

Interview with: David Pottle and Joel Stanhope
Occupation: Fishermen
Port Community: Eastport, ME
Interviewer: Lisa Colburn and Kate Yentes
Interview Location: David's home in Perry, ME
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Logger/Transcriber: Abigail Cassavant and Kate Yentes
Interview Duration: 2:33:38

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JS: I think that is everything on there.

LC: We have two tape recorders because we did have some problems once when we thought we were recording but we weren't and you can never have these conversations twice.

JS: Right.

LC: That is why we have two and they are very high quality. If you would like to say something off the record we will turn this off, and it is off when the red light is off just so you know that's on the table.

KY: If you guys don't mind stating your name, address, and how old you are.

DP: David Pottle, 20 Baymar Lane and 43.

JS: Joel Stanhope 747 Pier Road Perry, Maine and I'm 38.

KY: How long have you been at this address?

DP: 25 probably 30 years, my mother and father owned the house.

KY: Okay. How long have you been at your address?

JS: About 15 years.

KY: Are you both from Perry?

DP: Yes.

JS: Yes.

KY: What were your neighborhoods like when you were growing up? Were they mostly fishing communities?

DP: Just small do anything you can do to make a living.

LC: Do you consider it a fishing community, Perry itself?

DP: Not really, no.

JS: There was a lot of, back when we were growing up, there was a lot of industry. The Gilford Mill used to be the rolling mill, they used to make siding. There were some factories and some of them were going on when I was younger, but he probably remembers a lot more. A few more years than I do.

LC: How long before that went out?

JS: A long time, back in the seventies wasn't it?

DP: Yes there was one left in 84 or 85 that closed.

LC: And what about Eastport?

JS: That is where we are based out of.

LC: What about Eastport is that considered a fishing community?

DP: Years ago like I say there is only like 6 or 7 people that fish there now and actually there is no one that is full time. There are 4 or 5 of us that are full time fishermen that base our income on fishing. There are other people that work for a couple of months at it. This area is more like, today we might work for carpentry for a month or two and fish between doing carpentry or driving truck anything to make a week's pay, make a day's pay, or cutting wood.

LC: In terms of Eastport what are the other things people do? Would it be similar in what people do to make a living for people that don't lobster?

DP: A little bit of everything.

JS: Yes, if you don't know two or three different things and are more or less jack of all trades to live here as far as where the economy goes and what's here for work, if you don't know two or three specific things to do you won't make it and raise a family, you won't make it.

LC: How long ago was it where you could have made it full time on lobstering?

JS: I don't know if there...

LC: In your life time or have you guys always been diversified?

DP: Always been diversified. Even my dad when he fished, when my grandpa fished, they were all diversified. Had a farm, because my grandfather and grandmother owned the house right there when you came by. I mean it has been in the family forever and you always, you just don't make it in one thing. We are too far away from everything; the fishing isn't as good as in Jonesport. The people in Jonesport fish that's all they know, and it isn't like that in this area. We are only fifty miles away but it is totally different.

JS: Our fishing area is different too, we are closed off. I mean just out here in front of David's place is Canada.

LC: Oh okay so you're...

JS: We are forced into a limited area, as far as Calais goes. Out there is an imaginary line that goes out through the bay.

LC: How far out is it?

DP: Half a mile.

JS: Half a mile off shore.

LC: Oh okay so you don't even, you never go offshore...

JS: Well once it goes from here, I fish up here, David fishes more or less outside and I fish outside on another boat, but once you get to the other side of the shore it opens a little bit very little compared to the area Jonesport and farther south. They have way more area than we have.

LC: So there has always been this natural geographic limitation on your ability to fish.

JS: Absolutely.

DP: I can get a chart and show you.

LC: When you were kids how many fishing boats, how many people fished? I am trying to get a feel for there are five people now that fish...

DP: Back...

LC: Ten/fifteen years ago?

DP: They used to fish for like cod fish and stuff like that. There were all kinds of people that did that through the summer months, for three months, but they always had to go do something else in the winter time because there wasn't enough income to support you. So there were probably through the herring fishing twenty fishermen.

LC: Twenty.

DP: People.

LC: How long ago was that?

DP: Probably 25 years, when they did they all hand lined back when we were in high school and back before that even there was never a lot.

JS: You don't get hardly any hand lining now.

DP: You can't there is no fish.

JS: There is nothing to catch.

DP: Nothing to catch.

JS: So all that has gone by the wayside, the Reed guy he was talking about was my wife's grandfather and he used to catch the haddock and the pollock everything right off of Eastport. Not anymore.

KY: What are some hot topics in your fishing community or around the docks?

DP: Hot topics...

LC: Burning Issues.

DP: The whale issue is a big issue.

JS: The whale lovers... Yes we have tree huggers inland and we have whale lovers off shore, so we are pinned both ways because he is in the wood business. Diversification comes back again in the wood, trucks, equipment we are fighting both ways. Nothing is ever easy, and then you have the state who is also involved that puts more pressure on your ground lines. It is a never ending battle from one year you think you will have a good year then they come up with something new they will enforce and you have to come up with the money for it out of your own pocket.

DP: There is the bait issue too. This new bait issue with the restrictions that is the biggest thing.

LC: How does that affect you?

DP: Oh it will affect us because the price will go up on bait.

LC: Do you guys ever try anything else for bait?

JS: This guy here would be the one to ask if you have tried any bait. I have tried cow hide, but he is a little more up on it than me.

DP: I have tried everything and nothing works like herring.

LC: I think we, I am from Rhode Island, and I think the guys use skate.

JS: Skate really?

LC: I think don't quote me on it.

DP: When it comes time to weigh apples...

LC: There is no comparison?

DP: No, not compared to herring. But they probably get skate for a third of what they can get herring for.

LC: I am also wondering what it's like, I mean Jonesport they call it the poor man's Rivera I have heard it called that in terms of summer people coming in and outsiders coming in, what is that like up here?

JS: You get an influx of people, it's not like a Bar Harbor, I don't know if you have been down there yet it's not quite as drastic as that. We are getting more and more.

LC: Are you getting retirees or are they summer people?

DP: A little bit of both. Summer people, some people come to live here with their children because there is no crime going on. As far as schools go there is more one on one with the kids. The classes only have what 20?

JS: Yes.

DP: That is a big class. A lot of them only have ten kids in the class. People come for that. My wife was just talking about that this morning. My wife had a woman come in the bank yesterday and she was talking about how she moved here two years ago from down south because it was more interactive for the kids to be one on one with the teacher.

LC: Do you think in terms of town politics and who is really running the town, I guess this is both in Perry and in Eastport, is it people that have always been here or are the people coming from outside dominating it in anyway?

DP: They have tried too, but they always get voted out and the regulars come back.

LC: You are holding your own.

JS: You normally get the locals that run for office then they get the big ideas when you were speaking back on your hot topics, the LNG I don't know if you are familiar with that or not, but that has been a real hot topic in Perry. Washington county really.

LC: Do they want to run a line?

JS: They want to put a couple of ports in a couple of terminals between Eastport and Perry. In Pleasant Point they proposed one there, they proposed one in Robertson on the other side of us which is a few miles away, then they proposed another one in Calais. There were three on the table...

DP: There were three, one backed out and now another one started in Calais.

JS: There is a big push for it, and my point of view is, like David just said, there is a half a mile fishing grounds out here and we get enough boat traffic because they haul salmon feed back and forth up to Canada and now you are going to take more ground so it is a real hot topic. If you take an LNG tanker up here then you have escort boats you've got tugs you've got that many more props in the water to diminish your...

LC: And you have the dredging as well.

JS: Well I don't think there would be much dredging, that is deep water out here, but I mean as far as where the piers are going to go, I dive too I dive on the weirs the fishing weirs the herring weirs on the Perry shore there is a lot of lobster breeding ground it is

proven so that is another hot topic and I am pretty sure the wind turbine the off shore wind generation is going to become more into effect off shore which...

LC: Do you think that will affect you?

DP: Only a matter of time.

LC: You know what the guys in New Jersey did? It is the fishermen that are the ones financing it. They are finding a way to compensate for their loss of fishing habitat.

JS: There is one thing you have to understand between here and there, when you leave Washington County you leave I want to say poverty and really good fishing. We are in the poverty section of it. We are very limited, but once you step outside our boundary probably even at Jonesport I mean their catch numbers you can see them their catch number are way more than ours.

LC: Okay.

JS: Another thing they have going on is tide generating. We are getting hammered. They are actually putting one in now at the coast guard station in Eastport. They are building one right now, smaller scale modules, which the tide will generate the power into these batteries. The coast guard is going to load batteries from this barge to their station and power it.

LC: Wow, you are getting a triple, quadruple whammy.

JS: So you have the tide generation, the wind generation, and the LNG; all to do with water and fishing areas. It is bad enough we have to fight with the salmon fisheries as far as new leases. He used to drag a lot for urchins, David did, for urchins and scallops. When they put the salmon pens in we lose ground. I understand they have to survive too, but it keeps adding and adding which makes it harder to stay in this.

DP: That is why the numbers have been dwindling because no one can afford to stay in it. It costs a lot more money to fish now and days that it even did four years ago or five years ago.

