

Interview
With
PAM DAVIS MORRIS
In
Harkers Island,
North Carolina

Interviewed by Barbara Garrity-Blake

On June 7, 2016

Transcribed by Mary Williford

For Carolina Coastal Voices

<u>Track Time</u>	<u>Topic</u>
0:00:21	Morris' personal and professional background
0:02: 21	Attending her first fisheries-related meeting in the 1980s
0:03:22	Morris' early work in Down East fish houses
0:04:37	Clam kicking; A brawl at a public meeting on clam kicking in the 1980s
0:07:24	The beginning of “bad blood” between commercial and recreational fishers; Net bans in Florida and red drum purse seine harvesting issues in Texas
0:09:36	Parasitic outbreaks in oyster populations in the 1980s and actions of the Blue Ribbon Advisory Council prior to the Moratorium Steering Committee
0:13:13	Morris seeing women treated poorly in early meetings; Mildred Gilgo, Lennie Saunders, Elaine Davis, and the shellfish advisory committee
0:17:00	Gilgo, Saunders, and Davis successfully petitioning for a moratorium on shellfish leases in Core Sound
0:19:23	Morris' initial thoughts on the Moratorium Steering Committee process; Morris' confusion and disappointment with the Moratorium Steering Committee's final report
0:22:00	Different Women's Auxiliaries in the area; Objections Morris had with the Auxiliaries' makeup, work, and voting power

- 0:24:06 The dissolution of the Women's Auxiliary and the formation of the Carteret County Fishermen's Association;
The switch from Auxiliaries to Affiliates within the North Carolina Fisheries Association
- 0:27:41 Sending thirteen black funeral wreaths to the Division of Marine Fisheries;
Renting a bus to take 400 people to Raleigh to protest the Moratorium Steering Committee's final report
- 0:31:43 The aftermath of the protest in Raleigh;
The involvement of the Coastal Conservation Association and recreational fishing interests
- 0:34:55 Specific issues Morris had with the Moratorium Steering Committee's final report;
Fear of a net ban;
A preference for hashing out issues through the legislature
- 0:37:29 Discrepancies between the lives of smaller-time commercial fishermen and people running commercial fishing-related industrial operations;
Jule Wheatly;
The need for all types of commercial fishers to stick together
- 0:39:23 Morris attends more meetings in Raleigh;
Getting to know the power players in the Fisheries Reform Act process
- 0:43:20 Weekly meetings of the Carteret County Fishermen's Association to spread information and review changes to the Fisheries Reform Act;
Moving from a license-per-boat system to a license-per-person system;
Successfully working assigation and transferability into the Fisheries Reform Act

- 0:47:05 Fighting over the rising cost of commercial fishing licenses;
Drastically lowering the cap on commercial fishing licenses while adhering to the state's policy of not having limited entry
- 0:51:06 Morris, Sandy Gaskill, and Janice Smith regularly meeting with various Legislators, including Marc Basnight
- 0:55:35 The firing of Bruce Freeman, Director of the Division of Marine Fisheries, and a full audit of the organization
- 0:58:07 Cornering Representative David Redwine in a stairwell after a committee meeting in Raleigh
- 1:01:34 Meeting with Charlie Albertson, the “singing Senator”
- 1:05:19 An amusing interaction with Marine Fisheries Commissioner member Pete Moffat
- 1:07:52 Morris' views on how the Fisheries Reform Act has weakened over time;
Extreme dissatisfaction with the current Marine Fisheries Commission
- 1:13:55 Using the example of regulating speckled trout to illustrate current problems with the regulatory and enforcement mechanisms;
The lack of scientific expertise in the Marine Fisheries Commission today
- 1: 22:11 Defining what constitutes a commercial fisherman;
Charter boat operators opting out of commercial fishing licenses
- 1:26:20 Morris' thoughts on the future of the Fisheries Reform Act;
The role of various federal councils and council representatives from the state
- 1:29:22 The next generation of "fighters" for the commercial fishing industry;
Stopping at King's Barbecue in Kinston on their way home from a meeting in Raleigh

- 1:37:39 "Radical elements" in fisheries management today
- 1:40:58 Morris' take on the local seafood movement and shifting public perceptions of commercial fishers;
Programs and giveaways offered by Carteret Catch
- 1:45:15 The North Carolina Seafood Festival

BARBARA GARRITY-BLAKE: Okay, so I am Barbara Garrity-Blake and I am sitting here with Pam Davis Morris at the Core Sound Museum on Harkers Island, on June 7th, 2016, and this is part of the Fisheries Reform Act oral history project. So Pam, can you just start out by giving us a little background about, you know, when and where you were born, where you grew up, and how you came into this world of fisheries?

PAM DAVIS MORRIS: I was born in Newport News, Virginia in 1962. My daddy was an Engineer, and his first job was working at the shipyard in Newport News. My mother is a Medical Technician, but she wasn't working at the time 'cause she was home with me! And my brother was also born in Virginia, and when we were five, we moved to Beaufort [North Carolina] while we were building a house in Smyrna [North Carolina], which, all of us are Davises, really, from Davis Shore. So, after I grew up, I moved to Davis; I lived with, for seven years, and then married for another twenty, a commercial fisherman. But, even when I was in high school, I was commercial fishing, clamming, working at the fish house, heading shrimp--that was my first job when I was fifteen--and went to college, graduated from U.N.C.-Charlotte with an Art degree and an Art Education degree. I became a commercial fisherman when I graduated from college, and was a shrimp fisherman and a gill net fisherman and a clammer from--occasionally worked when I was going through college, in the summers, would clam also. And in 1988, I had a son, Cody, and after that, I did not fish as much, obviously. But when he got older, we still took him shrimping and all that; had a daughter in 1993, and that pretty much ended my fishing career [laughs] 'cause I had too many other things to do with children! But a few years after that--well, actually before that, in the [19]80s, I started attending fisheries meetings basically about clams, and kicking clams was the first fisheries meeting I ever went to whereas there was a knock-down, drag-out fight in the middle of the aisle on Pivers Island,

which is interesting! And I have been attending fisheries meetings ever since. When the Fisheries Reform Act started--well, no, actually, before that, when the moratorium was put on, commercial fishing license, that, you know, stirred up a lot of what we are dealing with today. Adjunct to that, I'm a member of the Carteret County Fisherman's Association, who is interested in policy. I don't know how far I'm supposed to go into this!

BGB: Well, let's just stop a minute, 'cause you are just all fisheries! This is great. But backing up, when you were--one of your first jobs, you said, was heading shrimp?

PDM: M hm.

BGB: What fish house was that?

PDM: I headed shrimp at Grady George Davis' fish house in Davis, and also at James Styron's fish company in Davis. Both. Depends on who had the shrimp of the day.

BGB: And neither of those two places are open, are they?

PDM: No. James Styron's just closed, but Grady George's has been closed for a long time, 'cause it was actually his daddy's, but it wasn't really--Grady George became one of these people that goes, that actually takes, you know, seafood off the boat, but then he would take it to another fish house, like James Styron's, mainly. 'Cause he didn't have the ice room, you know, as I grew up, anyway. It wasn't really kept up, and so he became like a peddler of sorts, like, you know. He didn't go up and down the beach or anything like that, but long story short, there is one of the two vehicle ferries with access on Core Banks: the Cape Lookout ferry is at the location of Grady George's fish house.

BGB: Okay.

PDM: Yeah, that's where it was.

BGB: Um, and then the other thing, just for the listeners' benefit who might not be

familiar with different types of fisheries, can you explain what clam kicking is?

PDM: Clam kicking is the mechanical harvest of clams, which means that, instead of using a clam rake or your hands or your feet to catch clams. Generally, this doesn't occur in shallow water, it's usually deep water where clams are inaccessible by hand-capture means. But, you put a kicker plate on your boat where the rudder is; it's a rudder, but it's got a specially-designed plate that sits at an angle, that is perpendicular to the rudder, and it forces the wash from the propeller down and kicks out the clams, out of the bottom, which, there's a cage--we had a bigger operation, relatively speaking, but usually there's a cage of some sort, it could be metal or it could be a net, but usually nets won't work unless it's just a little tiny boat. On our boat, we had a big cage, and it kicked the clams into a cage, the bars were set at less than an inch, or an inch, actually, they were set at an inch to let out button clams, you know, those are the immature--or, not immature, they're mature clams, they're just small. So that's how you do it. And then you cull up on the culling tray.

BGB: And then my other--you piqued my curiosity when you said one of the first meetings was about clam kicking and there was a knock-down fight in the aisle. What was that about?

PDM: Well, that was about, that was between the Salter Pathers and the, I think they're from Broad Creek. Anyway, they were co-users of Bogue Sound and there were certain areas that were open, you know, and I think maybe still are in Bogue Sound, clam kicking at certain times of the year, in the winter. And it was between the hand-clammers and the mechanical harvest clammers, and they were going to knots over the fishing grounds. And back then, you know, there weren't any such animals really that made any difference to anybody about this, you know, the emergence of the sport fishing bunch and whatever, they weren't even thought about. We

never even considered them. They were sort of, people who were there but we didn't really know what they were doing or anything; this was between us.

BGB: So, the good old days when the conflicts were between fishermen?

PDM: Yes! Commercial fishermen.

BGB: Yeah.

PDM: User groups, is what it was.

BGB: Yeah, and--.

PDM: [Laughs] Not so much now, but back then, it was.

BGB: So, Pam, what do you think the bad blood started between recreational and commercial fishermen or fishing groups? When did that happen?

PDM: Well, there really wasn't any bad blood that I knew anything about, or nobody around here knew anything about, until the moratorium process happened. There was an attorney, Bob Lucas, who sort of spearheaded that. You knew Bob. And anyway, so. They decided--'they' being those, I guess, recreational fishing groups, whatever--that something needed to be done. At the same time, there were these rumblings in Florida about a net ban, and that was a movement that was started in Texas by the Coastal Conservation Association over red drum, whose fishing, the practice, that practice of capturing red drum that they were opposed to did not occur on the east coast anyway, which was a menhaden, basically, operation. A purse seine operation that was targeting drum; that never occurred here, we never had a problem with it, didn't really realize or understand that other people were projecting this problem onto us! And expanding, you know, this idea that something needed to be done. I didn't think any of the commercial people were really aware of it that much at all. I know I wasn't. I mean, it was always, whatever conflict there were, it was between commercial fishermen; it was never

involving a recreational fisherman. I mean, those are the people we saw coming to the fish house for bait or wanting a clue or two on where to catch, you know, whatever fish they were looking for at the time. So I never really heard anything about this until the moratorium process began, and I don't think I was alone in that.

