

Interview with Lynn Selboe
Occupation: Fisherman
Port Community: Dutch Harbor, Alaska
Interviewer: Julie Olson
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The Working Waterfront Festival
Logger/Transcriber: Azure Dee Westwood
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09:30 Boat schedule; working from Dutch Harbor, lives in Seattle; boat company is from Maine; physical toll from fishing

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39:34 No health benefits, just 401K; advise to new fishermen is to push through the pain and work hard, work through seasickness, have encouragement; rationalization will hit them hard; businesses changing in Dutch Harbor over the years.

43:23 Change in provision ordering due to supplier businesses changing; where catch goes.

46:20 Bottom trawlers generally viewed in negative light; people against farmed fish (in Seattle).

49:16 People should take away from festival that there are women in the industry and that not all fishermen are “pirates”.

50:55 End of interview

Major Themes

- Education Interviewer – Bachelor’s in Exercise Physiology
- Ethnicity – of other crew members (Mexican, Polish, etc.)
- Gender – female
- Home address – Seattle, WA
- Location of interview – New Bedford
- Crew – manages and works as
- Decision to fish – sister inspired her
- Education history
- Fictive kin – sister, crew on boat
- Health issues – lack of sleep; coughing during interview (from smoking?)
- Isolation
- Job satisfaction – Choice
- Management impacts – looming rationalization (quotas)
- Markets for fish – mostly China, Japan, Korea
- Percentage income from fishery – all
- Perceptions of fishermen – not all pirates
- Role of women – onboard, hard work defines role not gender, perceptions that women are cooks onboard
- Soc Net Fish Community – separates boat life from land life
- Stress – wheelhouse tasks, paperwork, rationalization

Interview

00:00 JO: You could say your name for the record.

LS: Lynn Selboe.

JO: Lynn Selboe. And what is your connection to New Bedford, did you grow up here?

LS: I don't have a connection to New Bedford. I commercial fish in Alaska. That's how I got involve with this. I met Kerston out in Seattle last year.

JO: Kerston Bendicson? (Sp?)

LS: Uh huh. She said, oh come out, we have this theme and then when I was coming she asked if I wanted to do one of the histories too.

JO: I see, so you came out just for the Waterfront Festival. Right.

LS: Why not, I'm not fishing right now.

JO: So you live in Alaska.

LS: I live in Seattle, I grew up in Illinois, but moved to Seattle so spent time fishing in Alaska.

JO: And your name is Norwegian name, right?

LS: Oh , very good.

JO: Olson! (laughs). So do you have a fishing family background.

LS: A little bit. I have... my sister, she started it. She was in college, she studied Russian and was a translator on a Joint Venture out in the Bering Sea with Russian/American boats, so she was a translator for their deliveries, eventually getting on a factory trawler and then she worked up as a deckhand and then she did about five years. Then decided she wanted to stay home, get married. She worked in a fishing company office as a vessel manager. I graduated college in 1991 and subsequently said, "I'm going to go fishing for a couple of years and make money, get my Masters degree." It's her fault! She threatened me with an inch of my life, when I started she said, "Ok, contract is 60 days, just don't quit whatever you do, don't quit." And now they ask me when are you going to quit! That's how it started. My sister and I are the only ones who do it. Coming from Illinois, everyone is aghast, pretty much, at reunions they are like what! It's good.

JO: So what kind of boat do you work on out there?

LS: It's a factory trawler. 124 feet long. My company is actually out of Rockland Maine. O'Hara Corporation. And they have three factory trawlers out there; *Constellation*, *Enterprise*, and *Defender*. I'm on the *Enterprise*, and I've been working for them for about 11 of the 15 years. Factory trawler so we catch and process our own fish on the lower level that's the factory.

03:09 JO: And how many people work on a boat that size?

LS: About, 27 average. Sometimes we have less because we can't find people, or sometimes we'll max it out at 30, I think we hold 30.

JO: And how many of those are women.

LS: Just me.

JO: Just you!

LS: Unless we get an observer, NMFS observer that's a woman... but yeah, I'm the only one that goes on the boats in our company.

JO: What is that experience. Do you get a hard time?