LC: But that is really amazing I didn't realize you were having so much trouble with alternative energy. Down in Point Judith people are all over, they are putting in some turbines out there and they have long term plans. They are in shore and they are off shore and aside from government regulations which we will talk about or ask you about in a little bit they are not getting double or triple...

JS: Like you said the fishermen down there are investing in it, yea well take your pick wind power, tidal power, LNG.

DP: We don't have enough money to invest.

JS: Like I was talking about that poverty line.

LC: Fair enough.

DP: We are fighting over enough money right now to pay taxes.

JS: And now to keep your house and your boat and keep your family going.

DP: We have always done that, I mean we haven't really seen how bad the economy is you don't see it. If you can do three or four jobs there is always somebody that needs something done. Him and I built my garage, we've done carpentry work we have done everything I do concrete work, I grew up in it. You have to, because you just aren't going to make it fishing alone in this area.

JS: You get back to the unemployment rate like David is saying as far as the economy is going, I happened to go online and there was a scale on there and the unemployment rate

is color coded. The United States then you click on it is a virtual whatever and the colors keep changing. Well we were always in the purple which is 7 to 9.5%. Our color never changed until last year when it went higher and everyone else just followed suit to Washington County it is really amazing to see. Like I said we never really felt the effects I mean we've more or less been in our own little recession in Washington County. You have always had to make ends meet.

DP: The only effect we had here was 9/11. At the time we were shipping a lot of lobsters and the buyers all got burnt because they were on airplanes and they weren't getting them out and they had to make up their losses, well who do they go to? The fishermen. Our price went from over 4.50 a pound 4.75 to 2.00 dollars. They never changed after that.

LC: Since then?

DP: Well it has come up.

JS: It is not back from the prices we were getting.

DP: No. We would get 6-7 dollars and now we are fighting to get 4 dollars and the price of everything else has gone up.

LC: Fuel and everything, that's gone way up.

DP: But that was the hardest we took it was 9/11. This recession here, in this area, I know if you go to Bar Harbor their cost of living is more so they get more money for the lobsters. The buyers control it.

LC: Where do you, do your lobsters go to Canada?

DP: They end up there.

LC: In processing plants up there?

DP: It goes through about four hands before it gets...

JS: As far as lobster buyers, there are two in Eastport that pretty much controlled it until David opened up a little bit of inland part of doing it. There was trouble getting bait all the time, good bait, and then David stepped in and made it quite a bit easier. We sell to him now and he transports to where ever.

LC: Is that what the trucks are?

DP: Yea down there, we can take a walk down there later. I can show you my buying station, where these guys come in, and I have tanks.

LC: I am curious what is more a part of your, you are doing both now you are a buyer and...

DP: And a fisherman but there are only two of us that's, I have a federal permit and I fish 10 miles, 15 miles off shore and hopefully I have a new boat coming. I am supposed to call today, but its. You have to be into everything. It is one of those things you come in one night and the price you lose in the week you have lost five thousand dollars and you are scratching your head you know. You make it easier, the bait issue we never had good bait it always had fresh water in it. You don't catch anything unless you have good bait, so I try to keep the best bait that I know, then you start getting these guys and you start beating him as far catching poundage. I will be catching four hundred and he will be catching a hundred and he says well geeze I have to do something different and bait is the issue. If you don't have good bait you aren't going to catch anything.

LC: I am curious what does your wife do for work?

JS: My wife did work, but she lost her job. As far as the crunch of the state she worked in the children's project for troubled kids more or less. She was the supervisor up there but now she is going back to school. She happened to get into one of the programs through employment and she is getting paid to go to school. She got into one of those programs which is good and she is going to behavioral science.

LC: So is it a bachelor's or a master's?

JS: It will be a bachelor's. She has another year I think. She stayed home for 17 years, I did the work, and she stayed home with the kids. We could afford it then I guess, well not afford it but get by with it I guess. Kids benefit from that's what I believe. Back in his 9/11 that is when our fishing starts. We make ends meet through the summer, you catch a little bit, September, October, November, and partially through December that is when we get into the lobsters and if anything happens in that time like September 11 did that did hurt us.

DP: We catch 90% of our lobsters from September 15th on.

LC: Do you go through December and pull out like a lot of people?

DP: Yes.

JS: We are mostly out in December.

DP: Well...

JS: Try to be.

DP: Try to be because scalloping starts and they run the 1st of December so you can go make just as much scalloping and not have the gear issues and everything.

JS: Weather issues...

DP: Weather issue, yep. You can go do that, you can make six-hundred dollars a day scalloping with a crew as versus going pulling your traps three days and let them set three or four days and make fifteen-hundred dollars. You are better off pulling them out and go scalloping so you can get your days in so your overall weekend is a little bit better. With scalloping you don't have the bait issue to buy bait, your overhead is down. We usually try and get them all out when the weather is like this in the winter time or December because you are only going to get out on the good days anyways.

LC: So you do actually fish I mean if it is a good day you will go out January to year round?

DP: No I bring the traps right in.

JS: Yep. You can lose too much gear.

KY: You mentioned that you have kids, and do you have kids?

JS: Oh yea.

DP: Yep.

KY: Did you encourage them to go into fishing or did you want them to further their education?

DP: I wanted them to go to college. My daughter she is going to school at Washington County Community College, and she has been to the University of Maine in Machias. She has bounced around because I think she doesn't really know what she wants.

LC: What are the ages of your kids?

DP: 28, um 25 and 14.

LC: She is 25, that's the girl and 14 is a...

DP: Girl, I have two girls.

LC: What about you?

JS: I have one that is 19 and...

LC: You guys don't look old enough to have kids that old.

JS: I have been married 20 years. I am only 38, so you figure it out...when did I have her right? I don't know if she is following in my footsteps or not but she is married and has a kid already.

LC: You're 19 year old?

JS: My 19 year old. Her husband goes to Hussen. He is going to be a physical therapist. He is in his second year for his doctorate. Plus he works 40 hours a week at Lowe's. He has his hands full and she stays at home with the baby.

LC: Did you say you have one 19 year old?

JS: I have one that is a junior she is 16 years old she is going to go to school somewhere I hope, but she says she is. I also have a boy who is 11, 6th grade, and if he was first he would have been the only one.

LC: I have a ten year old boy and a 14 year old boy.

JS: Oh I am sorry. He hates school, so I am hoping he doesn't follow in my footsteps. I don't want him doing what I'm doing. You miss out on so much when the kids are growing up when you are so diversified. If you could stay in one job, it would be great to have a job from 9 to 5 you know the average guy. Up here it is not the average some days you are working 14 hours a day and you get up 6 hours later and you do it all over again, it is a repetitive motion.

LC: Do you encourage, I am sorry if you asked this, would you encourage any of your kids or did you to go into lobstering?

JS: Absolutely not.

LC: Did you, do any of your kids have student licenses?

JS: Not yet, but I am assuming my son will have one. Unless he changes his attitude toward school he is going to be running a piece of equipment or he will be on the boat. He loves to be on the boat now. He will go out and bait bags and band lobsters. He has no trouble, his work ethic is there, but I would rather see him go to school, that is one of my dreams.

DP: Some kind of school is better than jumping out of high school. I never even played sports in school I was working. From the time I got out of school in the afternoon I was driving truck or hauling gravel.

JS: You have to weigh your options. If you want to work before school and after school and pay the bills. He always had a nice truck during school, he has always had stuff that he wanted and he could afford it because he worked. He lost out on some of his school just like he is telling you and it has carried on now.

DP: It is like my oldest daughter I was never there for her when she was doing sports things. Now my wife has two kids we've got four grandkids she has four grandkids, we

are going to sports somewhere. There are always games or we are doing extra stuff for them. I always have them bailed in the truck and we are going somewhere to spend time with all of them.

JS: You miss out on too much I guess. I mean I sacrificed missing some of their growing up, but it benefited to have the mother stay home. Now she is working which is helping a little and she has to with the way things are now.

LC: Where do your children live that aren't at home anymore? Do they live local?

DP: My oldest one lives in Robinston which is the next town up, it's only 8 or 9 miles from here. My youngest one lives with her mother, but she is actually here more than she is with her mother. Her mother only lives 2 roads over, so she will call or text me and say come pick me up off the bus. I have her every other weekend and Tuesdays she comes. Her mother doesn't have a computer or things like that so she is over here. When she is home she doesn't have anything, but when she is here she has free range.

LC: What about your daughter?

JS: My daughter moved to Holden just before Brewer on Rt. 1.

LC: How far away is that from here?

JS: About 100 miles. They bought a trailer. They were renting but it was too much. It was almost like 700 dollars to rent, but they bought a place for 400 and something a month.

KY: How did you guys get involved in fishing?

DP: My grandfather always fished, my dad, my grandpa got sick and my dad took over the fishing part of it. I helped him a little bit when I was in high school, but I got out of it then back into it a little bit later on my own.

KY: Is that what you wanted to do when you were younger? Did you want to fish?

DP: Not really fish, we always had something to do. My dad owns a camp ground and my mom just got out of the real estate business, so we always had something to do.

LS: Before you grandfather did any family fish?

DP: They probably did, my grandfather was born 1890 I think. His father grew up in that house too, so I am sure he did some kind of rowing and fished something. I never really was into the history part of it.

LC: What about you?

