

Interview #12

Location: Cape May, NJ 1

Date: 2/20/06

INTERVIEW:

RES: Your fishery, before we get into the actual regulations for the fishing, let's start off with how old you are.

INT: Well, (002)

RES: You were born in what?

INT: 1960

RES: '60? And where were you born?

INT: Philadelphia, PA.

RES: And did you come from a fishing family?

INT: No.

RES: How big was your family?

INT: I got three brothers, there were four boys all together.

RES: No sisters?

INT: No sisters.

RES: That's a handful. So nobody, your father wasn't fishing or nobody like that? Any of your brothers go into it?

INT: No.

RES: So how did you end up in it?

INT: Well, we lived in Wildwood since 1970, and I just a....

RES: Your family moved there?

INT: Yeah.

RES: So you started off crewing, or on a charter....?

INT: I started off working on the dock at the lobster house, and then I got a job scalloping, that would have been probably, I think it was 1979.

RES: That the first fishery (011)?

INT: Yeah.

RES: Been doing that ever since?

INT: No, I did it probably that year and a half, and then the bottom completely fell out of it.

RES: Out of the price for the market?

INT: Well, there was just no scallops.

RES: OK, out of the (013)

INT: Yeah,

RES: And then what?

INT: Then I went shrimping in Colombia for a short time

RES: Shrimping in Colombia, the country?

INT: Yeah.

RES: OK

INT: And then I came back here and started clamming

RES: 015 Clams or....?

INT: No, like when all the clam boots were here, the big clam boots?

RES: sort of clam and quahog?

INT: Yeah. I guess it was probably 2 ½ years.

RES: Were you an operator of a boat then, or were you ...

INT: No, just a crew member.

RES: What years were that?

INT: Probably be 1981, '82, '83, in that period.

RES: And then what about after that?

INT: Then I went, the guy I worked for, have you talked to XXXX before?

RES: No, I got his name down here and actually....

INT: He earns, and he was running the instigator and I was clamming with him, and he went from clamming to fishing, you know, he bought a boat.

RES: 020 trawl or...?

INT: Yeah, basically the same thing we do, you know. And I started dragging with him.

RES: So that was the mid-eighties, the mid to early eighties?

INT: Yeah, yeah.

RES: Were you a captain for him?

No, just a deck hand.

RES: And then what?

INT: And then from there I went to the "XXXX", it was a freezer boat. Kind of like the 026.

RES: Yeah, I actually talked to XXXX the other day. So you did that for...?

INT: I was there, for probably 2 ½ years I was the mate, and then I was the captain for a short time, and then he sold the boat, and went to Alaska.

RES: You went to Alaska?

INT: I didn't go, the boat did.

RES: And then what? What was the next thing after that?

INT: Then I went on the XXXX, probably just worked there I would say about a year.

RES: OK. Was that XXXXX

INT: Yeah, he was the captain.

RES: So that what, brings us to about the early nineties?

INT: Yeah, like rightthe late eighties. I was on the storm rig for, I would say, maybe a year and a half,

RES: The XXX

INT: Yeah

RES: Was XXX captaining that?

INT: And from there I went to here, and I've been here ever since.

RES: So what year did you start on this one?

INT: Um, I think may be like 1991. I'm really not sure.

RES: But more or less?

INT: Yeah.

RES: Do you have any kids?

INT: Yeah. Two step kids.

RES: And so you're married?

INT: Yes.

RES: Are the step kids into fishing?

INT: No. One's in grade school and one's in high school.

RES: The reason we ask about that is we're kind of interested in the next generation, like if fathers are 040 onto their sons or step sons or whatever. Is that something that you'd do or consider? Are they interested in that?

INT: They'reone is a girl, she's not interested at all, and the son, I mean, no he's really not interested at all. I don't think I would...

RES: You wouldn't do it?

INT: No.

RES: Why not?

INT: Well, I mean, I do it cause I make money, and it's what I've been doing for a long time and I like it, but to bring someone young into it, I don't think it'll be the same, you know what I mean?

RES: The same economically?

INT: The same economically, and it's really not a good lifestyle for a family.

RES: How do you mean?

INT: Well, I mean a lot of fishermen are divorced, and ...

RES: Cause you're away a lot?

INT: Yeah, you're away, and just, you know, you a, I ...048 just a rough, a tough lifestyle.

RES: Yeah. That's true up and down...

INT: Yeah, I mean it's the same, you know, right now we're doing real well, making a lot of money and some years you're starving to death. You know. It kind of makes it hard.

RES: 051 question is about your education. How much were you able to get?

INT: I graduated high school and went to one year of college.

RES: And did you ever do any formal marine training? Take a captain's license 053 or marine engines or nothing like that?

INT: No, we had CPR and first aid but otherwise nothing.

RES: Currently now you're, are one of the 055

INT: No, I'm just the operator.

RES: Who owns it?

INT: XXXX

RES: And how long have you been doing that, since '91?

INT: Yeah, on this rig, yes.

RES: That's what, 14 seasons?

INT: Yeah, something like that.

RES: So how old were you when you started working in the fishing industry? You mentioned you were on the docks for...

INT: Yeah, I think I was probably 19 years old.

RES: OK. So then you started on a vessel shortly after that, 20, 21? You have about 20 years of actual experience?

INT: What do you mean, as a captain, or...?

RES: A deck hand, or captain, on the water.

INT: Oh, well, lets' see 197 _ 2005, so there's 25 years.

RES: How difficult was it to walk on and be a deck hand? Getting into the fishing industry the way you did?

INT: Well, at that time, there was a lot of boats in Cape May and it was a lot of, I want to say family, family-run boats where there was the same guys, it was a lot of older guys, you know what I mean in the 065 , any of the young people were family and it was really hard, because if you didn't know anybody-

RES: And you didn't?

INT: I didn't, you didn't get a job. So it was just a matter of working on the dock, being, you know, asking hey, you need anybody, you need anybody? Having you stuff in the car, someone didn't show up or say the boat I got on was from Virginia, they came into Cape May and they needed a guy and off I went.

RES: So that was your first one was the Virginia boat?

INT: Yeah. But it was very hard to break into the fishing industry in Cape May just because it was a tight...

RES: Is that because they didn't want to hire anybody outside their family or because you were green or both?

INT: Well, a combination of being green, they didn't know you, you know, they didn't know, you know, they could take you out, you'd get sick, you weren't any good. So it was hard. I think the main thing was just they didn't know who you were, you know.

RES: Did fishermen socialize together a lot at the time? Did you guys all hand out together, was it a tight-knit community?

INT: Well, we were all young, like you know, Frank and Pat from the XXXX, we were all the same age so you know, you would, when you were fishing, yeah, kind of work together, if you

were at the dock on a Friday night you kind of hung out more than you do now. I mean everybody now has families or you know, maybe some of the guys...but it seemed like it was more, you know, I mean it was more tight knit or...

RES: It was back then?

INT: Yeah, but I mean we were all young, too. So you

RES: I went out more when I was 19 than I do now too, yeah. Were you guys organized in any way, any social way, or was there a union, or a club or politically or...?

INT: There was a couple different times, when you know, the walls would come up, the boats would get together and they wanted to give money, it just doesn't seem like it works to good around here.

RES: How do you mean?

INT: You might have 10 guys wanting 10 different things, and they're trying to voice their opinion for all of Cape May, but now you have, you know the docks on the boats today want one thing, you know you got, just owner-operators want something else, just an operator wants something else, so it's kind of hard to get them all together to agree on the same thing.