LS: No. You know, I wouldn't say a hard time. I've been working with a lot of these guys for most of the time I've been doing this. Same captain, same mate, and relief skipper, and I go mate and sometimes on deck, but you work with a lot of these guys so long that they realize what you do. Yeah, I've had occasional harassments a little bit, as far as sexual, but nothing that I ever really felt that threatened about. And people get smitten, ever once in a while a processor tries to woe me, I guess, and but you're like, "dude, I'm your boss!" You know you get a little bit of that, that's it. I think for the most part, people, the guys have been very supportive and they've been great.

JO: Do you think it's different, of course you don't have anything to compare it to, so this is a strange question, but Alaska is kind of the last frontier and lots of people move out there who weren't from Alaska, so is there this feeling of... do you think that makes it easier being a woman because you're sort of a pioneer in the fishing industry to be able, doing this, is it easier in Alaska than it would be say in New England...?

LS: I think so. I don't really know for sure, but my owner did give me an opportunity to go on one of the pair trawlers they have, they have a few boats out here, scallopers and draggers that pair trawl for herring and he let me go to see what it was all about. I remember them saying, "Oh, we're taking some girl". And I was like, wait a minute... but when I get there they were like, "do you know how to run this electronic chart, it looks different than it usually does." And I was like, ok. And that's what fishing comes down to these days, is a lot of electronics, sensors and stuff like that.

JO: So as long as you can do the job, it ends there.

LS: That's it. I had one guy come up to me claiming prejudice, that the guys were prejudice against him, he was a different culture, and I looked at him and I said; "You know, you want to talk about minorities here, I said, I'm in the wheel house now so obviously if they had prejudices against people I wouldn't be here." It's all in how you work. And he said, said, "Oh, hmm." And went away. It really is. Fishing is all in how you work, that's how you're judged.

06:41 JO: So what was your background, you said you went to Alaska after you finished college, what was your degree in?

LS: Exercise physiology, a bachelors and a minor in athletic training, and I really likes the athletic training. But I never did it. It was corporate fitness, it was big then. I wanted to actually get into physical therapy, so I was going to do that, go for 2 years, make money and go back to school. But I never went back! I may end up there, but I don't know. Now I will just need physical therapy rather than do it!

JO: So was there a long learning curve, not coming from a fishing family, but then on this big boat, was there a big learning curve to get up to speed?

LS: No, when I started it, it was all about working fast and hard.

So all about working fast and hard for 16 hours, so that was a learning curve, getting your body used to it, I mean I felt like I was going to fall asleep standing up, you get so tired, but then you get used to it. But as far as learning the net mending and how the gear works, that wasn't too hard. It seemed pretty easy. My captain said that I learned it pretty quickly. I think the hardest part was getting into the wheelhouse, not really understanding how... I've never really driven a boat before, so that was pretty scary. First time I was mate, I think I wanted to throw up every time I had to haul back and set out for a month. I

was just scared to death of everything, you don't understand how it all moves in the water, so that was tough. But now it's the usual piece of cake.

JO: And what's your life like. A lot of people here will be out for 2 weeks, come back for a week, that kind of schedule. What is it like out in Alaska?

LS: It changes every year. When I go up, I'll go up on deck, we have a captain and a relief skipper that usually takes the boat in January. We start January 20th, is when our season opens, and I stayed this year until June, so I stayed 5 months. Then I came off for a month and a half and went back... but you can... a contract is 75 days, so you can leave after that, but with my rotation it tends to be not as flexible as that, you have to have somebody cover in the wheelhouse.

09:30 JO: So you're on the boat for 75 days.

LS: Yeah. You're on the boat, you're not out to sea, you're in and out of port average every 10-12 days, hopefully. If you're not, you're not doing very well fishing.

JO: And you're landing in Alaska or in Seattle.

LS: Dutch Harbor, on the chain there.

JO: Then you fly into Seattle or how...

LS: Yeah. Well, in January, I'll leave January 10th and steam the boat up, so it's about a week weather depending, or if it's already up there fishing, and I've come home, then I'd fly to Anchorage then Seattle. So these guys that live on the east coast have a heck of a flight when they go up.