JS: I started out, there were 8 kids in my family, I was the youngest and my sister is 13 years older than I am. She got married to a guy, my brother-in-law, and that's how I got started out. I started out tended weir, fishing weir with him, then pulled a few traps by hand. Then I got on the stern with him, then I got my own skiff and got my own license. I had to do the apprentice program to get in when it first started. Now I have my own boat plus I fish in his boat.

DP: Actually his brother-in-law worked in the woods, he and I, and he bought a boat and fished a few traps and I always went with him. Then he and I bought a boat together, but

then we went our separate ways but always knew each other. We grew up in the same town and everyone knows everyone, well not now, but 20 years ago you did.

KY: Do you know any women that are in the fishing industry that are sternmen?

LC: Have there ever been?

DP: Not in this area that I know about.

JS: When you speak of lobster fishing and women you think of Linda Greenlaw. She is the one that sticks in my mind. I am sure there are others just not as well known. A few guys in Lubec have their wives go with them, but you don't see a lot. I don't see a lot. We take a lot people all summer long, but not as sternmen they just go to see what it is like.

DP: They go to see how it is done. If you guys want to go out for a day or something you would come down and say "geeze I want to come along".

LC: Do you do that for money?

JS: For free.

DP: For Free.

LC: I am coming up here.

JS: Yea you can come right up. People are amazed at that, it is a whole different breed of people here. If you go down on the pier then you have to go pay to fish on the pier. I don't care who you are, where you are from, what color you are it doesn't matter what race it doesn't matter you go down to Easport and pick a fisherman coming off the water and say "geeze what do you do for a living" and they will tell you and sit there and talk to you for however long you want to talk. They will make your ear warm. If you took the interest and said "geeze I would like to go see what it is you are doing" and some people like from away they are like really you would take me on your boat. On our part it is probably pretty dumb and if you come out on my boat and get hurt I am probably in a world of trouble, but that's just the way we are. We are easy going, you don't see that a lot of places. Somebody that will just take you ten miles off shore and you are wondering really I don't know these guys. We get them from all over the country.

LC: That is amazing.

JS: If we had a documentary of people we have taken out on the boats...

DP: You guys did that filming

JS: It would be incredible. Yea we did a movie with Steven Frye you can look it up on YouTube.

LC: Great.

DP: Do they still have it on there?

JS: Yes, Steven Frye and you look it up it should be there.

LC: F-R-Y...

JS: F-R-Y-E I think. Great big British guy, tall.

LC: About how long ago did you guys do that?

JS and DP: Two years.

DP: They took a big film of it.

JS: They did a big documentary in England that went around the whole continent.

DP: Then they came here and did the 50 States.

JS: They started in Eastport. He drives a little taxi. Every time he comes into town he is driving this taxi. He started in Eastport and then did the East Coast, well part of it then he did the whole United States. It is pretty interesting

DP: They had a helicopter doing a bunch of stuff.

JS: We did live shoots. You will see. He also wrote a book, I have it at home.

LC: What is the book called?

JS: Um...

LC: I can look it up.

JS: Yea look it up on-line. He autographed...actually this Angus guy that owns the boat, the on I stern on, he autographed a copy and sent it to him. They did the lobster thing, they did the lobster bait. He sits down and he is trying to explain to people on the T.V. He was supposed to sell it to the Discovery Channel and the Travel Channel, but it hasn't made it there yet.

LC: Have you seen the Lobstermen on the Discovery Channel?

JS: Yep.

LC: That's one of our interviewers down in Rhode Island his dad a Grant Moore, anyway his dad is one it. It is pretty neat and amazing. It gives you an appreciation for the job.

DP: Lobsterwars.

JS: Lobsterwars.

LC: But that's a pier that isn't down there so much. Well it is...

JS: It is every where, some people just aren't honest about it.

KY: Do your wives help you with anything, like doing the books or...?

DP: Yes.

JS: No.

KY: No?

JS: I do my own books pretty much. I like to keep a hand...

DP: I used to do it, but she just took over because it got...I have so much going on now.

JS: His wife is good with numbers; my wife isn't as good with numbers. She is in the bank and my wife is into making the kids behave.

DP: She is an accountant.

KY: What is a typical trip like for you? Like what time do you go out, when do you come back, what are you doing out on the boat?

DP: We usually leave at 4 in the morning by the time we get the bait, get down to Eastport, and get the boat loaded to go for a day we usually get back...we tend traps all day usually takes us about 2 hours to get out there in the morning. Before I even start to get to the first buoy it is 7:30. Then we haul traps all day, we try to haul between 350 and 400 a day. I have 700 traps in the water so I like to haul half of them so I can haul in two days. I usually get back by 6 or 7 at night and then you have to weigh them. We weight them all out.

KY: How long do you let your traps soak for?

DP: In the summer time usually 7 days if we haul them on Monday we will haul them again the next Monday. Come September when we start hauling, if the weather is decent,

every three days then once October comes you try and haul them everyday. The weather is bad the day light is shorter. You are not going to get, if you can do 250 in October you are doing good, because the weather is a lot nastier and you have to be quick getting everything done. There are more lobsters in the traps and you have to take them all out and band them and everyone slows up with getting the bait. Time is a lot shorter so you have to go everyday to get through your traps. You throw a couple of days in there when the wind is blowing or you have a storm it might take you 3 or 4 days to get cleaned up. JS: My day is pretty similar; we fish the same areas in federal waters. On the occasional day we don't go offshore we allow one day up here on my boat to we pull about 500 because we don't allow that one day and you have to go dock to dock to get them hauled to get back off shore again.

KY: Do you guys use the rope that is designated by the whale laws?

DP: Yes we have to.

KY: What has that been like for you?

DP: Not a good situation. We are losing a lot more traps, the rope I mean some of that rope last year I broke it off first thing. You have to bring it inland and you have a mass, a big ball. What happens is, is that where we fish it is so close, everybody is fishing so close that if you get somebody that is going 15 or 14 traps on a string and 1500 feet of rope out anchor to anchor and it is rough or foggy you get your line going and hopefully you are back somewhere were you belong but you get somebody else's going the other way and you get crossed. Well if they beat you to it and you tangle up the rope it gets a lot worse on chaffing because it is in the dirt, the sand, and the mud. You are going to be lucky to get 2 years out of the rope.

LC: And before the old rope?

DP: Six...

JS: Six, Seven, Eight...

DP: Years...

JS: But you have to understand float rope is off the floor, so now you have this whale safe rope...

DP: That is sitting on the bottom...

JS: That chaffs and chaffs and chaffs...

DP: I lost more traps last year that the two previous years combined.

LC: How many traps would you estimate that you lost?

DP: Last year? Just under 40, 37 or 38.

LC: How many do you have a permit for?

DP: 800.

LC: What would you estimate that your lost income was? I mean you have the lost trap and the lost income. What would you guess?

DP: That would be hard to kind of figure that because I don't know if I lost them in October.

LC: Okay let's say best case scenario, which is the worst case but...you know.

JS: Your best our worst.

LC: Biggest lost.

DP: For the whole season out of all them 30 could have been I don't 7 or 8,000 probably. What happens is the rope is not as slippery when it goes off the boat because we pile all the traps up and when you throw the anchor overboard they all go. The rope is not so slippery so what happens is it will kind of loop itself. It will take a ball and when that ball goes overboard it will slip until it gets to the trap and as you are pulling on that, that rope is wrapping around it and will burn it right off.

LC: So there all these ways it is getting chaffed and worn. I mean not just on the bottom.

DP: It is on the boat, it isn't as slippery as the float rope is so it rubs against itself and catches itself more. I don't know how to explain it. When it catches itself it grabs the rope and pulls it you might have 4 or 5 traps going and 2 go at once.

JS: We actually call it a**hole, because it kinds of wraps around itself and chokes it off and see ya later. That is just what we call it.

DP: What happens is then you start hauling that and that rope is in that knot and it keeps pulling through and when it catches on a trap it will burn that one piece right off, cuts it right off. When you are hauling you can feel it jumping you are trying to haul it slower and slower but then you feel that it isn't there anymore and you lost a trap.

JS: 75-80 dollars gone just like that.

DP: And the float rope you hardly ever lose a trap. The only time you lose a trap there is if someone gets over the top of you and you are trying to haul over it.

JS: They did this buy back program and I am sure you know about that. They bought the float rope back and issued vouchers for however many pounds you had towards this new whale safe rope. Well that is fine and dandy, but what happens now when you have to replace that rope.

DP: It is twice as much money.

LC: The cost.

JS: Now you have double the cost of what the whale rope costs and now you are going through rope every two years. This first wave of it every trawl you had you had to go cut off the float rope and change over to the ground line. That is a lot of hours.

DP: Another thing is when, everyone used to have to bring the float rope ashore, because it floated. If you threw it overboard it would get tangle in your prop or go ashore. This new rope everybody now if they have a piece that is no good what do they do with it? They chuck it. They aren't going to bring it ashore. They are just going to chuck it overboard and it is going to sink. Well how many million of pounds did they just buy for people that had for x amount of years and you have to cut that in half. Now you are going to have twice as much in 6 years because it is only going to last 3 years. Well they are not going to put it in the landfill, they are going to chuck it overboard. How many trawls do we get in of that great big stuff that somebody has thrown overboard? We couldn't even get traps out of it we had to drag it ashore. It was a bunch of rope in a big ball, the rope had come from Canada or somewhere because it was so big it was nothing we could haul. Our rope is like that and their rope is like that.