RES: 085 were you dealing much with regulations?

INT: No, all that stuff had just started, so it was more just kind of you do what you wanted.

RES: So were guys getting together and pitching organization at that point, did that come on later?

INT: That came on probably, I want to say in the I'd say in the late eighties, you know what I mean, when you started to need to voice your opinion, sort of become more political, it seemed like that when it started.

RES: and did you start feeling like you had to do that because of government regulations or because of marketing stuff or what, I mean what brought you together in the first place?

INT: Well, the dock really took care of the marketing but it was more, just the fishermen wanted to voice their opinions, you know, I mean it was new with the regulations and you thought you had a say, but you really don't.

RES: Do you still feel that way?

INT: Yeah. I think it's gotten worse.

RES: Yeah? How do you mean?

INT: Cause then it was, I would say it was the government against the fishermen, whether it was marine fisheries, not really against the fishermen but trying to give you laws and now it's just like the marine fisheries, the environmentalists,

RES: Rec boats?

INT: Yeah, but even the sport fishermen are under fire now, I mean before it was, you know, used to be commercial and sport, and now it's they're pulling under the same pressure we are, they're just seeing it 15 or 20 years later. You know, there's a lot of fish, how come they can't catch 'em? And we said that 20 years ago. You know, and now I think it's a lot more big business involved too.

RES: Since when?

INT: I'd say maybe in the past 10 years as the older, independent fishermen retired and would sell their boats, instead of it being bought by another independent person, it's going to people who have 3, 4, 5, 6 boats because they're the only ones who can afford it.

RES: What do you think about that?

INT: I don't think it's a good thing, but that's the way it is.

RES: What isn't it a good thing?

INT: Because...you're a fisherman because you're independent, you know?

RES: Choosing a lifestyle that's ...?

INT: Right, and I don't need someone, I mean, it took the incentive of a guy on deck wanting to be a captain, and the guy being a captain wanting to earn his own boat, you know, and it's more, more money-driven than a lifestyle, and I just, I mean you probably see that all up and down the coast, it was family-oriented and it changes, like everything else. You're a family-oriented grocery store or hardware store is now Home Depot or ...

RES: Family farms the same way.

INT: It's just, you know, it's following the same direction.

RES: Do you think that government regulations are helping that or hurting that or, I mean, anything to do with that or is that a market thing?

INT: I don't think it has anything to do with the market, I think it has to do with the government would rather control, say the fleet is owned by 15 people instead of 300 different people, it's easier to control 15 people than it is to control 300.

RES: You've got 15 people out there with the great big boats and ship it all to China and then you don't have toI've heard that before.

INT: Oh, yeah it's easier for the, you know, for the government to control a small handful than it is for the government to control

RES: That's a common perception. Are there specific regulations that you can point to, or actions that the government has done or things that they've said or anything that lead you to believe that, or is it more of a just sort of general feeling that you get? Cause you're not alone in feeling that, I'm just asking where does that come from?

INT: Well, years ago, you chose what kind of fish you wanted to catch and there are different times of the year you used your judgment when to catch it, and when the prices went down low enough where you couldn't make money, you tried something else. And it seems like now the government's forced everyone with the quota system into doing this, and then as soon as that's caught up, they do that. They get all the boats jumping from one thing to the next instead of everybody spread out doing different things at different times. It's like right now everybody's scalloping because that's where the money is.

RES: Cause they (121) and the price is good and the...

INT: Yeah, if you had to rely just on fishing right now, you'd be starving to death. You wouldn't make it, you couldn't afford to make the boat payments or, you know.

RES: So is that a good thing for people, being able to get in on the scallop fishing?

INT: Yeah, but what it's done too, is driven up the price of the boats so high, that where if I wanted to buy a boat, I could never do it. You could just...

RES: Cause of the permit?

INT: The (125) are worth so much money and you're making money now, so when there's no fish and there's no money, the price of the boats are low, and now they're just so high, they're only gonna go to a handful of people on the coast. Have you heard that same thing out about...?

RES: Yeah, I mean, you hear that from some people, you know. And that's one thing that I'm actually pretty interested in is how, what's happening to young people. You know, like yourself, you got in at 19, you worked your way up, was hired for some reason, but now there's an economic reason, it sounds like, on top of that.

INT: Yeah, you don't see a lot of young people around looking for jobs, and right now there's a lot of money in scalloping. There's a few young people, but, for the money that's being made, I would think that you'd see, you know, local, Cape May Country people looking for jobs, and you don't.

RES: What do they do? There's not that much else to do in Cape May, right?

INT: Well, there's a lot of different things to do, you just don't see young people showing an interest, whether the work's too hard. The money's here, you know they don't like the lifestyle, or it just amazes me the money that's being made right now, and there's no young people. No local. I, myself, I got all Mexicans working for me now. That are fishermen, by trade, that either been scalloping in VA for a year or they're coming from TX because the shrimp industry is so bad.

RES: Have you learned to habla espanol?

INT: A little bit, but not as much as I would like to.

RES: I worked in Mexico for 2 years, actually doing this kind of stuff. Different kind of fishery down there.

INT: Oh, these guys are all shrimpers.

RES: Know their way around a boat.

INT: Yeah, they're fishermen by trade, it's not like they're up here doing whatever, you know. They've been forced from TX to VA, you know.

RES: Have you always worked out of, besides those times you went away to VA and AK, have you always worked out of Cape May?

INT: Yeah, I mean Cape May, this past summer we were in New Bedford with the scalloping for a few months, but 99% of the time we're here.

RES: You started to talk about this a little bit in the beginning, back you when you were entering the fishery, what was Cape May like as opposed to now. How was it different in terms of the size or the amount of money that was around or the cohesion of the community or like what employment options there were? Anything that jumps out at you?

INT: I'd say it's pretty much the same, you know, Wildwood and Cape May are both tourist towns, you know they've had their ups and downs. Wildwood, right now is a hot area because of the property values. Back in the late 70's, early 80's, it was still a good resort area, they it seemed like it slumped for probably 15 years.

RES: Tourists stopped coming or...?

INT: Yeah, they stopped coming, you know. And now it seems like the whole area is more year-round, you know, there's a lot more people live around here now than there was.

RES: Live here now?

INT: Yeah, I mean lower township, Cape May, Wildwood, all of Cape May County than back then.

RES: How important was fishing would you say at that time to the community? Commercial fishing?

INT: Well, I'd say it was important to a lot of people. You know, there was a lot more clam boats, there were a lot of those, maybe not as big as what you have here now. You probably employed the same people.

RES: That's actually one of the questions: How many fishermen would you say there was back then?

INT: I don't know. You know, like now it's mostly scallop boats and some draggers, back then it was probably a combination of fishing boats, clam boats, scallop boats, you know.

RES: And by clamming, you mean

INT: ...clams

RES: There's also some guys inside the bay, right? Like, hard clams

INT: Yeah, I'm just talking the big ones. I'd say it's probably the same, you know, or bigger. It's just the fisheries have changed, you know what I mean?

RES: Describe that to me.

INT: Well, there's no clam boats here now.

RES: Where'd they all go?

INT: Atlantic City, north Jersey, Massachusetts, they left, you know, there wasn't the clams aren't in this area so they left to another area where they were, you know, they could steam 4 or 5 hours and get their loads, but (162) 12 or 15 hours so they just basically relocated.