JO: So there are people on the boat from the east coast?

LS: Mostly Maine.

JO: Because the company is in Maine, oh I see. It must be quite a commute.

LS: Luckily you only have to do it once and you're there for awhile, you don't have to do it that often.

JO: And then when you come off, you're off for...

LS: Well, like now, I'm off until January. This is actually a big break. Usually it's 3 months, we finished up early, and I was back in Seattle for shipyard August 14th this year. So other companies were... our quotas are based if you catch too much prohibited species which is halibut, they will close our season down. So that happened earlier, but we still did well, fish prices are good.

JO: And is this a young person's job, or do you see yourself in it for the long haul?

LS: Well, yeah, you do a lot better when you're younger, I remember jumping around all over the deck and now I'm slowing down a bit. I'm 38, and I find you get more tendonitis's all over the place, hopefully they go away, but you just work through them mostly. Yeah, it's easier when you're younger, but as you go... we've got processors who are 55 and 60 doing really well. A lot of what fishing is, is technique and working on boat, so you can still do it when you're older but as far as me, how much longer I'll do it, I don't know. As far, until I figure out what else I want to do maybe is what it would be. And getting in the wheelhouse has been a lot more physically easy, but mentally it's very stressful, so I don't know. But people do it for a long time though.

12:47 JO: And do you have a family in Seattle?

LS: It's funny, they all kind of moved out that way, except for one brother, he lives here in Wakefield, MA. We just sort of separated from Illinois, we went to opposite coasts. My sister that got me into fishing moved out there long before us, then I moved then

eventually it was my mom, and then my other sister and her husband. So it's nice actually, when you come home, you have people there. I have my nephews.

JO: Do you find many people who work on these larger trawlers who have children at home.

LS: Oh yeah. There's a lot of people who are married and have kids. I of course, get asked quite frequently when are you going to get married and have kids, and I'm like "well, it's kind of hard to haul back and change diapers at the same time". We'll see. It's actually hard. In my opinion, it's easier to go fishing because your job is that you go fishing, you have responsibilities of working on the boat and you're working hard, but the people who live at home actually have it the worst. They have to continue on with their daily lives, take care of children, whether it be a man or a woman, that is taking care of the children, but you know, it's a hard job at home.

JO: So I'm not as familiar with the industry out in Alaska as here. It's primarily groundfish you're catching?

LS: Yeah, cod and flounders and we catch everything, but can only keep certain species, try not to catch king crab and all the other stuff. But we're a dragger and nobody like draggers because they are raping and pillaging the bottom and screwing it up for everyone else. But that's changed. It's amazing how fishing has changed in the 15 years I've been doing it. I don't know if stocks are being depleted necessarily or they are moving, probably a little bit of both. The Bering Sea has been pretty resilient. Think how many years it's been fished and it still continues. And I don't know if that's why, to kind of help with that... regulation of that body of water is this rationalization that's coming out, I don't know, I'm not sure.

15:52 JO: Is it regulated by ITQ out there?

LS: What's ITQ?

JO: Oh a quota.

LS: Well, we're actually going to have quotas next year, rationalization is kind of up the quotas, based on our fishing history. So they think it's going to be better that you'll be able to fish this fish longer. You can kind of go whenever you want, no hurry up... maybe they do it for safety reasons, like the king crab fishery, they went from derby to the rationalization where they have the quotas. For us I think we catch so much stuff it's going to be difficult. We're going to have quotas next year.

JO: So I guess you'll wait and see.

LS: We'll have to see how it goes, we're not very excited about it but... this whole deal, I don't know, I won't get into it.

JO: So the corporation in Maine and your boat in Alaska, who makes the decisions about we're going to go here to fish or we're going to do this, is that the corporation or is it the people in the wheelhouse?

LS: Oh no, it's the captain. Well our permit is only for the Bering Sea. And our captain has been doing the Bering Sea... well he's fished back here for years then went out there, late 80's and has fished that. It'd be crazy for the... they might suggest... we could say, we want to come home now, we're tired of fishing, and the company would say "no, you have to finish up the year". We really pretty much work together but usually our company in our situation leaves the decisions to the captains.