JS: We have a size limit on our rope.

DP: The people are not thinking about what people are going to do.

JS: It sounds good right in the beginning for the whale lovers, it sounds great. It is a great plan save the whales, the fishermen won't hurt them too much well the fishermen

always take the rear end of the stick. We haven't gotten enough money to fight them and they have all kinds of money. The fishermen, we can't go to each fisherman and say we need 10,000 dollars out of everybody's kitty to go fight these guys. The lobbyist....

DP: In Washington...

JS: Can fight for us. Half the trouble is you have the law makers up there and that is just what it is you get the whale lovers or the tree huggers what ever business we happen to be doing. They get the money to push we don't have enough money to send somebody up there to represent us.

LC: We actually, in the survey questionnaire, we've got a pretty good section on that where you can really...

JS: You have a lawmaker up there right now making laws and he doesn't know what the hell a lobster is probably or he does from eating one. He doesn't have a clue about the way it is run, how it affects us, they are up there making laws and they don't have a clue how it affects the guys like us.

DP: That sink rope, in weather like this your anchor trips. The balloon is hauling on it and you have great big waves 18-20 feet. That balloon is stretching that rope all the time. How many times have I gone out on a day like this and that anchor will trip or drag on the bottom? Well you have sink rope, where is that anchor going to go? It is going to ball that rope up we can, I can show you, you can't even see the anchor when it comes up because there is so much sink rope on it. You get 4 or 5 traps hanging off of it. When the anchor trips that sink rope leaves the anchor up above it and every time, people are going to get hurt.

There are people that have lost their thumbs and everything because of this rope. He is trying to get a knot out and on a day like today and you have a swell going and he is trying to mess with it and he has his hands in there and tries to cut the rope, Patrick lost his thumb ripped it right off took it out of his...I mean because of this. People don't understand what kind of position you are put in when dealing with this stuff. It sounds good to save the whale and it is, but they don't even know if lobster traps are the ones that are killing the whales.

LC: So it sounds like it is the cost, trouble, and time but it is also a safety issue.

DP: It is a big safety issue. It is fine down in Portland where you don't have 24-28 foot tide.

LC: Right I forgot we are in the Bay of Fundy.

DP: We have balloons, buoys, I'll show you some of the balloons they are like that big around and that tall and in a full moon they are out of sight in the water that is how out of sight the tide is. You deal with that all at the same time, you don't just go out and grab a little buoy and haul it up. We are in a totally different area than what they are in down that way. If they come up here for a little while...

JS: Even in shallow water when you are driving you get a tide and you have to connect the twine down to the stakes on the bottom you do it when the tide is going, well good luck. You are more or less going to hang on with one hand and try to tie with one hand because that is how strong the current is up here. A lot of people come up here and they don't realize it and come up and see a beautiful house and oh look at the water. Well they come back six hours later, where is the water? Now the land looks ugly because It is a big clam flat and smells horrible.

DP: They put the kayak in at the boat school one day and parked the car on the side of the ramp and when they came back in they didn't have a car, the tide took off with it.

JS: So people don't realize. You might also get a couple stranded out on the light house out there. There is a little rock wall you can walk across and same situation they go up there half tide and they get looking around taking pictures and then they turn around and it is where did the rocks go. No more rocks you have to wait another three or four hours before you can get back.

DP: There was a guy that tried to swim and he drowned.

LC: What did you say that the tide differential is?

JS: On a full moon it is 28 ft. Average tide is 24-23 foot.

KY: You guys haven't had any person close calls, like been out in stormy weather?

DP: Nope, just me. It happened when I was fishing two trips and close to the shore and I threw one trap overboard and I thought the rope wasn't underneath my feet but it had actually taken a wrap around my foot where my toes are. I threw that one trap and we took off well that took me right off my feet. I was going to the back of the boat because the other trap was still on the rail and I held against the back of the boat and I was underneath so I wouldn't get hauled overboard and I tried to holler at the other guy to slow the boat down. Well he came over and pushed me down about that time I straightened my foot right out about as straight as I could get it and it sucked my boot right off like that. Well when it sucked my boot off the trap kept coming and it hit us then the buoy started coming at us and I ended up with no boot luckily.

LC: Did you get injured in anyway?

DP: I ended up with a herniated disk, but I don't know if it was that or not. It happened about the same time, then I had to go like two years later I couldn't stand it anymore and I had to go get my back operated on. I am sure it pulled something. You are standing there doing about 10 miles an hour and you get ripped off your feet and you don't know where you are going. You are going so fast you can't grab anything. People say well you should have a knife on you and this and that, well there is no time to worry about a knife. I am standing there underneath the back and thinking would it be easier just to go overboard to get some slack in the rope and get it off my feet. So you don't panic, but I straightened my foot right out it wasn't around my ankle, if it was around my ankle it would have been a lot worse. It was right around my foot like that and it just squeezed. I wasn't black or blue or anything, but I could have been.

JS: Knock on wood, no I haven't. I have been around a lot of rope too but nothing has happened yet. I hope never.

DP: I have my boat set up now different. There is not rope around my feet anymore now. I learned my lesson.

JS: That is one thing with rope you have to be really cautious and know where it is at all times. Like he said you get that swirling around and depending on what speed you are doing and what the weather is doing if it is rough, the rope is shifting back and forth and you just have to be aware of where it is.

KY: Besides big balls of rope have you ever pulled up anything interesting on the bottom?

JS: Anchors, old anchors. Years ago there used to be scalloping up here and you get a few old ship anchors and we have sold a few of them.

DP: Bottles, cannon balls...

JS: Off of Eastport you get a lot of cannon balls and...

DP: We used to get old clay pipes but somebody stole them. They had them on display in a store, but they ended up missing. Old bottles I guess, but that was while I was dragging not lobstering.

KY: In your opinion what makes a good fisherman?

DP: I don't know.

KY: What are some of the characteristics that you have to be a good fisherman?

JS: You have to be fairly rugged and you have to be willing to work a lot of hours for little pay. If a fisherman really thought about the time he had in his traps and gear for the year and figured out his pay, I don't know if he would discourage himself or not. You try not to think about it. But you have to like to do it, if you don't like to do it if it begins to be a burden like a job and you hate going to work you will never make it. You have to like it. That is plain and simple, if you don't like it you won't make it.

DP: Another thing is you see a lot of people come and go and I have to say it is because they don't know how to manage their money. We go and some days we do ten thousand dollars, but they go out and blow it, they are not thinking about slack time right now and there is nothing to do. You can't go fishing, well you still have to put food on the table and you have bills. They don't comprehend that there are 12 months a year there is not just three or four.

JS: The mind set you have to have today to fish sometimes you put yourself in harms way to get them, but some days you don't have a choice. Bills come every month. Lobsters only come about 3 months of the year.

DP: If you had wind for a month of that there goes some of your income.

KY: What makes you guys want to...

DP: Keep going? I don't know?

JS: What else are you going to do?

DP: I go just to get more than him.

JS: His drive is there just to beat me, right?

DP: I don't know.

JS: To really appreciate it you have to be there. You don't have a real boss, the cell phone might ring once but you don't have to answer them if you don't want to. Just tell them you don't have any service. Caller ID is a wonderful thing. You get out there and there is no one screaming at you unless somebody thinks you cut their trap or something stupid. It is a whole different world.

DP: Peaceful.

JS: Peaceful, that's it. That is the word.

DP: When we get up and go out at 4 in the morning it is still dark, but you get to see the sunrise. I tell my wife you wouldn't believe that sun rise today. It is beautiful, it is nice and no one is around the bother you.

JS: You see it rise and you see it set.

DP: No one is around, there are no street lights. I go to Bangor and I hate it, I hate street lights I am inpatient.

LC: Is there a street light in Perry?

DP: No.

JS: We went to Boston one time when I was a young fellow. A couple of my brothers went down, well I had been to Bangor and there are a couple lanes no big deal. Well you get down there and there are four or five lanes and I am looking for a street like and it is on the sidewalk. I didn't see it and I just kept going. You try to explain to them I am from Downeast Maine, I don't know. Well there is no excuse for the law sir, well I am not ignorant I am just not accustomed to it.

DP: Now I have to stop at the end of my driveway and I never used to have to stop. The traffic has gotten...

JS: We just got our first traffic circle last year.

LC: In Perry?

JS: In Calais.

DP: Which is 25 miles away.

JS: They put the new bridge in going across the water and it is the biggest joke I have ever seen in my life. Why do you have a traffic circle there isn't that many people here.

KY: Do you guys get a lot of tourist traffic coming down from Canada or people going up to Canada?

JS: Calais wouldn't survive without Canadian traffic. We don't get a lot of it in Eastport per say. You have a lot of big festivals in Eastport like the 4th of July there is probably about 8,000 to 10,000 people. I can't even get to my boat.

DP: It is different when you normally have 1500 people in town.

JS: Let me start with the Pirate Festival.

KY: When is it?

