's, 50 years from now when it's all gone, what are you going to do? I'm gone, the Indians gone, nobody cares anymore. And that's one of the things, once the user groups are gone, who's going to care? Nobody will care. So, I don't see us doing the right thing. We haven't even started doing the right thing yet. So bottom line for me is: we need to get the scientific data, that fish policy will be driven by scientific data and that strict criteria that holds to it. And that holds us all to it, you know, that's what I mean about a biased point of view, I'm going to make some point. If you have good scientific data, you can't hide it. If you're a good scientist, you're held to that. It's what it is, and if that gives us better sustainability, great. Because when I need to cut back, cut me back. But when I can open it up, take advantage of our good management policies, and the effects of it, then open it up. That's what's going to make it into the future. Not this management we've had for 30-50 years. So, anyway. Question 2.

SC: Well is there hope for the future generations? For people, say my age, just getting into this field...

CA: [Sigh] Only if you wake up. I woke up 5-6 years into my career in this business, but given the education, though I never used it, but I was grateful for it because that gave me the ability to go into, at least on a layman's level, go in and be able to discuss it reasonably to be creative, to have insights into what we were doing back in the late '70's early 80's, 90's, 2000's, major collapses like for salmon, having to have to deal with those things, both financially for myself and my family, you know, trying to make it sustainable, figure out a way that I can get through this down period [0:30:00], that's why the importance, I have a heavily permitted boat. You know I saw the necessity through the years and always saved the money so I could accomplish that. And it took me 30 years to do it. The bot is actually my 401K, every penny I have is in that boat, and when I go to sell it I hope I get its proper value, not more or less than it's really worth, because there's still good living to be made there, but to achieve it as that. It took me 30 years to get it that way. Now as your average guy, not being a hi-liner, I wasn't able to keep buying, buying, buying, but that's not really very sustainable either. It's sustainable for the top 1% that are in that category, but for the rest of us to have a job in Port Orford, a family-wage job and a business, it's not there. The promise of being the 1% is not there. So, if they're going to have it there for the middle guys, like me, well we're going to have to work at it, on all the levels. So.

SC: Do you see a future in fishing for your children, or one of your kids?

CA: No, I'm like any other parent that's had to work hard, you know it's a physical job. I don't want my kids to do that. I wouldn't stop them from doing it, I wouldn't stop, because I have two daughters, a pretentious son-in-law from doing it. Because I still believe there's a good living here. You know, you're not going to be living in some big mansion, but you're not going to be living in some slum. You're not going to be on welfare. And with that education there, you should be trying to do that. Through the Ocean Resources Team, we have science projects go into local high schools, even into the grade schools to try and educate these kids, of this is what your local resources are. Whether it be land, sea or some of those things, when you go to look at our website, you're going to see some of those things we involve ourselves in at the community level. And education is a really important part of it, starting at literally in kindergarten. And once we bring you up and you care about these things, maybe as you guys get into your responsible time and you become parts of society, whether it be private business or government agencies that you can drive these new, you know, priorities. But to leave it to my generation and before, and the way our bureaucracies going about it... NOAA's got this great big plan about community-based fisheries management that says right there in its new directives, I mean it's front page! But beyond that, it's a ghost. There's no funding for it, there's no real commitment, there's no feedback from the federal government down to state level agencies. They're all trying, they all say they're doing it, but when it really comes to it, no. It's not being done. So I wouldn't stop them from getting into it because we knew this back in the late '70's when Magnuson-Stevenson was a threat, and it was and it still is a threat. But somehow I'm still here, it's 35 years and I'm still making a living. You know, so to say that it can't be there 35 years from now, I would, then there is no hope. You know, I'm not worth anything, for what I've learned in 35

years, my 401K is worth nothing, the future for these small communities is not there and that breaks my heart. How did we do that?

SC: It sounds like organizations like POORT is making some impact, however small it may be, what do you think about if there were more organizations like that? If there were more fishermen that were interested in being part of these organizations?