RES: Where are the clam beds?

INT: More towards Atlantic City, more towards NY, that way. You know this area was a combination of being fished out and you know with the so-called global warming, maybe the clams you know moved further off. The beds are more up towards the north than they were down this way.

RES: When did that happen, that the clam boats left?

INT: Uh, I'd say kind of in the mid-eighties to early nineties. It seemed like that's when they started moving.

RES: Was that summer, spring, winter, fall? What kind of fishery was that?

INT: That was year-round. Yeah.

RES: So what happened to the people that used to depend on that? They go with the boats or did they...

INT: I'm sure some of them went with the boats, but then, you know, you want to be away from home? No, so some guys went with 'em and probably did it for a few years and ...

RES: Would their effort go into another fishery, did they find job on another boat, or?

INT: Yeah, but it was like clammers were clammers, fishermen were fishermen, scallopers were scallopers...

RES: So it I'm a clammer, and my clam boat leaves, what do I do? Do I get on a scallop boat or do I get on a fishing boat?

INT: If they're used to doing one particular fishery all their life, they don't like it. It's different. They're used to working three days a week, and you're going scalloping for 10 or 12 days, they don't like it.

RES: Yeah.

INT: Same thing with fishing. You know if you're used to working a couple of days with 2 or 3 guys on the boat, you know, working with 7 men, 24 hours a day....

RES: Different.

INT: Yeah.

RES: When you said fishing, what do you mean?

INT: Uh, you know, catching flounder, porgies, squid, sea bass,

RES: Dragging or netting...

INT: Yeah, dragging.

RES: When you say there's a few dragging boats around (176)

INT: Yeah, well I mean that's what we're gonna do from now until basically say the middle of March, cause we've done our scallop days, usually we try to finish up by, say the beginning of October, then you do maybe a month's worth of maintenance on the boat and if there's anything

to catch, you know, October, November, Dec., Jan., Feb. we do it. And in March we switch back over and go scalloping.

RES: What do you drag for in the winter then?

INT: Well, just like right now, we just, we were dragging for squid but the quota was reached so they shut it down.

RES: Right. Has that been your pattern since you started on this one, since the 90s?

INT: Uh, yeah, we started pretty much scalloping about, the boat had scalloped years ago but it didn't start scalloping again until I think it was 1998 or 1999 when they opened up the closed areas in George's Banks.

RES: When they opened those up?

INT: Yeah.

RES: What'd you do before that?

INT: Just fished, all the time.

RES: Scallops, whatever else, squid?

INT: Yeah.

RES: You ever go after (184)

INT: Yeah, I'm saying whatever...

RES: Mixed species.

INT: Yeah. But at that time, it just seemed like you weren't doing as good because of the regulations, no fish prices when the scallops started to show up, that's seemed to be where you were(186)

RES: What do you mean because of the regulations? Because, was George's Banks your primary grounds?

INT: No, right here. This boat fished in George's years ago, before XXXX had bought it. It did well, but since, I think he said he bought it in 1988, since then it's been based in Cape May.

RES: OK. And your scallop grounds are local?

INT: They were up until this last year when we went to Massachusetts when we went for the 3 closed area trips. You know most of the time, sometimes we were only fishing three hours from the dock.

RES: Could you show me roughly on a chart where....? This one's probably too big. I got the one

INT: Well, yeah, this one'll give you an idea. We usually ...

RES: I got a smaller one.

INT: So here's Cape May, and scalloping, we would basically fish from, just say all up in NJ, south of the mud hole

RES: The mud hole is up here?

INT: Yeah. That's where the (196) here.

RES: All right. Yeah, and this is where a guy was telling me there's some monk nets up there.

INT: Yeah, yeah. So I say we would fish from, you know, south of Long Island to, there's scallops down towards the Chesapeake Bay.

RES: Off of Cape Charles there, and so may be about here?

INT: Yeah, all the way to here. You know, I mean just different times of year, different years.

RES: So that's more or less been your fishing grounds.

INT: Yeah. Right.

RES: Is that an approximation for the depth?

INT: For scallops?

RES: Yeah.

INT: Yeah, I'd say 20, or, say 18 fathoms to 35 fathoms.

RES: OK. So then this line should probably be out a little bit.

INT: Yeah.

RES: All right. So you're just looking for (202) bottom, just like muddy, soft?

INT: Yeah. When we fished close to 3 hours for scallops. It seems like now there kind of disappearing that close.

RES: Why?

INT: Well, just from being caught, they just, they move, you know.

RES: You think they move around?

INT: Yeah. I mean we worked 3, 4 seasons in the Hudson County closed areas and did real well, but now the place is cleaned out.

RES: OK. And what's that closed for, that area?

INT: That was closed, I don't know how many years ago, because of small scallops, but it had been closed for say 5 years where the scallops grew up and got bigger, and then when you were allowed to go in there, it was good. You know.

RES: Now they're small again?

INT: Small, and there's not many of them.

RES: How long does that take?

INT: What, to get caught up? Four years.

RES: OK. So it lasts for a few years?

INT: Yeah. But it shouldn't have been opened this year, they should have let it stay shut, I think.

RES: Was it just this year that it got opened up again?

INT: No, it was opened up, it was opened up four years, and the fourth year it should not have been opening up. They should have let us go somewhere else.

RES: Where is that closed area?

INT: Um, It runs from like...

RES: This is the (212) areas up in here

INT: Right, well, yeah, it runs, say from uh, south of the Hudson canyon down towards the elephant trough.

RES: Somewhere around here?

INT: Yeah.

RES: To right around here?

INT: Uh, down, to down below here. Like that.

RES: Somewhere like that?

INT: Yeah. I mean it's pretty much the whole state of NJ.

RES: So you went back out there when they opened it up and it would be 215

INT: Yeah.

RES: OK

INT: For 3 years, even the fourth year, the beginning of the year was good for us, but boats that had waited later on in the season....nothing. Nothing, nothing.

RES: So they paid for waiting a little bit too long.

INT: Yeah, but the government should, that's where the government, that's where the government regulations are no good because, you know, the fishermen said, you ought to close it while we think there's enough in there, and they make the boats go.

RES: What do you mean, they make the boats go?

INT: You have to do them.

RES: Why?

INT: Because you're only allotted so many days, and so many closed area trips.

RES: OK. How does that work, how, I mean, what kind of license do you have, scalloping?

INT: A full-time scallop permit.

RES: OK. So how many days does that give you?

INT: I think last year it was forty days and 5 closed area trips.

RES: OK. And that means how long on each trip to the closed areas?

INT: Well, it's a poundage limit of 18,000 lbs whether it takes you 5 days, 10 or 15. Once you get your 18,000 lbs....

RES: But your clock's running the whole time that you're in there.

INT: Yeah. But they don't really charge you days at sea, it's the poundage.

RES: OK, so they don't charge you days at sea at all.

INT: Not anymore.

RES: OK. Is that good?

INT: Yeah, why not?

RES: Leaves more scallops for you, right?

INT: Yeah, I mean, you can go in there and then like before, you know, now they changed the, where, before if you went in there, you weren't allowed to leave. I mean guys would go out there and you know, the weather'd get bad, they would break down, somebody get hurt, if they chose to come in, they'd lose, whether, you know, I mean. You make the decision, but you know some guys got in trouble by their owners, got fired, me, you know, I don't feel it's safe or you know, someone gets hurt, or you break down, why should you be penalized. It's like they're trying to drown you out of it, you know.

