

**Interview #9**

**Date: 12/17/05**

**Location: Barnegat Light, New Jersey**

**INTERVIEW**

RES: Anyways, this project's also with Sea Grant with the Marine Science Consortium... And we're looking at cumulative effects of regulatory changes.

INT: Haha yeah it's funny you say that, because I gave that in my testimony at the ASMFC weak fish hearings.

RES: Oh did you?

INT: That's what I, you know, the cumulative effects. I said, you killed us, you know, you just, you know, just to take the real conservative approaches on everything now and you know they're just beating us to death, you know.

RES: Yeah, well that's the straw people talk about sort of building up. It's not necessarily one thing, it's like...

INT: Well, it's death by a thousand cuts is what you call it, until you bleed to death. And it's a darn shame, cause I mean there is some regulations necessary, but I mean it's booked itself into beast now that's uncontrollable, you know. And I'll tell anybody that will sit here and listen to me, you know, and...

RES: Well what do you mean? Can you elaborate on that?

INT: Well it's just, you know, it's just you have so many regulatory bodies now. And what really makes it tough is the ASMFC, you know, they have their national standards, you know, there's no (?magnason?)(016) doesn't apply inside three-miles.

RES: They've got their own regulatory charter, but

INT: Yeah, but it's not one that you can... that there's any checks and balances, you know, it's 0 checks and balances. I mean I've been, I was, the shad advisor, you know, blue fish advisor to the ASMFC. Shad, you know, they kicked us out of the shad business here not because we were overfishing. First they made the argument...

RES: Who's they ASMFC?

INT: ASMFC. They brought us in at first and they said geez a you guys are overfishing shad; what are you going to do about it in the ocean? And we said whatever we need to do, you know, we'll do trip limits, we'll do closed season, blah, blah, blah. Vic Grecko was doing the work, you know, and he says oh geez, you know, you guys aren't over fishing, you know, we're not hitting the overfishing threshold. So everybody scratches their head, they sent us home, brought us back

a year later, and said well you're not overfishing, but you may inadvertently wipe out a weak river system fishing in the ocean. And we're like what? You know, the shad migrate from 20 fathoms to the beach. We've got to fish right in the surf to have any success for them. I mean the argument was so poor, and I wasn't smart enough to you know really drag a decent attorney into it. I mean I think we could have stopped it, and I spent 4-5 years fighting, fighting, fighting, and we lost by like one vote. And every state that didn't have an ocean fishery just voted against us, and we were out. And that took like six weeks out of our...and we lost sturgeons a few years before. And now, you know, the sturgeons are coming back, but now all of a sudden it's going to crop here in the next 2 years as a bycatch issue really bad, and they're going to really come after us. I've been getting all of my connections always tip me off what's the next, you know, attack/assault, you know, and that's what it's going to be is sturgeon bycatch. And, you know, there's no national standards. I mean they're charter is just self serving, you know, there's nothing there, you know, that's going to help the other side of it. I think we need a congressional oversight hearing or something, you know. I've been to a couple and Jesus boy we need more bad.

RES: So ASMFC, are they the main ones that impact you? You're an inshore gill netter right?

INT: Yeah, but I fish offshore too, and I have a dragger – the XXX XXX – and I have a lot of argument about fishes primarily outside of three miles. I just feel we get a better shake at the council level than we do with the ASMFC. I know we do. I mean...

RES: Why is that?

INT: I don't know. I mean you just do; I mean you've got a chance, you know, you've got a chance. They do have national standards, you know, they have to go kind of things by the book. And where the ASMFC doesn't.

RES: Is the XXXXXX your primary vessel, or do you have more than one?

INT: No, I have 2. Well the XXXXXX I run, and the XXXXXX is a (?)046 a few years ago, in 2003 actually, in Wedgeport, Nova Scotia, and that's a ...I had bought some permits from XXXXXX in Point Pleasant – his permits from the XXXXXX – and so I have a fluke permit and a bunch of otter trawl permits.

INT is talking in background when he gets up to blow his nose 050.

RES: The XXX XXX which you've done as a dragger.

INT: Yeah (052 still in background and can't make out) I bought a Norwegian side hauler and I was hauling gear, you know, up the side. That's the XXX XXX. (he's showing pictures I assume)

RES: What's that a 45-50?

INT: It's 46 x 18 wide. And the other one is a Osmond Beal Lobster Boat, a, you know, faster – (?I'm just a little stuffy here – or than this little stuff here)(056) from racing around with that.

RES: That's the XXX XXX?

INT: Yeah.

RES: We should get some background questions before we get too much into the details. First begin with some like demographic stuff – just how old you are?

INT: 42.

RES: Where were you born?

INT: On the island.

RES: And do you come from a fishing family?

INT: Yeah, well my grandfather – he was a day clammer for 75 years.

RES: Inside here?

INT: Right here yeah on the Barnegat across the bay. He received that Harry Conklin award, but he was too old to go get it. He use to build boats, and he built boats, and clammed, and oystered.

RES: What about your, that's your grandfather?

INT: That's my grandpa. My dad no, he was a very avid recreational fisherman. He has a house on Hatteras Island and goes back and forth. We always were on the water. I built a boat when I was like 12, and I had a crab business. I use to sell crabs by the dozen to all the neighbors, and I got enough money to get a motor, and then I went and treaded clams for my grandpa, you know, sold clams.

RES: Yeah. So when did you start as a commercial fisherman then?

INT: As soon as I got out of highschool, you know, full time. I was in the Hulsing crew on Hatteras Island, you know, those guys taught me how to mend and...

RES: By 81, 82...

INT: Yeah 82, (?)(068).

RES: That's actually one of the questions is how much formal education did...

INT: High school.

RES: Right, and did you ever do any fisheries related training like a map course or marine engines or anything like that?

INT: Well I did; I did take a vocational class for marine trades, but I was already an avid fiberglasser and stuff by the time I was like 15.

RES: So you knew that stuff anyway.

INT: Yeah, but it was great cause we got to work on our own outboards, but I was always kind of liked spinning wrenches anyway, so it was all part of it for me. But, it helped; it was nice. It kept me in school actually, you know, it was a lot of fun, you know, it was more like going to work, you know, you were 3 hours in there, and had a beautiful shop, and it was great. I don't think they have the course anymore. I think they discontinued it, but it was a shame. It was a great thing though. I mean it was really...we learned of the instructor. He was an old school guy, you know what I mean, and he treated you like a worker, you know, not like a kid you know, and it was pretty good. I had a lot of fun there – a lot of good memories.

RES: And then you went into, since then you've been in commercial fishing? And so that's 23-odd years of full-time commercially?

INT: Yeah, you know, I got a boat built when I was 22 in Maine – a Bluehill Marine, a DHM-39. It's still at the dock today down there.

RES: What's the name of that one?

INT: XXX XXX was the name of that; that was my first one.

RES: (?) (080) the XXX XXX

INT: Yep, sitting down there. Well I actually towed it over to work on it today - blew the fuel pipes off it the other day, and I was screaming westerly there, the XXX XXX thank god was going past them. It was about 40-miles out, drug them in, and screaming gales northwest.

RES: What day was that?

INT: Oh I don't know a week or two ago – when it was blowing 30-35 northwest there (?) (084).

RES: I was actually up in Labrador.

INT: Ooh. Is that where you...

RES: Well there was crap up there...

INT: I would like to go there yeah.

RES: It's nice. I mean it's pretty bleak.

INT: Yeah I bet it is man, cause I love the guys Nova Scotia.

RES: Oh, you'd love Newfoundlanders then too.

INT: Yeah those guys, I get along with them grand, you know. They were like...

RES: Live and breathe fishing.

INT: Yeah man. I get to navigator; do you get the navigator?

RES: Oh yeah, yep.

INT: Yeah man.

RES: Yeah, that's a fun place to spend some time.

INT: Yeah, it's cool; I really like it.

RES: Yeah, your background is a lot like most of those guys – right out of school they're going into fishing, and they've lived and breathed it all of their life, family's in it...

INT: Yeah, I feel more at home with those guys than I do, you know, around here, you know, really. I mean here you're like a...I don't know. It's gotten better.

RES: As a commercial fisherman you mean?

INT: Yeah, we use to get more chastised. Do you know, you were like...

RES: Raping the ocean?

INT: Yeah it was like, you know, I use to fight back but we, you know, they still do it. But we've, you know, they still do it. I mean even my own family does it, you know, if they see a net boat go by, they think he's going to wreck their fishing or, you know, it's just this predisposed, you know...the recreational guys got it I think backwards, you know. I mean they think what they're doing is way more important than, you know, all of the people we're trying to, you know, grind a living out of it, you know. And they, you know, they think if they don't catch one extra bluefish because we set our net, you know, they got crooked, you know what I mean? It's hard for me to see that point of view. Even when I was a kid, you know, my dad would grumble every once in a while, you know, there'd be a commercial boater around, and I'd be wanting to get over there and get on it, you know, like wow yeah lets get over there, you know, and watch them, you know. But it's tough, you know, the state does a lot of sports. I know all of the recreational leaders, you know, pretty well, and they know we very well, and I know them pretty good. But we've seemed to here lately gotten over the stupid stuff like the net ban and, you know, other things.

RES: the really harsh kind of measures...

INT: Yeah, that seems to be going, yeah I mean XXX XXX and XXX XXX of (Freehill?)(100) Boat...

RES: Backed off of that...

INT: Yeah, I mean and Actually XXX was at the last hearing. XXXXXX was telling the ASMFC people at the public hearing, you know, and he's like, you know, XXXXXX works here in the audience, and he was the commissioner to the ASMFC. And he's like like you know, we took the sturgeons from them and we took, you know, what are they going to do, you know, what are you going to, you know. And just like what you're getting at, you know, it's always really been made me angry that nobody gives a crap, you know. I mean they just, I can understand, you know, having to regulate, but the thing it is nobody comes around and asks like what are you going to do, or how is this going to affect you? You know it's like, they'll kick you to the curb, and if you can get up, good for you. If you can't, see ya.

