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Conover, Shey ~ Oral History Interview

Julia Beaty

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Interview with Shey Conover by Julia Beaty

Summary Sheet and Transcript

Interviewee

Conover, Shey

Interviewer

Beaty, Julia

Date

January 23, 2015

Place

Rockland, ME

ID Number

VWWF_SC_003

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Biographical Note

Shey Conover is the Chief Operating Officer at the Island Institute in Rockland, Maine. She was born on March 5, 1980.

Scope and Content Note

Shey Conover describes the Maine Working Waterfront Mapping Inventory that her organization, with many partners, conducted in the mid 2000s. Ms. Conover describes how the Maine Working Waterfront Coalition was striving to provide communities with tools to protect their waterfront access, but that a comprehensive inventory of existing access points and type of access was lacking. Ms. Conover describes the attributes that were collected, the importance of community engagement in this process, and how it revealed some alarming data about the small amount of prime working waterfront access in the state. She explains how this and other initiatives of the Maine Working Waterfront Coalition have informed both community efforts and the National Working Waterfront Network.

Indexed Names

Transcript—SC_003

1 [Begin Shey Conover-Part 1 Interview]

2

3 00:00:03

4 **Interviewer:** So my name is Julia Beaty; I'm here today with Shey Conover at the Island
5 Institute Offices in Rockland, Maine and it's the morning of January 23, 2015. Shey do you want
6 to introduce yourself and say who you are and what you do?

7

8 00:00:22

9 **Shey Conover:** Sure; my name is Shey Conover. I'm the Chief Operating Officer at the Island
10 Institute. My birthday is March 5, 1980. My role at the Island Institute is to oversee our
11 program's department. The Island Institute is a 30 year-old community development nonprofit
12 here and we work to sustain Maine's island and remote coastal communities and exchange ideas
13 and experiences to further the sustainability of communities here and elsewhere.

14

15 00:00:51

16 **Interviewer:** Great; so we're here today talking about working waterfronts. Can you for
17 someone who is not familiar with working waterfronts can you just talk about what that phrase
18 means and what's a working waterfront, what's a--what are some characteristics of a good
19 working waterfront?

20

21 00:01:10

22 **Shey Conover:** Sure; working waterfronts kind of collectively define the soul and character of
23 Maine's island and coast--are a major part of Maine's economy both from the ocean economy,

24 fisheries standpoint. The lobstering industry is hugely important for Maine's coastal economy
25 but also attracts a number of visitors who come here to experience the unique character of having
26 an owner/operated fishery that you can sit on the dock and--and watch go out and--and talk with
27 folks. So it's a very important part of Maine's heritage, of our current economy, and of the
28 history of our place.

29

30 **00:01:55**

31 **Interviewer:** Yeah; definitely.

32

33 **00:01:56**

34 **Shey Conover:** So--so working waterfronts there are a number of definitions that vary a little bit
35 around the--the country. For the purposes of the Working Waterfront Access Project that the
36 Island Institute did back in 2005 and the way that we normally characterize it is property that
37 supports activities that require access to the water to make a living. So often in Maine that is
38 commercial fisheries whether that's the lobster industry, clamming, any fishery that--that needs
39 to--everyone who is getting--who is earning their--their living from the water needs--needs
40 access in order to get out there to make a living.

41 **00:02:45**

42 For the purposes of our study we also included marinas and boatyards and--and other
43 kinds of industries that need access to the water in order to sustain their livelihoods.

44

45 **00:03:00**

46 **Interviewer:** So what was like the driving force behind doing this project?

47

48 **00:03:05**

49 **Shey Conover:** There were a number of different reasons why we kind of conceived of the idea
50 of developing an inventory to--for working waterfront access in Maine. In the early 2000s there
51 were a number of organizations in the State that came together to form the Working Waterfront
52 Coalition whose aim was to develop tools to protect working waterfront access in Maine.

53 **00:03:34**

54 There were a number of inventories that looked at aspects of waterfront access in Maine
55 but there was not a complete inventory of exactly how much was remaining, what the
56 characteristics of it were, how many were publicly versus privately held and one of the things
57 that we realized is that it would be potentially really helpful both to characterize the kind of--
58 kind of attributes that makes working waterfronts really valuable so one of the highest priority
59 characteristics to protect in working waterfront and also where do we currently stand so that we
60 can best develop strategies to protect the access that remains?