RES: Right, right.

INT: Guys have actually drowned in closed areas...

RES: Trying to get their catch in.

INT: Yeah, just because, you know, you know how fishermen are.

RES: Yeah. You said there are five closed areas?

INT: Well, there are three in George's Banks, and then there are 2 down here.

RES: OK. And do they rotate your access?

INT: Well, they're starting to rotate them now, you know. I mean, it took 4 or 5 years to get to that period where they're gonna rotate, but they're talking about it.

RES: How do you feel about that system in general? Closed areas?

INT: I think it's all right, you know. But the thing is, is they should have listened to the fishermen more saying about Hudson Canyon because the area now is depleted so bad, you know, who knows how long.

RES: It shouldn't have been opened for 3 years, 4 years?

INT: Right.

RES: And what do you mean they should have listened to fishermen, in what way were fishermen, were you saying at a meeting, did somebody write a letter or what...?

INT: Yeah, meetings, or just fishermen talking, you know, what do you think? Well, you know each year, we've caught so many scallops, leave it sit. You have all these scallops in George's Banks that, you know, could possibly be dying because of old age, let us go catch them, they're bigger. Oh no, you gotta go to this area here and work this area.

RES: When you say, "You gotta," you mean that's because it was open to you. And everybody else is gonna go. If you want to use your closed areas

INT: You do, you know, that's what you do, you know.

RES: No, that makes sense. That's where you're going to catch your fish, or your scallops.

INT: But all the environmental stuff they started years ago, why send all those boats in there to keep towing and towing and towing and towing when there's nothing there.

RES: Why were they closed in the first place? Was it for scallop or was it....

INT: The one off of NJ was closed because of small scallops, and the three of them off of MA and George's Banks were closed because of fish, because of ground fishing. And they just, you know, there was no, that's where (241)

RES: And then they let the scallopers back in there.

INT: Right, they let the scallopers back in there.

RES: No nets, though, right?

INT: There are some access to them under, like, different programs, but it's just, you know...

RES: Pretty tight.

INT: Yeah, It's heavily regulated.

RES: I got off track there a little bit, but going back to the community back when you started in the eighties and talking about the number of fisherman and stuff, you mentioned that the fishing was different, it was more 244, there was more fishers

INT: Yeah, it was just more, everybody wasn't doing just one thing, you know what I mean, you were spread out, everybody kind of came and went when they wanted to, what you caught depended on the time of the year and the price.

RES: And what kind of role did regulations play if any at that point? More abundance and price?

INT: No, I mean you actually, some fisheries are catching a lot more now than back then. Some fisheries, the prices are lower.

RES: Like what?

INT: I'd say fluke and porgies now are a lot lower in price than they were 25 years ago, but scallops might have been a couple of dollars a pound are now \$9/lb.

RES: They just had a auction for the [] set aside this morning, hearing some of the prices for the different ... flounder is pretty high.

INT: Like what?

RES: \$1.55

INT: That's really not up that high. I'd say, years ago, like right now they don't want jumbo flounder, the huge flounder flounders. They got jumbo flounder 20 years ago, told you had a bag of gold. Now, the fish are too big.

RES: For what? For the restaurants?

INT: Yeah, the fillets are too fat. People don't want the big fillet, they want more of a smaller or medium. So even though the prices seem high, in all reality they're not because, if they were \$1 or \$1.50 20 years ago, everything else is more expensive except for the price of fish. Except for scallops.

RES: Why are scallops so high? I mean it seems that it's through the roof.

INT: They say it's because of the dollars is low, you know what I mean, when it's low, they're exporting them overseas and it brings the price up. I guess Japan or China wasn't dumping into the Europe market. Who knows?

RES: It's variable though. I mean all that can change.

INT: Right.

RES: So, I for get if you told me, but how many fishermen would you say depended on the fishery back when you started – ballpark? How many boats were around?

INT: How many boats are in Cape May now probably?

RES: I get different estimates from different people.

INT: 25-30?

RES: Ballpark, that's what people say.

INT: Yeah, and you figure each boat probably has, you know, 4 or 5 guys, so there's what?

RES: 120-150.

INT: Yeah, somewhere like that, but it seemed like...

RES: And is that now more or less than there was? You probably never were adding them up back then, but first impression?

INT: It's probably about the same. Now, I think it's more...before, the people that worked on the local Cape May boats were local people. My guys now come from Virginia; a couple of them are from Texas. It's not...

RES: And you said you had some...but they're Texas people – the Mexican people you said you have working.

INT: Mexican, yeah. Yeah, they're resident aliens and stuff like that, but now it seems like there's more people coming from, you know, there's more, you know, there have been...there was Russian guys, there was people from South America. There's more, I don't know, say immigrant people.

RES: Is it more like a professional deckhand, or is it just that most of the people don't the job or what? I mean why are you getting this replacement of?

INT: I don't know; I don't know. Why don't young people like to do certain things anymore that their fathers did or?

RES: That's just the way it is.

INT: It's different yeah. You can't really say that's the reason, but...you know what I mean?

RES: Well then you get a different answer from whomever you ask, you know. So you got on this boat in 1991, and you started...you didn't scallop really for the first little while or did you?

INT: No, we didn't.

RES: You were mixed species at that time?

INT: Yeah, we were fishing, because you made money fishing, and that's what we did.

RES: And scallop was no good at that time?

INT: I think in the beginning of the 90's, it was ok, but we made a good living fishing, so you didn't scallop.

RES: Describe a season for me then.

INT: In the summertime, you would ilex squid, and then in the fall you would go for flounder, sometimes loligo squid, weakfish.

RES: Summer was all ilex? There was no blues or anything like that?

INT: No. I mean that would have been from say May till September, and then September, October, and into November would be flounder, and weakfish, and some loligo squid. And then pretty much from say maybe November/December would be fluke, and then we would start porgy fishing – scup.

RES: By fluke you mean flounders?

INT: Yeah. And then January, February, March it would pretty much be all porgies.

RES: And when did you make the switch to primarily scup?

INT: In 1999.

RES: And that was the factor of the price and the abundance?

INT: Yeah, and I mean fishing just seemed like it tapered off, whether it was because of the, say, the regulations putting the squeeze on you, the price, and some of the fish seemed like they were disappearing.

RES: Let's go back to that regulations...what do you mean by that regulations putting the squeeze on you? What particularly was out there, specifically? Quotas or?

INT: Yeah, there was the quotas, you know...

RES: Some people say well, you know, I got shut out of the shad, I got shut out of sturgeon, I got shut out of ...those wouldn't have been your fisheries, but was there something specific like that that...

INT: No, it just seemed like at that time it really wasn't the quotas as much as just, it just seemed you weren't making any money.

RES: Prices were down?

INT: The prices were down, and there wasn't the abundance of fish.

RES: So profitability was going down.

INT: Yeah.

RES: And were other people scalloping big time then, and you saw them doing well and...

INT: Well you had your scallopers that did it nonstop, and like in the early 90's they did real well, and then it tapered off and off say in the mid 90's. And then back, you know, 1999-2000, it started picking up, and then the past 3 years, I don't think it could get much better.

RES: How did this vessel qualify for fulltime? You weren't really fishing...

