

Interview #30

Date: 9/29/06

Location: Belford, New Jersey

INTERVIEW

[recording begins during a conversation about fisheries scientists]

I: That guy is a multi millionaire and he doesn't even know it

RES: What do you mean?

I: Tries to tell us how many fish are out there and stuff, cause he's a multi millionaire and he doesn't even know it

RES: Smart enough to figure out how many fish there are

I: He knows where the fish are, how many fish and everything. He don't need to be here.

RES: Buy a net and get out there

I: Oh there's all these old boats for rent, go get them. Don't tell us how many fish in the ocean. He don't know no more about the ocean than the man in the moon. I watched on Discovery Channel one night they talked about California. He said the top scientists in the world knows little or nothing about the ocean. Here he pitches that he knows everything. Used to amaze me that the survey boat from out of Sandy Hook; we'd be down to haul whiting fishing and in the middle of the hole catching whiting, catching 10,000 pounds a day; he'd come out and go two, three miles away; he'd go up on the bank there and make a few tows and catch nothing.

RES: Cause he didn't know where to?

I: He wouldn't move where we were, where the whiting were. He'd go way up there, three or four miles up on the bank there, make a couple of tows and catch nothing; say there ain't no fish.

RES: Think all the scientists are suspect?

I: Oh, yea. I've never seen a research boat in the middle of a fleet fishing yet. You got to remember all these boats are out there every damn day; they know where the fish are because they're looking for them. The research boat he comes out, he goes way over there, someplace where there is nothing, way over there. They should do away with the research boat and just hire a fishing boat.

RES: Sometimes they do that.

I: They would save the taxpayers millions of dollars.

RES: Give the fishermen some more money too.

I: Give the fishermen more money and they'd get an accurate account of what is there. Not having a research boat is []. You know fish aren't all over. Fish are in certain areas.

RES: How long have you been fishing?

I: About since I was seven

RES: How old are you now?

I: 50

RES: 43 years?

I: Yea

RES: What kind of fishing have you done?

I: []

RES: Everything

I: Seining, dragging

RES: Seining for what, bunker?

I: Yup

RES: For bait or for or for?

I: For bait

RES: []

I: I did that too. Seine for porgies.

RES: What are you on now?

I: []

RES: How big is your boat?

I: 65 foot

RES: Steel?

I: Yup []

RES: How long have you had that position?

I: Thirty years I guess

RES: Are you the owner/operator?

I: Owner with my father.

RES: Partners?

I: Yea

RES: I already know the answer to this one; you got started through your family then Do you have any kids of your own? How many?

I: XXXX

RES: How many of them are in fishing?

I: One. One son and two girls.

RES: Did you encourage him to get in to fishing?

I: I helped him along I guess.

RES: We ask about that because it's one sign of the future I guess, if fishermen's kids are getting in to fishing or not and whether or not?

I: I think a lot of them are scared by regulations. There would probably be more kids if the government did more to help the fisherman. It just seems like they're just putting you out of business steady.

RES: So your boy is what, 25, 30, 35?

I: XXXX

RES: So how many people his age would be getting into fishing? Not very many eh?

I: No everybody is scared of regulations. Can't get a license. You go to buy a license it costs so much money and they don't know if they're going to be able to catch fish if they get the license. Like the fluking, they're talking about they're going to cut the fluke in half. Who the hell is going to buy a license to go catch half when we're catching; all summer long we got five boxes a trip. What are you going to get, two boxes? Won't pay the fuel. Who's going to spend the money to go in to business []?

[]

RES: Any fisheries training, besides what you learned on the water, did you ever go to take a [] or anything like that?

I: No, I learned everything right here.

RES: Back when you got started what was the challenges in fishing? The reason we ask that is because now the people say the challenges is the regulations, getting in to the industry because of the cost of the entry, the insecurity of it; back then what?

I: It was making money. That's all the challenge was. You'd just get out there and do what you could do. I started out with eel pots. Two hundred eel pots [] after school. Then I started dragging, I had a 23 foot boat, started dragging.

RES: When was that?

I: When I was 13 years old.

RES: Deck hand for your dad, or?

I: I was captain.

RES: At 13?

I: Yea, he'd be sitting on the dock waiting for me to capsized. (Laugh)

RES: On a 23 foot dragger?

I: Yea.

RES: Who fished with you?

I: A couple of other guys.

RES: Do you know anything about engine repair and that kind of stuff? Is that

I: You just learned as you went along.

RES: So you said you were 50, so that's in 69, 70?