CA: Well strangely enough, the mindset of POORT was knowing over the 30 years, realizing well we need to be more sophisticated, we need to be organized, there are 5 commercial fishermen on our board and that's it. There's no independent board members, no public board members, none of that. Because we all realized how we're kind of screwing this up, my whole career, and, cause these guys are my age. We're all in our late 50's, middle 60's, you know, so we all kind of see the importance of doing this correctly, and don't get me wrong, it's going to be tough. To get this information on a scientific level will be very tough. It's going to take millions, millions of dollars, but what we thought as an organized group, straightforward, even within this own community, but it's just like society. You look at any section of society today, even political, you know local politics, state versus federal government in terms of you know, who gets to make the laws, we're [unintelligible] away from anarchy, in everything we're doing. And I think it's very dangerous situation we're facing, but the thing that all of us want to see, a total collapse. I'm not against government, I'm against bad government. I'm for good state government and for good federal government, but to have kind of what we have now, this dysfunctional, both at the state and federal level, to where it's not serving anybody any good including fish generations, you know, I don't want to get into my personal politics, but you know, supposedly mankind is supposed to be getting better, you know, instead of wanting to kill each other, which we're going down the road of wanting to kill our local citizens. Port Orford people hate us. They think we have some hidden agenda. I'm a commercial fisherman, why would I want to kill off fishing? I don't want to kill it off. The people, you just can't trust government anymore. That's the point I was making with Leesa at the, I'm sorry, I'm one of the worst guys for names, but Colinosky, the governor of today? What's his name? You don't even know, well anyway, whoever our governor is today! [Kitzhaber] I've got so many things in my brain it's ridiculous. Um, but anyway, that was the point I was making with him. Give us the tools, give us the expertise, give us the resources, you know, the monitoring of, so we can collect fish data, fish habitat, and let us do it for ourselves. We'll get it right, just like they finally did with the [water ports?] in Oregon. You know, they showed the ability to be able to do it out on the local level of the community involvement. You started farming them to the point to where they became capable of going and monitoring what was going on out on the land, in the rivers. And now we need to develop that capability out in the oceans at the local level. And your job is to give us the tools to get it done. Beyond that, you know, on a more widely, on a political arena, they've lost everybody in this country. Most state and federal governments have lost all of us. It's becoming more and more apparent by the growth of the so-called 'independent'. The trouble is it's the silent majority that doesn't, you know. One of the mistakes that I've made was trusting government. He wouldn't get that job unless he was really good at it, you wouldn't be governor unless you were going to be good at it. Well it turns out they're just people just like us, whether it's with education that is particular to whatever position they hold in government or just somebody who wants to, like me, as a board member, just a local citizen who thinks he can help. I'm somewhat retired, but I'm on a board, the city council, whatever it is, but there's nothing specific that says I can do a good job. And in that, unless somebody's watching me on a daily basis, which is my fellow citizens, there's no guarantee that I'm doing a good job. So that's what we've lost, citizen participation, literally on a weekly, daily, monthly basis. This thing has gotten so out of control, none of us as citizens know what to do anymore. Yeah we call up, say this guy, who called me back right just this minute. I have a medical problem that I need to deal with because I have a permit that's order onboard, and I need to figure out what they want in terms of getting me an exemption so I can maintain the income and still fish this thing now that I've gotten older and I can't [lead the form] like I used to. But I got to go jump through all these hoops, which is fine, I'll jump through them, but when that becomes so erroneous, you know, shoot I just got proof to prove I'm an American citizen. I don't even know how to do that. Oregon DMV just sent me a notice saying, I need to have 5 things that say I'm an American citizen and they're telling me a birth certificate's no good. How am I supposed to do this? So it's not user friendly, everything that we've got, everything that we do in life... and what's the solution? Smart people and being involved on a daily basis? That's what's going to make it work, but to sit back and think everything's fine, you know, ODFW or any other state or federal agencies

got a good handle on this, they're doing a good job. You are so offline it's ridiculous, and we're proving it every day just watch the news. So I got off another rant there, but anyway.

SC: It's all connected...

CA: And that's the point. You can fix this little point over here, but it will get crushed with everything else that's wrong. And it just doesn't change anything. You need to go back and redesign literally. [0:40:00] And then there's no management system that I know of, and that's what I went to school for was business management, that can operate without very good information on a daily basis and be willing to change your management style, literally it has to be on a daily basis. That's all I've managed on .10 cents on the dollar. I mean nothing. Not having enough experience when I first started, having had to scrape by, having a very strict rule on how we spent our money, or else I wouldn't be here today. It took me 30 years to finally have a little bit of something. And it certainly did not come over night, and it didn't come to me because I was lucky. I was just an average guy who worked real hard and ended up with a little bit of something. And I think that's all anybody can ever expect, you know.