RES: Yeah, good riddance.

INT: Yeah, exactly, you know, and that really pisses me off, you know, I just can't believe that there's no spirit of cooperation, you know, by the time you get...

RES: Yeah, trying to accommodate other people.

INT: Well just, and trying to do the right thing, you know what I mean, for everyone involved, you know. It's pretty harsh; it's a pretty harsh reality, you know. I think I get a little too much information some a lot of times, so I think about it a lot, you know, being pretty involved in e-mails all of the time, and stuff coming to the house, and phone calls, and you know just having to stick up for yourself really. That's what it boils down to, you know, or you'll just...

RES: Well that's defending your livelihood right?

INT: Yeah, you'll get bowled over, you know, and sometimes unjustly bowled over, you know. I seen a lot of bad stuff, what I consider pretty bad stuff, and I down the middle of the road. You know, I understand we need to, you know, not over-fish anything, you know, let's catch less, lets try to get more for it, and bring the quality up, lets do the...

RES: Maximize the...

INT: Exactly yes, you know, maximize the dollars you know and our time.

RES: Pushing in another way.

INT: Yeah, and it's just never worked out in anything, you know, and pretty much, you know. So it's...

RES: Are you married?

INT: Yeah.

RES: How many kids do you have?

INT: One.

RES: I ask about that because we're interested in sort of the next generation. A lot of guys are saying what...it sounds like you have a little girl I guess?

INT: Yes.

RES: If she was a guy, or even as a woman, would you encourage her to go into commercial fishing as a kid?

INT: Probably not, you know, use it maybe for a... I just have no faith in the future, you know. I mean, you know, maybe a good, you know, launching pad to generate some income, but it's hard to ever believe that, you know, 50 years from now or 30 years from now that there's really going to be a... I mean there may be a, maybe a little puppet fishery, you know, maybe I'll be, you know, I'll be old then but I just don't know you know. I mean the only ones that are now, I mean the full time scallopers are making a ton of money. You know they're really doing it up, and that's about it really. You know there's some bright spots here and there, and there's some good fishermen here and there, but the rest of the industry's pretty...you know you go down to Carolinas and stuff, you know, and it's pretty shaky really, you know.

RES: I went to grad school down there; I know that fisheries are pretty shaky.

INT: Yeah, and everything, you know, nobody makes a whole lot of money, everybody's struggling, you know, it's kind of a mess really, you know. I don't plan on doing that, you know, I'll move. If I have to, you know, I'll hang in as long as I can, but I'm not going to be this starving, you know, moron hahaha, you know, you're trying to hold on till the last (?death)(132). You know, I just refuse to do that, you know, I'm not going to be belittled.

RES: What else would you do?

INT: I don't...probably build boats or something like that, you know.

RES: Rec boats or?

INT: Yeah, whatever, you know.

RES: You're a fiberglasser right?

INT: Yeah, I do a lot of glass and woodwork, and I just...it'd kind of be a natural fit for me, you know, into that.

RES: There's always demand for that too.

INT: Yeah, you know, I mean I enjoy doing it for myself. I don't know if I'd really enjoy it as a full-time job.

RES: Well when you got to do it...

INT: Yeah, you know, but I do have a lot of boat building knowledge just from being around it. It's always interested me anyway. I'm sure that's where I would break into that field. And in a lot of these instances, a few of these guys, you know probably 25% of them I'd say, are capable of that. You know, some of my friends are...

RES: That could slide into some marine related industry but not necessarily commercial fishing.

INT: Absolutely, yeah. Well yeah, slide into some kind of boat, you know, repair and hauling.

RES: Specifically boats, you know.

INT: Yeah boat.

RES: One of the things we're interested in, building on this idea of new entry into the fishery, when you started, was it difficult to get entered into fishing? Like what were the challenges or obstacles, or what would you face as a young guy trying to go in here?

INT: Well back then, it was old school boys, you know, and they didn't you know, you had to be...a novice had to really suck it up, you know, they were pretty harsh on me, you know, and old clam boat Bob and some of those guys they're like you stupid kid, you know. You're going to starve! And they weren't...

RES: That's the G-rated version I'm sure.

INT: Yeah, they were rough on me, you know, but I knew them. I knew those guys, you know but right away I had some real big success and it just.... they all just shut up, you know, and left me alone at that point, but I could mend net right away, you know, they didn't, you know.

RES: You were good with twine right off the...

INT: Yeah, and so they kind of left me alone pretty quick, but they... and I had a decent boat, you know, but I mean, you know, my dad gave me 20,000\$ and told me good luck. And I went to the bank and I begged and borrowed and, you know, I borrowed 45,000\$, I had like 35 saved up, I had to make the nets and I had a net reel, and I had an elax scope, and I was just trying to gather stuff up you know, start an operation. And they all knew I was getting a boat, but a few of them were pretty tough on me.

RES: The socialization if...



INT: Yeah, and I was around I mean they all knew me, and they were still hard on me. But since then, it's changed a lot. There's a lot more people come and go, and in this town anyway, you know. Like North Carolina, you always saw a big turnover, and I use to say every...it kind of seemed like every good old boy who didn't have a job was going to go fishing, you know, and it was a little different here. You know, it was hard to get your foot in the door unless you were a deck hand.

RES: Because they didn't want green people and people with no knowledge?

INT: Yeah, there just wasn't a lot of jobs, you know, there just wasn't a lot of opportunities, you know. There was some, you know, but you had to really beg to get on a boat back then.

RES: Did fishermen hang out a lot together back then?

INT: Ahhh...

RES: What I'm getting at is the social...I mean if that's changed over time, like...

INT: It's about the same, you know. Some of the...there's always some guys who...

RES: The fishing bar, and there's...

INT: Yeah, I mean it's always been a certain...here it's always been, although there's not to many left on the island – all the guys live on the mainland, you know...

RES: Too many what, commercial fishermen?

INT: Yeah, there's only a few of them – about 4 or 5 of them that's left here in town you know.

RES: Why because of the pricing (?)(160)?

INT: Yeah, the prices are so high.

RES: Were fishermen organized in any way like formally, socially, or politically at that point?

INT: No, not much and then started a fishermen's association years ago, and it kind of floundered on and off.

RES: What's that called?

INT: It was called back then, oh geez what was it – what the heck were we called –

RES: that was the inshore gill netters?

INT: No, it was a NJ organization. We had the old fishermens association – the NJ fishermen’s association. But it floundered on and off for a while. That’s why I was so involved; I was always representing myself, you know. I mean cause I really had no formal...not too many people, you know, Niles was always involved, Niles Stolpian, but I kind of had to represent myself quite often everywhere I went, you know. Now we have a pretty good group, and I’m in the Garden State Seafood Association.

RES: Yeah, I know Greg.

INT: Yeah, I’m on the board of directors. I was one of the founding guys for that, and yeah Greg is a good guy.

RES: He’s been nice enough to introduce me around a bit.

INT: Yeah I like Greg; he’s cool.

RES: So did you get involved right away to begin with?

INT: Pretty much yeah, because the guys were so bad, you know, the old guys were so bad at not...they wouldn’t do anything, you know, they bitch and moan and never do a thing.

RES: Bitch and moan about what?

INT: Regs, or anything coming, they’re going to do this to us, they’re going to do that to us, and they wouldn’t a hour away to go to a meeting. I just instantly, just god was too young, I had too much at stake. I was standing there like what, you know, started to ask questions, you know, and since then I’ve had quite a, you know, got to know a lot of people. I can get on the phone and pretty much track down all of (?)(175) and get to the heart of the issues a lot and quickly.

RES: Right, well that’s a skill to wade through all the...

INT: Yeah, well I’m on the large whale take reduction team, you know, like ten different committees for the state, you know, and 3 or 4 for the regional stuff and...

RES: How do you find that?

INT: It’s rough, you know, I don’t get to go to all of the meetings that I should. I have to pick and choose. They always seem to wind up on a day like I got that (179)(?moniker) sitting out there, and there’s no way that I can’t go (home or haul up?)(179) when I get a window of opportunity or, you know, fish are rotting out the net, you know, there’s draggers around. It’s a nightmare, you know, I have to go. And I always find that I’m missing stuff that I should be at, but I get to some of it, you know, what I can, you know, and I wish I could do more, you know. I don’t really like public speaking, and I have to really force myself to get up there.

RES: Yeah, well that’s true for a lot of people I think.

INT: Yeah, I have to really suck it up to get up there because I'm like ohhhh. I spoke twice at congressional committee meetings and hearings and, you know, I hated it, but...

RES: You had all these congressmen sitting there looking at you expecting you to have pearls of wisdom dropping out of your mouth?

INT: Yeah, well they were good to me. They were always... geez both of the ones that I went to man, you know, like one was about mobile gear and bottom impact, and Penny Dalton was the head of the fishery service was sitting next to me, and Don Young from Alaska ripped her to pieces, and I'm sitting there going ohh man, you know, I'm next. And he was nice.

RES: He's pretty supportive of the fishing industry in general though, I mean...

INT: And same with the... I went and testified at the stripped bass, you know, the EEZ opening, and I'm sitting between Bodey and Donna Frio and they're like passing hate notes behind me, you know. And, you know, a couple of the sporting congressmen got up and left and wouldn't even look at the (?188)(plan).

RES: Oh really. Made up their minds already huh?

INT: Yeah, and off they went. And Jim Gilcrest from Maryland, yeah he was really nice, you know, and he was like where do you live XXX XXX, you know, and I was like pssew...

RES: Thank god there was a real guy up there.

INT: Yeah, you know, yeah, you get a little like oh grief, you know, yeah. It's been interesting I'll tell you. I get in a hell of a mess at times.

RES: You always worked out of Barnegat Light?

INT: Yeah.

RES: As I said, I think I said on the phone, some of this is kind of a history thing, so I want to go back to when you began – maybe go through a season; what was your season like back then? You start off, are you fishing in January or no?

INT: No, we would start in, back in them days, we could start early shad fishing. We could start in like the end of March.