BGB: Yeah. So, of course, the moratorium was what really kicked off the whole Fisheries Reform Act process; can you tell us how you were involved, if at all, in that process? Where were you, what was your involvement, what was going on at the time?

PDM: Well, before the moratorium process, there was another process that had to do with oysters, called the Blue Ribbon Oyster, ah, Blue Ribbon Oyster--it wasn't a committee, there was a name for it, whatever.

BGB: Council or committee?

PDM: Yeah, something to that effect. Anyway. What they were all about was, you know, trying to look at oysters and the decline, supposed decline, of oysters. Oysters at the time were facing this Dermo [*perkinsus marinus*] and MSX [*Haplosporidium nelsoni*] outbreaks in the 1980s that were really having a big impact on oyster populations, so they formed this Blue Ribbon Oyster thing. Well, some of the people pushing this Blue Ribbon Oyster thing were what we and some of us--and 'we' I say, just individuals--viewed as folks trying to take over Core Sound, and take it for their benefit and possess it as if it were their own. And also, at this about same time, there was a clam lease gained through a loophole that happened by a fellow in Atlantic, who still has that lease on the eastern side of Core Banks or Core Sound, next to Core Banks, and that was a total firestorm about that. That was before the Moratorium Steering Committee was commenced, was this Blue Ribbon thing. So people were talking about, locally, here--I don't know how far out it went because Carteret County is like shellfish central, or was at

the time. Now I think that's more down south now, to an extent, than it is here. South of the [North Carolina State Highway] 58 bridge, they're more concerned about shellfish than we are. Although, there's a huge number of people who recreationally clam here, all over the place. That's just what people like to do in their free time: go home and have a clam bake. Anyway.

BGB: Were you involved in that Blue Ribbon Oyster?

PDM: I went to some of the meetings, yes. I was not on a committee for that. I mean, I was just around at, like I said, the first meeting I went to was about clam kicking, where we thought that they were going to change the area around Cedar Island that you could kick clams, and that's where all the clams were, mainly. There were still some, like, in the channels of Core Sound, there were chowder clams mainly so you knew you weren't gonna make a lot of money off of them. Money clams were off of Cedar Island and Portsmouth and up there, in the deep water around Harbor Island, Wainwrights, you know. Anyway. I was not a part of any of those committees; however, I did attend the meetings--and other commercial fishermen, commercial fishermen have always attended meetings, especially if they thought it was gonna put 'em out of business or get them off of the fishing grounds, is what that amounts to. That's putting you out of business, when I say it. So I was not on the Moratorium Steering Committee; I was an outsider, I did not really know much about it other than relying on others at the fish house to say what's going on, or I met these women, especially with the Blue Ribbon thing, whom you know, that was Mildred Gilgo and Lennie Saunders and Elaine Davis.

BGB: I'm trying to remember, you know, there was the whole Women's Auxiliary movement.

PDM: There was, but, you know--.

BGB: And they were involved in that, but they were also working on their own--.

PDM: Well those three, especially. I know there was another one; can't remember who it was. But those three especially were concerned about this Blue Ribbon Oyster thing and the Core Sound, what became the Core Sound moratorium. So they were the ones that--I was not involved with them, I was in meetings where they were, because at the, before any advisory committee had commenced, there was a shellfish advisory committee, and they were just some little committee out there, mainly oyster growers who didn't want anybody else to come to their committee meeting, is what it amounted to. But these three women went to this meeting, and me and my mother went in the [19]80s; I just wanted to stop and see what's going on because, you know, I'm curious that way. So I saw them being ignored or talked bad to in this shellfish meeting, you know. They just--these men, and it was men on this committee--just tried to ignore these three women. Well, I know them three women, and you ain't gonna ignore them. You ain't gonna do it. And so--.

BGB: Is this a Marine Fisheries Commission committee?

PDM: It was.

BGB: Okay.

PDM: Or else it was a Division of Marine Fishery. I think the Division actually started it, and they were just basically shellfish growers trying to push their shellfish growing agenda. But there weren't any wild fishermen on this committee that I recall. But these three women--and they had to do with this Blue Ribbon thing--and these three women found out about it, would go, well I found out about it, and I went, and that was my observation of one, that was maybe the second thing I ever went to, and I was like, wow. They are really--they are not gonna take no crap from this bunch of men, and they're not gonna be ignored, either. And I admired that, I mean, I admire strong people anyway who stand up for what's right, and what they were doing,

in my view, wasn't right. And because, you know, there's a whole philosophy of, submerged lands are public lands. They are not private lands unless you dug out something and created a marina or something of that variety, I could see where that might be in private hands. But anything, any natural area underwater from the high tide mark down, those are public lands, as far as I'm concerned. And I don't think private individuals have a right to public lands but under certain circumstances. And, you know, so I was just interested to see that those women were standing up for what they believed in, and I agree with them one hundred percent! [Laughs] Because being from eastern Carteret County, you had to fight for whatever you got. So.

BGB: So, seeing those women that day, did that, do you think that inspired you to get more involved in fish politics?

PDM: Oh yeah. Oh, definitely. Those three were my inspiration. They still are today, are my inspiration! I mean, Mildred, I can't tell you how much I admire Mildred Gilgo, because they're smart, they did their research, they could not be fooled, you know, because this gang out running around out here thought they were so smart they would just talk their way around them women. Well, honey, they didn't know a candle compared to what them women had done. They had researched everything to the *n*th degree, and they got what they wanted! They are the ones, they went door to door with petitions explaining to people what was going on out there in Core Sound after that lease was gained across the sound, and they had a moratorium put on leasing, period, at all, on Core Sound. Which is still there. And they put together, you know, all these committees through the years, Doctor [Mike] Orbach was one of them, this user, user group study, which was the biggest waste of money of anything I have ever seen in my entire life! Paid \$300,000 for nothing! I went to the follow-up meetings for that, the Christie Wright Lodge, and I'm like, 'This is [laughs] this is the biggest waste of money I have ever seen. Ever.' So, long

story short, the moratorium's still on, it has not been changed, they're still trying to get it lifted. I just had a meeting with Carteret County Fishermen's Association where a guy from the Division [of Marine Fisheries] or from shellfish, whatever, came and brought, bearing maps, wanting to know where they did not want any clam leasing. And so, you know, they're still trying to lift the moratorium today! Now, whether they will remains to be seen.

BGB: Yeah, and so, just for the listener, right now we're talking about a moratorium that prohibited any expansion of clam-leased bottom, or shellfish leases.

PDM: Correct, shellfish leases.

BGB: Earlier, we were talking about a different moratorium, which was for the, in advance of the Fisheries Reform Act.

PDM: Right. Moratorium on commercial fishing licenses.

BGB: Right. Okay. So Pam, can you just tell us how you got involved in that process? Did you go to the meetings, did you testify, were you on an advisory committee, or what were you doing during the moratorium?

PDM: Well, I'll tell you what I was doing: I was--well--my real involvement with the moratorium came just like most everybody else: the moratorium was just another something like the Blue Ribbon thing, various and sundry other projects that had happened that really didn't amount to anything. So folks are kinda like, 'Yeah, they're meeting, so what?' You know. 'Do I really care about this? Are they really gonna do anything?' I wasn't gonna get too involved with it 'cause I had a lot of other things going on, until they decided what was gonna become of all this. The Moratorium [Steering Committee] met at least two years, minimum, and they produced this final report. Well, some of the people who were involved, you know, whom I'm not gonna name, with the Core Sound moratorium also kept their eye out for other things, including this

final report by the Moratorium Steering Committee. Well, one of 'em sent it to me, and [sigh] anyway, it weren't good, I'll put it to you that way. And I was like, 'Who are these people serving on this daggone friggin' committee? Who are these people? Do they represent me? I don't friggin' think so! They fell and bumped their head if they think all this is gonna happen!' So, you know, a great sense of unease settled in when that report was released. Well, we had a man in the legislature at the time from Carteret County, Jonathan Robinson, and Jonathan was a Legislator, so--.

BGB: And what did Jonathan do for a living?

PDM: Jonathan was a commercial fisherman and a long haul fisherman. Anyway, Jonathan was serving as a representative, representing our area, so we had a man on the inside. So when this--and also at the time, right up until the current Governor took office, there was a committee called the Joint Legislative Committee on Seafood and Aquaculture. And everything seafood had to go through that committee for vetting before it went any further. So this report, this final report, was going to Seafood and Aquaculture. Well, Barbara, you mentioned a little bit ago about the Ladies Auxiliary. There was a Ladies Auxiliary which these folks from Atlantic, I think Barbara was on it, Janice Smith, they used to meet at her house. I had heard about a meeting that they were having; I did not go. There are reasons for that, but. And Sandy Gaskill, my good friend here on the island, was part of the old Auxiliary. There were also other Women's Auxiliaries; there was a strong Auxiliary in Pamlico County. I don't know where else in the state, but mainly there was the Carteret County Auxiliary and the Pamlico County Auxiliary made up of these women. And these women didn't take things lightly or lying down. Also, Twyla Nelson was on that, too. And Twyla was hooked up politically with Beverly Perdue, so there was somebody else. Beverly was our Senator at the time, when all this was happening. So anyway,

when the Auxiliary was meeting and I didn't really know--I was invited to go, but my problem with the Auxiliary was, they were part of the North Carolina Fisheries Association and I felt like, from what I understood, that they were doing fundraising activities and grunt work of sorts for the Association, but they did not have a vote on the Association board. And I was like, I'm not gonna be a party to that. And I don't think it should be made up of all women, either; I think it should be men and women. Everybody. And I don't really necessarily think it should be only commercial fishermen; I think it should be other people. Anybody concerned about this should be able to go to these meetings and have a say in it. And that was just my personal belief. But they were out there doing stuff, so when that report was released, the Auxiliary got a meeting up in Davis Shore. I went to that meeting at the Fire Department, and we always met at Davis because it was central to Down East. So we get to the Fire Department and Jonathan [Robinson] was leading that meeting, Jerry Schill of the North Carolina Fisheries Association was also there, so they gave us the low down and the dire situation that was getting ready to happen in the legislature about this Moratorium Steering Committee. So what we did was, that night, the Auxiliary disbanded, we formed the Carteret County Fishermen's Association, and they had just developed, at N.C.F.A. [North Carolina Fisheries Association], 'Affiliates'. Affiliates were different from Auxiliaries in that they got two seats on the board and they got voting privileges. That, I could live with. It was a men-women-anybody. So from that night on, we became Carteret County Fishermen's Association. And I'm still to this day a member of the Carteret County Fishermen's Association.