JO: And now that you're in the wheelhouse, do you do the processing? It's a back and forth?

LS: Yeah sure. My wheelhouse portion is at night, so the captain who will sleep about 10 o'clock, and he tells me where he'd like me to tow, and I give him a report in the morning. And when he gets up, I either go on deck or into the factory, unless there's no fish, but usually there's fish. I don't really get into that idea of I'm too good to do this other stuff. Maybe it makes me a little more accessible to the crew and hearing their problems but that's O.K.

JO: So you're on for 16 and then you...

LS: you're off for 8...

JO: off for 8, sleep hard back!

LS: You shower, you eat really quick, go to bed. Usually. There are times that maybe there will be slow towing, like night towing, which is kind of a little bit slower, and in some instances. Yeah you might fun out of fish and everyone gets a little break, but in the scheme of things you want to keep going 24/7 until you're full, go in. For us, we have a slow turn around in town which is about 24 hours. There is no going to the bar and having fun. There's no break, you just keep going.

19:40 JO: It must be quite physically exhausting though, I mean, 8 hours to sleep and do everything.

LS: Yeah, but you get used to it.

JO: You get used to it.

LS: Some days you wake up and you're pretty blurry, it's better to keep going than to have breaks all the time, honestly. Yeah, and if you don't fall asleep in that 8 hours, and have to work the next 16, it's really tough.

JO: I don't think I could do it. I guess you learn to fall asleep instantly.

LS: Or you take Tylenol PM if you feel you're not going to!

JO: It must feel like your own little community or your own little town out there for so many weeks at a time?

LS: It is, a little bit, it's your own little family you get used to people, and talk, get to know them.

JO: And then when you're done for the year, you all fly off to different places or do you know people in Seattle?

LS: There's a few. There's a few that live in Seattle or Washington, a town maybe a few hours away. A lot of our processors are from Mexico or Mexican. We had a pretty interesting deck crew, which was me, a Polish guy, a guy from the Ivory Coast, one from Vietnam, and one from Mexico. We have a little United Nations out there.

JO: And it's been that diverse the 15 years you've been working or has that changed?

LS: No. It changes. I've worked with a lot of the same guys, not all of them though. The factory crew seems to change a lot more than any of the other stations. Like the one captain I've worked with all the time, our relief skipper, and some of these guys came on when I changed boats to the *Enterprise*, and they've stuck around, it's a good boat, puts some fish to our factory and did really well for the size that we are. So we do have a lot of returning crew, but you'll get... after the 75 days you start seeing the new people, which is when the fun begins. They are great.

JO: A lot of people, especially once you've been at it for a long time, will talk about fishing as not just a job, as a way of life, I mean there is the lure of the sea and all that. You were only going to do it for 2 years and you're still there?

LS: Yeah, it's getting out there... after going through college, you're out here, all of a sudden you're just working like there's no tomorrow, and it felt good, really. And you're learning new things, and you never stop learning, if you do, if you think you know everything, ... maybe the guys who have been doing it for a long long long time, they probably know about every situation you can come across. It just kind of a great thing, there's no feeling of "I feel macho or something" because I'm out here on these seas, you enjoy it, love being out there. And then when you're home, you miss it. It does become a way of life, there's a bit of culture shock when you get home. You have food presented to you and now you have to go and figure out what you want for dinner, you go to the grocery store, and it's really hard for a little while, but you get used to it. It's definitely a way of life, and it would be a hard adjustment if it should ever come the day that I can't do it anymore. I don't know what I would do. I would like to what a lot of these other women do like sing or write books, or something like that, but I don't think you want me to sing!

24:12 JO: You can be the next Linda Greenlaw!

LS: I know, she has an opportunity, it's amazing. But yeah.

JO: Do many of the other boats have women on them?

LS: In our company, no. In other companies, I think there are a few. A lot more on the bigger pollock fishing boats, the big factory trawlers, in the factory or in QC, quality control. I don't know, there's the Pollack fleet and the H&G, head and gut. In our bottom trawling fleet, H&G fleet, I don't think there are any other women, maybe one more, but she's on a catcher boat, they just catch and put their fish in the hold. I think there are a few still in the factory or cook, but everyone when I say fish, they say "oh do you cook?" And I say my crew wouldn't like that very much!