I: Yea

RES: What was Belford like back then?

I: Nice.

RES: How do you mean?

I: Nice easy town. Everybody went fishing, can't put your pole out---quiet, no hassle. We didn't take no guff off of the wardens. They'd come in here, we'd rock them.

RES: What do you mean hassle, do you mean regulations or do you mean...?

I: Regulations come down and hassle and get on your boat and want to check this, check that; treat you like a piece of shit. That's how I feel when a Coast Guard comes aboard my boat, or a National Marine Fishery or something like that I just garbage. That's just how I feel.

RES: Why do you think that is? I mean it doesn't have to be that way?

I: They have a badge.

RES: So they're just abusing the?

I: They think they're gods. We had one warden, we used to have a guard out here and the guy would stop him and ask him for his badge and stuff. The one night they come flying in here; he ran down there and gave them a bunch of gump and everything, the federal guy. The federal guy called me up, the guy was president of the co-op at that time, said next time I come down and that guy stops me, I'm locking him up and locking you up he says.

RES: What did you say to that?

I: I said he has a right there, he knows who I am; he's says I'm locking him up and I'm locking you up, that's what he said, that's his exact words.

RES: When was that in the 80's or in?

I: That was about 88, 89, I guess; when they were first coming in.

RES: Is that when you started noticing regulations or that feeling of?

I: Yup, right around then. I knew it was bad then.

RES: What was the first thing you remember happening? [] you talked about the mesh size on fluke nets?

I: Lobsters.

RES: What happened with that?

I: Well they just had, like I said the guy with the badge come down and everything and go through the whole boat. It was just like it was the Gestapo. We were nothing. They'd tell you stop your boat, jump on the boat, grab all the knives; everybody got to stay on the stern. I mean what the hell is going on here? Can't say nothing to them. You say one little thing out of the ordinary and they're going to fine you for interference.

RES: Has that happened to people here?

I: Yea, I think XXXX got interference.

RES: Have you always worked out of Belford?

I: Yup. No, I was in Point Pleasant, I guess I fished out of there a couple of months when it was iced up in here. That was back in the 70's.

RES: You started on a 23 dragger then you worked your way up to a 65?

I: Yup

RES: Always dragging, that's been your main thing?

I: Seining too.

RES: You use the same vessel for that or you rig out?

I: Same boat and I got a little boat here, I got a [].

RES: Is it purse seining?

I: Yea. My lobster boat. That's what gets me, inefficiency means everything. I mean one year there wasn't this here, you'd go for that; jump around; but they're trying to perch you on one thing. It's not the way fishing was around here. Here you had to be in everything.

RES: Is there something you can't participate in now that you used to? You mentioned your days a sea with flounder.

I: Days at sea and I guess; lobstering you can't do that because they have [] so you can't do that because you catch nothing to make it worth your while. I haven't been lobstering about three years now; maybe longer. They made the mesh size, the escape net so big, that it lets out the good size lobsters. I can't see just feeding them, letting them go.

RES: Was that a year to year change? Like one year they changed the regulation and then the following year it was no longer?

I: They just kept increasing and increasing it and it got worse and worse and worse. Lobster pots are so expensive and everything. I still have a boat with pots, ready to go; but just can't make any money.

RES: And a permit.

I: I've got the permit.

RES: So back then what was the season like? Take me through a year; whiting in the winter and

I: Whiting in the winter; there was good whiting fishing, we caught plenty of whiting. Then we'd either go fluke and flounder fishing in the spring.

RES: Flounder and fluke?

I: Flounder, then fluke would come later after the flounder.

RES: Till May or so?

I: Yea, until May. Then after May it's seining, seining in the summer time. If there was no market we'd go fluking. The fluking that was a tough racket back then.

RES: Why, because of the price?

I: You couldn't catch that many. We'd fluke all night around NY Beach and you might catch four or five bushels, maybe. That was a good night, four or five bushels. In the fall you'd catch more. But now it's,

RES: Fall meaning, August, September and October?

I: Usually the fish come down the channel the second week in August; we'd start catching. You wouldn't catch nothing like now, you might catch fifteen boxes maybe something like that, that was a big night.

RES: Why was that, just no fluke around?

I: No fluke, not like now.

RES: Was that because, I mean was there no fluke because fish always go up and down or because?

I: I think there was more fluke in [].

RES: Too much fishing at that time?

I: There was no mesh size, taking all little ones, killing all little ones along with the big ones.