BGB: Do you remember why that happened, why the Auxiliaries were disbanded and this new structure started?

PDM: Because they were just--my sense, and I was not on the Auxiliary, you'll have to

ask them about that--but it was a small group anyway and I just think that they were tired, they had been through so--.

BGB: Let me just interject one little P.S. to that: I remember, at one point, the President of the Auxiliaries did get a vote on the North Carolina Fisheries Association, and then it was taken away!

PDM: Oh, my gosh!

BGB: It was taken away! Because the powers that be didn't agree with the position of some of these Auxiliaries, which tended to represent more small-boat fishermen. So that age-old conflict reached that point and, in my memory, that was one of the factors where it's like, why are we even, why do we have this Auxiliary, we're not here to bake cookies. Right? Okay. Go on!

PDM: Well I--that's good to know! And that's good to be interjected because I didn't really know anything about the Auxiliary, I didn't know why they were disbanding, but I knew that they were and that's why this big meeting was happening, that's why Jerry Schill was happening, and I said, 'I don't know why you're having an Auxiliary or any other kind of thing,' I said, 'I'm not gonna be a part of anything that we do not have a vote on. Forget it! That is not ever gonna happen! I am not fundraising for anything without full disclosure of what they're doing financially, and without a vote.' That's just not gonna happen. I said, 'Now, you can do what you want to, now, if you give us that, I'll support you just to myself.' Not that I matter to anybody--but I think that I'm speaking for a lot of people that were there at the time. There wasn't a lot said at the meeting about why the Auxiliaries were going away; my sense of it was there was something that was strong that had happened for this to occur. Now, Pamlico County kept their Auxiliary up until the ladies that were doing it either just died or got too old to do it,

which does happen. But anyway, but back to the moratorium thing, so we get all up what happened as a result of this big meeting in Davis was we also, another preamble that's important to know, is right after this occurred, they fired the Division of Marine Fisheries Director. [Bruce] Freeman. And there were thirteen--if I remember right, and I could be very wrong about this--but I think the Auxiliary was the ones that did it, or a faction of the Auxiliary, sent thirteen black wreaths to the Division of Marine Fisheries. I mean, thirteen black funeral wreaths were sent to the Division of Marine Fisheries! Obviously, it was a bad time! It was a very dark time for everybody. So we go up there, we put on this, in like three days there's this meeting that's gonna be in Raleigh. So Carteret County Fishermen's Association took, when they switched over, the Auxiliary had \$2-3,000, I think, in their account. We took that money and rented buses, and then everybody chipped in, too. And we took 400 head to Raleigh to this meeting in the L.O.B. up there, the Legislative Office Building.

BGB: During this scheduled session--

PDM: Yes, when they were--

BGB: about the Fisheries Reform Act.

PDM: No. it was no Fisheries Reform Act. This was about the moratorium.

BGB: The recommendations?

PDM. The recommendations coming out of that final report.

BGB: Okay, that's right.

PDM: So they were gonna vote on all this mess, so we took 400 of our people up there and went to this meeting. Couldn't speak, we were just there. We protested, we had signs and everything. Walked all around the capitol square and got all of our permits, everything. And I know that I was on the elevator, got stuck on the elevator, there were so many people on it, with

Jean Preston, bless her soul, and the elevator was like a foot up and then stopped, so we had to pry the door open and get Jean [laughs] off the elevator! I mean, I'm claustrophobic, I thought I was gonna pass out!

BGB: This was, she was in the House at the time, right?

PDM: She was in the House, she was.

BGB: House of Representatives.

PDM: She and Jonathan [Robinson] and I think Ronnie Smith, we had three, the way districting was at the time.

BGB: Yeah, these are our Legislators.

PDM: These are all Legislators.

BGB: So you had to help--

PDM: Beverly [Perdue] was our Senator.

BGB: --you had to help poor--.

PDM: We had to help Jean get off that elevator! [Laughs] Which I always thought, I mean, I always loved Jean but that day I was like, 'If I don't get off this elevator, I'm gonna kill somebody! Or myself!' But anyway, but that was--I was talking about the elevator because I also got on the elevator with a sergeant at arms who was a cool guy, and he was like, asking me who I was with and I told him and of course they knew we were coming, and he was like, 'I must say that this is the most well-behaved group we've ever had of this size at the Capitol.' And I mean, they thought, 'Here comes these commercial fishermen, they're gonna be raising hell, they are, and they're gonna be fighting and they're gonna be very obnoxious people!' And we were not, at all. Although we have laid down the law pretty much, there was no rioting, you know, we were gonna be very organized, and we were! And so when we were coming home from that meeting--

they voted not to do anything, they did not do one any thing. We also, you know, there was a fellow named Robert Grady, he was also one of our people at the time.

BGB: Who was Robert Grady?

PDM: Robert Grady was a representative from Onslow County. So when we were coming home from that trip, that was--I think that trip, that trip right there, was the turning point from where we are today. And I think, from the people, I mean--Herbert Morris, my husband, he cried on our way home. That tore me up. I was so angry. I still am very angry, very angry.

BGB: Why?

PDM: That these people, these C.C.A. [Coastal Conservation Association] people who I could give you a string of curse words, because I despise 'em. I mean, I'll just tell you, and I don't say that lightly. I don't despise 'em as individuals, but what they do and their actions, and they don't know anything. They have zero knowledge. That's what I despise.

BGB: So they obviously, then, were at this big legislative--?

PDM: Oh, they were! They were, they were. Their leader at the time was a guy named Dick Brame. But anyway, after this meeting, Carteret County Fishermen's Association continued to meet, see what they're gonna do. Jonathan kept us informed, so. They wanted something to happen.

BGB: But getting back to Herbert being so upset: were there specific things said at this meeting, or was that the first time the C.C.A. [Coastal Conservation Association] kind of got on your radar as being very political?

PDM: Well, they were upset. It was really one of the first times that--I think it was an eye-opening thing 'cause, as I said before, nobody really even thought about recreational people. I mean, we always got along with 'em, there weren't no problems there that anybody ever knew

about. These people were the only ones with any problems. We hadn't ever seen them before in our lifetime! And that's what we were all thinking, because we--I say 'we' meaning commercial fishermen that I've had contact with--as I said, leading up to this, you go to fisheries meetings and it's intra-commercial fishermen issues that have to be resolved. It's not these external forces from Joe Blow, you know, whoever they are. I just use C.C.A. as an example, but there's several different examples that could be cited. And there was this whole idea of, you know, we're just the low-hanging fruit here for larger problems like environmental problems and all this sort of thing. Which, in Carteret County we're, I won't say immune to environmental problems, but we certainly don't have as many as a more industrialized area like a Wilmington area down south that doesn't even have access to as large inside waters and all that as we do.

BGB: So maybe that moratorium meeting was just an early realization of the extent to which these people hold power, and what they might do or were trying to do?

PDM: I think so.

BGB: Okay. So Pam, specifically when Jonathan was at that meeting in Davis talking about the recommendations coming out of this Moratorium Steering Committee, was there anything in particular that bothered people, or was it just the whole thing?

PDM: I think [pause] well, there were specifics about it, you know. A net ban, for one thing.

BGB: But that wasn't part of the recommendations.

PDM: No, it wasn't, but it was being talked about, you know. This is--it was being talked about at the same time.

BGB: It was.

PDM: Frank Mitchell had introduced a net ban bill; that was the first one I ever

remember, which was at the same time as this Moratorium Steering Committee report was coming out, the exact same time! So there were, you know--no, it wasn't a part of the report, but they were using the momentum from this report to do other things. That's what scared us. I mean, that, the word 'net ban' especially after Florida had just passed one? You know?

BGB: Yeah.

PDM: And they're not even talking about gill nets, they're talking about trawls. You know? Bottom-disturbing gear. That would be devastating!

BGB: So is this the idea that, all this stuff is being done to us and we don't--yeah.

PDM: Right! And, you know, you don't really think that they're gonna do it, you know? You don't think that they're gonna do it, but they do it!

BGB: I remember the representative that introduced the net ban kinda used that as a stick, saying 'if y'all don't like Fisheries Reform Act, maybe this is--'

PDM: Oh yeah! Yes!

BGB: There was some kind of talk like that at the time.

PDM: There was, there was. They were using it, yeah, I guess you could call it a stick, or blackmail, you know, blackmail is what I called it. Like they were gonna hold that over your head and I was like, well, either they will or they won't, but bring it on! That was my--'cause all during the--from that day on, we'd go fight it out in the legislature, and we have never had anything done bad that went through the legislature. I mean, we had Moratorium Steering Committee, we had just successfully had a moratorium put on Core Sound! I say 'we', I didn't have a direct party into it, but those women did. I mean, you know what I'm saying?

BGB: I do, I do.

PDM: So I felt just as good about going and fighting it out in the legislature as I did

anywhere. But after that failed, I thought like, after this Blue Ribbon mess failed and after the Moratorium Steering Committee failed, there was reasons why they failed! 'Cause they weren't worth a shit! Because people with their own agendas were driving the process!

BGB: But Jule Wheatly, who represented the commercial fishing industry, was on the Moratorium Steering Committee, and he and Bob Lucas came to be great friends and supporters of this.

PDM: Yes! They did!