JO: So these are non-fishermen that have this idea that you would be the...?

LS: That's just what women do on boats, we cook.

JO: But on the boats themselves, the roles aren't particularly gendered, they don't say, oh, quality control is women, there's nothing like that?

LS: No I think anybody can do the jobs. Some seem to gravitate more towards quality control and stuff like that. Pursers... on the big boats, they have 150 people or so, you have to have people... the amount of paperwork that we have on the west coast verses here is huge. We fill out contracts, we go through background checks, drug tests, you have to send in crew lists, kind of what a mate is is a secretary anymore, you sit on the computer and type messages and fill out paperwork, and get people to sign all their contracts, chase them around if they're going to extend their contract.

JO: So have you ever had any close calls at sea?

26:48 LS: One time, we were coming to Seattle and I was a young mate and we'd come out of the locks, heading to the dock. And we had a steering situation where you had to flip a switch and adjust the knob to either jog or magnetic compass, you had to change it off the gyro compass, that's what you steer on mostly, but when you move to the forward steering station to hand steer it to the dock, right. So my captain, I'd been up a long time, like 20 hours, you just start staying up once you go past your shift once you get that close to the dock. He says; "switch it to"... we'd actually been... it's different set ups for each port or starboard steering stations right, so we had it set up for port and I was back by the chair, and he says "switch me over to starboard, turn it to jog and off". And I flipped it and I go gyro and remote, or something, so anyway I switched it to jog and then it was

gyro or remote, and not off, and I didn't see an off. And I was like, I'd done this before and he goes "quick before the gyro takes over" and next thing you know the boat does a hard starboard turn and we came within inches of an old wooden tub that if you looked at it hard it would probably sink. It was amazing, we were going and Phil's like "what are you doing" and I go "I don't see an off" so he came running around, I went running to the port station, threw it in reverse, and the funny part about that, the owner was standing on the dock that we just went by with his camera, looking at us sideways, thinking what just happened! In the end, we ended up getting a different steering. A Simrad Autopilot where it's easier that as soon as you put it into gyro or off it goes to the heading you're on. There's no knobs that you twist, it turns right to the heading that it was supposed to go to in the old situation. That was my close call. The captain took the wheel and after I threw it in reverse, he switched it back so the port station had control, his whole back was drenched with sweat. I was standing there exhausted, and all of a sudden I started laughing, like "oh my god, I can't believe what I just did. So anyway, I have those close calls but all close calls are learning experiences and hopefully they don't go array. But when I think about it, the guys who have the good stories are the guys that have been doing this forever. But in 15 years, I feel like I've been very lucky. I haven't had many situations where things have gone wrong. They go wrong but they're not that bad. So I don't think I've seen very much.

30:53 JO: No nasty storms or anything...?

LS: Oh we see storms, they get nasty, but nothing... I guess last year, we changed some door shoes, brought the doors up on deck and ended up poking a hole in our stern ramp, because they're really sharp shoes, and didn't know it, they went out, I flew home that trip. They were out and it was blowing 100, it was blowing so hard and next thing they realized, they were taking water up the stern ramp and into the lower thing, a big hole. So I don't know, I think they just planted the boat up into it, called the Coast Guard, and they welded it up or put a patch so they could take care of it when the weather came down. Probably shifted all the fuel forward and brought the stern ramp out of the water. I was glad I wasn't there for that storm. Sounded pretty nasty.

JO: Have you have seen anything very strange or unusual pulled out of the water.

LS: It's funny, whenever I see this stuff I say I have to remember this because I know people ask me this question. And right now I can't think of anything super duper strange. It's the usual... I heard people say they've caught a WWII, one of their jeeps or something, because Dutch Harbor was a huge WWII port at one time, there was some conflict there and on other islands down the chain. So they have gotten weird stuff like that. But I have not seen anything in particular that sticks out in my head. I wish I had the memory, too many head injuries I guess.

33:14 JO: What are your biggest challenges in the fishing industry?