RES: Now you're regulated by trip limits; you got five days a week – or in the summer you have five days a week and the mesh size

I: The mesh size is what made the difference.

RES: So you like the mesh size part?

I: I like the mesh size, yup. I don't like the way they went about it.

RES: How do you mean?

I: Well you just can't diverse; it's got to be a five and a half inch bag, that's it. What do we do with all the nets we have? We probably got a hundred thousand dollars worth of nets sitting in the garage ain't worth a shit.

RES: Because they're too small

I: They're too small and they didn't reimburse us for that.

RES: Did you have a five and a half or did you have to go out and buy all that?

I: Had to go out and buy all that; never had that. We used to fluke fish with four inch bag.

RES: Back when you started what was the fleet like out here? How many seiners, a couple of seiners and?

I: A couple of seiners I guess. Back earlier there was more seiners

RES: Back earlier meaning the 60's?

I: 60's. In the 70's we had all draggers. I think we had about fifteen, sixteen boats dragging.

RES: All 65 and under?

I: Yea 65 and under. I think there was one 70 foot or something.

RES: And all mixed trawler right?

I: Mixed trawler, right. Mainly this was what was here, mixed trawler. There was no target species. We'd be whiting fishing and we'd catch three or four boxes of flounders, whiting, ling. You'd catch blue fish in the fall and stuff. Now they try to make it all one. It's a hard thing to do. You never come up with a mixed trawl fisher. You can't put a sign on a net, "whiting only". That's what they think.

RES: A little board, a little sign at the door, please don't come in here. What do you got now, about a dozen draggers?

I: Probably got 15.

RES: So roughly the same?

I: The same.

RES: Are people fishing more short handed? Fishing with less crew?

I: Oh, yea. Some guys fish by themselves.

RES: Why?

I: Just ain't enough money there, catch five boxes of fish.

RES: Is that dangerous?

I: You can't hire somebody cause you can't pay them a lot, so they're not going to work. Dangerous! I guess it is, probably one of the most dangerous things you ever do is go by

yourself. Block snaps or something, bang, kill you. You'd just bleed to death on deck, nobody even see you go.

RES: I did this project in Newfoundland before and up there they're going out two hundred miles sometimes for crab, people are crabbing going solo, crazy.

I: Yea, you have to do it, either you stay in business or you're out; what are you going to do then? This is your whole livelihood; your whole livelihood is invested in the fishing business. You have nothing really.

RES: Are people on there insuring, or not insuring, more then they used to?

I: A lot of people don't have insurance I bet you 80 to 90% of the boats here don't have insurance.

RES: Has that always been the case?

I: I think more of them had insurance before but they just can't afford it. I said, when they come in, they said okay, we're going to put a law on here, you can have up to two hundred pounds on this, a couple of hundred pounds of that; all that would add up and make it a little better so you can at least stay in and hire somebody to go with you and make some money. But just to come in and say okay you can have no flounder you can't have nothing else but this specie; you know you're throwing all this stuff back dead anyway, it just don't make sense.

RES: So in a perfect world you'd have a multi species permit with a small amount of each?

I: Right a small amount of each, a couple hundred pounds, at least it would pay the fuel and the crew and stuff and you would be able to make more of a living. That's why I said the National Marine Fishery has done a poor job with what they did. They should have come to every port and said, what have you guys been catching here in history, lets hear what you guys have been catching. They already know what you've been catching. They didn't do that. They just jammed those things right down your throat.

RES: I'm not arguing with you but there are fishermen that serve on the councils. Why don't they get the message out to the?

I: Whose, what are the fishermen serving on the council? I was down to a meeting down at Point Pleasant. One of the guys serving on the council owns four or five boats, big boats. He'd love to get the little guys out.

RES: They have an agenda.

I: That's right. Not too many common guys that are on there I think.

RES: In other places in NJ that is starting to happen too, people are buying up four or five, ten scallop boats. Is that happening here; people getting bought up and multiple owners, or staying more independent operators?

I: No, I think everybody is a little scared of regulations but like in scallops, they know that down the road that scallops going be just a few boats; going to be like clam is, two or three big owners, got it all tied up.

RES: But now Belford is staying owner/operator?

I: Yea, pretty much. Cause there ain't nobody in Belford making a lot of money. If they start making a lot of money then they probably will start buying up boats. Right now nobody's seen that.

RES: What about your, you personally, we don't need numbers or want numbers but your profitability over time; has it gone up or down?

I: It's gone down.

RES: There's a lot that goes in to that. The price has gone up for some things, the fuel has gone up, the insurance has gone up; but...