BGB: Did you ever talk to Jule about what was going on?

PDM: I did not talk to Jule directly. Well, actually, I did: I told him I didn't appreciate it much, for certain aspects of what we couldn't live with, but really, Jule [pause] you had to know Jule, though, you know what I mean? Yeah, he owned Beaufort Fisheries, which is a menhaden plant, he had had a lot of terrible things done to him by people just like Bob Lucas. But on the other hand, he knew that he could get out of it. He could get out of it and he'd be just fine. He wasn't those poor devils that were working on the boat. I loved Jule! I got along with him famously! But, you know--and it's not just Jule, I've come across a lot of people that were in it for number one; they weren't in policy making committees and such as that for everybody, they were in it for themselves and they were looking out for themselves and people on the [Marine Fisheries] Commission are living that life right now! And maybe that's human nature or whatever, but I don't think--I think the rule number one, in my fisheries philosophy, rule number one is never go against another commercial fisherman. I don't care what they do. I don't care if they're clam leasers, I don't care what they are. If they're out fishing, especially fishing wild, I think that they should stand together. You can't have a gill net fisherman against a pound net fisherman and all this mess, or crab potters against shrimp trawlers and all this. You're past that

now.

BGB: So we know that, even though that day, the Moratorium recommendations were not voted on, no action was taken, eventually they, some form of these recommendations, did pass as the Fisheries Reform Act.

PDM: Well, you know how that came out, though.

BGB: Tell us.

PDM: Okay. So they had a committee meeting that we'd heard about, Carteret County Fishermen's Association. And I didn't work at the time, so I could go. So I dropped Candace off and I dressed up and I went--I had never been to anything like this.

BGB: Where was it?

PDM: It was in Raleigh, in the L.O.B. And there was a meeting in there, Jean Preston was there, but the main one--in fact, I don't even know if Jean was there--the main one driving that train was a guy named David Redwine who represented Brunswick County and who claimed that he had been a commercial fisherman, which I still don't believe. But he was [laughs] he was the insurance salesman is what he was down there, and may've been a real estate agent, I can't remember, I think he was both. Whatever. So he was a representative at the time, called this meeting. Todd Miller was there from the Coastal Fed [North Carolina Coastal Federation], um, anyway, there was some that I recognized, most that I didn't. None of them didn't know me, 'cause I had never been a part of it, and that worked for me, that worked to my advantage because I was dressed up and people were wondering 'who is that?' you know? So they were having--'cause David Redwine said they were putting too much in this moratorium thing to let it go--and Bob Lucas was behind it, Bob Lucas was an attorney but very powerful, politically, Governor Hunt was in office at the time. So they felt like something had to be done, and the

reason they felt that way was because C.C.A. [Coastal Conservation Association] was blackmailing them, I think, to push it. And in other ways, it had gone, you know, it had gone so far that something, they wanted something to come out of it 'cause they had put money in these other two projects and ain't gotten anywhere. Well, that's because they were bad projects! They put money in something that you should know, right off, ain't gonna work. So that was what was behind it. So I went to this committee meeting, and they had several, so David Redwine was pushing it. Well, then he got Jean Preston to sign on to it, and they developed a bill, and they were the two co-sponsors, which became the Fisheries Reform Act of 1997. So, Jeff Hudson, who is a quasi-friend of mine, who develops bills for the legislature, he's in research--

BGB: M hm, he's a staffer.

PDM: --he's a staffer. So I got to know this Jeff guy. He was, I think he may've been an attorney and that's the thing he worked in, but I met him through [the Joint Legislative Committee on] Seafood and Aquaculture, 'cause he was on, he was the staffer adjunct to the committee and would advise that committee. So I noted who was in charge and I got to know them people. When I went up--I'll tell you who else was in that Redwine meeting, that was Charlie Albertson, who used to be a representative, or was he Senator? He was a Senator from Duplin County, who's a great guy, which, I didn't know him before this, but he apparently had performed on Cedar Island, he was a Democrat and Cedar Island was a Democrat stronghold, so. Anyway. I started going to these meetings, in other words. I would report--I went that first one, I reported back to Carteret County Fishermen's Association, and we have probably twenty people that would come every single week. So that's how we started meeting about it. We met every single week 'til it was passed, and we would review the bill, see what had changed. Like, for example, we had some very important things [laughs] that were, I don't know how we did it, but

that were put in there! For example, we had assignability wrote into the Fisheries Reform Act, because we were like, what if you're sick? What if you can't run your boat? You know? 'Cause the underlying kernel of Fisheries Reform Act is licensing is not on the boat anymore, it's on the individual. That was a huge change; that is the core of the Fisheries Reform Act, that kernel that it's all built around is that concept. So we had assignability so if you were sick or you got hurt or whatever, you could still work, your license could still be used and you could still have some income. Also, for people who own multiple boats like in a long haul operation or a crab pot operation, especially, when you've got people that may have 2,000 pots but they've got 150 assigned to Joe and 150 assigned to Tom, Dick, and Harry, and he's got all the boats to do it with, also there are other fisheries that this happens in, but crabs is one of the main ones. So that you can have all these licenses and people, like, I know a guy in Sea Level that had seven licenses. Some were clam boats, some were long haul boats, some were shrimp boats, you know, so he had all these different kinds of boats because licenses weren't \$35 under the moratorium, under the license moratorium. So that was another thing that we had done was transferability, assignability, transferability to where, if you sell your boat, you can transfer the license, 'cause that's where the value of the boat was gonna become, we knew, was not gonna be in the boat necessarily itself, but in the license. Because it was going to the individuals. Before, you were selling your boat and the boat held the license, you know.

BGB: So you could have more than one license after the Fisheries Reform Act, but they were assigned to you, not the boats?

PDM: M hm, you owned the license, right. They became your license; they were removed from the boat number and they were put on--remember the endorsement to sell? That was the precursor.

BGB: So I've never heard this part of the story, that you guys, that you went to all these meetings after the big fiasco--

PDM: Oh yeah! Every week!

BGB: --and reported back to the Carteret Fisheries Association here?

PDM: M hm.

BGB: How did y'all get your input? Through Jonathan? How did you get your input?

PDM: Jonathan came to all of our meetings and he, he was very smart about that stuff, very smart. And he would give us advice, and I would take it back to my house and type it up, and we sent it to Jean, and we sent it to the other--we sent it to Jean, we sent it to Redwine, but mainly Jean, 'cause she was one of the, what became the co-sponsors. And we sent it to Beverly, Beverly Perdue was our Senator at the time. That was before she was Lieutenant Governor. She was our Senator and she was Chairman of Appropriations. So she was in a seat of power; she had way more power, in my mind, I don't know anything about it, but I felt like she had more power as a Senator than she did as the Lieutenant Governor.

BGB: Or Governor.

PDM: Or Governor, yes. 'Cause your hands are so tied, you know?

BGB: Yeah.

PDM: But anyway, but there was one other thing I did want to mention that we had done through all this, and that was the cost of a commercial fishing license. It started off as being \$250. Now, you know, say this guy from Sea Level owns seven licenses, that's \$250 apiece! What in the world there, you know? That's gonna be a lot of money. So even though--we tried to get it down to \$100, 'cause you got to know, it was \$35, you know! So you're going up to \$250. But that had a big impact like on today, so we got it down to \$200. Also something else that

happened with licensing was the fact that North Carolina is a public trust state and limited entry is illegal in this state. Now I don't know, they could change the law any time, but that time, that was a serious thing. So there had to be a way in; it was against the law for them to put a cap on commercial fishing license or whatever was out there, you had to have a way in. So before they had a thing that they called the 'hardship panel', this hardship committee, I went through the hardship committee over a crab license because these agents, one of the agents from Harkers Island forgot to give us our crab endorsement, and you were S.O.L. if that happened! So we had to go battle it out, and that was not easy, let me tell you something, to get that crab license back! That was an act of Congress. So they, they did away with this hardship thing that was in the old rules and they developed what they refer to as 'the eligibility panel' for commercial fishing license, 'cause you had to have a way in. So they set it at 500.

BGB: 500 cap?

PDM: That was the cap, was 500. There's 500 chances for people to get in.

BGB: Oh, there were 500 additional?

PDM: Additional chances.

BGB: I think I remember what the initial cap was, was it like--?

PDM: It was 500.

BGB: No but the number of fishermen, wasn't it like 6,500?

PDM: No, it was 8,000-something.

BGB: 8,000, okay.

PDM: And that was not individual fishermen; you got to remember that these licenses that turned over from the endorsement to sell, they were on the boat. See what I'm saying? They weren't on the individual.

BGB: Right. Okay.

PDM: The individual wound up holding them all, so you could be one man and you could have seven licenses.

BGB: I gotcha.

PDM: Right?

BGB: Yeah.

PDM: So, but the cap, the original cap was 500.

BGB: Saying that 'we will allow this to expand by 500, no more'

PDM: No more. Exactly.

BGB: Okay. It's not saying that there will be 500 fishermen in North Carolina.

PDM: No, no. it was saying, there's 500 more chances additional to what we've got now, licenses to what we've got now, which is different than people. Right? So it went up two or three times; we did beat it down to \$200, which, you know, it was something, at least. We didn't get our \$100, but at least we got fifty bucks knocked off it. So, you know, as a matter of course or whatever, that's, those are the things, I guess why I'm trying to stay on this topic, those are the things that we had the greatest impact on was licensing, was assignability, transferability, and [clears throat] and the cost of the license. And also the fact that you could not cap the license at a hard number 'cause you had to have a way in. Those were the main things that we got done. Also, I don't know where you're at with your questioning, if you want me to get into that right now at all about what happened after it was, after implementation.

BGB: M hm, we'll get--well--.

PDM: I started to say, I don't know if you're there yet or whatever.

BGB: We'll get there.

PDM: Yeah.

BGB: Yeah. Go! Talk about--but I just thought that was really interesting, I never heard that story that you all, week to week to week to week during that period of time let through every little thing and put your--.

PDM: Well, the interesting thing, though, was me--that's how I met and got to be--which, I met him, but I wasn't, you know--Sandy Gaskill and Janice Smith and I became thick as thieves! Because we were the three that went every week.