INT: When XXXX had bought it, it'd been in Mass for I'd say probably...um it had to be...it had sword fished, and then it was doing ground fish and scallops, and that was the 2 main fisheries out of New Bedford, and that's how it qualified for a fulltime permit.

RES: Oh alright. So do you know if he'd intended to buy cause it had a scallop permit on it or was that...

INT: Nah, I think he just bought it because it was a boat, you know, it had permits. At that time when he had bought it in the late 90's, there really wasn't boats...there didn't seem to be as much permit oriented as it is now cause, you know, it wasn't all limited entry. It was kind of, you know, some permits were, but some of them weren't. But when he had first bought it, the boat had scalloped a few years...

RES: But had that fulltime qualifying...

INT: Yeah, they just...really the money wasn't involved in it. I don't know if you know [] runs the [] have you talked to him?

RES: On the phone only, yeah. I haven't sat down with him.

INT: Yeah, he ran this boat before I did for 3 years or 4 years, and he had scalloped it a little bit. And they did ok, but then they fished too.

RES: Ok, so between those things, you were able to get the fulltime where the boat was...

INT: Yeah, the boat had the permits.

RES: So profitability is usually one of the questions we ask. That shot up, I imagine, for this vessel in the last few years?

INT: Oh yeah, yeah, big time. I mean if everybody would have known that the boats were going to be worth so much money, and there would be so many scallops, that's why certain people got 15 boats.

RES: Right.

INT: When the boats were cheap, and the permits were cheap, people were buying boats with permits – junk boats but with permits – and gambling on...

RES: That permit?

INT: Well not really the permit, but just the whole overall situation being good, and it turned out great.

RES: Yeah, yeah. Back when you were fishing, you were doing when you were doing multi species stuff, what would you say like 4 in the morning till?

INT: Well in like, say in the fall, we would leave in the morning and come back in the evening.

RES: What do you mean by morning?

INT: You'd leave 4 or 5 in the morning, before day break, you know, pretty much tow all day into the afternoon/evening depending on what you did, and you'd be back at the dock in the evening. That would be for say the flounder, and weakfish, and croakers. And then when you're off shore, you're working, you know... I mean most of the fish that we catch, we pretty much seemed to catch them in the daytime, so from sun up to sun down.

RES: When you're offshore meaning when you were what?

INT: Say catching squid, fluke, porgies, mackerel, sea bass.

RES: Yeah, and how often would you go offshore vs. staying closer?

INT: Well that's what we did all winter long from say pretty much Thanksgiving till Easter we worked off shore.

RES: And how long would you be gone for on a trip?

INT: You know 1, 2, 3 days, 4 days, depending on what you caught and the weather.

RES: Ok. How did you enjoy that kind of work?

INT: It was alright. I mean it was different than it is now.

RES: How do you mean? That's what I'm getting at is how...

INT: Well back then, like right now, you know, you have a lot of bigger bag sizes, so it seems like you catch more...

RES: What are bigger bag sizes? You mean the actual cod end or?

INT: The cod ends are bigger, so there's not as much discard.

RES: Can you explain that a little bit more?

INT: You know you're not...there's more fish there to catch.

RES: How does the size of your cod end affect your discarding? I mean don't you just catch the same % of everything?

INT: No, the smaller ones would get out.

RES: Ok, so you're talking about the mesh?

INT: Yeah.

RES: Ok, I was thinking the actual volume of the cod end.

INT: Nah, nah.

RES: Ok.

INT: And it just seems like now, you know, were not...like before like say say fluke, you might have went out and would stay 4 or 5 days and have 3-400 boxes of fluke. Now you're only allowed 75 boxes.

RES: There's a trip limit?

INT: Right, so you might only be out 1 day or a 1 ½ days and then you've got to run in to unload and then maybe go out and do it again. So you do more steaming in and out with less fish than before just staying out and trip fishing. So you either work so many days where, you know, had so many pounds of fish, and you would come in.

RES: Do you prefer one over the other? In a way coming back every other day wouldn't be bad for [] whatever.

INT: Steaming in and out, it's a waste of fuel. You know, you might have 4 days of good weather, and you work two days, and you steam in to unload, pack the boat, steam back out, so there's a whole day of steaming. You get back offshore, you might only have one more good day of weather, and the weather's getting bad, when if you could have stayed those whole 4 days...that's one bad thing about certain closed, you're just...

RES: Trip limits in particular you mean?

INT: You do a lot of steaming for nothing – in and out, in and out.

RES: What about scalloping? What's a scalloping trip like for you?

INT: You know, we usually work now with 7 men...

RES: By regulation right?

INT: By regulation, which is fine with me; it seems to work. This big boat isn't big enough to handle 10 or 12 guys, so...

RES: How big is this boat?

INT: 87 feet.

RES: Ok, yeah, so you've got 7 guys...

INT: Seven guys, and we usually stay 8, 9, maybe 10 days at the most.

RES: And how do you find that – being away from home longer?

INT: I doesn't really seem to affect me.

RES: Some people, yeah, some people don't...

INT: Yeah, I mean we're making good money just...

RES: Hard to complain about that.

INT: Right, every time you wake up, you're making X amount of \$.

RES: Yeah, well that's a good way to think about it. And yeah, we asked you about your profitability a little bit. Tell me a little bit about regs in the scallop fishery; are there any that you have a problem with or that have affected you in a negative way? I mean you talked about these closed areas, but it sounds like you didn't think they were altogether a bad thing?

INT: Nah, I don't think it's a bad thing, but for the past 5 years, you were not able to leave a closed area once you went in there. And I had gone out one time where we wound up going out, and worked a couple of days, and the weather got bad, and we wound up jogging for a few days, because they didn't want to leave.

RES: I'm not sure I understood that. What do you mean?

INT: The weather was bad. It was...

RES: So you're inside the closed area...

INT: And you weren't allowed to leave.

RES: Leave and come back in and still work towards your limit?

INT: Right, if you would have left, you would have lost your trip.

RES: So you stay in the...

INT: Yeah, we stayed there for 2 days, we didn't work, we jogged around, because I didn't feel the weather was good enough to work. To me, it was unsafe, so when the weather got nice, we went back to work. You've already been out there 5 days – 2 of them jogging around getting the shit beat out of you.

RES: Jogging around, you mean outside the closed areas?

INT: No In the closed areas just laying there, because the weather's bad. Then the weather gets nice, you work another 3 or 4 days, we still didn't have out trip, then the weather got bad again. I think we laid there another couple of days, so now you're up to 7 or 8 days, you only might have maybe half of the poundage you were allowed at that time, then we went back to work for another few days, and then a hurricane was coming in, and we came in. And we never really caught our full poundage, but...

RES: So what's the problem with that, that you lost all of those days away from...

INT: Well you're out there...

RES: Burning fuel...

INT: I know the weather isn't safe. I'm only 6 hours from home, I should be able to come to the dock.

RES: Safety concerns?

INT: Right. When the weather's good, I can go back out. What's the difference? I'm only allowed to catch so many pounds; why make me stay out there?

RES: Right, so if it were up to you, would you say go [] capped at 18,000 pounds.

INT: Now, you're allowed. They finally changed it after 5 or 6 years, and some guys drowned.

RES: That triggered the change?

INT: It was one of them, but you know it's like, it should have always been that way. Why should you be made to do something...?

RES: Why was it that way? Did they give you a rationale or?