I: You're not catching fish; you're limited as to how many you can catch.

RES: Overall you feel that yours has gone down?

I: Oh yea

RES: Like a lot or half or?

I: I'd say a third I guess. Like I said them extra couple boxes you need to be keeping makes a difference.

RES: Those extra couple boxes would be what, other species, ling or blues or whatever?

I: Flounder, like I said you go whiting fish, you take two or three boxes of flounders that makes a difference.

RES: Do you think there is a lot of crap getting thrown over because you can't keep it?

I: I think when you whiting fish there is other stuff being thrown over that you could keep. Not a lot, but...

RES: I know that's a loaded question, but that's one effect...

I: I never seen you catch a lot of little stuff a further off of shore. You catch a lot of little stuff in shore. When you start getting in within two or three miles, that's when you start killing a lot of fisheries, such a small mass. When you get off of shore it's mostly bigger fish.

RES: Right, that's just biology; I mean that's where the bigger fish are.

I: I guess so, that's what they say. If they told me right it's daylight I'd believe it's dark. I don't believe nothing those guys say.

RES: Has that always been the case? I mean some people don't like regulations period because it's an intrusion on privacy.

I: I think regulations are great. I think they should have had them years ago. I think we would be in better shape than we are now. I think they're great. But you got to come down and work with the fishermen, put in the middle of the pack

RES: The style, the processing, whatever?

I: Like you, if you were making say 50-60,000 dollars a year and the government comes in and say you got to make ten grand; that's it. That would hurt, right? Same thing here. If they were to come down and say you make 50-60; alright lets work this out; can you survive with 40? Can you still make a living? That would have been the right way.

RES: More importantly, what does it take to get the 40?

I: That's right, yea. Gradually put it in. Don't come in and jam it down your throat and then set up the box limits down here and crucify you. That's just what they do.

RES: Them being the wardens,

I: and the Coast Guard. I have no use for them at all. When I retire Coast Guard is in big trouble. I'm going to be on them like flies on shit. They're the crookedist bastards that ever walked the face of the earth.

RES: Why is that? They don't have to, you said the badge, but

I: They got the power. They abuse that to the limit.

RES: Is that across the board or is that a few bad apples?

I: I think mostly the commanders. I was towing down the hole one day, whiting fishing, big boat along side me. Now when you're in the mud hole, up this end there is a lot of wrecks; you're around barges, you loose your net in a matter of seconds. So we're towing and everything and the big boat comes there and he's laying there and so I come up to a wreck ready to turn and I'm watching what I'm doing not really watching him, I'm waiting for him to call me on 16. And he called me, so I called him and said I'm getting ready to turn around here; if you want me to stop or something. Oh no problem he says they're coming in the back door. They're coming in the back door! Well, I flipped out. You're supposed to be out here [] got have turned the boat and some of the guys, snap, like that. I did that over in NY one time.

RES: What happened with that?

I: We was fishing along the beach there, within a half a mile and a NY man came out and he was in a rubber raft and he came along side and says I want to board you, okay I said I'll [] no he says, we're trained, we'll board you like this, he says just keep going straight and we'll board you. He come along side the stern, he bounced off the stern, he got around the wheel once, got underneath the cable and gone right down. I says hurry up around there and stop the boat right quick and threw the [] over the boat. Did the same thing with the Coast Guard...I couldn't turn, the wires been there and bang, some kid [] I wouldn't even know what's going on. And they're out there for safety. I'd give them a write up. Then he comes aboard and says we're going to check the safety equipment and all that. Got a sticker, we're going to check them. It's good; get a man out there to take that sticker out of the window. What do you mean? Take that sticker out of the window. What do you want me to do with it? I'll shove it up his ass as far as I'm concerned.

RES: Not doing you any good any way.

I: I spend two hours at the dock to get that sticker to say I'm alright; now you're going to check everything; take that sticker with you. He says we're going to look for fire safety

while we're out here. They knew I was pretty upset about it, what they did. I mean they're not out there for safety, they're just out there cause they don't board boats, they don't get to [] that's all it's about.

RES: Traffic cops making traffic stops right? You have to have so many tickets.

I: Government ain't going to give them money if they don't board. There is no reason for the boarding. Why do they need to be out there? Boats got stickers at the dock, checked; got all the equipment on and stuff. What's the reason? Tie you up for two hours?

RES: You getting boarded any more or less now than say ten years ago?

I: More and more every year.