SC: Well it sounds like there's been a lot of changes in your history and the history here over the years, so why are you still here? What brings you the most joy in fishing?

CA: Because I was comfortable here. And I don't want to get into my personal, my personality and why I left the east coast. But man, if you grew up in the east coast, it is a really competitive, you talk about competition, the competition over there is... that's why there's this little joke about east and west coast people, how all the west coast people are all laid back, you are. Back east, you couldn't survive two hours. People would run you over on the highway, you know. Whether it'd be mentally or physically, they'd run you over. And I didn't like it, so I liked it here, and I liked being a self-starter, I don't like people demanding I do something, you know, in their timetable. I want to do fishing myself. So from a very highly structured to a less structured, because you got to have structure, I don't care where you go. Without the structure you can't manage it, you know, and manage it well. Not being the best or worst, here I am, you know. It's still a business, still something that's worth something. I still believe in commercial fishing, as a viable way to spend your life. But just as tough as I think these 3-5 years in the past, for me, have been, to predict the next 35, I can only say I hope, it's there. I wouldn't be afraid of letting somebody try it, like somebody taking over my business, you know, has a future in it. But just like we thought 30 years ago, because half the people that were in this business got washed out I think, half the people that were deckhands said, I can't make a living here and left. I just happened to find the woman that I got married to, had a couple kids, you know, and I liked it here so no matter how bad it got, I was going to still figure out a way to stay here. Anyway.

SC: Well, if you could use one word to describe fishing, just one, what would it be?

CA: Give me a moment. [Pause] Given, I can't do it in one word, but I'll do it in a short... hmmm... it's attitude whatever. Given that I never hide my head in the sand, it's certainly been challenging and interesting. Those that hide their head in the sand, you know, they don't see anything coming. They get by somehow, but that's not me. So that's my one word.

SC: Well that's all I have.

CA: That's it? [SC: Yeah] Did I, through my diatribes, and even my ability to use the words, if I had to write all this down, I couldn't get three words put together without misspelling it, that was part of my promise, staying back in that sophisticated world, I'm the worst, and most men are bad spellers, but I'm really bad. If I could just say what I mean, I can argue and debate with anybody, but if I have to write it down, it's real trouble. But given, you know, our conversation for 46 minutes, I think we covered all your points. I gave you a good history of the economics of it, the social pressures involved, the lack of what I feel is where we need to go, we're not making those steps, and one more thing. Being at the end of my career, though I am very frustrated, very tired, I don't want to deal with it anymore, but I still, I'm taking kind of a little break, but I still think it's important that we take some of that local knowledge and we expand it to state wide, west coast wide, and even national. Because a lot of what's happening here in

Port Orford, is also happening all around this country and in that, you know, we need to be at the table with each other. And I know that the Northeast guys are far ahead of us, especially when it comes to, though I'm sure it's no picnic getting funding and stuff, but in Port Orford, you're working literally on .10 cents on the dollar and not even that, it seems like a penny on the dollar. And you give me a dollar for a dollar it's still not going to be enough. But we're really struggling here in terms of trying to keep this place going. And we get all these alkaloids, but trying to do it with nothing is very, very difficult. So what I see, I think we're still not really getting it, though we are sending ourselves back and forth across the country to some of these meetings, it's not often enough. It's not coordinated enough to where we see the commonalities between the different communities and different problems on the different coasts, including Alaska to where we can actually make a change in the bureaucracies that govern us. And we're just not even close yet. Because we haven't really gained that sophistication to where we can actually take the management under our wing and actually manage it well. I mean we have to be held accountable and we will get it for future generations. But the way that it's done now, the model is just so far wrong, it needs to change or else it's not going to be there. So, basically that's my closing statement.

SC: Well thank you.

CA: All right, well I hope I didn't bore you.

SC: No, absolutely not.

[End of interview 00:46:59]