RES: So the season really starts in March.

INT: Yeah, the end of March, you know, and then we'd took shad pretty good. And back then there was no strippers; there was none.

RES: This is mid-80's you're talking about?

INT: Yeah, no bass and so it was clean. The shad fishing was easy. The shad...

RES: And that's all gill netting?

INT: Yeah.

RES: And you're on the XXX XXX

INT: No that was the XXXXXX back then. Oh yeah. And I had that until 99 that boat – for 14 years, 13 years or something.

RES: Ok, so you're shadding in March?

INT: Yep, and then we pretty much do that right almost till June, and we'd catch shad and big weakfish, and we were able to keep sturgeons, and you know...

RES: But those were incidental or were you targeting them?

INT: Yeah, well we actually started to target them about 1990. We realized there was enough there, so we started...

RES: Is that a meat fishery the sturgeon back then or...

INT: Yeah, we use to really get good money for those turkeys selling them to the Russian delis up in NY. They were paying us like 3-4\$ a pound for dressed sturgeon. So two fish make your whole day on two fish. So we did that until the ASMFC slammed the door on us...

RES: So you've been closed out of

I switched computers at 203, so the counter was reset to 000 at the 203 mark.

RES: of both the shad and the sturgeon?

INT: Yeah, and then they wouldn't even let us have one. They put a 40-year moratorium on it until.

RES: Yeah, well I think that fishery's like done for...

INT: Yeah forever, yeah. Well what sucked about it is, you know, they wouldn't even let us have one. They said oh you'll high grade and throw the one over until you get the biggest one you can get, you know. So then they instantly make a crook out of you, you know.

RES: Yeah, well there's an assumption right off the bat that you're a crook.

INT: Right, yeah. So we lost that, but then we blue fished and bonita fished.

RES: When did that come on?

INT: June.

RES: June into July?

INT: Yeah July yep. May, June, July, sometimes May, you know, about mid-May sometimes.

RES: So you said bonita and...

INT: And bluefish. Yeah, we still so that today.

RES: All gill nets right?

INT: All gill nets, different styles.

RES: Did you ever use any other gear other than the dragger on the...

INT: Yeah, I did a little... I tile fished, long lined, in one season like in about 83.

RES: Only one season?

INT: No, I've tile fished on and off for a few years, you know in the winter to make a couple of trips and make some money. And then...

RES: It use to be the tile fish capital of the East Coast yeah, or the world.

INT: There are quite a few out there now again, you know, guys are catching them pretty quick when they get out there. You'll see that in a few years...it is pretty hot now, but when the fish get up to big stuff again, you're going to see that. These guys are catching, they get the gear out, and they're catching like 3 or 4 thousand pounds a day. So that's going to break loose. Well it has really. The guys who have the permits now are, they know what they're doing and catch them pretty readily. And you're going to see that in 3 or 4 years.

RES: That's a pure long line fishery right?

INT: Yeah.

RES: SO July is bonita, bluefish, finish that up. July August?

INT: Weak fish. Or August, Sept, Oct weakfish.

RES: Which is also pretty much done?

INT: Not really. I mean that's another zoo, you know, I mean well we're fighting for that. They can't take that from us. I mean this is it. I mean this is like Custer's Last Stand here, you know.

RES: Sould you be done if the weak fish got...

INT: No, because we have croakers coming out our eyeballs, but, you know, and it was an immediate...weakfish/croaker just went pssew – one went up the other went down.

RES: SO you use to do weak fish, and now you do croaker instead?

INT: Um hum, and some weakfish, you know. But we've gone to fishing so much bigger mesh to catch these croakers to cull out the big croakers that when the little weakfish are there, we don't catch them anyway. We've got the wrong net on, you know. You need 3 and ¼ and and we're running around w 4 inch.

RES: Because you're targeting croaker.

INT: Right because we don't want them little tiny pin head croakers; we want them big croakers. So we don't have the right net. But there was a huge weakfish spawn this year. It was enormous, I mean it was just amazing.

RES: How do you know? I mean is that what you hear or you see it?

INT: Oh know, I can see it.

RES: I've never seen when fish spawn, what does that look like?

INT: Well no, recruitment was huge this year.

RES: Oh, ok. You saw lots of small...

INT: Drove and drove and drove of them. I mean it was intense, you know, and I knew what I was seeing what my dragger was seeing offshore. I mean it was a huge, huge, spawn. They go along and then they just have one super big year clap – you know boom here they are- but you know we saw a direct correlation with the rise of the croaker and the...

RES: Decline of the weakfish?

INT: Yeah, absolutely. And you're never going to build all of these fish to these pie in the sky levels at the same time. It never happens.

RES: Strippers probably play a role in that too.

INT: They sure do, and everything eats those small trout. They're just like a hot dog; they're soft, they're not very bony, you know they everything I ever caught eats them. But I mean when I was first started fishing, you know what I mean, it was all blue fish here. I mean and the weak fish wasn't very good. I mean it was just...you had to be careful, you know, there was so many blues around – small blues- in those days, and there wasn't many weakfish you know. And then

we saw the blue fish go down and the weak fish went boom – crazy. And I was catching a 150,000 pounds of weakfish every fall. And then, you know, that's been replaced with croakers now, you know. I mean you just see these changes, and you can see them coming, and it's foolish for the manage regimes to thing that they're going to have all of these huge stocks at the same time. It's really not...my dad as a boy here said you couldn't catch a bluefish to save your life for quite a few years. He said if you caught a blue fish everybody would come over and look at it. I was an amazing thing. It was all croakers.

RES: Huh. And now that is the way it is again. So going into Oct, are you pretty much done for the year at that time?

INT: Back then no, we'd shoot at blues right till almost Christmas. And then the sturgeon fishing taught us how to catch monk, you know, I was the first guy really in the mid-Atlantic to ever use a piece of 12-inch monk gill net. So we were, me and clammer Bob, we all had ten inch nets that we were using for sturgeons, but we'd get some monk, but it wasn't really right. Then we just started using 12-inch, and it was like wow and we started catching big monk fish, you know. So that was came good out of the sturgeon fishery for us. We taught ourselves how to monkfish.

RES: So I have kind of an idea here. You're shad, blue, croaker, bonita, weaks, sturgeon, stripers?

INT: Never.

RES: Never stripers?

INT: No, I would never. I mean we use to sell them when I first started, but there wasn't many around, and then they made this big comeback, you know. It was funny because we knew they were fierce before any of the management regimes would even admit that there was any kind of recovery going on. We were like oh my god, you know, they were all over the place, you know. I mean we saw it. I mean, you know, it was nuts.

RES: Yeah, but you never got into it?

INT: No, we weren't allowed. We were the only state, you know, that wasn't allowed – the precious striper you know.

RES: Yeah. So how has that all changed? Those are your main species that you were targeting at that time, and you're out of shad, out of sturgeon...

INT: And dogfish was in the mix there in the 90's you know. We got the boot out of that too.

RES: And when is dogfish fishery, that's summer, but when would you...or year round or?

INT: It was spring and fall, and you know either you could do it both times of the year, you know. Go get them; they're underutilized, and 5 years later they closed it, you know. There was no trip limit, no net size, no anything.

RES: Right, they became charismatic somewhere in there.

INT: Ohhh, you know, I remember that public hearing too. Actually, I told that one fellow XXX, I think his name is from the mid-Atlantic Council, I says good think you don't manage money cause you'd be in jail right now. I mean we just went from wide open to closed. And I'd written a letter two years previous to the mid-Atlantic Council going, you know, I think we need to regulate these things, cause I saw them getting smaller. With a mesh size or something, and I didn't save the letter and they wrote and they wrote me back and said oh no, no actio0n needs to be taken at this time. Well a year later it was closed, you know. So, you know...

RES: After they weren't telling like you didn't know. Either way it's not right.

INT: No, but that's how that went.

RES: So are those the major changes then? You're out of shad, you're out of sturgeon...

INT: Out of dog, yep.

RES: Out of dog, Otherwise your fishery is similar in terms of seasonal grounds, in terms of...

INT: Yeah, there's a few mackerel. Some years when the mackerel show, I get some mackerel in the winter, you know, around the end of the month.

RES: So they're erratic though, aren't they?

INT: Yes.

RES: Back when you started, how important would you say commercial fishing was to Barnegat Light?

INT: Pretty much very, you know. Back then, it was a lot of long liners here, you know, and it was a staple, you know, in town here.

RES: And how many fishermen would you say there were, and how many boats?

INT: Back then there was probably about...it was more bigger boats then, you know...

RES: The pelagics, like the long liners?

INT: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yep. There was probably, I don't know, maybe 15 or 20 long liners, and maybe 10 net boats, and 7 or 8 scallopers.

RES: Scalloping has grown a bit by then. There use to be only like 2 or 3 here, right?



INT: Ahh in the 80's, let me see if I can count. There was a boat called the Amber Waves, a boat called the Carol Ann, the Grand Larson, Jennifer Lee... yeah you're probably right. It probably was only really 4 or 5 back then.

RES: And how were the gill net boats crewed? I'm just trying to get a # of how many people...

INT: Usually just me and one other man. When I took the **XXX XXX** with a side hauler, and I had a flaker in the back, you need 3 guys. But generally, I could go 3 hand a boat; we make a lot more money when we go 2 handed.

RES: SO that's at least 20 people on board in that time, aboard net boats?

INT: Yeah.

RES: Were there the same docks and infrastructure back then?

INT: Pretty much. There was another dock in the middle there of 15<sup>th</sup> street that went...

RES: So there was 3?

INT: There was three.

RES: How did net boats do their crew shares at that point?

INT: We pretty much paid everybody got a third, you know. I mean you took out expenses and gave your man a third, you know.

RES: Boat got a third, captain got a third?

INT: Right, you know, that's a pretty square deal. I still pay my good guy that – He's been working for like ten years. But he's like the top paid in town, you know, he gets...that's a little more than, well a lot more than what most people pay, but...

RES: What do most people pay?