RES: So that problem is getting worse?

I: Yea. I know it's the case cause I know a couple of guys in the Coast Guard and they said the commander told them get out there and board them boats. So I know that's the case. They don't want to do it. Some of the guys said I joined the Coast Guard to defend our country from terrorists and stuff. I didn't join the Coast Guard to come on a god damn fishing boat. You guys ain't terrorists. They put a warden on the dock to check mesh size. Okay you got the right mesh size, how many fish, you got the amount of fish here; what do you need to be out there for? Ride around just to harass you.

RES: There's got to be a lot of people leaving the community, I mean leaving the fishing industry, if there was more boats back then and definitely more crew back then; what happened to all those people?

I: Went to a job where they can make some money. Can't make no money

RES: Did people leave Belford, did they go into construction, or?

I: Some of them left Belford, some of them went into construction, some of them just decided to get different jobs. Their life has grown, they couldn't make a living. You stepped out of line a little bit they want to put a 20, 30,000 dollar fine on you; tell your wife that. You got a 30,000 dollars fine, she'll shoot you.

RES: []

I: Yea my wife says don't come home telling me that. It's stress you know, they stress you out. They destroy your life. You can't make enough money to send your kids to college. How you going to do that, if your wife don't work? Need two jobs to do it.

RES: Has the sense of community changed over that time, the sense that people talk about Belford they talk about the fishing community?

I: Yea, I think the sense of the commercial fishermen after all that stuff in the papers and the environmentalists say we're killing the whales and we're killing the turtles and all that, I mean that makes the commercial fisherman look like a bad guy. All he is, is a hardworking guy. He's out there, he don't want to kill nothing just to kill it. I mean they act like you're a god damn criminal.

RES: Who's they, the public?

I: I think when they put this stuff on the Discovery channel and the media and the environmentalists and all that; somewhere along the line, you can't save every turtle. What are we saving them all for? I watched the Discovery channel one day, the got on there about these scientists running up and down the beach gathering up these eggs and start planting them over in a fenced up area and the next segment they got on there is about these two old couples there, two old people, they're prescription drugs are \$1,000 dollars a month and they get \$1,100 from the government, social security. And here we're paying millions of dollars for these scientists to run up and down the beach to collect these eggs and then the poor old can't even pay their drug thing. Now something is wrong with that picture. I'd kill every fucking turtle in the world to save them old people.

RES: What about the relationship with the recreational fishing guys? Some people say it's shitty, some people say it was bad but it's actually gotten better now cause they're under fire.

I: I think it's a little better cause they're realizing that they're coming under the gun too and they can't do stuff either. Before it was all their way and now it's not all their way. They're getting their asses kicked now. So I think they're looking to more team up with the commercial guy than beat him up anymore. I don't see where they have any bitch anyway, there's plenty of fish. They're catching more god damn bass now than they ever caught in history. The fluke there, there is plenty of fluke, but they just can't keep them. I mean 16 ½ inch fish, that's ridiculous. Imagine how many fish they're killing every day; that hook goes down into it, they pull that out, the fish is dead. They should set a limit; you catch three fish, whatever three they are you keep. What's the matter with that? Then a guy goes out and catches a 14 inch fish, you got a 14 inch fish you can filet it and eat it. Why let them sit there and pound all day to catch a 16 ½ inch fish, you probably killed ten fish to catch two fish or three fish. That don't make sense.

RES: Have your fishing grounds changed, where you fish, have to go farther, or?

I: No it's about the same I guess, I don't think they've really changed. We fish in the same spots.

RES: And you're fishing for, more or less, the same species, except for lobster and whiting.

I: Well we still fish for whiting but there's not that many down here. We ain't had no whiting down here since that joint adventure up in, the east there, with the Russians that summer. We haven't had whiting since then.

RES: What summer was that?

I: That was back in the 80's I guess.

RES: Think that's what did the whiting fishery in?

I: That was our last season; we haven't had any whiting down here. They hit those stocks pretty good, enough to destroy us down here. Before that we had plenty of whiting. If someone had thought way back in the 70's that there would be no whiting in

twenty years, I'd tell him he must be fucking nuts. A lot of times you'd make one tow and get 10,000 pounds.

RES: Your species are more or less, besides the ones we talked about

I: The fishing area has opened up a lot with these new [] stuff.

RES: So you can go farther

I: You can go in between the wrecks and stuff where years ago we never did. We'd go down to the mud hole and stay a hundred feet, a hundred eighty feet, and go down a hundred and eighty feet; we never went down two hundred feet.