JS: It is in September and that is getting bigger and bigger each year. People are dressed in pirate gear, the kids and the adults. There is, they have a couple of sail boats that fire at each other with powder and they over take, they assault Lubec and they take it over. They put the Eastport flag up there and then Lubec comes over and invades. It is a good time and they have a couple of dances. It is a big party and it is getting bigger, the Pirate Festival.

LC: Are there any other festivals?

JS: The Salmon Festival used to be on its own, the Salmon Festival which promotes the farm raised salmon. They used to have a salmon dinner on Salmon Sunday, well now they have combined it. They have combined Salmon Sunday with the Pirate Festival. They are catching up to the Fourth of July numbers.

LC: What about any other fishing related festivals? You guys don't have the lobster boat races like in Jonesport?

JS & DP: Nope.

JS: We should start having some of those lobster feeds where they are 2 for 5 bucks like down in Stonington. Support your own boat. Times are tough, but it isn't quite there yet.

LC: Those church suppers they have on Edward's Island, have you ever been up there? Everywhere they have the lobster suppers.

DP: They are about 25 years behind us though, in the times. You look at things over there. Yes they are computer aged, but they are laid back more.

JS: What else do they have here as far as festivals in Eastport?

LC: Does anywhere around here have blessing of the fleet?

DP: They tried to do that in the winter time, but...

JS: They tried to do it but we have to bless our own fleet I guess when you get back in.

KY: Is there any industry in Eastport or Perry? Any large Wal-Mart's or superstores?

JS: About the closest thing you are going to get is an IGA. And that isn't very big.

LC: Now is IGA a market?

JS: They don't carry any clothes it is just a food chain.

DP: Eastport only has one gas station.

JS: Wal-mart is in Calais which is 20 miles, 25 miles.

LC: Around here what are the, in terms of businesses that might have gone in or come out in the last 5 or 10 years?

JS: Gate's Fiber used to be here, they used to make trunk liners for...

DP: General Motors.

JS: Formed fiber for G.M. They lasted 10 years. That went out by the wayside.

DP: Royal Corporation went out.

JS: Pearl Essence used to make fingernail polish.

DP: They used to make the paste and send it to New Jersey.

JS: What else is in there?

DP: They used to employ 200-300 people back in its day.

JS: They have got a tech shield over there where the mill used to be, the rolling mill.

They started a tech shield they make carbon armor for the um...

DP & JS: The troops.

JS: Over there, there are probably 15 people working at that one.

DP: There used to be two down there.

JS: The other one used to be creative apparel which coincided with that.

DP: Which that one closed up.

JS: That one closed up but the Tech Shield one is still there.

LC: So a lot of businesses.

JS: Yes it comes and goes.

LC: What about local businesses, you know coffee shops or clothing stores, those sorts of things?

DP: There is always somebody that will start one and it will go a year or two then someone else will start one.

JS: You have the Mustard Mill they have a stone and it is all hand made mustard. Stone ground mustard, I am not sure if it is the only one in the world or they are pretty well known. That has run for years and years.

LC: Goldens?

JS: Ray's Mustard Mill. They are in supermarkets and on the shopping network QVC. They have gotten bigger, but there is not a lot of people employed there, maybe 8 or 10 people. Then of course you have the Waco, the Waco diner and that has changed hands, but it has been there for years and years as far as I can remember.

LC: It is called the Waco?

JS: Waco Diner W-A-C-O. It has changed hands about 4 or 5 times in the last couple of years. The Cannery Wharf.

LC: You said that went out a long time ago?

JS: Nope it is still going.

DP: That is like a big restaurant.

LC: Oh it is a big restaurant, okay.

JS: Restaurant and lobster pound.

LC: And that is in Eastport area?

JS: Yep.

DP: Some of the business, some of the big businesses are gone. The old war mill that closed up at the end of the 80's early 90's and that employed a couple hundred people. The [XX58:14] Corporation used to employ three hundred, there used to be a couple or three canneries back in the 70's and 80's and there used to be thousands employed and I bet now there isn't even 500 employed anymore. Woodland mills in the only thing keeping this Eastern Washington County going.

JS: It's a [XX58:34] It makes pulp...

DP: Pulp and Paper.

JS: We have a, I also work on the ships for federal marine terminals; I work the crane on the ships. They export pulp from the mill and they are getting a conveyor so they can hopefully get some bulk cargo like pellets, chips. Hopefully they will start shipping some of that out.

DP: Just like how he is talking about working on the ships, they haul the cargo everyday and put them in warehouses and they only have them ship once a month. Works 3 days, so it is one of those things.

LC: Diversified.

JS: To get back at that again, he hauls the paper down because he has a couple of wheelers and his brother across the street has a couple of wheelers. When the ship is in they hire 10 or 11 flat bed trucks with the trailers on them and it is all pretty much everything we do everyone has a piece of it, everyone you know. It is pretty much, I don't know if I would go as far as family oriented but you know everybody.

DP: Its, he gets his insurance from working there.

JS: That's the only reason why I am there.

DP: If the ship is in and we are doing good lobstering they have to go do the ship, because if he doesn't he loses his insurance. This day and age, I am lucky because my wife has insurance.

LC: Your wife does with her job.

DP: That's right.

LC: What about your boats are they insured?

DP & JS: Oh yes.

JS: I wouldn't dare not to. If you lose that what do you have? It is like being on the road in your car you have to have insurance in case you hit somebody. It is pretty much the

same thing, if something happens to your boat you have to have something. There are a lot of people that believe it or not don't have it. They can't afford it.

DP: This is another thing we have been talking about because there have been so many accidents with the boats in this area. I don't know if you have read anything about the drowning.

KY: On Owls Head?

DP: No Laten Point.

JS: We lost 6 people this year.

DP: The last three years...

LC: Fishing or...

JS: Yea.

DP: There is a lot of current there; really a lot of current and one of the things is drug use. Like you have to do mandatory drug test on trucks, I asked the Coast Guard how come you guys can't do it, we can't do mandatory drug tests. Well what is the difference between me going out and driving that boat and driving that truck it is still commercial there should be mandatory drug tests somewhere. Well they, the coast guard, said they can't do it. Well if they were doing it there wouldn't be all these accidents, at least that is what I believe.

LC: Tell me about that. So you are saying there is a fair amount of drug use in the fishing people that...

DP: There is a lot more than what people realize.

LC: What kind of drugs?

DP: Everything.

JS: You name it.

LC: Heavy stuff?

DP: Yep. All these guys are using, most of them are using those pills.

JS: A lot of it is prescription abuse whatever you want to call it, but you take an urchin diver one guy in particular will go out and dive an hour or two enough to get a couple urchins to go sell them for enough to get a fix and then go back out into the water. You get a clammer that goes out and clams half the tide and get enough to go get a fix and then finishes up the rest of the tide.

LC: Is that around Eastport or further the field?

DP: It's everywhere.

JS: It's Washington County or further.

DP: Right but its, it shows up here more I think because there is not a lot of stuff to do.

JS: There isn't much else to report on. They find a thing and they run with it. They think the answer is the meth clinic in Calais.

LC: Say that again, meth clinic in...

JS: Methadone.

LC: Yes, yes but they are saying they are thinking there is?

JS: No there is one. There is a Discovery House is what they call it. You take some of these people who can't show up for a job at 6 o'clock in the morning, but that is funny because if you drive by their parking lot they are there at 4 or 6 o'clock to get that fix and we are paying for it. You are out there busting your butt on the water...

DP: And then they get their fix and then they go out of Eastport fishing for three hours.

JS: Knowing they are on meth, and running a vessel.

DP: They are driving. I mean there is no difference between them driving a car and me driving a truck.

JS: What's the difference between me and him having a six pack of beer and driving a truck down the road and a guy that is going to drink a 6 pack or smoke a joint or whatever on the boat, what is the difference? There isn't a difference you are putting people's lives at stake and your own. Mostly your own.

DP: They should have some kind of, but the coast guard says they can't do it. It has got to be some step. I have been talking to them because of the accidents. They are putting so many more laws on us well geeze face the facts listen to people that are running boats around here. Don't make us, don't penalize those that don't have any troubles.

JS: That goes back to cost again. It is like he is saying they are going to get somebody out there to pin it on anything besides drugs because its not drug oriented they are going to say "oh his vessel wasn't safely equip". Well what does he need? Well he needs that and he needs this and he needs that. Alright I am all for the safety issue, but I don't want to be forced into the issue which is not my problem. It is another mandated thing that is going to come. Like these lawmakers they mandated for these schools for no child left behind, well now you have the state stepping in and saying we are going to take your funding but you still have to carry on the no child left behind law. It is no different in fishing. You have the legislation making the laws, the DMR making the laws who pays for it? The ones that are doing it, the ones that are working. We've got a safe record. Why should we be penalized for some dope head/ crack head out there ruining it for everyone else? It also puts a bad name on the fishing fleet.

LC: Do you think that drug use or alcoholism, just thinking in general in terms of the larger population, do you think there is more of an issue with drug use and alcoholism or is it the same? Or is it just certain people in there that make it bad for everybody?

JS: Drug use in Washington County is wide spread.

LC: So it's wide spread anyway.

JS: Anyway.

LC: Okay.

DP: It is one of the easiest things for them to do because you can get a license to go or you can go with somebody that has a license. These guys that are doing it don't have a regular guy that goes with them everyday. Today you go down to the store and say "geeze can you go with me today". Well that guy will go and make a hundred dollars or whatever.