INT: Geez, now there's at least low as 17% on boats, you know –some boats more, 25 on some boats. The norm's probably 25.

RES: Do (sounds like cods or cause 069)(?) come out of the boat share in your third, third, third?

INT: Um no, it's off the top.

RES: Ok, so (cods?)(070) are off the top and then it's a third?

INT: Yeah. I do now, these days, I do take a net share, like a couple of hundred bucks a week for replacement gear, because we go through so much.

RES: They get torn up a lot or?

INT: Yeah, we just have a lot. We have a lot. If I showed you my net stock, you'd throw up, you know. It's taken me all these years just...I have a...

RES: Why for all the species?

INT: Yeah, just, I mean, different years, different times, I mean where you had to have this net for...I think I've been doing this too long, because if you go down, if I showed you, even some of the newer guys are always amazed. I'll go out in the field and dig this net out and they're like, what is that, you know?

RES: What do you use this for?

INT: Yeah, you know, and I'm like we built this back in, you know, and when the Spanish mackerel were here, you know, that couple of years. We built this when these little trout were here and the blues bad, and we needed to get underneath the blues and get the trout, you know. And it just goes on and on and on, you know.

RES: That's expensive.

INT: Oh yeah. I have 21 net boxes, 4 x 8 boxes, 21 or 24 net boxes that are stuffed to the top.

RES: How many nets would be in each?

INT: It's tough to say. It all depends how deep it is – anywhere from 20 nets to 6 nets depending if it's a big drift net or something. But it's just loads and loads and loads of lead, melted and (?) (078) lead. I use to make my own lead lines, you know – a lot of crap, a lot of crap.

RES: A lot of capital up in that.

INT: Yeah, I know. You know, I'm still doing it; I'm still ordering secret weapons, you know, that try to get these little niche things in that I see, you know, like if I get this little smaller mesh and it's a little deeper, it might be a little more effective, you know. And I just keep, you know, every year, I'm building...

RES: It must pay off, that gamble, every once in a while?

INT: Yeah it does; it doesn't always, but every once in a while you hit it on the nose, you know.

RES: How's your profitability been? I don't need #'s, but in terms of then vs. now, has it gone up or down or about the same or?

INT: It's probably gone up a little bit because of the monkfish really – that's about it, you know, that's really why.

RES: That pays a lot?

INT: Yeah, yeah, I mean if you could catch your monkfish, you could make some good money.

RES: SO even though you've lost shad, sturgeon, and dog, you're probably really overall...

INT: Yeah, because of monkfish.

RES: Because of monkfish.

INT: Definitely, but that...I just saw yesterday that tax (?has been or didn't)(085) cut in half, so next year we're going to lose a lot of days at sea.

RES: In terms of the quantity of gear that you use – like you mentioned overall how much you have, but at any one time - has that changed much over your career?

INT: Not really. We might use a little more now, cause we've got a little smarter how to haul it and made it a little easier for ourselves.

RES: You mean your efficiency in terms of...

INT: Yeah, (?talking at same time)(088), but I think we're about at our pinnacle, you know, I don't think we can get much...

RES: How many can you fish on a given trip?

INT: Oh it all depends. I mean I sometimes, I can go out there and stuff that thing so full like a boat load of (?)(090) and you'll set once and be done for the day. You know, it all depends. It's really very erratic.

RES: You set fleets, or how do you...

INT: No, drift netting we run around together, but usually just searching and searching/looking.

RES: No I mean your nets, do you shoot out three or 4 pair, like in Newfoundland they call them fleets – they'll shoot out like 3 or 4 tied to each other and then set 3 or 4 of those, what they call fleets, together in a certain area – do you do it that way?

INT: No, I don't, you know, I mean like I...our drift nets are attached to our boat when we set. The monk nets though, they might be something like that and yeah we'll set like 3 long nets out, you know, right there – just the same area – if we get a good spot. That, we do it like yeah that...

RES: Sometimes?

INT: Yeah, that's pretty much how you monkfish though probably. They're more of a ground fish, monkfish kind of think up there I think. Like when we're fishing in the spring and the fall, we're actually chasing the fish with this elak machine, and we try to line them up.

RES: Elak?

INT: Yeah, it's this old West German bubble machine. You look at it, it looks like a heart machine. And when the right fish comes on, it leaves a certain signature bubble, and it goes in actual time. It will, you know, because of the boat, it goes pshhh and it disappears and it's gone, and...

RES: It's an image you see on the screen?

INT: Yeah, and it takes a ...

RES: It's like a fish finder, but different?

INT: Yeah, it's an old – they haven't made them since the 80's, but they're good machines, and there's a few guys here that are good with them, you know. Some guys never get good with them.

RES: You can tell species with that?

INT: Yeah, you've got to really stare at it. It takes a long time, but I mean the guys that are good with it, you know, it's effective.

RES: So can you tell a croaker from a weak with that or?

INT: Yes, you sure can – yes.

RES: Wow, that's an effective piece of machinery.

INT: Yeah but if I showed it to you, you'd be like what is that, you know, but it's...

RES: It looks like (?)(101).

INT: Yeah, you've just got to, you know, people always ask me how do you stare at that thing like that? I mean you can't even turn your head for more than, you know if you're riding along and you see one, there's one you know and another one, you know, and then there's feed and you're like is that one and then all of a sudden you'll be like that's enough to go on you know. Some times I don't even...people ask me like, they'll be like, what did you see there, and sometimes I can't even answer it. It just looks right, you know, it's like its these bubbles look right and it just I'll scream like throw the jug and I'll just turn and set. And inshore, it's tricky cause there's so much feed, and there's so much little stuff, you know. Offshore, like blue fishing, it's fairly easy, you know, you're steaming along and then boom you see a blue come out, you know, and boom you'll see another bluefish, you know, and it's fairly easy, you know,

like out 15 fathoms looking for blues. But get up in that surf in the fall with all those, it's just so much feed and crap and seaweed on the bottom and you've got to...

RES: Clutter and noises.

INT: Exactly, you're just rooting through, you know, to look for that one thing that you need to see, you know. And I mean, and sometimes you'll just see a big huge puddle of bait, and you can set it and catch nothing, nothing, nothing, and you'll see one fish come cracking off the top of that, let it fly, and you'll catch 2-3000 pounds. So it's a real, it's a mind game is what it is. It's a chess game. I mean you just start out first thing in the morning man, and you just got your face in that thing like...the croakers have made it easier for a lot of the guys that weren't real good at it cause they kind of spread out like miles of them. But before, like we would ride looking for weakfish, you know, you'd drive for like 8 -10 hours before you even fired, you know, just rooting through the stuff trying to see the...

RES: You can't do that with fuel now, right? I imagine?

INT: Well our boats are pretty efficient, you know, so it's not bad. I mean you run all day for you know 50-60 gallons on the shore, so it's not that bad. You know, you can keep moving, you know.

RES: These Canadian boats, they're capped at 65 feet, you know, but they're not capped in terms of the (?)(114) so they've got these just blunt squares that they're putting. Their fuel costs are huge because of it, you know.

INT: Yeah, well their fuel is high anyway. But like even the XXX XXX, like he'll go out trawling for a couple of days, and he'll burn you know 3-400 gallons. And that's starting to add up; it's like 6-800\$, you know.

RES: And because of the factor of where they're fishing, you know, they can't afford to goof around. You've got to be efficient when you're...

INT: Definitely, and effective. Yeah, it's starting to get that way here. It's changing it; it really is. The 2\$ fuel's starting to...for years we were paying 50 cents you know – the high was 80, you know- and it's changes the game.

RES: Yeah. I guess we can talk a little bit more about regulations like when you began in the 80's there really wasn't that many regulations?

INT: I didn't even have a federal permit – not a single one. I had a net license, and I was good to go.

RES: A net license, so that was a category – a gear license?

INT: A state net license.

RES: So you needed to apply to NJ? Was it just a nominal fee at that point or?

INT: Yeah.

RES: A couple of bucks or whatever?

INT: Yeah it was whatever it was, I don't know a 100\$ or something, but that's all I needed, and I was good to go.

RES: Register your vessel and go?

INT: Yep, document it – and just my net license. And slowly but surely, I had to get this federal permit; I had to get that federal permit.

RES: What began that? I mean what are the first big ones that you remember – regulations that came on?

INT: Well actually ground fish, you know, the ground fish permits, and I didn't even really want one, cause I would have had to have a log book. So I kind of like just said, I don't want one, you know.

RES: You weren't fishing them anyways.

INT: Right, and catch, I mean I could qualify. I only needed one pound, and I had a, you know, winter flounder or something, I( could have qualified. But I did qualify, but I didn't want it. I didn't know any better. I was just like oh I'm not filling out that stupid log book over ground fish, you know, so I turned it down.

RES: Do you regret doing that?

INT: Hahaha yeah.

RES: Why?

INT: Well I could have had a ground fish permit, you know. I probably would have never had any days on them by now, but after all the amendments and this and that, it probably would have been useless anyway. But at one point, I probably could have sold it or something.

RES: It would have been of value.

INT: Yeah, yeah.

RES: Ok, so then the permits started coming on to enter into the fishery. What about gear restrictions and all of that kind of stuff? When did that start? I'm looking for sort of milestones as you go through time that really had an impact on your fishing operations like what...

INT: We never really had that many gear restrictions. It was more the fish restrictions.

RES: Meaning tax and trip limits...

INT: Yeah, you know, getting kicked out of this and trip limits and stuff. Yeah we never really had, I'm trying to remember any time when our net...you know just the shad, I mean, losing the shad and not having...and the dogs and having all that net, you know, all that gear that you couldn't use anymore.

RES: How did that happen getting to let's start with shad. How did that happen? You say kicked out; what happened?

INT: Well I told you, we showed up and they said that, you know, that they formed an advisory panel, and they asked me to be on it – the commercial representative for up here. And so me and a guy from Virginia named XXXXXX went up to RI to a series of meetings where they told us we were over fishing. So we pretty much got...there was this one lady who just despised the ocean fishery, and she worked for the NY DEP. And she really was a one man army. She was some kind of Hudson River foundation, and she brought in this old shad fishermen who had a giant paving company who was a millionaire, and but he was about 80 years old, and got him to tell them that we wiped this shad out. But it wasn't, you know, it's when the striper started really getting bad, and as I got...