RES: Just following the bath line of...

I: We had certain places where it was clear towing, that's where everybody would tow. But now you go all over, you get a bearing on the wreck; you go around the wreck. So it has opened up a lot with that []. Worse thing that ever happened.

RES: Why?

I: Before the fish had places to hide; everybody went down to 180, make two or three tows and then there was no more. The fish went deeper and went higher. Then everybody went home; cause back then same thing next day. The first couple of boats would get them, the next couple would have to stay a little longer, cause the fish would go deeper and hide and they could go higher and hide. Now there's no hiding. He's either on the wreck or he's getting it. So it has opened up a lot with that []

RES: And that's a bad thing?

I: [] I think it's a bad thing. I mean it makes it easier for the fishermen but I think it makes it worse for the fisheries.

RES: When did you get involved in fisheries management? You said you'd gone to meetings, and [] was a couple, when did you first remember doing that?

I: I guess that was back in the late 80's.

RES: Why?

I: Well I wanted to hear what they had to say and after they lied to us about going [] they went and did that and started figuring days, I gave up on that.

RES: But that was later than the late 80's.

I: Seems like every time you go there, you voice your opinion but nothing happens. Like they're just here to take your records and that's it.

RES: Have you stopped going?

I: Yea, I don't go. For what?

RES: You feel frustrated about it.

I: I used to go but they're going to do what they want anyhow.

[]

I: The one guy on the NJ council said I don't like the way you talk.

RES: In the meeting?

I: Yup.

RES: What did you say?

I: I told him he murdered all the clambers. They first found their clam regulations they thought we worked Monday, Wednesday and Friday. If you don't work them days you don't work.

RES: Are you talking about hard clams here?

I: I'm talking about the surf clams. So if it was blowing hard knots on Monday, they're gone, because if they don't do it they'd lose a day. So they went out, a lot of them lost [] and now []. Take the Alaskan King crabs; those guys working in bad weather; why should they be working bad weather, wait for a nice day. When they opened the season for 72 hours, then guys got to work; if it's blowing a thousand knots they got to be out there.

RES: They're changing that I heard.

I: Yea, how many guys are lost already? Reality they murdered, just like putting a gun to their heads sooner or later they're going to hit the right trigger. Now they're changing it. Now they find out, oh! We're the ones going. They wouldn't be out there working in a gale wind. Would you work in a gale wind when you could go next day when it's nice?

RES: No, pretty easy decision.

I: Yea, so I tell them they murdered; they don't like that word. Truth hurts though.

RES: Why were you involved in the clamming debate?

I: I just knew what went on. I just wanted to express my opinion.

RES: But you weren't representing the co-op, or just giving your opinion?

I: What happened, but they didn't like it.

RES: A lot of people don't get involved in management. A lot of fishermen don't get involved.

I: It takes a lot to get up in front of the speaker and talk. That's the biggest issue there is. People are scared to get up; they don't want to say the wrong thing.

RES: What would be a better way, coming out here?

I: Coming to the docks. [] meeting where most people you don't know; all suits and ties and all big professional guys and you don't know nothing, they know everything.

RES: Yea, like lots of degrees.

I: Degrees, they can stick the degrees up their ass; cause sitting behind that desk you don't know what's going on in that water, I guarantee you that.

RES: So getting a handle on regulations, one of the things you talked about was a certain lack of flexibility, on [] you'd bounce around between different species, fish different things, a little bit of each thing. Now you're pigeon holed into one thing and if that one thing goes shit then you're screwed. What else has regulations done? Is there another; the entry cost, you talked a little bit about it; make it harder for younger people to

I: Some guys ain't going to come in to it. They can't buy a license to start with cause it's going to be so high. The cost of getting in and the money you're going to make just don't add up; just hard to make. If you're not brought up in the business and have help doing it I can't see you getting in to it.

RES: Are you looking at your boat as retirement funds?

I: No.

RES: Why, a lot of people do.

I: I believe a lot of fishermen do. I don't cause I don't plan on retiring. I love fishing. The guy says he's going to retire at 50.

RES: You better get going if you're going to do that.

I: No, I like fishing. I can't wait to get out there and go. You get caught up in it; going every day, you get there first in the morning, you get that good tow, it's just something, it's in your blood I guess. Some people say how the hell can you get up at 3:00 in the morning to go to work?

RES: Is the competition here, some people talk about the competition the game of it, does it stay friendly?

I: Ain't like it used to be.

RES: Use to be friendlier?