LC: So there is a safety risk because the guy doesn't know what he is doing?

DP: Right. But they are going because they know they can go get 100 dollars and go get their fix. My crew has been with me for ten years, my crew.

JS: What he more or less is trying to say is that I can't go down and get a fix, if I am a crack head, I can't go get a fix then run a crane in Eastport because we have mandatory drug testing.

LC: So it is not even an option.

JS: It is hidden. They can go on the water and it is hidden they go in the back of the boat and whatever.

DP: And it is all cash money too. I mean you come in they go and sell their urchins or scallops and they get cash. The first place they go, some of the best drug dealers have the best boats.

JS: They are running out of places to hide.

LC: Where is that?

DP: Lubec. I am not saying it is not in Eastport, but it's a lot more... When we were in a [XX1:06:26] do you want to do a line this or that, I don't think so. I mean they are doing it right when they are hauling traps and the coast guard can't do anything? Come on, that's when I get upset with that.

LC: I really appreciate your willingness to talk about that. It is I mean a lot of people we ask that question and a lot of people pass on it.

DP: Well they don't want to talk about it; they don't want to deal with it.

JS: It is well known, but sometimes you go on the street and people won't talk about it. I really don't care I don't use, but it is affecting my livelihood. When they start going to the meth clinic and I am out there busting my butt on the water it gets me upset.

DP: Then they can go a couple hours later and drive down there and get on a boat and go do it. Then they get busted for small eggs, small scallops whatever and they still keep doing it.

JS: It is no different say for yourself you work you go to the grocery store. Well now food stamps have changed over to a plastic debit card you get in line, you can always pick them right out their carts are full up like no tomorrow. They get up there they hand them the card, well that is fine and dandy but now I need a pack of smokes and 40 dollars worth of scratch tickets and whip out five or six hundred dollar bills. You talk about angry, where is that coming from. When the IRS sends me a letter that says you need to pay more taxes, it is like I wonder why (sarcastic).

LC: So there is a connection between the guys that are doing that kind of thing and there are just people in general that are flying under the radar.

JS: Round about way, welfare is too easy. Some people do need it I understand that but there is a lot of them on it that don't. They just abuse the system.

DP: One of the biggest things I seen the other day in the paper to get welfare there should be a mandatory drug test.

JS: Not only that, we can go to politics again. You want the welfare fine we will pay you, but I want to see out there in the state holding a flag or something on your feet for 20 hours at least earn something. A lot of people move to Maine just because the welfare is so easy compared to New Hampshire and so on, it is just so easy to get it. Look at the SSI disability report in the paper a couple of days ago. There are more people on SSI disability than there are on social security. You know why? Because it is about 300-400 dollars more a month.

LC: Wow, so they are manipulating the system.

JS: There you go. What is there going to be for social security, I am paying in and he is paying in what is going to be there when we get there? I am only 38 what is going to be there when I get there, nothing.

DP: They are already bankrupt.

JS: 2015 the Medicare situation is going to be out the window, that's what they are claiming. What are you going to do?

KY: You had mentioned about lobster gangs. I was wondering how much of a problem that was up here?

JS: About what?

KY: Lobster gangs if that was a problem up here, or if you had a problem with people cutting traps.

DP: No not usually. They used to, I used to have a lot of trouble, but I kind of took care of that. I took care of it for a lot of people too.

LC: I'm not going to ask how.

DP: Sharp knife. I don't pull any bones about it he knows, he knows.

JS: Yea there was pretty much one that was pretty bad. Told the whole bay and he kind of didn't like his own medicine and he's pretty well straightened out now. Used to go out there and your heads would be cut in your trap, all four sides, and a knife in your buoy, you'd pick up your rope and there'd be nothing on it.

DP: Oh I could probably find some buoys somewhere I don't know, I know I kept them. You know with some nasty stuff on them.

JS: We put brand new traps there before and the guy I work for, I didn't have a boat then, I was on his boat, and we picked up two pairs of brand new rope buoys bringing traps and he said, "I'm going to set right here" and I said, "That isn't a very good idea we've lost up there before." He just thought I was being a smart ass when I said kiss them goodbye, and guess what? We didn't see them again. Next day they were gone. And sometimes when you go up there it won't be one or two it'd be twenty or thirty. But now it's calmed down a lot. Down here anyway.

DP: There's a lot more people fishing now.

JS: From our area.

DP: In where we're fishing and it kind of was like, he can't cut everybody. It's come to the point where...

JS: You're under more of a rotation if you're not out there, chances are the other three or four or five from Eastport is going to be out there and vice versa another day. It's pretty much you know keep an eye on.

LC: So you're talking about the small number of you from Eastport.

JS: Yea, right.

DP: Or even, even he'd cut his own brother, or own son.

JS: He'd cut himself if it would make him feel good.

DP: So I mean it's just to the point where everybody watches.

LC: Sounds like he has some kind of other problem.

JS: No, he's not one of the ones whose got problems he's just like anybody. He's seventy-something years old, and he tapes his legs, he tapes his legs up to go fishing.

DP: Cause he can't stand up long enough on them. He's just been there for...

JS: Long time.

DP: Thirty, forty years and he doesn't think anybody else should be there. Turf war is all it is.

JS: I don't understand how he stayed married that long because apparently he can't like his wife either, he doesn't like anybody else.

DP: I carried a shotgun around with me for awhile on the boat that's how serious it got.

JS: We had one too.

LC: How long ago was that?

DP: Seven.

JS: Seven, eight years ago.

DP: I mean it got to the point where in the middle of the fog, you don't know, you look to the right there's someone coming but you don't know who it is. What do you do? You keep on hauling or you look for cover? You don't whose coming.

JS: We've gotten threatened before.

[72:08]

LC: Yea?

JS: Boat circled us, reached down the cuddy, assuming he's probably going to...

DP: Pull something.

JS: Pull something. I had to call the Coast Guard and Marine Patrol to come out.

DP: They wouldn't do anything.

JS: What do you do? Like Dave said you take cover and go get your own.

DP: I'm not going to be put in a position where I'm not going to have protection.

LC: Okay.

DP: I told them that, I told the Coast Guard that. I said, "You're an hour away!" I mean I'm not going to get myself into a mess with my hands tied and I can't do anything.

LC: Okay.

DP: He pulls up along side and he's got something aimed at me I'm going to make sure somebody's, the crew going down in front to get it ready when he can pull one too. I mean I'll be standing at the wheel so I can maneuver the boat to try to get away from him. If you have a bunch of traps coming up you can't just cut your rope and take off to get out of the way. I mean it was scary there for a couple, three years. I would go home nights tell my wife and she would be all upset.

JS: It's calmed down a lot.

KY: Sounds very stressful though. How does that stress then affect your relationship with your family?

JS: Try not to bring it home.

DP: Try not to.

JS: Sometimes it's uh...

DP: She used to ask every night when I got home, "How much trouble you got out there?" And I wouldn't tell her everything or she'd get upset.

JS: "How was your day?" I don't think you really want to know.

DP: Financially it hurts when you start losing ten, fifteen thousand dollars a year, twenty thousand dollars when you're not making that much to get started with.

JS: Some guys go out there and fish, they just fish, junk gear. You know they just buy five dollar traps from somebody getting out of it or somebody upgrading their stock or whatever. A lot of guys, like David and ourselves, have pretty nice gear, you try to keep and maintain nice gear. So obviously when you lose the nice gear, five dollars compared to seventy dollars, hurts a little more.

LC: Now in relation, sort of in relation to this, have any, you know if you compared to ten years ago, in terms of your plans or you know your hopes for your kids, you still have a young one, but have your plans or hopes for them changed based on change in the

fishing industry? Some people you know might have wanted their kids to go to a different school, or maybe ten years ago you would've thought, "Well if..." Well you got all girls right? Would you have wanted your kids to go into the industry more or has there been a change in your thinking between you and your family?

JS: I think personally for me, from day one I mean, like Dave said there's a lot of hours, you miss out on a lot of stuff, you know it depends on what you want, what you want to do. You know if you're happy doing it that's great, you know? Go try it but if I could persuade them to stay the course they're heading you know school, school school.

LC: Yes.

[75:13]

JS: I'd highly recommend it, staying the course. But it's getting harder and harder to maintain, to stay in the industry. You can't just go, "Well I'll go lobstering three days this week and make ends meet." You can't do it.

LC: Would you have said the same thing ten years ago?

JS: I don't know if I'd been one hundred percent...

LC: But now you're resolved?

JS: But now I know the course I know, and I don't want them to do it.

LC: Okay.

JS: You know if you can work a regular job and have...

DP: Benefits is the biggest thing and insurance.

JS: Benefits, you know take care of yourself, take care of your family if you start a family, you know? School. Once you have gone to school they can't take it away from you. Well you got a boat? They can take it away from you.

LC: Yes.

JS: You know? They can't take your knowledge away but you can lose it. Obviously you know the economy affects us a lot.

LC: Yes.

JS: If you go from making seven dollars a pound to two dollars a pound, you probably aren't going to make it. Not to say he wouldn't get his student license and go fish a few lobsters because he probably will.

LC: Yes.