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RES: And when you say bad, you mean lower?

INT: No, they were thick, bad, they were hurting us, they were hurting our shad fishing. And after talking to the old guy, I mean you know, when he was at his peak of his shad performance, he was fishing like 60 nets, cause there was no bass. And when she drug him in there, he was down to fishing like 6 nets, you know what I mean. She never let anybody know that this was, you know, really what happened to this guys fishing is that he couldn't put the gear in the water anymore, you know. And I got to know the guy; he was a great guy...

RES: Why he couldn't put any, because...

INT: He was picking stripers all day, and they're destroying the nets. So it was really bad; I mean it was really bad. I did eventually show it to an attorney who just said man you guys really got it, you know, and he was supposed to help us, but he never did.

RES: And they closed it meaning that there was no more quota given out or?

INT: Right, so what they did is they tried...so anyway they said you know you're over fishing; you've got to stop. So ok good, we'll go with trip limits, or let's do some closed season, or net limits, or whatever. Ok, so they sent us home, and well they decided that we weren't over fishing. The #'s came back, and said you know we were not over the over fishing threshold, you know, we weren't, you know, over F, you know, or F5 or whatever. So they sent us back home for like, I don't know, we didn't hear from them for 6 or 8 months. And then when they call us back in, and said well you're not over fishing, but you could inadvertently wipe out a river

system with this. And this girl called the...she told everybody that it was a brand new fishery – the Ocean Intercept Fishery, you know.

RES: Oh, the intercept thing.

INT: Yeah, and this and that, and that and his. And then so I brought in documentation from these old square heads that were around here that gill netted shad since WWII. They pound netted the living bejesus out of them, you know, right here. The old guy that had the surf city fishery told me, he told me they use to take like 40,000 pounds a week out of his #2 pound, you know, I mean they were here, you know, and everybody fished on them. So anyway, so I got that across, but it still didn't do any good. They said well, you know, you're catching mixed stock. And the real kicker was, at the end, they found out that they left all of the bay and the in river fisheries alone; they found out in the end that there was the same mix of fish up the Delaware Bay as we were catching in the ocean – and they still put us out. They gave us a 5-year phase out.

RES: So that fishery's totally closed now?

INT: Totally closed to me, except 5% - 150 pounds or 5% of fish on board, which is a joke. We try to catch some big weak fish; we get a few.

RES: That's a volume fishery though. I mean you can't make it with that.

INT: It's disgusting, disgusting. They didn't say oh just take 500 pounds a day guys and try that for a while; it was just pssew, you know, so we really took it on the chin there and that was just a disgrace. And then now, you know, between...we just have so many problems these days. We've got observers just hanging all over us...

RES: what does that do? I mean I know what they do, but is it a...

INT: Oh yeah, it's a witch hunt, you know. They're hoping, you know, the enviro's are pushing the service to get enough observer coverage that eventually they can get hopefully get enough mammal takes or turtle takes or something to just crush the fishery, you know.

RES: And you're talking about the inshore gill net fishery?

INT: Yeah, um hum, yep, they just keep sending them. I mean they don't see...the only chance they have seeing anything is with the large mesh fishery. They don't see anything all spring...

RES: You're talking about the observers, what they see?

INT: Yeah, right, and they keep coming. And they quoted me in the fisheries news a couple of months ago, and I said it, it's a witch hunt. You know, they came here like ten years ago...

RES: With you guys as the witches, commercial fishermen?



INT: Yeah, I mean they're looking...they're just looking for something to clobber us with, you know.

RES: Why are they doing that?

INT: I don't know, you know, I think it's just driven...I've sit on the large whale team, and when you sit around with the environmental groups, it's stunning the hate, the disdain, that they have for us. I mean...

RES: Do you think that's particular to gill nets or do you think it's commercial fishing as a whole. I mean you talk to long liners, and they feel persecuted. You talk...

INT: Yeah, no, it's commercial fishing as a whole, you know, the mobile gear – whatever, you know. They have just made arguments that all commercial fishing is horrible, and they just pick their battles at certain points where they'll see a turtle scalp dredge issue, they'll assault that for a while, you know. And then they'll move over an attack this one, you know, and they just pick, you know. There's so many lawyers; there's so many people making money from it now that it's run itself into a monster. You know, it needs to be on the O'reily factor, you know what I mean, it's just...I don't know. I mean it's spun itself into a beast. It can't be, you know, we can't, you know, I mean they're going to get us.

RES: They being the enviro's?

INT: Yeah, them or the serv...I think the service is not as evil as people would think they are. I mean they can be...

RES: You're talking about NMFS?

INT: Yeah, they can be bad, but they're driven a lot politically, and they're driven by the environmental groups. You know, I believe that. I mean what these observers come out with these, you know, I mean...it's funny because I get a disgruntled observer, and I kind of try to deprogram them, and what they're telling them. And man on man, you know, some of the stuff they tell these kids, you know.

RES: Are they all kids?

INT: Yeah. They tell them some wacked out stuff. I mean they come out of there telling them we're shaking turtles out of the net when they turn their heads, and you know they tell them this kind of stuff, you know, at observer training. And the one boy was telling me, you know, at their college they had their job day or whatever and there was a lot of environmental groups and they were trying to get them to join the groups and giving them this observer program – be an observer, you know, do the right thing, help, you know.

RES: Being an observer = being an environmentalist.

INT: Right, and they're telling them, you know, get out on those boats and, you know, blah, blah, blah. I mean I'm hearing this from these people, you know, they're telling me, and I don't think they're making it up. So it's scaring me, you know, and so it's rough. The observer program got what 27 million\$ last year. They built a new 1300 sq foot facility, and they're asking for another 13 million. I mean this program didn't even exist a few years ago, you know, or not like it is today. So that's the beast I'm talking about that's just, you know, I mean you go down to Viking Village there's 4 or 5 observers. They're probably there right now this afternoon trying to get trips. I don't even want to go down and work on my boat anymore.

RES: Why? Cause they'll hang around and...

INT: They'll keep coming over asking for a trip, and you can't refuse them.

RES: You can't refuse them? What if it's a kid that's kind of a personality conflict or something – you don't like him – you've got to take him?

INT: Yeah, I've had some problems, a few problems, but one fellow he quit, but I told him he's not getting back on my boat. And XXXXXX, who was #2 in the service at the time, she was a friend of mine, I called her and she said XXXXXX you don't got to take that guy. I said XXXXXX, I said I'm going to either punch him in the face or the boat aint leaving, cause I'm not putting him on my boat. You know, a 22 year old kid telling me, you know, oh well if you happen to catch too many mammals we're going to have to shut you down. I mean I'm hearing this from a sea sampler, you know. This predisposed...it's horrible man.

RES: And they speak for NMFS as a whole or something?

INT: They're trying to, yeah. They're subcontractors, and they're at the bottom of the food chain, and they're like...and I've been fishing hard for a long time, and I've got them looking at, you know, I just I'm not taking that. I can't, you know, I can't.

RES: No I don't blame you; I wouldn't want that on my....somebody looking over my shoulder and telling me I'm doing things wrong and illegally and all.

INT: Yeah, I mean I have to take them, you know, I mean the beginning of the month I'll have to give them 2 trips, you know. But like I said, they'll eventually they'll be something will happen where they'll get enough takes or something where they'll be able to really use it against us. It's just, it's going to happen, eventually it'll happen. And then nobody's talking about how there's more mammals and turtles and everybody's protecting them and they're having turtle watches on the beach, and letting, you know, nobody's talking about that. I mean there was really no issues like that when I first started fishing, you k now, and then the craps getting thicker. So now we're the bad guys, you know.

RES: You mentioned once, this is kind of an aside but, but you thought some regulations were good, but others are bad. How can you separate those? I mean which ones are good, and which ones are bad.

INT: Well stupid stuff like the way the monkfish fishery's run where we're on the clock and we have trip limits. So I mean you can't haul your gear, you can't clean, you know, so like I left a load of fish up there the other day.

RES: Up where?

INT: Up where my gear is. You know, I hauled 50 nets, I had my double limit. Before that it's been slow, you know, we've been barely getting the limit, and I had a double limit.

RES: This is the trip limit you're talking about?

INT: Yeah, I ran the clock for 24 hours and 1 minute – I had a double limit, and I had to leave another 2 or 3000 pounds of monkfish in the water.

RES: Waiting to...

INT: Well hopefully not all of them will be out preying, you know, that they get back there and the dogs haven't eaten them or something. So that's stupid regulations.

RES: Well you leave them in the net?

INT: Yeah I can't take them.

RES: Yeah, yeah ok.

INT: So hopefully I didn't lose them all. The moons up, so the bugs shouldn't be going too bad. But the dogs were chewing me up where there's so many horn dogs that they're just biting your fish apart.

RES: Dogs?

INT: Dogfish.

RES: Oh horn dogs. I haven't heard that one before.

INT: Yeah, they've got the horns on them. Yeah, we get smooth dogs, which are sand sharks, and then horn dogs.

RES: Yeah spiny dogfish.

INT: Yeah. They're up there really fierce, so we're hoping. I'm leaving tonight, you know, we'll (?) (194) I can preload them. The one boat, I can preload the clock, but the other boat had a ground fish permit, The **XXXXXX**, and I wasn't allowed to preload the clock.

RES: What is preload the clock?

INT: I can haul out early. You can't sit at the dock with the clock running, that's illegal. But with an A or B permit, you can preload the clock.

RES: And an A or B permit a specific spp?

INT: Monkfish. Yeah, the C and the D is monkfish with multi spp. And the XXXXXX has a D, and I couldn't preload on that boat.

RES: So the clock thing is actually something I'm just wondering more about. Is that required for all of your trips or just monk?

INT: Just monk.