BGB: Okay!

PDM: And we would take various and sundry other people with us, like Jonathan went with us or he'd go on his own and meet us there, Paul Smith there to Cedar Island, he went with us a bunch of times, he's another interesting character! And those were the main ones that went.

BGB: How do you think those Legislators felt when they saw you women coming?

PDM: They thought--I think that they admired us in a way for being so dedicated, I mean, because most of those people didn't know what was going on. They don't care about fish, they don't know anything about fish, don't care! They just want to be able to go to a restaurant and eat a fish, that's all they care about, you know! Hopefully from North Carolina, if you're in the legislature! So that's all they cared about, but we would go like, say, I mean, the three of us, we had a lot of adventures, a lot of adventures! And I know I've told you some of them, but they're just too priceless to forget, because it was just--but we fought, we fought tooth and nail for everything. So at the time, the President *pro tem* of the Senate was Marc Basnight, and Marc, I had never met. Only thing I knew about Marc Basnight was he was the President *pro tem* of the Senate and was a coastal Legislator, so therefore, we needed to go talk to him! So after the committee meetings, we always found somebody to go talk to. So we went, first time we went to

Basnight's office, well Janice knew everybody anyway, you know, through the years as a fish dealer. Janice says, 'Yeah, I know Marc.' I said, 'Well, let's go talk to him.' So here the three of us go, and we get there to his office and he's got all kind of staff and whatnot in the legislative building, on the second floor, in the corner, in the blue corner. So we get in there and he gives us--he was busy, he was somebody--he gave us a guy named Rolf Blizzard. Now Rolf Blizzard, oh my Lord! We talked to that man I bet for two hours. We told him everything you can imagine--way more than he wanted to know about fisheries! And I'll never forget, he pointed to a picture on the wall from Dare County, he had a barge full of oysters. I mean, it was rounded up big as this room, oyster barge, that they were hauling to Virginia, I think. Anyway, he was like, I want oysters to be just like that! And I thought--this was taken like in the 1800s some time, probably mid-1800s I would say. I said, 'Honey, all I know is you got a long way to go before you get to that point, 'cause them days are over!' And that's for a variety of reasons. So anyway, but he was a great guy and we talked to him and he got to know us and we got to know him. Then, Senator Basnight come and he talk to us another twenty or thirty minutes, so we just got, we got things done! And Janice would say, 'Marc, now I'm gonna tell ya, we've got to have this and this and this, and if Billy were here, if Billy were here, he'd be here telling you the same thing, more or less!'

BGB: 'Cause her husband was Billy Smith, the most powerful seafood dealer in North Carolina, who was tragically killed in a boating accident.

PDM: Yes, correct. Anyway. [Laughs] Anyway. But Janice, that was Janice's way. Well, Sandy's way was, she's so honest and straightforward that she just draws you in, you know? I'm the one who's the behind-the-scenes one, is the one I am. Or the one that'll just snatch a knot in you kind of way. So anyway, that was one of our times. Another time I remember specifically

when we were up there--of course, Bruce Freeman had been fired, they had done, through all this mirage or compilation or morass of things that were happening all at one time, they got rid of the [Division of Marine] Fisheries Director, which he weren't worth two cent riding or walking, he stayed locked up in his office all the time is what he did, he was scared to come out! I couldn't blame him for that, but still it weren't right, what he done. So they got rid of him, they did an audit on the Division--a full audit, not just a financial audit but from top to bottom audit--Ralph Campbell did it, gathered a report, which basically said the Division was in shambles, morale was in the basement, and it was a mess. So we agreed with that, of course! And it was a mess, it was a bloody mess. I knew plenty of people that I thought the world of the Division and they'd tell you things, this and that, but they couldn't do anything about it.

BGB: But what was your second memory of those times in Raleigh with the women?

PDM: Well, the second memory's what I'm getting to, has to do with this Director. When we were in the cafeteria of the legislative building, we--that's when we met Preston Pate and that day--who became the next Director, eventually--but Preston Pate was the Director of C.A.M.A. [Coastal Area Management Act] and had applied for this Division of Marine Fisheries Director job and had interviewed with Beverly Perdue right before we saw him, for that job! For the Director's job! And he came, I saw him talking to Jonathan, who was a couple tables over from the three of us, and then he came over and sat down with us and talked to us and was like, 'You know, if I'm the Director, I've been instructed, you know, that we've got to get out in the community more and see what the needs of our constituents and the people we serve are' which was like a big fat 'nothing' on the audit, you know what I mean? So he was just as nice a fellow as there's ever been. So we enjoyed meeting him, that was one of the highlights was he wasn't even the Director then but we knew he was gonna be hired, 'cause we would always go talk to

Beverly, and we did that day, we went by and talked to her, and she said she'd talked to him and all this. So another time that was especially amusing, thinking back, that we just laugh about to this day, had to do with representative David Redwine, and he was in the committee and was describing as to how he knew all this stuff about commercial fishermen because he had been shrimping a time or two. Well, let me tell you, Sandy and I were both shrimp fishermen, and that didn't sit real well with us. So we took off--after this committee meeting was over, 'cause he was just saying that for people to agree with him, like he was from Brunswick County and he knew all this so therefore--because that's how it's done in Raleigh. However the person sitting beside you votes, you know, 'Do you live here? Okay, well how should I vote?' that's how it's done, right?

BGB: Yeah.

PDM: 'Cause what should they know anything about it, really? I wouldn't expect 'em to. So I saw him--so the way these rooms are set up, you've got, in the far side of the room, there's a raised dais looking thing and it's got chairs and you've got the person that's running the meeting up there and some staff people up there. On the sides, you have desk like things where the committee members sit, then there's a bar. The audience sits behind the bar and you can't speak unless you're actually asked to speak. That does not happen very often. So we were in this meeting and he was saying all this, and he had already had encounters with us before then, 'cause like I say, we talk to people after it was over. Every time. We just found whoever we could grab and we told 'em what we were thinking. So he took off out the far end because they had these escape doors. Well, we said, honey, I don't think so. You're not getting away from us, not today! So he tried to evade us! So I caught sight of him when I darted out like I do, that was my role in things, so I darted out the door, saw where he went, and I took off after him. Well, he got

to the bottom of this stairwell and went around the corner and there was like restroom set in an alcove up in there, so he had darted in toward them restrooms, up in there. Well, I had blown past him, wide open, in my high heels! Well, little did he know that Janice and Sandy were coming behind the same stairwell behind me, and when he thought the coast was clear, he walked out and Sandy Gaskill grabbed ahold of him! [Laughs]

BGB: Legislator, caught by a fisherman!

PDM: The Legislator! Yes! Oh my Lord, it was the greatest moment ever! My Lord! And bless his heart, he's probably still down there. And I'm sure what he thought he was doing was the right thing, but we knew it wasn't the right thing! We were not gonna face any more restrictions on any more shrimp trawls, no sir!

BGB: What did you tell him when you caught him?

PDM: Oh, we told him he was not a shrimp fisherman, right to start off with, and how was he out there talking all this mess about shrimp fishing we he ain't known a damn thing about it! That was the gist of it. I thought he was gonna cry before it was over with! So we--anyway--those are the three top--Oh! One last thing and I'll, you know, but this is a great story. Senator Charlie Albertson I always went to see, and he was one of our regular visits. We always went to Marc Basnight's just to say we were there, we always went to Charlie Albertson's office to check in with him, always went to Jean Preston, always went to Beverly Perdue, and we'd go see Robert Grady sometimes, he was up there. Those were the main stops, but if somebody said something in a committee that we needed to straighten them out, we would go find them after the committee meeting. So we had those people, but when we went to Charlie Albertson's office, one of the first times we ever went up there--'cause he was co-chairing a meeting and maybe that was the Seafood and Aquaculture, but there were all these different ones we went to, I can't keep

‘em all straight! [Clears throat] So Jean and Charlie Albertson were the co-chairs; Charlie was running the meeting. So after the meeting was over, we go by and talk to him and he was, at the time, the hog farmers were having a hard time. I think a lot of what Charlie’s thing was, was a) he was a Basnight man, whatever Basnight said, he was gonna do it, and ain’t no problem with that as far as I’m concerned. But that was just something you had to understand. And also, he represented Duplin County hog farmers, who were under a lot of stress of their own; they were being mommicked, as they say, ‘cause they got to live, too. And everybody was putting just like they were doing them the same exact way they were doing the commercial fishermen, tormenting them to death because of all these things, ‘cause they could do it. They were the low-hanging fruit of people to persecute was the hog farmers and commercial fishermen, you know. So the developers of the world can do whatever they want to do, is what it basically amounted to, in my view. So anyway, we go to see Charlie and we had parked out eleven blocks away ‘cause we didn’t know what we were doing, and hiked to the legislative office building. I mean, I was pretty bad off, I had heels on. That was back when I deigned to wear heels, I don’t wear heels no more. But I mean, needless to say, we were bad off ‘cause we had to hike the whole way back. So we were just, we were in Janice’s brown Lincoln, that big old car of hers! We get to Kinston-- I’m always the driver, okay, so I’m always driving--get to Kinston to get gas, who do we see in the gas station but Charlie Albertson? He says, ‘Ladies, I’ve got a gig at a hootenanny tonight and you all should come out dancing!’ And I was like, ‘Hell no! I don’t think so, bad off as I am!’ Now, oh my Lord, we did some laughing!

BGB: He was our ‘singing Senator’!

PDM: He was!

BGB: And he had C.D.s and he performed regularly, okay.

PDM: Yes. And Jonathan told me, when he was in the legislature, Charlie went there and put a C.D. on all the desks! Gave everybody--I said, 'Man, I'd love to have a C.D. of Charlie Albertson's!' 'Cause he, I remember he used to play around Carteret County and Ronald Goodwin, George Goodwin's daddy over at Cedar Island, he used to get him to come play for their Democrat fundraisers, which they used to have a lot at Cedar Island. So he was a great guy though, man, I'm telling you. We met some great people up there.

BGB: So, while you're telling these stories of that time, you told me a story recently that was really funny, when a former Marine Fisheries Commissioner, Pete Moffat, came in here and told you something about Janice Smith. Tell that story.