JS: But I mean that'd be fine but hopefully that'll be like his part time weekend job or something that he really just wants to mess around with make enough money for a truck or something.

LC: Yes.

JS: But not be full time.

LC: Yes.

DP: I told my daughter she could go to school and get something with benefits. She bartends and she likes it. Over the Fourth of July week, make four hundred dollars a day, yea and I say "What happens in the middle of February when you only make 20?"

LC: Right.

DP: You know get a full time job that has got benefits and this and that and then you can go bartender. Make sure you get an education. I mean I screamed at her one night. She moved from her mother's to over here, she thought she was going to be out all hours of

the night in high school and I said nine o'clock curfew and 9:05 she wasn't here. I let her have it. I said "I don't care if you have got four years you have to listen to me." So other than that, and I said "An education and respect is your biggest two things". Respect should be your first one. I mean as far as when you go to school, you respect your teachers, respect this, and respect what someone's telling you." And I said, "Get a job that needs an education so you can go do one or two things. Not just rely on one thing but pick up one of something else too."

JS: Get more the security of it.

DP: She's, we talk a couple, three times a month and she only lives eight miles away because our relationship is getting better it's just I drilled it in her head that you have got to get something besides bartending.

LC: Yes.

DP: Bartending has no future, you know what I mean?

JS: A lot like lobstering.

DP: What if the place closes, the place burns? You don't work two months. Three months, however long, she'd have nothing. Where'd she go? She would come here. You know, and borrow money. Its fine but you have to go to school. I said "I'll pay for whatever you want, you get your education. Wherever you want to go, I'll do what I can. [78:10]

DP: She goes to school so that's, hopefully going to stay.

JS: You going to work ten dollars an hour for eight hours that's eighty bucks. You get up in the morning and you know you're going to make eighty bucks, unless you go home sick of course, You go lobstering...

LC: You don't know right now.

JS: You might make nothing. You might go out and your traps could be gone, you don't know.

LC: Right.

JS: From day to day you don't know. It's a gamble.

KY: What is your social network like? Are a lot of your friends fishermen or...?

LC: Fishing families or, I mean who do you hang out with? I mean you guys are obviously close...

JS: We hang out with...

(Laughter all)

JS: We hang out with fishermen, wood cutters, restaurant cooks, bartenders, x-ray technicians, uh, divers.

LC: It reflects all of the things you do?

JS: Pretty much. Yea.

DP: We all help each other.

JS: We golf a lot; we have got a lot of golf friends because we try to...

LC: There are a lot of fishermen that golf.

JS: We have got a couple months that are a little slacking and we try to do it every chance we get but when, you know, you have to go to work, you have to drop the clubs and you have to go to work. Stress relief, I think it is.

LC: Okay.

JS: That's another game that's peaceful.

LC: There's actually down in Point Judith, they have every year at the "Blessing of the Fleet" and they have a road race and it's all to raise money for a scholarship for kids, used to be strictly kids that came from fishing families. They also have a golf tournament. It is a big one and it kind of draws a lot of people. It's all to benefit, you know like I said, it's all to benefit the fishermen's fund.

DP: Well most of the time we play we try to hit all them tournaments to raise some money for whoever.

JS: We're not serious.

DP: We're golfing for fun.

LC: Yes.

JS: You know if somebody has a cancer awareness tournament or a Relay For Life tournament, you know we'll go, we'll support them.

LC: That's great.

DP: You know we just call up each other, "Hey, we're going to go on such and such day can you make it?" "Oh yea, sure. Write me down, write me down."

JS: We've gone to Bangor before, you know on the last whim of the moment, got a call for a tournament and they needed two more guys, and you know get in the vehicle, and "swish." We're right up there if we don't have anything going on, we're more than happy to. But uh yea we have got a pretty good group of friends.

DP: It's not just fishing it's everybody.

JS: We have people up at the mill, up in downtown. We're actually going to Myrtle Beach next week, there's eight of us going.

LC: That's pretty serious.

JS: Golf trip.

DP: It's fun.

LC: Well, you know.

JS: It's a serious trip, yes.

DP: It is five hundred dollars I mean...

JS: With the economy and you go down there for five hundred bucks, you go five days, stay five nights, right on the beach.

LC: Okay.

DP: For five hundred dollars.

LC: You can't afford not to at this point.

JS: Yea.

DP: I spent fifteen hundred going to Bangor last week.

JS: Yea. The tournaments...

DP: Yea.

JS: Basketball tournaments they have these BCD tournaments.

LC: How we doing here just, are you guys I just wanted to check in are you guys pressed for time?

JS: Yea I have to check my black book, see if I have to go.

(Laughter all)

DP: Yea.

[81:00]

LC: Well I really want to respect your time.

JS: Eleven-thirty, I have to be in Eastport by eleven-thirty.
LC: Alright we should be done by then.
JS: It's only ten minutes away so.
LC: We'll be done well before.
DP: I don't have anything. I mean I haven't planned anything, so whatever you need.
LC: Ok, that's great just wanted to check in.
JP: We'll take you for a boat ride if you want to go.
(Laughter all)
LC: I'm going to take a rain check on that.
DP: You can't pick the days you have to fish. You know what I mean? If it's raining you still have to go.
KY: Oh yea.
LC: But I will take a rain check on that.
JS: You come right now to Eastport Pier and I guarantee we'll get you on a boat. Between me and David you'll be on a boat. There are no guarantees to when you're going to get home; it could be you know eight o'clock at night. What we tell them before they go, the guys like, "Oh I spent a long time in the water and I don't get sea sick." I said listen, "In here in the bay here it's pretty good. You turn the corner and it's like a whole different world. Twenty degrees difference in temperature."
DP: Son-in-law did the same thing.
JS: And it starts getting a little bit like this. We had a great big guy he must've been about four hundred pounds, probably 6'6". I mean we had to sew two pair a rain gear to get him to get some oil skins on him, and "Oh I've been to West Virginia or Virginia or some place deep sea fishing I'll be alright." He wasn't alright.
LC: Was he puking?
JS: Uh, yea. I got film of it.
LC: You know I'd be having these patches and the bracelets.
JS: Whatever it takes.
LC: Right.
JS: But yea he wasn't feeling real good.
LC: You know those pressure point things that's what I'd do.
DP: We took Angus's brother.
JS: Frank, yup. Military guy.
DP: He's a military guy; you know he's right in the Marines and everything. He goes "Nothing bothers me." Yea he never lasted ten minutes.
JS: I think the funniest one we got out there, he had false teeth, and I didn't really know he had false teeth.
(Laughter all)
LC: I know where this is going.
JS: I looked over and I go "Oh geeze", he's taking out his teeth and putting them in his pocket to lean over." And I go "Oh no." I pretended I didn't see anything.
LC: They didn't over the side he just popped them...
JS: He just popped them in his pocket, yea.

KY: Yea I love going. I went out with a couple of guys out of Winter Harbor because I worked at the Oceanarium in Bar Harbor at the lobster hatchery down there, so they

would always do extra stuff when I had to go release lobsters. It's nothing like the waves out there.

JS: You may come on a flat, calm day you never know.

KY: Well what are some skills that a good fisherman should have? What is some essential knowledge about being out on the boat?

JS: First one is respect of the water. David always talks about respect as far as teaching goes. You have to have the utmost respect for the water because it will get you. Very dangerous, that's number one. Number two, having a little knowledge about the boat in case you're a stern man or vice versa if you're captain or something happens to your captain, you should be knowledgeable of the boat, electronics, surroundings, you know how to get from "A" to "B" if you need to in an emergency. But um...

DP: Tides and stuff around here.

JS: Know your tides, know your area.

[84:10]

DP: The tides, the tides are the biggest thing around here because a lot of people don't understand. Like I said about the guy who went in to go kayaking, parked his car on the ramp and when he came in there was no car because the tide had come in. That's one of the biggest things around here too. You can get in a mess real quick.

JS: If you're good with your hands that's a plus. Braiding, splicing.

DP: You have to have good vision.

JS: Tying. You have to be more or less one step ahead of what you should be doing. You know when we got out on a boat I knew what he's going to do; I know what my job is. There are three of us on our boat everybody knows each others' jobs'. You know if I know I can turn around with an elbow and know he's not going to be there, pretty much. Pretty much is each other's pockets so you know what the other's doing so that's, that's good.

KY: Have you guys net your bait bags or?

JS: I never have.

KY: No?

JS: I don't want to either.

DP: I don't want to know that.

JS: We've made our own traps before.

KY: Ok.

JS: And if you're, you know you save a bit of money if your time's not worth anything if you're on the down time if you want to put a few traps together, save a little bit of money. But if your time's worth anything it really isn't worth it.

DP: Go do something else and right them off.

JS: You could go do something else and buy your trap. Like he said go build something, go build a porch, go build, go do something else. There's always something to do.

KY: And you guys use the four foot wire traps?

JS: He does, he's got bigger ones than that. I fish forty fives on my boat, that's only because it works out right for my boat.

KY: Ok.

JS: As far as room.

DP: Forty four inche ones, fifty four inch ones, five foot ones.

JS: What he fishes there's a lot of lobsters where I fish there's just a few so I don't use such a big trap, I just need room for four or five he needs room for forty or fifty.

DP: Yea right...

(Laughter all)

DP: I could hope so.