RES: The scallopers have to do it too right? How do you find that system?

INT: It sucks.

RES: It broke the other day didn't it or was that just for scallopers?

INT: It might have just for the scallopers. Yeah, you know, if they just said ok, you know, here's your 20000pounds go get them, you would waste so much less – or whatever the # was – you know you wouldn't waste so many fish. The way we're doing it now is wasteful.

RES: How do you mean?

INT: Well just like the other day, half of those fish get chewed up there, or  $\frac{3}{4}$  of them.

RES: Because of you're trip limit.

INT: Because I didn't haul it. If they'd given me those fish, and they came off my totals, then I wouldn't have wasted what got chewed up.

RES: What's the rational there? Why would they have a trip limit and an individual quota?

INT: No they should just have an individual quota with no trip limit.

RES: No, but why do they say they have the trip limit? I mean what's their rational?

INT: Well it would basically make it an ITQ, and congress put a hold on them for a while. They took it away now. I think you're allowed to do it again. But they just, they wouldn't give us a running clock, they said we (002 abused)(?) it in the ground fish fishery. See if they gave you a running clock, you'd be ok too.

RES: By running clock...

INT: That way, like ok, I had, lets say I had the other day doubled them and hauled it all and had 6,000. Well I would have to run my clock until I gobbled up enough time to equal that amount of fish I had, which would make perfect sense – a running clock – cause then ok, I had my 40 days and I just burned three days work off on the 6000 pounds and now I move on. But that's too smart; you can't do that.

RES: So you have a days at sea restriction on the monk too?

INT: Right. The running clock would be smart. That would stop waste as well – just came in and keep the clock running until you used your time up and then go back out.

RES: They'd have to come up with some formula like X pounds of fish = X...

INT: Well we have it now anyway.

RES: Yeah, just apply that to the...

INT: I've suggested it at the monk committee. The service shot them down, because it just wasn't (?) (07) to the running clock. I don't know what they did, but...

RES: Somehow they...

INT: Yeah.

RES: Ok, so those are a couple of examples of regulations that impact you. Are there other major ones that... I'm trying to figure out, it's actually quite challenging to figure out what a cumulative effect is, cause we can talk about the effect of say an area closure. You can't fish in there, and that means, you know, you've got to burn more fuel. But talking about it in combination is difficult, like how does it affect you, all of these regulations? You've mentioned being sort of feeling persecuted, perhaps. Like you mentioned a sort of a loss of flexibility – you can't...

INT: Yeah, we have been in pure luck that we haven't been totally had the legs cut out from under us.

RES: The monk fisheries...

INT: Everything. I'm just astounded that we're still standing, you know, I mean with the loss of dogfish, the loss of shad, the loss of sturgeon. I mean what it's done is taken your opportunities away. Croakers have rebounded – pure luck – you know they're here and haven't been here in 40 years. They're everywhere. When we lose them we're in big trouble, you know. Monk fish came along for us, but that's fairly controversial, and god only knows where that's going to end up. You take monkfish out of this equation, you take those croakers away, and, you know, it's a 4 month/4 month of the year fishery. I mean we have just been skating on such thin ice. I mean that's really...

RES: Fragile is a word I've been kind of dealing with, like you guys feel more fragile in terms of your viability maybe than you did 20 years ago?

INT: Oh god yes! Absolutely. Yeah. This has been pure luck.

RES: Because, I mean I'm just thinking out loud, but 20 years ago you sort of bounced between fisheries, and you fill in pieces here, and you get 6 weeks out of shad, or whatever, and you get three weeks out of whatever it was, and then together you piece it all together and you make a living. But now...

INT: But now when all of these pieces start to miss, and your more dependent on just a couple of them, but those come about, then it's...

RES: Feast of famine.

INT: Right. And then the current cost of things, you know, these days, it's an expensive living I guess, you know, you won't last long.

RES: So how would you fix it?

INT: You know, a little bit of everything – a little bit of everything. You know, give us 200 pounds...give us 10-15 big strippers a day, you know, we can sell for 4\$ a pound. We'll be in her by 10 in the morning not catching anything else; give us what's there, you know, let's have one sturgeon, you know, let us have 2000 pounds of dogfish, you know, let us have little bits and pieces of this stuff so we can put a day together. Right now, you're...it's so hard, you're trying to root through everything to try to get to this one thing, you know what I mean?

RES: No, what do you mean?

INT: Well like we have weakfish, and we have different closed periods in the fall for weakfish and bluefish, you know, and then throughout there, there's weakfish around, and you have to stay away from them. You know, you're just trying to...you have to be so accurate now. You have to be so...you have to know where you're at, you have to get...it's just a certain thing. There's no more...

RES: TO stay legal you mean?

INT: Right. There's no more mixed fishery half the time, you're just trying to pinpoint on one thing, you know, like when you're throwing big sturgeons overboard when you're monk fishing. Those sturgeons, I mean that one big sturgeon years ago use to make the day sometimes, you know. Like if you're having a crappy day and here comes a 100 pound sturgeon, it be like you'd be moon walking across the deck – yeah, you know, here it is; we're alright here today, you know, we made it. I mean the business has been...I've fished really hard; it's been really good to me. I mean I shouldn't be griping so mush, but I see what can happen, you know, and I've...I don't know. I wouldn't want to be a young man starting over again. No way. You've got your

hands full, you know. I don't think they could do it, you know, without some kind of in. Just you need to be much more skilled than you were before.

RES: Fishing skills?

INT: Yes. It's pretty squirrely.

RES: Pardon?

INT: I said it's pretty squirrely, the whole thing.

RES: One thing we didn't really ask you about yet, just to get it kind of quickly, the ...

INT: That's my wife XXXXXX.

RES: Hi XXXXXX I'm XXXXXX...

[break in conversation]

RES: Market distribution and how that's changed overtime – where you sell it, and how much you get for it, and all that kind of stuff.

INT: Well thankfully I have some (?mic malfunctions for a second)(034)

RES: How?

INT: Ernie's done a lot for us at Viking Village. I mean we've always, you know, we use to ship independent. I use to sell all my own fish.

RES: Up to NY or Philly or whatever?

INT: Yeah, yep, but we didn't have a lot of leverage, you know. Now Ernie, you know, he sells all the scallops and a, you know, so he gets a lot of leverage. I mean, you know, they don't mess with him as much as they would...you know, I did end up with some good customers, you know, some of them gangsters up in NY, you know, and they were good to me because I was a steady producer, you know, they could always count on me. But no, that's gotten better for us, thank goodness. It has to; you can't miss another one of those, you know, you can't not or we wouldn't be around.

RES: And how do you mean better- like you're getting better prices or you're getting steadier income?

INT: Yeah, better prices, steadier income, you know, Ernie knows where to the fish, so he doesn't flood the markets, you know. If NY starts to pack up, he's going to Philly, wherever, you know, just to keep the glutts from stopping, you know. He's done a tremendous job.

RES: So does all of your stuff go through Viking villiage now?

INT: Yeah.

RES: So that's a fairly good exchange.

INT: Yes.

RES: Does it make it easier for yo in terms of...

INT: Yeah, it does, yeah. I mean it's going there and getting the check and it's, you know, all the expenses are out, you know, the fuel, the packing are out already so...

RES: We could do this quickly, but one thing we usually do is sort of talk about where your fishing is occurring just in general so we get an idea of like how those might have changed. I've got a few chart here, maybe I can...can I just lay them right here?

INT: Sure absolutely.

RES: Could you maybe just show me where some of this...now how far are you traveling in an inshore vessel? Are you all inside the bay, or where do you?

INT: Oh no, you go right to jail you do that, but no well see this chart's only good for the fall. Well we use to shad fish, this was my hotspot right down in – this was my shad hot spot all down in here back in the day.

RES: Right in here?

INT: All in here, yeah. I shad fished there for years – caught a lot of trout in there. I still go down there messing with those big (?) (048) in the spring.

RES: Ok, so that's pretty close to shore, you're only

INT: Very close.

RES: ...is this in fathoms or meters?

INT: No, that's feet right here.

RES: Oh feet, even feet.

INT: And when we fish in the fall, we fish from down here all the way to up here, but we pretty much we're not outside of like 60-foot. Yeah, this whole chart is where we...that's our like August through November, or excuse me yeah August to Nov.

RES: So maybe about here...



INT: yeah Seaside, or that's, yeah, that's Manasquan. Manasquan all the way down to like, this is called little beach down here just past the end of this chart. Right like within 3-miles to the beach, that's our fall fishery, you know, we run up and down the surf line. June and July, we fish...this is the Barnegat ridge; we do a lot of Bonita fishing around here – Bonita and bluefish – real good spot these two ridges right here. We drift net there.

RES: Still?

INT: Yeah, oh yeah heavily. And if we don't find stuff, we'll crank right up...this is called the humpty dumpty here, and then you get up here a little further, and this is the edge of the mud hole. We'll go up here, trawl all up and down this mud hole right here looking fore blues. We can catch them good. I mean you find them, you can set once and get a boat load and get out of there. Sometimes we're done in a few hours.

RES: So that's all blue fishing? This is this here?

INT: Yeah, that's just a lump there called the humpty dumpty, but that'd be one of the spots we'd check, you know, looking for blues as we're cruising. Like here's another lump here called the JD lump....right here something...

RES: Oh yeah, I see a line of 94 up to 80.

INT: Yep. So we'll just check all of those lumps, just cruising, you know what I mean – riding, riding, riding, looking for swirlers, looking on the....

RES: DO you use much temperature gear?

INT: Yeah, for bluefish you do, cause we get a lot of up welling here. So like in the summertime like you know you'll get a screaming southwestern and the upwelling occurs, and then you'll need to make sure you're out of that cold ass water or you won't catch a blue fish.

RES: Yeah, but it's all surface stuff you do right.

INT: Yeah.

RES: You don't have any down...

INT: No, no, pretty much no, pretty much I can pretty much predict, you know, whether I can catch anything or not just by which way the wind's blowing in.