PDM: [Laughs] Well Pete, Pete was on the Marine Fisheries, he was one of the first commissioners after the Fisheries Reform Act passed and he was a recreational fisherman, and oh Lord, he was--I mean, for me, Janice, and Sandy, he was the aggravating-est thing that's ever been, oh my Lord! He was, you know, oh he was hard to deal with. He wouldn't see reason! There was no reasoning with the man. So anyway, but I never had anything against him personally, but he was just one of those kind, that's how he felt about things and, you know, whatever. Anyway. But Janice didn't like him at all; I didn't like him much and neither did Sandy 'cause he was so damn aggravating. So he come in here--let's fast forward to now, twenty years later--.

BGB: Poor Miss Janice has passed away.

PDM: Yeah, Janice is gone. Don't seem right, but she is. Anyway, so Pete is a decoy carver, or a wildfowl carver, but it's mainly primitive pieces or old style things, or interpretive pieces, things like that. Anyway, doesn't matter. So he brings them into the museum. Well, I'd seen him a couple of times through the years anyway, I was glad to see him and we were talking

about this and that and he said--you know, we're standing in Billy's room over there, Billy Smith's room--and he said, 'You know, I always got along with Billy and he was a County Commissioner and all that, had lunch with him, you know, got to talk about things,' he said, 'but Janice? Janice was a peel.' He said, 'She one time told me in a fisheries meeting something about, if she had her way'--we were in New Bern at the meeting, I remember the meeting--'the river would run with his blood!' And I was like, 'I don't doubt that for one minute!' 'Cause Janice, I mean, she was right, she was tired of it, she was tired of it and we were all tired of it. Because, again, what is it, what kind of way is it your business to start off with? I still feel that way. They can say what they want to about public trust.

BGB: So here we are, twenty years almost that the Fisheries Reform Act has been in effect. You have probably been more part of the system than anybody: you've been on the central committee which is now the southern committee, you're on the eligibility board, you're still on the southern committee. You have been involved in many ways, shapes, and forms. So, just overall, as we come up to the twentieth year, is there parts of the act that you say, that was a good thing, are there parts that should be changed, or how do you feel about it?

PDM: [Sighs] Well [Sighs] I think, in the beginning, once you kinda got used to the way it was going, it was okay. You know, the license change, the license change you know you can kinda deal with, it didn't weed anybody out, people paid the extra money or they let their extra licenses go; that's why there're so many in the pool now, that was the result of license fees. Some people have gotten out of it, some people hold on to their license. I think, up until about--up until this new Governor came into office, it had stayed basically the same. I think it was a process that had been weakening through changes in directorship. I think in the beginning, the process worked good with all the advisory committees; the guy who was running all the committee, Jeff,

did a really good job on running those committees. After he retired, the emphasis on the committees went down; after the new Director came on board, emphasis on the committees went down even further.

BGB: Which means, there was less public input.

PDM: There was, and what public input there was is not being considered by the Commission at all. So that's, that's not good. It has been slowly being weakened in the last, since, since Preston Pate retired. That's the crux of it right there. I think the fisheries management plans have been used in the wrong way; I was not actually for them in the beginning. N.C.F.A. [North Carolina Fisheries Association] decided through negotiations that they were gonna support fisheries management plans. I think that, if they would have left it the way it were in the beginning and stayed to those high standards that they had at the time, in that everybody, for example, from the committees, you were expected to have a member like--I've been on a committee since 1998. First I was on the central committee, as you say, and I was a co-chairman of that. Now I'm on the southern committee, when they did away with two of the committees and made a super-committee, which makes things even more watered down because Carteret County is now in with Pender, south, not so much Onslow, they're kind of more Carteret County, but like Pender County on south? We ain't got no business with them. They are totally different way of doing things than we are. And being grouped with them? We should not be grouped with them. We should be grouped with the northern committee, not the southern committee. But, because we sit in the middle of the state, that's why we wound up in the southern committee. Because they've got a lot less region than we do and they would have even less if they didn't have Carteret County. But it's just, that's an example of how a good process has just been weakened and weakened, and it's now undergoing further weakening. The fisheries

management plans with the composition of the Marine Fisheries Commission, which I hear now is going to seven [members], that could be a plus or a minus, I'm not sure. It doesn't matter if you got twenty-five; you served on it when they had a lot on there! They had seventeen people on the Commission at one time! I thought it was a lumbering behemoth myself, but, you know, I was pleased when it took it to nine [members], but again, that hinges on having sensible people. And sensible people who are making decisions. I mean, we had good people on the Commission at first, you know, people that believed in hearing others out and getting the whole story; it's not that way at all now, for many of the Commission members, in my view. It's, you know, the Commission is as screwed up of a mess as I have ever seen in my life. I think that they should throw every single soul off of it, right now and start over. But, whoever's doing the appointing, you know, they have to not pick yes-men, for one thing, and they need people like they used to have, like the Joe Clems of the world and the Norm Bradfords, who was an Audubon. Norm was a great guy. And they were sensible people who made sensible decisions. The people you've got now are a bunch of radicals who are just in there to create chaos and put the commercial fisherman out of business. And that's all they are. They have no expertise at all; they have no expertise. There's no science being used. You look at this whole debacle of [laughs] the recent debacle of speckled trout, you know. Speckled trout was the most [pause] how do you say it? That was the most screwed up-est thing, there was no science involved with speckled trout. They produced a report that said one thing; all they did was just holler about something else. That was nothing but C.C.A. [Coastal Conservation Association], they have a plan to get things done, they're following their plan. They just say things with no basis whatsoever, you know, and get people to vote their way.

BGB: Just to, for the listener, let me remember: speckled trout is a fishery that's very

susceptible to cold weather and mortality--

PDM: Sort of. It's got to be really cold weather. For a long time.

BGB: --freezes, right? From what I remember, there were some high mortality rates that the fishermen pointed to freezes, but nonetheless, very severe restrictions were put on the commercial--.

PDM: Well, what happened with speckled trout was a) there was no problem with speckled trout. There was no biological problem with them, there was no science that even supported that. Yes, there were cold-stun events, but those were not in the norm, they happened every four or five years. And that's also natural mortality, that's not fishing mortality. [Clears throat] They were trying to say that there was a problem with speckled trout when there was not, and they put on additional--and there was no science that supported it. Their white papers said that, you know, you're gonna have cold-stun events, but that's about it [laughs] and because speckled trout grow real fast, it's just--I don't want to get into it--they're not like red drum, who live a long time and all this stuff.

BGB: But tell us how many can a fisherman catch now, a commercial fisherman?

PDM: What, speckled trout?

BGB: Yeah.

PDM: Oh, I don't even know if they can catch any speckled trout now.

BGB: Okay. I thought--.

PDM: I mean, at certain times they can, it's like twenty-five fish or something like that.

BGB: Yeah, it's this very small number which has impacted long haul fishing for one thing, right?

PDM: Oh, long haul, they put them directly out of it. Bradley and them have caught 300

boxes of speckled trout, which means, that's 300 boxes, that's 30,000 pounds of speckled trout. I mean, that's not all the time, but sometimes they would catch a lot.

BGB: So if they're limited to twenty-five, thirty fish, which I can't remember the number--.

PDM: All it is, that was the whole point of it. But there's no Biology. The people catching the speckled trout, the ratio, is recreational are catching seventy percent, commercial fishermen are catching thirty percent. Plus, there's no, in the biomass there's no downsizing of the biomass of speckled trout. It's just, once in a while, once every three or four years if that often, there will be a hard freeze in Carteret County or wherever these trout are holed up, and they'll go belly-up 'cause the water's cold. Well, so what? It does not affect them one way or the other in the long run. And they were trying to say that it was affecting them. This is a trend that started with speckled trout that is happening now, they're trying to implement the same plan, and that is the lack of science and the use of a supplement process to put on emergency rules when no emergency exists and after the emergency, according to them, is over, *i.e.* when the next stock assessment comes out because they put off the speckled trout stock assessment 'cause they knew it was going to say there's no problem with speckled trout, so they didn't release that so they could get these emergency rules on. I was there, in the Commission meeting, at the end of speckled trout speculations and discussions. It came right after a flounder talk, which a lot of commercial fishermen went to, but they left too soon. So I stayed for that speckled trout part, but when they talked about speckled trout, nobody on the Commission--not our people, not their people--they said, oh, just--the Division man says--'Oh, just so you get an update on speckled trout, the stock assessment is here and it says, oh joy, there's no problems, we won't need any more rules on speckled trout!' But did anybody make the motion to disband, get rid of those

emergency rules that they didn't need in the first place? No.

BGB: Wow.

PDM: That's, Barbara, the problem right there. And that's why they're doing with flounder--in fact, they even, with flounder, because [laughs] with flounder, when that came in and they were talking about that, they went through all these steps of a lot of chatter about how bad off it was with no substance, they were just saying it was, you know? The old theory 'you say it enough times and it will be', they were implementing that with flounder! Then they get in the Commission meeting and, since there's no science and their, ah, their quote-unquote 'stock assessment' will not pass a peer review, so therefore they cannot use it for fisheries management plan purposes. Okay? So, you get the Marine Fisheries Commission, their yes-men are in place so they've got that five-four vote. So, when they get there, what do they do? They pull, quote-unquote, 'options' out of their ass with no science at all. They knew what they were gonna do. Zero. Ah, that was when [snaps fingers] what's-her-name? God bless America, what is her name?

BGB: Anna Beckwith.

PDM: Anna Beckwith, George's wife, was on the Commission, stands up and says, 'We're gonna handle this, the Commission's gonna handle this,' talking about flounder, 'ourselves.' None of 'em with zero expertise. They couldn't do anything 'cause the Division-- their paperwork, because, why wouldn't their paperwork pass? Because they're trying, in my view, to manipulate it to make flounder look like there's a problem there and there ain't no problem there! Just like they did with speckled trout, right? So you've got this all going on, Barbara. That cannot go on. Well, now, where are we at? Division Director's out on his ass; got rid of him. I don't know why; some say it's 'cause the C.C.A. got him out, but this is all a part of the weakening. But it's not even weakening--this is full circle here! This is full circle, baby.