I: Yea it used to be, the fishermen had more consideration for the other guys. Now the young guys have no consideration for you.

RES: Why?

I: They just don't.

RES: There's not that many young guys in it, what do you mean?

I: Well the young guys that's in it don't have the consideration for the old guys.

RES: Do you think that's just a sign of the times or do you think that?

I: Just a sign of the times, yup.

RES: What would that look like; is that people setting gear too close or?

I: Yea, setting gear too close and trying to kill the old guy so he can't do it; get the hell out of the way, so they can have it all for themselves.

RES: Not respecting the traditional patterns?

I: Yea, I had lobster pots down in Deep River, down in Mohawk, and this guy he came in there, I set my line back there on top of him, he picked that line up and cut that line in more pieces than you can imagine. Cut every [], cut two or three times in between every pot. I mean I was grabbing for the line, it was number 9, I'll never forget it, I grabbed for two hours, finally I said to my kids, oh the hell with it, we'll come back later, maybe the guy [] and go grab another line. I run down and grabbed the other line and he says what [] are you looking for; I said the number 9 and he said there it is right there, I said well it ain't supposed to be there. We went over and picked it up and it was all cut to shit. I mean cut up real []. I says, one guy called me after a while because I told another person, I knew who it was, I said by the end of the season me and him is going to be so good buddies. We're going to be real good friends. When I got all done he says he wished to hell he never heard the word []. He called me up that night, said he was sorry and everything. You know I've done lobstering a long time and I've never seen nothing like that in my life, never.

RES: Did that make it good?

I: Oh yea, he brang me up a new line and everything.

RES: Has the day to day work of fishing changed for you? Has the regulations

I: It's easier.

RES: Easier, why?

I: Not that many fish. You don't have to work as hard; I mean five boxes of fish.

RES: That's a difference, you talk to scallopers and they say now it's harder in a lot of ways, some ways.

I: Well they're catching more scallops than they ever caught.

RES: Well more scallops and there's only seven on board

I: Well yea, they cut the crew size down, but I've seen there is plenty of scallops and they're allowed to keep whatever they catch. So that is a lot different than fishing, you're only allowed five boxes. Right now you're only allowed forty boxes; hell that ain't nothing; 40 boxes for the week. It's a lot easier, can you imagine if he's going hog wild now he'd probably catch two or three hundred boxes per week, easy. Then you have to work a lot harder.

RES: You mentioned the towns, as before, participating in fishing, how would you compare it to the ones now?

I: Try and stay in business. Before we were just getting out there and make money, like I said, get out there and work; now you just try to manage your money so you can stay in business cause you only have so much income, you're only allowed so much fish. You work for XXXX

RES: Yea. Do you know XXXX?

I: Oh yea.

RES: She's the principal investigator on this.

I: She's a good girl she is.

RES: Yea, she's had a lot of time I think in Belford.

I: Yea, she's

RES: She worked in Newfoundland before, that's how we got to know each other originally; my work up there. That's actually why I came down here cause I knew she was interested. She cares about fishing communities. Nice.

I: If nobody cared about it I wouldn't be here.

RES: What do you think is going to happen here in twenty years, say ten years?

I: If they keep up the regulations we won't be here; condos.

RES: But that is not necessarily the same thing. I mean the waterfront development and the regulations are two pressures you guys are facing, right? You could have no regulations and still have waterfront development.

I: Yea, but guys that are making money aren't going to sell out. You know if you can make money you're not going to get rid of it. But if you can't make money, can't pay the bills, can't make a living, you got to go.

RES: Are people talking about that?

I: Oh yea, a lot of guys are thinking about going. If they cut that fluke in half, what's going to be here? Fluke is a big part of us now. What's going to be here for little boats? I mean the big boats will all go to the gully and do something but the little boats, what are they going to do, the little guys?

RES: What would it take for this space to be; I mean the co-op has to decide collectively to say, we're done?

I: Can't make no money can't pay the bills. You can't run a dock with two or three boats.

RES: Are people finding it hard, like in Barnegat, people are physically leaving; staying and fishing but the waterfront costs and taxes got so high, that they go to live on the mainland or whatever. Is that happening here?

I: I think that's coming. I mean there getting ready to repossess everybody; the ferry boat and condos. I don't think the condos are going to last.

RES: Why?

I: I just think that it's just the swamps; it's not the area I think. Too many little houses over there.

RES: Who is it that lives there, is it all Manhattan people that come over on the ferry?