LS: I would say working long hours, having relationships, boyfriends, although they think it's really cool, then I leave for 5 months and they don't really like that so much. As far as a fishing challenges, the rationalization that's coming up, that's going to be difficult. It seems it will be a big change. Regulations, keeping up on those, they change every year. They are all in the name of safety which is good, but at some point, we have a skiff that when we're offloading to the tramper in the bay, we'll take the skiff into town and run errands and get that all situated to decrease the turn around time at the dock. So they had a list of everything you needed to have in the skiff. You need another boat to

keep all the stuff that you need for the skiff. So you start getting that stuff. Paperwork, that's a challenge, keeping up with it, you have to stay on top of it, you get behind. We have of course daily and weekly production reports we have to send. Other challenges... staying awake at night, it tends to be a challenge, people say "do you read awake" and I say not if you want me to stay awake at night, it's dark and you're looking at screens 7 screens or something, your radars, sounders, third wire and stuff like that. That's about it, I think. Different challenges, maintaining a life at home. (heavy coughing).

JO: Is there a... what makes someone a good fisherman as opposed to a bad fisherman?

36:11 LS: Well, I think my captain is one of the best fishermen in the Bering Sea, but I think everyone thinks their captain is. A good fisherman is a man who can catch fish, who maximizes your dollars per day. We have target species and then you have the bycatch which is usually more money. But if you have, not in the case of codfish, but if you have 100lbs of codfish, you can keep 20 tons of flathead and 20 tons of rock sole... you get 20 percent of each of these species. A guy who can work the Bering Sea in such a way that maximizes what your dollars, and doesn't just go for the easy fish. That's what you do. That would be a good fisherman to be, someone who is fair-minded, not a screamer, I mean there are points when you have to yell, but a lot of times it's not necessary. I think that's it.

JO: Just out of curiosity, do you refer to yourself as a fisherman or a fisher?

LS: I call a fisherman.

JO: Same here, women who are fishermen call themselves fishermen.

LS: Yeah, people like to do that, oh, you're a fisherwoman, I'm just a fisherman. It sounds silly. I'm not that wound up in the cause... I don't know. Call me what you want really!

JO: How in this corporate situation, how do you get paid, do you have a wage or is it a share?

LS: You get paid based on what you catch that trip. You are paid, out of the total of the trip value, 67% goes to the owner and pays for dock fees, freight, and all the stuff they have to pay for, fuel, and 33% is split amongst the crew. The shares are basically the Captain is 6, the mate is 3, chief engineer is 3.5 or 3 depending, deck hands 2 shares, processors, except for the foreman and assistant foreman are 1.1 down to 0.8 and you start at 0.8 of a share.

JO: And what's your official role at the moment?

LS: If I went back in January I would be deckhand. Usually about March one of the guys will rotate off and I fill in as mate. Usually stay on as mate from then on, between the 2 captains rotating in and out or I go home, take a break.

39:34 JO: And do you get benefits like health insurance, no?

LS: No. We do have a 401K that you can put money into, which is good, that's a start. I think it was one of the two... they tried to figure out how they could do it for people on the boat, having health insurance, and they decided at this point 401K. But I think they are looking into insurance for us and how that could work. But they take care of you if you get hurt on the boat, for sure.

JO: I'm going to start looking at the questions I'm supposed to be asking. Some of these are clearly for older fishermen. What advise would you give someone who is starting out today based on your 15 years?

LS: Oh gosh. What advise about fishing or...?

JO: About getting into the industry or what you need...?

LS: Definitely just be able to work hard and you'll get used to it, understand you're going to have pain. Especially the first contract. Seasickness. That's the big one. I puked for 3 days when I first started, but that's what you do is keep working. Keep working, it goes away, everything is good. I don't know, you don't need any experience really... just encouragement really.

JO: Here in New England, the regulations are coming down hard on a lot of the fishermen and affecting the fishing community. Do you see something like that happening in Alaska or in the northwest?