We've been through all this stuff over twenty years. You know, Milton Styron always talked about cycles of fish in a twenty-year cycle? I believe that theory, man, I'm telling you 'cause we're right now on the Fisheries Reform, twenty-year cycle. So here we go, we're rolling back around, we're not paying any attention to these advisors and whatever, we're decreasing advisory committees, you know, anyway. So now we're back here: we got rid of the Division Director, he's out, we don't know who--well, we do know who, now that's been combined with C.A.M.A. [Coastal Area Management Act], how ironic, that's where Preston Pate come out of.

BGB: Yeah, yeah, Division--.

PDM: Of course. So they've come around back to that, and so, you know, now they're questioning, you know, what is the effectiveness of the Fisheries Reform Act? You know, so here we are, man! We're here back full circle!

BGB: They're even talking about definition of a commercial fisherman.

PDM: And they have been! I can tell you all about that, too, I mean I was there when they were doing--because, you know where that definition came from? It came from the eligibility panel, because we had to define what constitutes the commercial fisherman.

BGB: But those of us that have been in the game for a long time see these same things come back around.

PDM: Oh yeah! There's nothing new out there, nothing. Well, when we decided on eligibility panel in 1998, when we first convened, that what was gonna be significant involvement and who was gonna be considered commercial fishermen. And I said, because you had to meet certain criteria for eligibility, you had to be involved in commercial fishing to be eligible for a commercial fishing license from us. Right? So what we decided on was, if you were holding a standard commercial fishing license--didn't matter if you used it or not--if you

hold a standard commercial fishing license, you are a commercial fisherman. Right?

BGB: Right.

PDM: And because some people may do it this year and be a carpenter next year and then be a fisherman the year after next or ten years from now, I don't really care. But they'll be fishing on and off most of the time if they're holding a fishing license of some kind. Okay. Then we had this question of what is 'significant involvement'? Because you have to be significantly involved in commercial fishing activities, which is defined--that was another definition, what does that mean?--so, commercial fishermen, commercial fishing, is defined as someone engaged in the sale of fish. Engaged in the sale of fish, that's what means--it doesn't mean you're going out there and caught a mahi or mullet and given it to your church fish fry. That's not commercial fishing, even if you're using a gill net. 'Cause people tend to think about, I'm using commercial fishing gear, therefore, I'm a commercial fisherman. No! You're not! Or, you got the other recreational tuna fishing faction who want to sell their tuna under that, where N.M.F.S. [National Marine Fisheries Service] came out with that general tuna license, remember that? Well that came about about the same time as eligibility and we got this flood of, of, of recreational fishermen wanting to be commercial fishermen. And we were not gonna let that happen 'cause, used to, charter boats were considered to be commercial fishermen. They were, and really it was C.C.A.'s [Coastal Conservation Association] doings behind their back; they were the ones that determines how they were too good to be commercial fishermen and I remember telling George Hirsch, who was the attorney at the time we're first meeting for, because when we're first meeting for eligibility I was like, yeah, charter boat people are commercial fishermen! I mean, they're involved in catching fish and those fish basically are for sale, 'cause they're selling the opportunity to catch those fish. That was how I thought about it! Well he said no, that they had

that taken out of the people who were eligible or could hold like an endorsement to sell, they took them out of it. They asked, when Fisheries Reform Act went through, it be taken out of being a commercial fisherman. I said, 'Well they were stupid, weren't they?' He said, 'Yes, they were!' [Laughs] And now, you know, they're like doing whatever, I want my commercial fishing license! I said, well you should've put it in that bunch of C.C.A. [Coastal Conservation Association] people, you know, that were getting you out of it! Now the old-timers like Sonny Boy and that crowd, who are not dingbatters, basically? They've still got theirs, honey, and they do it the way it's always been done. That's the way it's always been done. They're all commercial fishermen, they're not daggone no recreational fishermen 'cause they're a charter boat! They're commercial fishermen! But whatever.

BGB: So what do you think the future is of, um, Fisheries Reform Act? Do you think it's going to be revamped, is it gonna be rescinded, what do you think's gonna happen?

PDM: Well, right now, I do not know. I think it could, actually, personally, I think it could go either way with the Governor that we've got now and the person [sigh] the Secretary we've got now, 'cause at the same time they got rid of that old Division Director, they got rid of the department, the Secretary of the Department and they changed the department.

BGB: Oh, D.N.R. [Department of Natural Resources]

PDM: There's no D.N.R. There's no more D.N.R.

BGB: No more Seafood and Aquaculture.

PDM: There's no more Seafood and Aquaculture, there's no more, what was the other one? The Division Director no longer only has the Division, he's also got C.A.M.A [Coastal Area Management Act]. You know, how's that gonna work, because the Division of Marine Fisheries is huge. Does that mean that they're going toward, they're leaning toward--there's been, I mean,

the commercial fishermen would rather be in aquaculture anyway, or in agriculture.

BGB: I was gonna say!

PDM: Not aquaculture, no! The commercial fishermen'd rather be in agriculture.

BGB: The department, under the Department of Agriculture.

PDM: Under the Ag Department, yes. Much rather. And they've been trying, some factions have been trying to get in there for a long time.

BGB: Is that because of the emphasis on food?

PDM: Yes. Yes. Because we deal in commodities, not a good time. You know what I mean? We're commodities-based people, and we are actually far more like the farmers than we are fishermen. The reason I think that won't never happen is that, is because of the federal government and all the councils that we're in. You know that's nothing, these federal councils, I wish we would replace our representatives on the federal councils, especially the South Atlantic Council, since the former Director is not there anymore. I think that they should redo who's on those councils, especially South Atlantic Council. That's been an awful council for a long time. Preston Pate was actually on the Mid-Atlantic Council for a long, long time, but even after he retired, but they even took Preston off of the Mid-Atlantic Council. And that is never good. They should just look at the people and try to get more sensible people that are willing to do it. You know, that's another thing: you got to have people that are actually willing to do the job. So, I mean, they've had a guy on the Commission that lasted exactly one meeting! But, you know, I've said plenty here today that people aren't gonna like, but I said the way I thought about it and, you know, so. Nothing new there! I tell ya, there are people who fight and they're always like, right now, I don't fight like I used to fight. I just can't; I'm too busy at the museum now. But, you know, Sandy Gaskill, she's fought longer and harder than anybody, and she doesn't

fight like she used to now because, I mean, let's face it! We're all getting old!

BGB: Yeah, who's the next generation?

PDM: Some of these, there's got to be another generation of fighters. And I think they're coming up, I mean, you got to get to a certain age to know enough to even be a fighter. You can't know enough, you can't live long enough to know all there is about fisheries, you know that. You can't. Hah! It's too complex. You can't--I love talking like the fisheries about you because I don't have to explain everything, but fisheries is so damn complicated, you cannot explain it to where an innocent bystand--that couple come in here and you can explain any of this to them! You can't do it! It's too complicated! If you try to pare it down, you're gonna leave something out that's important, that conveys the meaning and the implications of the bigger picture. And with fisheries, you must always contemplate the bigger picture. You cannot leave that out. And that's why I get a little aggravated at people--and it's just in my nature, that's just in my nature, I try to fight it, I try to fight, fight, fight it--but, you know, when you get people that come in that don't know, that just don't know anything. It's not their fault, but I've seen people who place themselves in supposed positions of power, I won't say there's any power there, but they're seeking power, I'll put it that way. And they don't know enough! They need to go home! Or they need to just be there to listen, to do what other people tell them to do, keep their mouth shut until they know enough! And I've observed that a lot over the last ten years, I would say. When the hard work has been done already and it's maintenance that's happening now? The hard work was done when that damn meeting came up that we all 400 people. That was the hard, that was the nitty-gritty right there. I don't think it could've been any worse than it was that day. I've never been to a worse meeting than that one was. And it wasn't any one thing, it was just the whole thing, and that net ban wandering about from Frank Mitchell. That was a bad time. On our way

home, we stopped, I remember, at the best, we stopped there at a King's Barbecue in Kinston, and this is why I'll always love King's Barbecue: not 'cause of their barbecue, but 'cause of the people that run that place. Wilbur King was there, who's apparently an uncle of Ruthie King and Faye's! Yeah! Who would know? But anyway, he was there and we stopped there in that bus, bad off, it was like, it was at night, it was at least eight o'clock going on nine. And we walked in there, a bunch of scraggly commercial fishermen, and he was tickled to death! He wouldn't let us pay for nothing! He said, 'Whatever you want'. I mean, he knew we had been through something that day, and I will never forget that as long as I live. I mean, that was, between that and just seeing the impacts, seeing it--I mean, it was dawning on me, hell--just seeing the impacts and I swore, that day, I will fight 'til I'm dead, over this. That's why I still fight today! I mean, I don't have a dog in the fight now; I'm not fishing and Herbert's not fishing either, and he works at [U.S. Marine Corps Air Station] Cherry Point. Cody's not fishing. But I don't care; I will be a fisherman in here until I am dead, which it won't be too much longer!

BGB: In your heart.

PDM: Yeah, in my heart. I will be a fisherman until I am six feet under or burnt up, one or the other. And it is morally wrong, what's being done. Morally and ethically wrong. So. That's all I know to say about it and you've heard more than you wanted to! And I've said more than I wanted to, which I usually do!

BGB: Well thank you, Pam. And for the record, we're just scratching the surface!

PDM: Oh, yeah!

BGB: [Laughs]

PDM: Yeah, that's too--I mean, there're just so many people that, I mean, this project, as we've talked about, just needs to be done now.

BGB: Yeah.

PDM: I mean, somebody's gotta go over there and walk to Sandy and got to go talk to Elbert! And got to go talk to, uh, Glen, Glen Hatter, Glen Skinner, Adam, those are gonna be the new fighters.

BGB: The next generations.