I: Yea, nobody local I think. They like it cause it's right there and the ferry boat goes right there, from your doorstep go right to work.

RES: Not that many places that you're what, less than an hour from down town Manhattan and relatively [] of water

I: When we first come here, houses were \$100,000, \$80,000; now they're 3 or \$400,000.

RES: Are fishermen starting to sell?

I: Well they're thinking about it. They're just getting ready to re-assess people now. Then after the re-assessment you'll, that will be the tell.

RES: When does that happen?

I: They're working on it now. By 2008 I guess they'll be done. So we'll find out.

RES: What about your markets, distribution, has that changed over time or pretty much always gone through the dock here, the co-op here?

I: Yea, I've always gone through the dock here. I guess the Fulton Fish Market, I guess if they make it [], I don't know if they're going to be able to make it. I hear the bills are pretty high.

RES: It all goes to Fulton though?

I: Fulton and Philadelphia, they ship to Philadelphia. And then we have some local vendors around that sell around here. The majority of it goes to the market.

RES: Well those are the questions on the survey. We always try to end by asking what we missed; what I didn't ask you about or you think, knowing what you know about what we're trying to do, which is understand the affects of all regulations on cumulatively, what else do we need to know, or take into account?

I: I think they just got to understand that these are families that depend on their livelihoods. How they can crucify them so bad []? My wife tells me get a new job. She knows that ain't going to happen.

RES: Encourages you none the less.

I: I know a lot of guys that have left the fishing cause of []

RES: You do know guys that have left fishing from Belford?

I: Yes

RES: Where do they go?

I: They go to Florida, where it's cheaper living, get jobs there. Jobs in construction work, somewhere they don't have so much aggravation. There's a lot of aggravation; worrying about the Coast Guard coming on, nitpicking this, nitpicking that. Now they got one little thing out they send you back to the dock.

RES: One little thing, meaning like?

I: Fire extinguisher; if your life raft is over due by a month or something they'll send you back to the dock. The life raft is going to work. I can't understand, I've seen on TV, one time they were eating rations from WWII; they were still good. Shit the life raft only lasts one year. Give me a break.

RES: Yea and it's your ass anyway.

I: Who's got their hand in that? If I ever had trouble, shit I'd never call the Coast Guard first; they're the last ones I'd call. I have no use for them what so ever. I'd call the boat along side; get a better response, quicker.

RES: []

I: They got boats, 50, 60 knots; they can go, if they want to. We was down the hole one day, this guy had a wooden boat, [] he was taking on water, he said the [] was close enough, he called the Coast Guard, they said put your life jackets on, what's your position? Put the life jackets on; fuck the life jackets! He's trying to find where the fucking hole is, trying to stop the water from coming in; get your ass out here and try and save me. Go through all that bull shit. I had a guy hurt on the boat one time, and called and they said is he bleeding and unconscious and all that, he's hurt, he needs help, send somebody out.

RES: I wouldn't be calling if I didn't need help.

I: Finally I said fuck you I'll take him to the doctor myself. That's the last I heard from him.

RES: How far off were you?

I: It was like two hours from the dock. I bring him in, the ambulance was here.

RES: Was he alright?

I: Yea he's alright. Broke his nose, bleeding and stuff. So I never had a good experience with the Coast Guard.

RES: Has it been harder like in terms with the services here, like haul outs, you used to have a railway here eh?

I: We used to have a railway up here; it's hard to get hauled out now.

RES: Where do you go to get hauled out?

I: Got to go to Cottonville, Staten Island.

RES: What happened to that?

I: I guess they came in with the regulations on scrubbing the bottoms of boats and all that stuff, the enviromentals and all that shit. That's what did him in. They had to make a new place for when they hauled the boat out to collect all the shit and stuff. I get a kick out of it; they do that but the county go up there and put creosote poles in there and they'll bleed for fucking two years run slick down the creek and that's okay.

RES: Where did they put the poles in, you mean down by the?

I: Where they put the new grids in. Creosote poles leak for years, slick coming off of it; but that's all right.

RES: A little inconsistent there.

I: I'd say.

RES: Where do you go for electronics?

I: Well we shop around; Consumers, that's where we buy most of them. We go up here to the [] we try to give him as much business as we can, try to keep him there.

RES: Does he do repairs too?

I: Well he sends them out and stuff. Nice to have a place close by.

RES: Well, I should let you get to your day. It is about the hour that I told you. Anything else?

I: Not that

RES: That's enough to start on?

I: Alright

RES: Sometimes when I go back over