LS: Yeah, I think this rationalization... a lot of the from what I hear, went to the meeting regarding our Amendment 80, saying don't pass it because it's going to affect them. You're going to totally cinch up your belt as far as spending, because we as a fleet, at least our fleet, I can't remember the amount of money we spend at the hydrolics and nets, groceries, and all this stuff. It would completely affect... it does, I've seen.... Over the years anyway, I've seen differences in Dutch Harbor, businesses have closed up or changed. It used to be that you could order anything, say you would be at the dock at 2am, please have my fiber food ready. Now, if you don't plan ahead... they were on call 24 hours a day to get you ready. Now you have to plan ahead which is fine but it was an interesting change because it was like... "we're not coming in until 8am" and you say, "what, we got to go". So the business... people have changed a little bit there....

43:23 JO: What's caused the change, are there just fewer boats to provision?

LS: Yeah, exactly, when it's hot and heavy, the weather, the past couple years have been really snowy in Dutch, so in order to get your food or your fiber or whatever delivered to you, they have to shovel off the platform, got to shovel that off, then load it up, it takes... they say if you want stuff, you got to plan ahead, plan about 2 hours because they're making deliveries to other boats too. Now we get it in before we even hit the dock or the tramper to offload when we get to town so everything is all... you have an idea about how long it's going to take you. You have different destinations for our fish, if there's multiple destinations it's going to take a little longer. Most all of our product goes foreign, to China or Korea, or Japan, depending on what it is. And recently some of our codfish has been going to Europe.

JO: None stays in the domestic market, its all shipped out?

LS: Unless it's really big wreck sole, which is similar I think to the east coast grey sole. Usually we have so little of the big ones that we just send them to Japan anyway, Japan likes the wreck sole.

JO: They pay more for it?

LS: The U.S. will pay more for the wreck sole, the big sizes, than Japan, but the cost of having it shipped on a domestic tramper to Seattle, it's not worth it.

JO: Strange, because it's closer.

LS: It's more of a... I think that's how it works... I guess the separating it out, the handful of cases, to deal with at the dock, to this other tramper, it's not worth it. It's kind of what it is. They try to make it as easy as possible for us, especially when you have 5-6 destinations for this stuff. Even they may all be going to 3 of the destinations, Dali (?) and China, but it's 3 different buyers, so they have to spread the love to everybody!
(heavy coughing)

46:20 JO: How.. I have to change this question slightly for you... how is fishing viewed in say Seattle, which is a big town, or Dutch Harbor, it must be the entire community... are there negative views or positive views of fishermen?

LS: Oh yeah. Especially with the bottom trawlers, we're messing it all up, we're raping and pillaging the bottom, we're dragging it, we're dredging it, to some extent, yeah, but it's sand and it's mud, and I know there are ecosystems in there, worms and grasses, and I don't know the biology of it all, that if its not that difficult for it to re-grow or its Ok, there's arguments from some scientists that say that's it's good for the bottom to be stirred up, but with the amount of effort that sometimes we hit an area, So that would be some negative things. As far as the communities viewing us, it's just part of life for them.

JO: In Dutch Harbor you mean?

LS: Yeah, I mean there's people, there's lots of different fisheries in the Bering Sea, but as a community in Seattle, their views of fisheries are that you have the farmed fish which people are against that, which my brother in law is involved with, but he doesn't farm any of the fish that I catch so that's Ok! I think everyone has their different views. Seattle seems to be very environmentally aware, try to preserve it, and if there's something that's taking from it... granted we are feeding people with our fish. I think that's about it. I think I'm done. I was kind of floundering there for a little bit.

JO: For people who are coming to this festival and maybe don't know anything about the fishing way of life, although I imagine most of them do, but if there were someone here that didn't know that much, what do you think they should come taking away?

49:16 LS: Oh boy. What should they take away? Well this year, that there's actually women in the industry. I don't know how to answer that. What would I want them to take away, you said? To understand that fishermen aren't all pirates and that we do work pretty hard with gear and not taking fish that... are mesh sizes are regulated, ours aren't regulated on the west coasts, but that we're not out to kill everything. We aren't there to try and reduce that. Sometimes it doesn't happen so well and sometimes you do fine.

JO: Are there any questions that I didn't ask that I should have asked?

LS: I don't know. Not that I know of. So we're done.

JO: I'll turn this off here.

50:55 End of interview.