INT: I don't know, you know. I guess they thought you were going to go out there, take so much, and come to the dock and say you didn't have that much. Who the hell knows? It just was, you know, it was a bad thing, you know what I mean.

RES: []?

INT: Yeah, you know. Is there any other job where the government gets involved and says, you've got to stay there when you're not working?

RES: No. What about other regs that affect your work?

INT: I mean this 7 men is kind of hard because if you work so many hours a day, but even if they allowed us more men, we would probably still work the same hours.

RES: What do you mean? How many hours a day do you work?

INT: See years ago, they would work...

RES: You had to carry 12, right?

INT: 12 guys and they would work 6 hours on and 6 hours off. If you had 12 men, 6 guys would be up for 6 hours and they would lie down for 6 hours. You're working 24 hours a day; there's always a rotation. But the way we do it now is you only have 7 men, so there's a man on the wheel – either the captain or the mate – and there's always 2 guys in the bunk. So you actually work...

RES: You have 3 or 4 on deck then?

INT: Yeah, we work like...

RES: So what do you got 2 cutters and one...

INT: Well no, there's either between 3 and 4 guys on deck all of the time working.

RES: And what do they do? What are their roles?

INT: Well, you know cut the scallops...

RES: 2 cutters and is there...

INT; Well no, everybody's doing the same thing, you know, they're all...

RES: Right, so you don't have one guy dedicated to minding the dredge and one guy...

INT: Well I mean when you haul back, one guy will run the gear one guy will dump it out, but pretty much everybody's picking, cutting, cleaning. But they'll work like...

RES: Anybody can handle the dredge, like you don't have one guy that always does it or?

INT: Nah, I mean they all know how to do it, but it just seems like usually the bunks themselves they work out, like I'll run one side, and someone else will run the other side, and they kind of get into their own...

RES: Groove?

INT: Yeah, who wants to do what, you know. But they'll work...

RES: But you don't hire a particular guy for one of those roles?

INT: No.

RES: Just general scallop qualifications?

INT: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I mean the captain and the mate are, that's their job, but they're still doing the same thing everybody else is. You know what I mean?

RES: Yeah.

INT: We'll work, if we're doing 13 hours on and 5 hours off.

RES: That's 18 hours, so you aren't on a 24 hour schedule?

INT: No, it just rotates around all of the time, you know, day or night.

RES: Have you been involved in fisheries management at all?

INT: I'd gone to some meetings years ago.

RES: When?

INT: I'd say in the beginning of the 90's when the stuff all started.

RES: What stuff? Oh, regulations.

INT: Right, and they wanted fishermen to go.

RES: Do you remember the first one you went to.

INT: Shut that off for a minute.

Tape stops at 355 for a minute.

RES: Do you think it's gone from more community driven to more a family business, or families...

INT: More business driven.

RES: What are fishermen going to do in 20 years here if that's your case? I usually ask that at the end, but it seems like a good time now. Where's Cape May going to be in terms of commercial fishing?

INT: It's hard to say.

RES: Much different?

INT: I don't think you'll see...it's not going to be an independent, family operated, fishing industry like there was passed, and...I don't know; it's tough to say. If it wasn't for scalloping, a lot of these boats would have been bankrupt.

RES: What do you think about this gen cat business?

INT: I think, me personally, I really shouldn't say. But I mean I started scalloping when it got good, but there's guys that starved to death for years, and years, and years, and went through a lot of regs and almost put them out of business. The scallops came back; they did good. General category was a by catch fishery with a loophole in it that became a full blown fishery that...it's like you're starving some guys, and they're letting other guys do what they want. Me personally, I think they should stop it completely.

RES: What do you mean there was a loophole in by catch? How did it start?

INT: If I was fluking, and we were catching some scallops, you know, so instead of throwing them back overboard, you were allowed to keep them.

RES: You're allowed to keep 400 pound shuck...

INT: Right, yeah, but nobody...we...the nets we usually don't catch them, but as the price increased...

RES: It was worth it to direct at that.

INT: Yeah, now it's a directed fishery. But we've got boat tracks for the past 5 or 6 years; those guys don't.

RES: Boat tracks?

INT: The government knows where the boat is at all times.

RES: Ok. What does that have to do with it?

INT: Well it just seems like certain boats came and went to where they wanted to go.

RES: I'm not following.

INT: Well they go in the closed areas when they shouldn't have been there.

RES: Oh, ok. And do you have a VMS on board.

INT: Yeah, boat tracks.

RES: So that's what you mean?

INT: Yeah.

RES: And like the gen cat guys and others have been going into closed areas when they shouldn't?

INT: It kind of seemed like it.

RES: Cause they don't have to have a VMS?

INT: Yeah.

RES: Well I think that's all over the place.

INT: Now everybody does, but it just seemed like the fishery got out of hand, you know what I mean, cause they're starting to strangle a whole bunch of people. I mean the opportunity was there for anyone to do that and, you know they didn't, but...

RES: Didn't what?

INT: Didn't become a target gen cat all the time, you know what I mean. I mean we've done it too, the same thing, you know. Instead of using our days, do the gen cat, but it just seemed like...

RES: So you also have a gen cat?

INT: Well if you're a fulltime permit, you are included in the gen cat.

RES: A [] get one?

INT: Yeah, but if the price is what made it be such a bonanza, or made so many boats, or I the price wasn't there, you know...

RES: Do you think that will fade away if the price crashes?

INT: Yeah, it will.

RES: It will go back to the way it use to be right? I mean just a by catch.

INT: I mean, you know, 2001, which now what 4 years ago. Right after 9'11 we got, I think it was 2.75 a lb for scallops.

RES: Wow, it quadrupled.

INT: Yeah, it always seemed like it was 4 \$ one year, and then it went to 5, then to 6, you know, and then this past year it went...

RES: Where do you market and distribute, through the dock here?

INT: Well we do it through Dock Street Seafood. The owner has his own small seafood business, so he buys and sells the scallops.

RES: Ok, and has that been the case since you started, with him?

INT: Yeah, pretty much. I mean Lund's did it for 1 year or so, and then after that, the past 4 or 5 years he's been doing it.

RES: Ok, so what I'm getting at there is if market and distribution has changed at all for you?

INT: Nah, not really. I mean we basically just sell to the dock. Whatever they do with them, you know, we don't really know.

RES: Yeah, that's not really your...

INT: No, it's not; we really don't have anything to do with that you know.

RES: Has the way the crew share been divvied up changed over the time you've been in the fishery? How do they do it; is it half and then the crew splits 50/50, or? How does this boat work?

INT: Well, 5% to the captain, the boat takes...

RES: Of what gross after costs or?

INT: No, of gross, and the boat takes either 42 or 43%.

RES: And the boat covers costs?

INT: No, it covers...or and then the crew gets 53, and then the crew pays for the food, the ice, the fuel – like the phones, bags, just some small miscellaneous things, and then we get paid.

RES: Ok. What do you mean you get paid?

INT: You know after you pay the fuel, the ice, the food.

RES: Ok, you get the 5% as the captain right?

INT: Yeah.

RES: Ok, so yours is before costs, and you don't have to pay for the food, fuel and, and...

INT: Yeah, but it's like, you know, it's split up 100%, you know what I mean – 5, 42 and then 53.

RES: Ok, and the boat, then, has to cover equipment and fuel?

INT: Right, oh well no, the crew pays for the fuel, but the boat pays for all the maintenance, you know.