RES: So is that about as far offshore as you would go?

INT: Um not...well now I'm fishing pseww! Hahaha, you know, I'm monk fishing.

RES: Where does the monk run?

INT: I'm fishing up off of Byar Island. We use to monk fish all up inshore there too. There still is a lot of boats, but it's got a lot more crowded, so we use to monkfish all up in, actually right off in here, and there's tons of guys still fishing here – monk. This is the Manasquan ridge all in here all the way out to here to the west side.

RES: Ok, so that's big.

INT: Yeah, yeah.

RES: SO what do you look for for monk?

INT: Ah, you're just setting bottom contours and looking for clean bottom where there's no lice and you know productive place, and, you know...

RES: Mucky bottom or what?

INT: Yeah, mucky's a little better, but you know then it all depends on how many nets are in front of you. There's so many guys that got into that monkfish fishery that...I fished here, this was my haunt, probably 10 or 12 years you know, and now I just steam right past it.

RES: And then you go up by Fire Island?

INT: Yeah, there's just too many new ones in there you know.

RES: Gear conflicts?

INT: Yeah, you just don't want to fish behind all of that gear, you know. I'd rather just steam and take the beating, you know, but be a little more productive.

RES: So what are the regs on the monk fishery now?

INT: Um well we're allowed...

RES: Is it limited access?

INT: Yeah, but so many permits were bought from NE and brought down here that were ground fish permits. I have one on my other boat...oh no, no, that's right excuse that was Jimmy Loveburn, so he was right out of here, but he was a trawler, so he qualifies. But so many permits came out of NE. I mean if they just had mid-Atlantic permits for the mid-Atlantic boats that actually qualified in the mid, there'd probably 2 dozen permits, but there's 100's that came from NE, you know. Not 100's, but probably 100.

RES: Yeah, a lot.

INT: A lot, yeah they came out of NE. Yeah. But no, we still fish, you know, 6 months of the year we still...if we were still shad fishing, we'd still be fishing in our traditional grounds except for monkies. You know, all of this is all still real productive.

RES: For all of those species that you're still allowed to fish?

INT: Yep, it's very productive. I've probably caught 450,000 pounds of fish this year. I mean we work really hard...

RES: All species?

INT: Yeah, and we know what we're doing, but you know...

RES: Do you have a gen cat scallop license?

INT: Yeah.

RES: Do you use it?

INT: No, I wish I had. That was another...freaking...that pisses me off. That's been a launching pad. I mean they're restricting everything like crazy, and then that gen cat thing went ballistic. Again, I told you I get too much info. I was an idiot for not putting a dredge on that Viking Rose. What a perfect boat, you know, but everybody kept telling me oh you know there going to put an amendment in, you know, 10-foot dredge, blah, blah, blah. But meanwhile, you know, the process is slow, and I would made a lot of money if I had just done that, you know, and just said screw it like everybody else did and just jumped on it.

RES: What does it cost to re-rig for a scallop?

INT: 50 grand if you do it right. So I went otter trawling...

RES: Well that's a chunk of change though...

INT: Yeah, I know and I like trawling because I have the permit, you know, but I should have. I never thought scallops were going to jump to 9 to 10\$ a pound either.

RES: Yeah, well nobody did I don't think. I mean nobody knew it would go that high.

INT: I feel like a total moron. I really do, you know, I mean being around this business that long and then, you know, again I think I get too much information sometimes from the inside, and they were scaring me. If I didn't hear anything I probably would have done it.

RES: Ignorance would have been bliss at that point.

INT: Yep. But the gen cat thing really jerks my chain because what it's done is it's just made a launching pad for, I hate to say it but, a pack of nit wits. And when the gen cat thing ends,

they're all going to be looking to buy nets or doing whatever they can do to get in and be in the fisheries that they were never in, looking for permits, and just making the whole thing worse, you know. Over-crowded fisheries getting more crowded...

RES: Displaced effort into your niche.

INT: Right, because it's going to happen, because they're going to be next. You know, I mean the gold rush mentality for the gen cat scalloping was unbelievable, you know. And it's really exactly the wrong thing that we need to happen right now, you know, is have...especially people that don't know what they're doing with net and stuff like that out there, you know, doing dumb things.

RES: Like what?

INT: Just not setting in the right place, causing gear conflicts, you know, you could do stupid things when the water gets warm – you don't want to have the gear out there – you'll have the sharks come, you know, turtles, you know, there's all kinds of stuff going on out there. You just don't want unqualified people racing around with a lot of net. It's a bad mode of doing it.

RES: Yeah, bad for the fish, bad for the...

INT: Bad for everything, you know.

RES: The image of the fishery too.

INT: Yeah. It's a shame cause it's still really viable, it's still going to be really good, it's just a matter of doing it right, you know, it really is.

RES: Well like anything else I think. Well, we usually end these things by, you know, asking you if there's anything that we need to know that I missed that I didn't ask you about cause we come up with the questions list. It's only what we can think of before hand.

INT: I don't think so. I hope I didn't get on my soap box too much.

RES: No, I mean that's what I'm here for. I'm not...I don't want you to sit here and listen to me.

INT: Yeah, you know, it's just a little frustrating, you know, the whole mess.

RES: Profits of livelihood that they're messing with, you know. It seems just like #'s on a page, but...

INT: That's just where it was getting back to the new caring you know, like with the ASMFC is they just keep, you know, hammering these fisheries closed, and nobody ever comes around and goes well what do you fellows think you're going to do now. No one gives a shit, you know, it's the god's honest truth, you know. I mean not that, I guess maybe we're not deserving of any compassion. I don't know, but you know it's just kind of weird though, you know. I mean I

know if I was in charge, the first question I would be asking myself is, you know, what's this guy going to do next. Is there anything for him to do, or should we be... I think if they, you know, had as much effort in trying to solve that just brush you aside, I think we'd be in good shape. I just think there's so much effort...

RES: I'm not sure I understood that?

INT: Well so much effort goes into figuring out how to get us out, or how to, you know, close the fishery. I think if they use that much effort in how to manage it right, I think we'd be in better shape. Like the monk fish, like I was telling you about, the running clock. Why shouldn't we have a running clock? Why? I mean nobody ever explained to me who abused it and how it was abused, and I haven't figured it out yet – how you could abuse it. I mean you come in with 6000 pounds, you better run 72 hours off of your clock or you're dead meat. You know, if you get caught not doing it properly, you call in, you hail your weight, I had 6600 pounds, well that means you've got to run your clock for 78 hours and start running it, and don't go out till you run your clock, unless you want to throw all of your fish over. But that would work better than what we have today. That's the kind of things that, you know, I mean nobody works toward, I don't believe. I see some like ground fishermen seem to get a better deal than anybody even though they've been sliced and cut and hacked. They seem to get, I think, politically in NE there's enough people feeling sorry for those guys where they, you know, you've got Olympia Snow. And people like that, even though they are crushing them, they do seem to try to work with those guys a little more to give them a palatable you know way to do it, you know, where we don't get that.

RES: Why, because you're lacking political support?

INT: I think so, yep. Nobody will champion our cause, you know. And I've always felt that we really have no voice, you know.

RES: Do you think that's because it's low on the sort of NJ profile or economically, or why, or just the actual interests whoever's in office?

INT: I think it's controversial, you know, and they don't...they're not going to support the watermen. I don't think we...like in Maine, you know, the lobstermen. Everybody wants to see the lobstermen, you know, I don't think we have that – though a lot of tourists do come down nowadays and like to watch us.

RES: Well yeah NE, the brochure, it be looking at BnB or something like that. I mean this quaint fishing village or...

INT: Yeah. Yeah, but I don't think there's anybody worried about us really. I mean they don't really care, and that bothers me really more than it has for a long time, you know. You go out of the meeting where there's just like the ASMFC public hearings where they're just basically just totally debunking the weakfish fishery. And even though they're saying it's not overfishing causing the problem, they don't know what it is, they can't admit that it's cyclical. They just say that there's a problem, it's not overfishing, but the only thing we can control is fishing, so we're

going to take your season away. And there aint nobody standing behind that guy going you fellows going to survive there or what? Aint nobody back there, you know, looking and asking. That's what I mean about there's no national standard.

RES: They do do some socioeconomic impacts. Have you found it inadequate?

INT: Yeah!, Yeah. I mean the shad one was just like too bad, you know, I mean basically is what it said. Then they'll go just say it will have no impact.

RES: Is it the info that they are collecting that is inadequate or is it their response to it or both?

INT: Both. Nobody comes and talks to me. I've been the shad advisor for 15 years. Nobody talks to me, you know. I don't hear from them. You know, I'm easy to get a hold of. They have my #. I get all of their propaganda papers.

RES: You agree to do interviews.

INT: Yeah, I mean I get their propaganda literature constantly, you know, and I'm loaded with it. **XXXXXXX** I knew him well; he knows me, you know. He's not there anymore (?) (116) I think his name is; (?Dave's) (116) got the number, you know, the higher ups – **XXXXXXX** she knows me.

RES: So what are the big ones now on the horizon that would really screw you – that you would really have a hard time...

INT: Sturgeon bycatch in the monkfish fishery.

RES: If there's a sturgeon bycatch thing that would really hurt?

INT: It's coming. I hear it from the inside.

RES: What about the, what was the second one you said...

INT: That's the main one. Weak fish, yeah, I mean again once they take those...once you're down to like a 20 day season, they're going to rebound in a couple of years. You're not going to have access to them anymore. And then you're going to be by-catching, you know what I mean. If you go out, you know again that's what I was telling you about, you have to get better and better to sort through, be more accurate, not to catch any of this, try to catch just that, you know, you have to just get smarter every year.

RES: Is it too hard for some people?

INT: Yes, absolutely. And you're going to get guys who just don't care. They're going to go screw that.

RES: Can't keep up with it anyway.