PDM: Those are gonna be the new fighters. Brent Fulcher, Brent Fulcher, somebody needs to go get him. He's the next generation. Brent Fulcher, I'm gonna tell you something about Brent Fulcher, and you know, I don't care if he hears this and knows it, but since Billy Smith died, there has been a void that was never filled. I remember when he died, I thought--that was before the Moratorium report, too, and all that. That was some of the worst mess that went on in the mid-[19]90s, oh my gosh, it was. They think it's bad now? Now ain't shit compared to what it was then. You know, just--I just can't describe how bad it was. But Brent is now stepping up to be the new Billy Smith, and thank God! Because you've got people that could've done it; you've got that gang in Pamlico County that could've done it, but they wouldn't put their money where their mouth was. Right?

BGB: Right.

PDM: You got some crowd in this county that could've done it; wouldn't put their money where their mouth was. But he's willing to invest, and that's the difference. Back when N.C.F.A. [North Carolina Fisheries Association] got started, you know, Elmer Willis, Nancy Willis'-- Nancy Willis Lewis now--daddy? Elmer? He invested. He was the one that started, him and Clayton Fulcher, you know. Once they died out, you know, what's happened to Clayton Fulcher? Ain't no more Clayton Fulchers. He'd turn over in his grave if he knew what happened to Clayton Fulcher Seafood. You know? Janice would turn over in her grave, but Janice knew it was

coming. But Janice would've hit it head on; Janice wouldn't have been, she would've been proud of it, the way it is now. I think Brent's done a great job. I'm glad it happened, you know?

BGB: Yeah, because Brent bought Billy Smith's place.

PDM: Billy Smith's place, T.B. Smith's place!

BGB: I didn't know that!

PDM: That was T.B.'s place! His original place!

BGB: Oh, yeah, I was thinking of--

PDM: That used to be tons of seafood went through T.B. Smith's.

BGB: --I was thinking of Terry Smith. Yeah.

PDM: Well, T.B. was Gary's daddy, of course. Yeah. They divided the property up.

Phillip Smith had the fish house, Gary had the boat railways.

BGB: So the good news is, there's a new generation.

PDM: Yes. That's the good news. That's what keeps me going and, you know, you've got Bradley and them who's not exactly the new generation, but he's leading, he's shepherding the new generation, I think. Because, some of the new generation, I'm telling you, think they know everything. They don't know everything. They don't know everything. They think they do but they do not. They have not been where we've been, and I'm glad they haven't! I'm glad they haven't! I don't want 'em to have to go through all that. But, again, it's coming back around and they're gonna have to stand and fight.

BGB: Well, that's part of the reason Susan put in for this project, because I think the history is so important. How have we come to be where we are today? Where did all this come from? Who are the players? You know, what happened? And so, I think, even a lot of the younger people in the industry now don't know, they don't know all that that went down in the [19]90s.

So I'm really happy to sit here with you and just--.

PDM: And even the [19]80s, I mean, Heavens! Look back to the '50s! When they formed--

BGB: The whole thing.

PDM: It's always been a fight. There's never been an easy time. Mostly, you know, the first fisheries rules were about oysters in the 1800s, and it's just been a continuous thing ever since!

BGB: It has.

PDM: Really! It was all about shellfish, not so much finfish at all. But like, right now and this whole recreational fishing thing is deceiving because, really, as far as I go, back in the day, before C.C.A. [Coastal Conservation Association] and all this, everybody got along so well. And they still get along well. It's only this little radical element of C.C.A. There's no, there's no sensibleness in them, you know what I mean? So, I don't know. They may say that about me, which I will say that I can be very radical. But on the other hand, I'm certainly not as radical as some are, and I think everybody ought to be able to give their own opinion unencumbered, too. But, you know, when you get playing these dirty tricks like the Commission's doing, that's just not right. No matter how the vote goes, there's not even any decent discussion, they just say, you know, make a motion, second it from their supermajority. And that's one thing that Chuck Laughridge was right about: he said, in the Marine Fisheries Commission, right when he got on there, that--I mean, I was sitting in the audience, heard him say it! 'We've got a five-four majority, and we're gonna do this thing. Now, we're willing to give you a few things, but we're gonna, this is gonna happen.' See, that would never happen before him. Never.

BGB: So why do you say he was right?

PDM: Well, because he was right, because he's got the five-four vote because, you know, you've got Ken, you've got that Mark guy, you've got that--.

BGB: But he was correct in saying that the recreational--?

PDM: He's correct in saying that whatever he's discussing is gonna pass!

BGB: I gotcha, yeah.

PDM: And, you know, he wants to give you one or two bones, crumbs, you know, and then they get in there pretending like there's nothing being done. Well, we haven't looked at this in two years, therefore they think they're starting from the beginning. Like nothing has ever, rules ever being made when you got a rule book that thick. Right now, the rule book is on an eleven by eight-and-a-half size by about an inch thick. Used to, the rule books were five-by-sevens, and they were about an inch thick.

BGB: So, to wrap this up, because I know you got stuff to do, but I just wanted to get it on record that you're very involved and you are on the ground floor of the Carteret Catch branding program and, you know, this whole local seafood movement. Do you--do you think this local seafood movement will help shift public perception in favor of the, sort of the idea of fishermen as farmers and not as, you know, the old stereotype of tearing up the world, tearing up the sea. What's your thought on that?

PDM: Well, I think it already has. I think there's already been a tremendous impact, and I'll tell you why. The example I'll cite is the game fish bill. So, Carteret Catch was the first of any of this, and it was--just a little bit of background on them--it was started from nothing and became something, and the reason it became something was because of the time it came to be. It was the right time for something like this, and so it wasn't just, and also it wasn't just a fishermen thing, it had science, N.O.A.A. [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration]

scientist, N.M.F.S. [National Marine Fisheries Service] people, it had some commercial fishermen, but it had restaurant people, it had consumers, it had all the user groups that complete the whole seafood industry. 'Cause the seafood industry is made up of a lot more than just commercial fishermen, and that's where, that's what, you know, people who want to put on all those rules, once you think you're only hurting a small amount of people! You know? So therefore, why not? Who cares about them-type of deal. But what happened at game fish was, we pulled out these contacts that we have developed through Carteret Catch, through all the rest of the littler Catch groups, and through N.C. Catch, which came in on the tail end of things. Contacts that were made from the catch groups are the people who swung the pendulum in game fish hearing. There's you the best example I know to give you. You had restauranteurs, you had, of course, fishermen, you had recreational fishermen, you had dealers, you had small family dealers, you know, like the Eddie and Alisons of the world? And those people testifying are what stopped game fish. So there you go!

BGB: So our legislators saw that this is not just about a handful of fishermen?

PDM: Correct! Which is what they'd been told! Which is what the C.C.A. [Coastal Conservation Association] whispers in their ear! That was our main goal was to connect consumers to seafood.

BGB: Yeah, yeah.

PDM: And I think we've done that. I mean, as much as we've been able to so far, but we keep increasing our awareness campaigns, I mean, we're running a successful campaign right now, in state, that is through a giveaway that we're doing with Time Warner Cable. So we're out there trying to, we have this thing where we're giving away two motel rooms for a night, an excursion, excursions at Mark Hooper's seafood place where they go and catch their clams,

gonna take 'em to the bistro, and bistro's gonna cook 'em and serve 'em to 'em with wine pairings.

BGB: Wow!

PDM: And our second giveaway, which is almost concluded tomorrow, I think Friday's the end of that one, during that giveaway we're having an excursion on Jess Hawkins, doing an ecotour clam thing again, wild clamming this time. The restaurant is the Ice House restaurant in Swansboro, which I personally consider to be a part of Carteret County, although the T.D.A. apparently doesn't. That's another story. And two motel rooms again at Beaufort Inn.

BGB: How about the dinner for two on the trawler?

PDM: Yeah, Carteret Catch does this thing called the Fisherman's Village, and our seafood festival basically sucks, as you know.

BGB: The North Carolina Seafood Festival?

PDM: The North Carolina Seafood Festival. They're getting better, but only under duress from the Ag Department. They were really pretty darn good and then those of us who manage things left and then they got really, really sorry, and then there was a movement for good, that then was rejected by the Seafood Festival! So after the second rejection, which we had tried to work with them the year before on a Friday night thing, which ultimately, right before we were having the event, they pushed us out. So. We said, to hell with you, and have a very successful Fisherman's Village at Jack's in the middle of the Seafood Festival, on private property.

BGB: It's a waterfront bar.

PDM: It is a waterfront bar so you can get a drink at the same time you're being educated! The owners are awesome people, and this was an old fish house, Jack's was an old fish house, it was Oliver Davis' fish house and Lucky Seven fish house, the Lucky Seven fleet.

Anyway, it historically is a fish house! So we had, they let us tie up a ninety-foot trawler, shrimp boat, we modified their deck and put a gangway so people can talk to the Captain of the boat, the owner of the boat, they can see heads-on shrimp that they're getting ready to eat. Well, the headed shrimp, not the heads-on shrimp. But they show 'em heads-on shrimp, well they look like they were just caught by the crowd. And when you get off the boat, then you're served local shrimp with a dipping sauce that, well, we have a couple of dipping sauce, one Kathy Fulcher does, Brent supplies--Brent being J Seafood--supplies the boat and the donations of the shrimp. Kathy makes the sauce; she's an excellent cook. We also have a sauce done by Tim at the bistro that uses our sponsor product, which is Shellback Rum, so we have a rum sauce too, and we have the Wicked Tuna [television program] fishermen that come and talk to people, and they're a big hit. You know, my buddy Britt Shackleford, who needs to be interviewed for this whole thing, and Dewey, him or I, I assume you're getting Dewey, of course. And Dewey's a young guy, he's a new--he's a fisheries warrior, man. Dewey is a warrior. So is Britt. So is Jamie Rible, up there. So is Tilman Gray.

BGB: Tilman, yeah.

PDM: Tilman. And, you know, Ann Hardy. David Hilton. You know, I mean. And I'm sure there must be some down south; I don't know who they are or where they are, but I know the first meeting we had as a southern committee person, it was about shrimping on New River and there were about 200 heads showed up to that meeting of shrimp fishermen. I was like, I didn't think they had hardly anybody left down here, but they're coming out the woodwork! I mean, you couldn't even find a parking place, there was so many! So, they're there. Somebody needs just to wrassle that crowd together and do something with 'em!

BGB: That's right.

[END OF INTERVIEW]