RES: That's pretty standard?

INT: Yeah, I mean different boats or different companies, it kind of changes a little here and there, but what we have here, to me, is good settled.

RES: You're cool with it?

INT: Yeah.

RES: Has it changed over time for you?

INT: Nah, just within the past year or 2 because the insurance doubled, you know, it went from 35-70,000.

RES: For this boat?

INT: It might even be more now.

RES: So what happened then?

INT: Well they took another couple of %, but you know.

RES: What did; the boat?

INT: Yeah, but it's just going...I mean it takes a lot of money to run a boat. It's not all profit, you know. It looks like a lot of money, but it isn't.

RES: Especially with fuel at whatever you're paying – 2 plus right?

INT: Yeah. So but pretty much the expenses for the, you know, this settlement has stayed the same. We're not getting robbed.

RES: Yeah. Any other regulatory effect that you guys have felt? I mean would you say regs affect like the # of trips that you make or where you fish or?

INT: Actually, we're done better now in the past couple of years than we did even 5 years ago because of the regs.

RES: What do you mean, because of the price?

INT: Ok.

RES: Ok, so the price is so good that regs doesn't matter, cause it's...

INT: Yeah, and right now, what kind of, you know, we were forced to do the trips in George's Banks, so we wound up going up there, which normally we would have been here, you know. We were fishing...

RES: And gained by saying force, you mean, that they opened up those closed areas?

INT: Yeah.

RES: And if you want to stay competitive, you've got to go...

INT: You go. What we'd do is, you know, we were gone for 2 months.

RES: How'd you find that?

INT: I mean money wise, it was great, but there's 2 months I wasn't out you know. My wife came up for a few days in between one of the trips, but...

RES: Where do you stay onboard?

INT: Yeah, we just stay onboard.

RES: You never go into New Bedford or whatever?

INT: Well no, that's where we were staying- in New Bedford.

RES: Yeah. I live in Amesbury – not too far from there.

INT: Yeah, 6 or 7 days, we'd come in, unload, stay maybe 2 days, and then leave again, you know, and then we came in between the 2nd and 3rd trip, my wife came up, we went to Newport for a week, the guys went home, they came back, and we did 2 more trips.

RES: Yeah. Newport's a fun town.

INT: Yeah, it's just you spend a lot of money doing nothing.

RES: Oh yeah, I know how that goes. Did you go to the mansion?

INT: We didn't go in, but we did the cliff walk and you know.

[]

RES: We talked a little bit about rec guys before. Are there any conflicts you guys have with rec guys or other commercial sectors that have gotten better or worse over time? How's the relationship there?

INT: With scalloping, there's really no conflict between commercial fishermen and rec fishermen.

RES: They're not on your ground?

INT: Well no, it's just not a rec thing. Fishing, yeah, you know, especially when we use to fish the beach all of the time, you're very visible to the...

RES: And when you say the beach, you mean right in here close?

INT: Yeah, you know, 2-3 miles. You're very visible to a rec fisherman, and the first time they don't catch a fish, it's my fault.

RES: Cause you're visible?

INT: You're very visible, yeah. It's an out of sight out of mind.

RES: You said you're still fishing a little bit in the winters now?

INT: Yeah.

RES: And what are you targeting now?

INT: Well we were targeting loligo squid. The quota was reached, so it was stopped.

RES: Ok, so is that why you're in now?

INT: Yeah.

RES: So what are you going to do for the rest of...I mean it's almost...

INT: Well, we'll take off. My crew went home, and then we'll probably go back out on January the 2nd.

RES: Ok, for loligo again?

INT: Well we'll...

RES: []?

INT: Yeah.

RES: Ok.

INT: You know, then it didn't seem like there was any fluke or sea bass around for us to try. You know the way the weather is, it just seemed like the fish are scattered.

RES: Yeah. Any of those fish, those winter fish, have you noticed the resource abundance going up or down or?

INT: Oh yeah, to me there's a lot more scup around than there was, and they're all nice fish. But for a few years when the market...when the regs were really hard, they destroyed the market.

RES: What do you mean when the regs were really hard?

INT: Well you weren't allowed to catch them, and when you don't have a fish to catch, you don't have a fish to sell. People go from buying one fish to something else, so you lose the market.

RES: Ok, and when you weren't allowed to catch them meaning there was a small quota, small trip limit or?

INT: Yeah, small quota, small trip limits, you know what I mean. There wasn't...you have to have the fish to have the market, and once you lose that market or you lose those buyers, it's tough to get them back.

RES: Yeah. If you weren't scalloping fulltime, do you think you'd be out there fishing?

INT: Yeah, but you wouldn't be able to pay your bills.

RES: Is that profitable enough, why?

INT: It's just between the quotas and the price of the fish, it's just not there. I mean mackerel was good a couple of years; that's been hot or cold.

RES: It always is with mackerel right? I mean mackerel is hit or miss.

INT: Yeah.

RES: We usually, at the end, ask people if there's you know anything else I missed that you think we need to take given what you know about what we're doing and what we talked about – anything that I should be writing down about cumulative effects, or any other stories...

INT: No, I mean regs are good. You've got to have them; you've got to have laws, but it just seems like some of the laws are forced down your throat, and then other laws everybody wants something different. It's like how do they come up with the right laws or the right...

RES: Well what do you think? How do they come up with the right laws?

INT: I don't know.

RES: Well how would you do things different? I mean I know in like academic discussions with managers and stuff you say well put the fishermen in charge. And they say well you shouldn't do that because...

INT: Yeah cause now the wolf's in the hen house. Yeah, everybody has a different take on it.

RES: What do you think?

INT: I don't know.

RES: It's not an easy answer.

INT: No. Like you said, you have, you know, there's different groups that want different things, and to get them all to come together, you know...like me, I'm use to regs cause they just started when I started fishing, so I'm use to it, but you took a guy that has fished for 40 years one way and all of a sudden he's got the government telling him what to do, that's not happening. You know what I mean? Me, yeah I fished under regs, so I don't know any better, you know. And the people to come after me will probably say like I can't do this no more; I don't like what's going on. But when the next guy, and that's all he knows...

RES: Deal with it.

INT: Yeah, you just deal with it is what you do.

RES: As I say, we're trying to figure out about the effects of regs, and one of the possible effects is that people left the fishery, right? How would I find those people if I want to talk to somebody like that? I mean where do they go?

INT: Some of them land jobs. A lot of them maybe weren't making no money, or it was family problems, or they just got tired of it or...

RES: Can you recommend anybody that gave up on fishing that just said the hell with it?

INT: I mean I wouldn't even know where they even...

RES: Well I don't either; I mean that's why...

INT: I mean some guys retired; some guys just come and go. It's a very transient business, you know.

RES: Whether or not there's regulations, it's transient?

INT: Yeah, I mean it's hard to say that somebody...maybe certain people have... I think the regs put a lot of clammers out of business years ago.

RES: The surf clammer Quahog guys?

INT: Right, it was...

RES: They left in around the 80's that you were...

INT: Yeah, it was a very small, you know, it was all owner operated, and guys sold and this and that.

RES: They put the ITQ system on there right?

INT: Right, I mean that was one of the main things there.

RES: What happened?

INT: I think they strangled them.

RES: How do you mean? Cause they were small or?

INT: Well the quotas, and they were only allowed to work so many days a week, or so many hours, and some guys, they're quotas weren't big enough because they had small boats and they just sold out. And by them selling out, it wound up going to a small handful of people to basically run the whole business.