INT: No, they're going to go out there and just catch it and throw the other stuff over; they're not going to care. You know, we have guys from the dogfish fishery, when that ended, took their dogfish gear, anchored it right up the beach at seaside in the fall when the strippers were moving, and they hurled 10,000 pounds of stripers over on a flat, calm, sunny day on the weekend. Alls you could see was white bellies floating for as far as you could see. Well 6 months later I'm down at the enforcement trailer, you know, with the head of the rec groups trying to come up with a compromise, you know, because they wanted a net ban again. And I said well no anchored gear. I had to explain what happened. I mean this is what a delicate situation, where I'm defusing it – me, you know. I mean I don't feel like I want to shoulder that, you know, I mean it's nuts. I mean the whole fishery's relying on, you know, smoothing that mess over because a couple of knuckleheads, you know, that were catching 10 boxes of weak fish and throwing 90 boxes of strippers over, you know. And these guys will do that stuff. This is America, they can't stop me, you know.

RES: Yeah. How prevalent do you think that attitude is? I mean is that like the cowboy, that one guy in a bucket, or one apple in the barrel, or ...

INT: A handful, a handful. One smacker will get the rest of them going, you know. It only really takes one. You know, that's the frustration that I feel, you know, I've been through those kind of things a few times, you know, over the years. It's just like the gen cat scallop things. There's guys with 3 or 4 gen cat boats.

RES: Is that legal? Yeah.

INT: They had reduced that to 250 pounds where it would have made an owner operator thing out of it, it would have kept it to the people that really needed it, you know, somebody maybe like me or one of the other guys that fished for a long long time, and if they get kicked out of something, they can fall back on that and go get it you know – not get rich – but make a days pay and keep the operation rolling. But then they left it go, and now, there's guys with 3 or 4 gen cat boats trying to make an enterprise out of it.

RES: Cause they can?

INT: Cause they can.

RES: That's an awful risky thing though. I mean everybody's got to know that that gen cat thing isn't going to go on forever, right? I mean...

INT: Dude, it hasn't stopped them. There's 7 boats at (?) (134) right now getting rigged up.

RES: To enter now. Hum.

INT: It's nuts, it's frieking nuts.

RES: Well I think I would have been in your camp. I just can't imagine that that's going to last for...

INT: Hey, no brain no pain man. I mean those guys just don't give a shit, you know, I mean they don't. I'm telling you, I know these people, you know...

RES: About risk you mean?

INT: Yeah. And it just frustrates me, I mean they should have just lowered the limit.

RES: Yeah, well it's a shame you get examples like that that screw things up for a lot of people.

INT: Well like I said I feel like a fool, you know what I mean. I feel strongly about it cause I sit there at night and say damnit! Hahaha, yeah you know. I mean if anybody, not deserving, but if anybody could have used something like that, you know, it would have been a displaced gill netter. You know, I mean I don't know. It is what it is. And you'll hear different, you know, from different people by how long they've been around you know. You still got guys that are thinking the oceans a bottomless pit, you know, like monks are everywhere! I mean you've still got guys out there like that, you know, but I've seen a lot of changes – some good, some bad. There is a lot of fish. I mean, you know, we're not looking at a dead ocean; that's for sure, because I'm catching more fish than I've caught for the last 10 years than I did 10 years before that.

RES: Wait say that again?

INT: I've caught more in the last 10 years per year than I had in the first 10 years.

RES? Is that cause you're a better fishermen?

INT: Yeah, better fisherman, but and it's some more fish around.

RES: So you think abundance in some species is up? Croaker you mentioned.

INT: Yep, croaker we still see. I mean they had this big panic over bluefish for a few years, and that was a joke, and they were just going further east; there was no problem. And now they're saying bluefish are fine, you know. I don't see no change hardly, in the fishery, you know – a little bit, little idiosyncrasy's, you know, about water temps and stuff, but no big change.

RES: Yeah, in terms of resource abundance or health it's more or less the same?

INT: Except for these up and downs, yeah. These little, yeah, weather driven up and down, so the years when we didn't have blue here in the summer, they were all in Maine, you know. Everybody...I built the XXXX in 1999; I'm sitting up there about 50 miles from the Canadian Border, the hotel at night, you know, picking the fiberglass out of my skin. And I see this guy down on the river up in the head of, not Pitchatil Bay the one up above there, there's a guys, he's



up in this river, he's got the rod bent and holy smokes what's he got going over here, you know. So I go wandering over there, the water's 50, he pulls up a 3-pound bluefish.

RES: Wow what the hell's that doing up here.

INT: We're catching the hell out of these things the guy says. These are great; they really fight, you know. I'm like oh my god, you know, I mean...

RES: Yeah, that's a NJ fish.

INT: Yeah, you know, and this was August, you know, everybody wants to know where the bluefish are. I mean down east Maine? That's quite a ways away from here.

RES: I'd say.

INT: So you know you see those kind of things. I've paid attention to all of that, you know. Yeah, it's hard, you know – hard to buy into some of their stuff you know.

RES: Some of whos stuff, managers?

INT: Yeah. Yeah, they really...they don't have any time on the water, you know, I mean they just read the trawl surveys and stuff like that. Some stuff is, I mean I'm sure they know they're doing with some ground fish and stuff like that, but how can you...you can't be catching bluefish with and otter trawl, you know, ineffective gear. And they'll tell you that, but they'll say well we caught 3 snapper blues in Area-6512 in 1983 and we trawl there and get none; it's still an indicator. You know, I mean...

RES: Same gear, same place.

INT: Yeah, right. They start using that crap on you, and then it's just like, you know, I mean you're looking at such a small %; you can't go by that. I mean you're nuts, you know.

RES: I actually agree. The blunt, blind reliance on...

INT: That's available science is what they call it, and that ain't right.

RES: Yeah, no I agree. I mean they should be using more fishermen's knowledge in the fisheries surveying the seas as science and ecology. Call it other information if you don't call it science, but call it something, you know, and use it, cause it's valuable. Why did you decide to get the dragger?

INT: I don't know, you know, I don't know. I wanted to...well I actually wanted to ...I monkied it, you know, the monk trip limit was real big, and going so far. I thought that...

RES: But you're gill netting for monk?

INT: For monks, yeah.

RES: (monking? 044) would be some other thing, yeah.

INT: Yeah. I caught a few here one year.

RES: Oh did you?

INT: Yeah, hell yeah. I caught like 2 dozen of them bastards down in Maryland. I was in ocean city.

RES: Really.

INT: Yeah it was pretty neat, you know, but they were like aqua blue.

RES: Yeah, they're cool eh.

INT: And then they turn brown, you know, dark after they die. They were awesome. But I don't know, you know, I ended up with these permits – my buddy had them – and it was a good deal. There was a monk permit. He said XXXXXXX I want you to have this permit, you know, and 10 people were trying to buy it from him. He's calling here and XXXXXXX (luckner? 048) who's a heck of a guy – you probably know him.

RES: I know him. I don't know him yet, but I know his name, yeah.

INT: Yeah, he's a good guy. And XXXXXXX you've got to buy these, you know, you should have these; I want you to have these permits, you know. So I was like alright XXXXXXX, you know, (?)050). So I start looking for boats, and I was looking at these boats, and I almost bought XXXXXXX.

RES: You couldn't use your existing boat for that?

INT: Well, I had a permit on there.

RES: You wanted a second monkfish permit?

INT: Well I ended up with a second monkfish permit, but it had a fluke landing permit and seabass landing permit for NJ, which are very very hard to get.

RES: That's what you wanted?

INT: Yeah, cause it just gave me a couple of options that I didn't have you know – plus another monk permit.

RES: This is the XXXXXXX has those permits with it?

INT: Right.

RES: I see, ok.

INT: So it gave me a couple of huge options, you know, that I didn't have before.

RES: Fluke and monk.

INT: Well fluke and sea bass, and I had a monk on the XXXXXX, but it gave me another monk permit.

RES: Ok.

INT: And those years, the trip limit was big that year. So the first year I had this, I had that 6600 pound limit (?)057). And it was good, you know, it really caught a lot. And then I did it again, and then I just got a hair on my ass to go catch fluke, you know, and I thought oh I'll run the dragger when I'm not gill netting. So I rigged it up; I bought all of this beautiful galvanized rigging from Mataken, Nova Scotia, had it trucked down, and (?)062) machine – awesome stuff, you know, and got it all together. And then I met this guy XXXXXX who was a third generation trawlerman, and he needed a job, so I hooked him up on there. But after getting it going and maintaining it, you know, and the boat just sat there when I monked it in the winter there was nothing for me to fix. The thing was just still, you know, I hauled it out and painted the bottom; that was (?)065) down there you know – all the time fixing, you know, nets are blowing apart or you know putting bellies in nets, and fixing, and fixing, and fixing. And, you know, so it's come now a lot, but in retrospect I was a fool to think that I could go dragging and then do as much gill netting as I do. I have to say, you know, gill netting the thing, cause that's what I really know, you know. I'm really...I'm very effective at that, you know, I really go out and get them, you know, when there's fish around. So I, you know, you have to stay where your strengths are. I'm too old to go wandering off and not making any money, you know, on some experiment.

RES: Well you've got a family and ...

INT: Yeah. So it's pretty cool. I mean if it doesn't work out I'm just going to sell the XXXXXX I have people interested in it already.

RES: How long have you had that again?

INT: 2003.

RES: Ok, so it's relatively short term.

INT: Yeah, it's a beautiful boat. The rigging I put on it, the trawl gear's all galvanized. It looks like something out of a navigators (?)074).

RES: Yeah, I'm sure I've seen the same equipment on other boats up there.

INT: Yeah. So I'm really happy with it, but we'll see what happens, you know, XXXX has a good (?too low to hear)(076).

RES: Yeah, if you've got somebody good on there then.

INT: Yep, he's a good trawler. So you know we'll see how it goes. I'm a realist, so you know I won't hang on till I'm you know committing financial suicide. That's one thing beautiful about that boat, the permits it has are upgradeable to 72-foot or 150 hp, so it's got...I could sell it to, you know, Lund's or one of those trawlers groups, you know.

RES: Well I should let you get back to your nets probably here right?

INT: Yeah.