LC: Have there been people, I mean you have about five people that are constant, none of you are full-time? One of the things we are trying to do is also talk to people who have left the industry, because they couldn't make it in the last five to ten years. If you can think of anybody that we might be able to talk to, and do this kind of thing that gives us a better kind of feel for the stress, the family stress and stuff.

JS: Well you go some people in it that get out of it, but are still in it, you know what I mean?

LC: They go back?

JS: I mean they still maintain their license.

LC: But if they're out I mean if they're not actively fishing that in you know the last five to ten years how long have they held their permit and not fished?

DP: Well in today's day and age, in the state of Maine, you don't want to let anything go.

LC: Okay.

DP: As far as licenses and permits...

JS: You don't renew it you lose it.

DP: You don't get it back. I have a stack of licenses just because I haven't done urchins or mussels in four, five years. I haven't dove for urchins, I used to dive for urchins, I haven't dove in fifteen years, eighteen years but I don't dare let it go you know.

LC: Okay.

[87:08]

DP: Even if you don't do it.

LC: If you have someone who has all these things but hasn't really fished in let's say you know, even one year, I mean if they're doing something else because they can't make it in fishing, even if they're holding the permits I would consider that somebody that's currently not fishing, so that would fall into the category.

DP: There's like, there's like sixty or seventy people in this area that's got lobster licenses and you can count them all on two hands that fish.

LC: Oh okay. I mean, have they, would these be people that...

DP: Just holding a license.

LC: But would these be people that maybe between the last five or ten years have fished, you know, half time and now they don't fish at all, even though they have the license? That's what we're kind of looking for.

JS: There's Eugene but I don't know how much knowledge you're going to get out of that.

DP: Tommy, but I don't know.

JS: That's not a real, good one I don't think.

LC: Well I mean.

JS: Yea we'll think of it.

LC: Yea, yea. We can contact you later on it. It's really hard. It's really hard to get these guys.

JS: It is because, because you're back to diversification because you know, he fishes but he also hauls gravel, he hauls paper.

LC: Right.

JS: Hauls wood. It's not to say next year, next month he's not going to fish six months and do the other stuff. I mean, I don't know it's hard to find them.

DP: It's driven by money. It's like Tommy I mean he used to fish lobsters, he tried to fish it but you know he probably couldn't make it. He's got kids, just trying to put the kids in college. Three kids in college. His father had a lumber mill, so he's concentrated now on the lumber mill. Still has his boat, still has his licenses, and still has his traps probably.

LC: But he's not fishing?

DP: Right because he's gone to the lumber mills and he's probably making more money for his time.

LC: That's the kind of person we want to talk to.

DP: He's managing land. They have got a lot of land, managing his land.

JS: We have another one, Butchie. He's bought a couple of sailboats, kind of got out of fishing.

DP: He got out, yup.

JS: He kind of got out. He still maintains his lobster license but he doesn't fish.

LC: Butchie?

JS: Butch Harris.

LC: Ok, and what was the first guy?

DP: Tommy Pottle.

LC: Is he related?

DP: Nope, but he lives just over here, five houses down.

LC: No relation? I mean that's...

DP: If it is, it's long ways. I mean the house right there that grey one? They just built that. He and his wife would be Gloria, well she grew up in that house right there, and she was a Pottle. There's no relation.

LC: Okay.

DP: Her dad and my dad are the same age and they grew up right there, both of them and they're not related. It goes back to early 1800's and the records are kind of fuzzy. So we don't know.

LC: Oh that was one question I wanted to ask real quick and we're kind of ready to go on to the actual survey. Where do your people come from? Do you have any idea I mean you said the history in terms of fishing but your ancestry, and your religion, and that sort of thing. Where?

[90:15]

DP: I don't know.

JS: No idea, I don't get into that kind of stuff.

LC: Okay.

JS: People tell me you're related to this one, that one. Ok. I don't pay much attention to it.

DP: I don't follow it either.

LC: I mean it's interesting down in lets say, New Bedford, there's New Bedford and there's Fairhaven. There's all the Scandinavians that are out of Fairhaven and then there's a lot of Portuguese ancestry in Gloucester as well but in New Bedford, but it's real interesting It would be that people came generations ago.

JS: Yea. I never much really got into that.

DP: Well my grandmother and my uncle did it, a bunch of genealogy, and you know I never looked at the books.

LC: Okay.

DP: But I'm sure that. I don't know if my dad's got the books now or not, I don't know where they ended up.

JS: This guy here when you get a hold of him you have to be careful.

LC: Say what?

DP: You get a hold of this guy here?

LC: Yea?

JS: You want to be aware.

LC: Be aware of?

JS: He's got lucky shirts.

DP: George, George is actually his name.

JS: George "Lucky" Harris.

LC: Oh. You mean?

DP: Butch. We just call him Butch.

LC: Butch, oh okay.

DP: But his real name is George.

KY: Oh okay.

DP: Junior.

JS: Lucky Harris.

DP: I mean if you were going I could probably try and find a telephone number.

LC: Yea, no that would be great before we leave if you could; you know anything you're comfortable with. Ok. So there's a lot of this that we can sort of do simultaneously, but like I said there's a set of about fifteen questions that we need to ask you individually and we need to like plug your ears so that your, you know, there's no cross pollination or anything.

[Survey 01:32:12 to 02:25:50]

LC: Great. So we've got the resident information. Do you guys, you own commercial fishing vessels?

JS: Yes.

DP: I own two.

LC: Two?

JS: I own one and I'm sterning on another one.

KY: And what type of boats?

DP: Fiberglass you mean?

LC: And yours?

JS: Fiberglass.

LC: Is it a lobster?

JS: Lobster, dragger, scallops, what ever.

LC: What is the length of yours?

JS: 35.

LC: Where do you guys land?

DP: 34 and 35 foot and we land in Eastport.

LC: And you are Eastport?

JS: Yes.

LC: Is that your home port?

JS: Yes.

LC: It sounds like your principle fishing type is lobster.

JS: I would say.

LC: That is your first and the gear you use?

KY: Traps.

JS: Yep.

DP: That is the only way you can catch them in Maine.

JS: You can't dive for them.

DP: You can't drag for them

LC: Do you guys do any other types of fishing? In addition to lobstering you mentioned a couple of other things, do you still do those?

JS: Urchins, scallops, halibut.

KY: You don't do urchins anymore?

DP: Oh yea. If the price comes up, but I am not going to go and do it for nothing.

LC: What are the gear types that you use for those?

JS: Drag, usually the long line for halibut.

KY: Do you also do halibut?

DP: Yes. Mussels.

LC: If lobster is the first most important one for your income can you sort of rank the other ones?

JS: Based on this year? Scallops.

DP: Scallops.

JS: Urchins after that, halibut is just a hobby you don't really make enough money at it.

If you catch a couple a year you are happy only because you are going to eat it.

KY: Halibut and then mussels?

DP: Yea because I have been doing mussels for a couple of years.

LC: This is where I actually grab all of the things that you do in addition to fishing.

JS: Crane operator, long shoreman, I do carpentry.

DP: Driving truck. Heavy equipment driving.

LC: How do these rank in importance to fishing?

JS: After fishing probably the crane operator then carpentry then wood.

KY: What brings in most to your income what would be second after fishing?

[0:02:25:50]

KY: Can you give me a description of any taboos or rituals that fishermen have? For instance...

DP: Territory.

JS: Lobster is very territorial.

KY: Do you guys practice anything that would set your mind at ease? For instance people don't walk under ladders because it will give them bad luck.

DP: I don't have anything like that but my wife is petrified.

LC: Of?

DP: Everything like that.

LC: So she is very superstitious.

DP: Wicked.

LC: I mean you say superstitious and sometimes it has a negative connotation. There are guys that actually, there are certain things that they do or they don't do or beliefs that they have.

KY: Like no whistling, no black suitcases.

DP: I don't have any.

JS: Really? Those superstitions are out there?

LC: Yea, an hour and a half south of here.

JS: Maybe that is why we don't catch the lobsters.

LC: Do fishermen up here have any, or have you heard of anything?

JS: I am pretty sure we put our gear and rain boots on the same way they do, but I guess they just think different.

LC: That is really interesting.

JS: Why would you want to add more fear than what is already there?

KY: Well they think it takes away their fear. They believe it will give them good luck on their boat so bad things don't happen.

DP: If I get up and I am breathing in the morning.

JS: I have a little Buddha on the bow and I say an Amen and Hail Mary to him ever time we leave.

KY: There you go.

JS: No. I wouldn't even want to fish if I had that many superstitions.

LC: I was telling Kate about this article I read called "Baseball Magic" and baseball players have a phenomenal number of rituals and beliefs and some of them will put their uniforms on exactly the same way every single time.

JS: Always left foot first, oh yea.

LC: I never thought about it that way. That there is a whole lot into it, they talk about how there is a correlation in that and what was it the number of strikes. Some of them really take it seriously.

JS: No it would just be adding fuel to the fire. If you did something wrong and your engine blew and you did your superstition wrong well now I have to fix that it would be a never ending list.

DP: I don't have any.

JS: Me either. Wake up and breathe everyday like Dave said.

KY: The last two are scales [0:02:29:29-0:02:33]

LC: We are done. Thank you guys for participating.