RES: 2 or 3 or 5 or 10 or whatever it is.

INT: Yeah, instead of employing 500 people, it might employ 100.

RES: Would you be against ITQ's as an option?

INT: Yeah, I don't think it's a good thing.

RES: Because of that effect?

INT: Right. It seems that in the clamming industry, the ITQ's only benefited a few people.

RES: If you had the bucks.

INT: Right.

RES: Is that kind of what's happening now anyway? I mean if there's guys...

INT: Well 15 boats you know, but if a handful of people own all the boats, and they want ITQ's, that's what they're going to get.

RES: What's the difference between an ITQ and them owning the boat than what it is now?

INT: I guess nothing really.

RES: I mean I don't know; I'm asking; I don't know, you know?

INT: No I guess it's probably the same thing, cause it seemed like they did it in Alaska; it didn't work, or it didn't work the way they thought.

RES: ITQ's?

INT: Yeah, you know, and the clamming industry same way. I guess they do it overseas. It doesn't seem like anyone should own the fish. You might own the boat or the permits, but you don't own the fish. It's still, you know, your knowledge and your...

RES: No, I'm with you. I think it should be spread out amongst a lot of people, and you know the public good. That's my personal piece, but you know...

INT: I mean a lot of people think ITQ's, yeah, but I don't. I just... basically scalloping right now, half of your season is in the closed areas is basically an ITQ. Half of your season is a poundage limit, which is...

RES: Yours because you have a permit.

INT: Right, so right now it's good. Usually when a quota system is put into effect, it always seems that the prices go way down.

RES: What do you mean?

INT: Well any time you're only allowed to catch so much, they figure oh, you know, if I only can catch so much, the price should stay up. But it seems like whenever they say you can only catch so much, the prices go way down.

RES: Yeah, I mean what would explain that?

INT: I don't know. Scalloping is really the first time that there's been a quota. The way I see it, the prices actually rose.

RES: Yeah, and as you say, there might be some international market things going on there. I mean there's lots of kind of explanations right?

INT: Oh yeah. I mean fluke is...the price of fluke are down. The porgies, we use to get really good money for those, but it just seemed like when the quotas went into effect and there was no fish to be caught, or you weren't allowed to catch them, they lost the market. And then once the people stopped buying the fish, they don't want them.

RES: Yeah. The market's got a lot to do with what's going on.

INT: You know, you don't...

RES: That's a tough thing for us. I mean when we're trying to do this research, you're trying to talk about regulatory effects, but I mean you've got market changes going on, you've got you know...

INT: Oh yeah, you have to have fish to sell to keep the market.

RES: Right. Well that's like Newfoundland, I had mentioned I was working up there, these guys – they're finally starting to get cod back in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, and they don't know what to do with them. They don't have the markets there.

INT: The market, and even then like I guess the same thing, your shore side facilities...

RES: Yeah, they've all switched over to crab and shrimp. I mean they can't handle it in terms of protesting, and you know as I say, the markets are gone, they're competing now with the Norwegians....

INT: Yeah well here, they use to cook fish, you know, at the docks. Now they don't. They chuck them somewhere else. You know you lose that shore side capabilities...

RES: Right, it doesn't matter what you're landing if you can't do something with it.

INT: Right.

RES: Well is there anything else I should get down before we're calling it quits?

INT: No, I mean I think regs are good; it's just what regs and how they go about coming up with them. You know, everybody has a different idea, whether it's the fishermen, the enviros, the general public, the gov, everybody.

RES: So which should decide?

INT: I don't know.

RES: I mean, it sounds like you went to a few meetings, and then you stopped going. Did you get frustrated with it?

INT: Yeah, I think most fishermen do. Most fishermen fishermen.

RES: What do you mean fishermen fishermen?

INT: The people that work on the boats, not...

RES: Big dock owners and money making operations.

INT: Right, yeah.

RES: Because you feel like you don't get listened to or...

INT: I think a lot of the stuff is already been decided way before. They just let you come and think you're doing something when you're really not, and then if you're....there's lawyers there talking and smart people, and you get up there and start talking, you sound like an idiot.

RES: You're not use to public speaking...

INT: Right, and then you can just...I mean a lot of times, it's better now if you just write a letter where they'll have groups where they'll say ok, you know, all of the Cape May fishermen, this is what we think should be said, and everybody will agree to it, and you'll sign your name and the boat name, and they present a letter as you know maybe 10 boats instead of each guys saying something. I mean that works good.

RES: You think you can get a better shake that way?

INT: Yeah, cause someone would know how to present it in the right way, and you know sometimes fishermen get up there and get all huffy and puffy and...

RES: Well I've been to meetings in New England where they get more than huffy puffy.

INT: Yeah, and it's just...I mean it's not their fault. They just get worked up, but they're trying to say something, and they don't know how to say it the right way.

RES: So you think like a trade organization like Garden State Seafood; is that what you mean?

INT: Yeah, you know, they'll voice the opinion as of Cape May.

RES: Right, as well as you can express it across, cause as you say, there's differences.

INT: Yeah, everybody's a little different, but the general...

RES: Right, this is the Cape May view point on whatever it is.

INT: Yeah, and I mean that seems to work. Like with scalloping, we always donate to the Fisheries Survival Fund and that's – I don't know if you've ever heard of that?

RES: No.

INT: It's for all of the scallop boats, and they've done a good job.

RES: Fisheries of Wildwood?

INT: No, the Fisheries Survival Fund.

RES: Oh ok. Fisheries or fishermen?

INT: Fisheries.

RES: When did that start up?

INT: Oh, that's probably been going I want to say maybe 7-8 years. It's in New Bedford, and that seems to be...

RES: 98? Oh that's New Bedford?

INT: Yeah, but it's all of the scallop boats on the east coast, and they seem to have done a real good job on the, you know, with the government, and the marine fisheries, and the lawyers.

RES: Is scallop managed out of north east council?

INT: Yeah.

RES: So it makes sense to have them (?) (475).

INT: But I mean that's where most of the scallop boats are, and they seem to be...it's one of the few organizations that stuck together, cause it seems like they'll do good for awhile, and then they start fighting, and then they split up. And they seem like they pretty much...

RES: This one's come together?

INT: Yeah, they do a good job, you know.

RES: So you feel like you get a fair representation?

INT: Yeah.

RES: What do they charge you dues or?

INT: Well you just pay, you know, with so much... I think over like I think we give 3,000-3,500\$ a year, but that's well worth it – well worth it.

RES: For their voice?

INT: Yeah.

RES: How much longer are you going to keep doing it? You think, say, 65 or?

INT: I hope not.

RES: You want to be done before then?

INT: Who knows? I mean right now the money's good, and you're physically able to handle it. You know if you get sick or you can't make anymore money out of it, but I couldn't really see myself doing anything else.

RES: Yeah, well retiring?

INT: Yeah, but I mean like start another job, if you've been doing this particular work for 25 years, you're the captain, you're as high as you're going to go except for owning the boat, you're at the top of your class you know. I mean it's treated me good. It's hard, but...

RES: Yeah, but you made it.

INT: Yeah, I mean I'd probably do it again.

RES: You would?

INT: I guess, you know.

RES: No that's saying something. People say you definitely know if you're a fisherman or not, and you know not everybody says that about their career. Well I'll turn this thing off unless....