61 **00:04:24**

62 So that was one impetus was to provide information to support the efforts of the Working
63 Water Coalition to develop protection strategies. In the kind of early 2000s, 2005--excuse me,
64 real estate values were increasing tremendously so another I guess--so. What was interesting
65 about this project is that there were a number of different reasons both at the local level, at the
66 regional level, and at the statewide level why it would be helpful to have this information. At the
67 regional level was to support the efforts of the Working Water Coalition; at the local level
68 because of increasing real estate costs, local communities were also working really hard to say
69 what are some strategies that we can take on whether that's zoning or whether that is having

70 towns work to invest in purchasing additional public access points. But there was a lot of efforts
71 going on at all levels basically to support protecting working waterfront access and so when we
72 went through the process of developing this inventory we were really focused on what
73 information would be helpful at all levels so that it could be--it could be supportive of a number
74 of different efforts to protect working waterfront access.

75

76 **00:06:00**

77 **Interviewer:** Great; so was the Working Waterfront Coalition like a way to bring together all
78 those different levels or was that more or something different?

79

80 **00:06:11**

81 **Shey Conover:** Uh--

82

83 **00:06:13**

84 **Interviewer:** Maybe it's not relevant but--

85

86 **00:06:15**

87 **Shey Conover:** The--the Working Waterfront Coalition is--was actually a national model for
88 protecting working waterfront access and had I believe it was around 150 different organizations
89 that came together to support protecting working waterfront access that ranged from harbor
90 masters and town officials to nonprofit organizations, state agencies and industry and industry-
91 based organizations.

92 **00:06:48**

93 And a couple of the--the major successes of the Working Waterfront Coalition were to
94 work with the legislature to develop a bond package that helped to--helped communities invest in
95 purchasing working waterfront access to remain in perpetuity. Another was--.

96 **00:07:35**

97 Another really important tool that the Working Waterfront Coalition helped to create was
98 working with the legislature to create a current use tax incentive so that working waterfront
99 properties used specifically for commercial fishing activities could be taxed at a lower rate
100 similar to existing programs for farmland and forestry and that kind of thing. So those were two
101 of--of the major initiatives that the Working Waterfront Coalition took on and has--and since
102 then leaders from Maine's Working Waterfront Coalition have gone onto create to support the
103 creation of a National Working Waterfront Coalition to both share the strategies that Maine is--
104 has used to protect working waterfront but also to be able to learn from States around the country
105 for ways that they can work together to address these challenges that--that really small
106 communities around the nation are facing.

107

108 **00:08:37**

109 **Interviewer:** Yeah; so you sort of touched on this a little bit but I'm wondering if it would be
110 helpful to kind of elaborate more on the threats that working waterfronts in Maine face and like
111 what it might look like to a community that's you know feeling pressure to--to like sell land or to
112 you know kind of change the character of their working waterfronts. I don't know if you have--if
113 you want to talk about any particular examples of communities that have faced these pressures or
114 just talk about like the changes that are happening in a more general sense, and like what it

115 actually looks like to a community to--to face these pressures and to need to preserve what they
116 have left.

117

118 **00:09:22**

119 **Shey Conover:** Sure; so one example that I guess I'll start speaking to in a bit is the St. George
120 Peninsula and they were one of our--the major partners in our project in helping to identify how
121 this project could be used to support local initiatives. But the primary fishing industry in Maine
122 of course is the--the lobster industry; historically access to the water has--has happened over
123 privately owned property fishermen have had, waterfront land, they've had their own piers and
124 been able to walk out their front door, go to their boats and head out on the water.

125 **00:10:10**

126 Over the past several decades with increasing property values and increasing taxes
127 they're feeling--private property owners are feeling the squeeze so that if they're getting out of
128 the fishery it's a big temptation to be able to sell your property for major--major dollars that can
129 help in your retirement but often those--those buyers aren't interested in having folks come
130 across their pier early in the morning and smell bait and all of the--all of the character that comes
131 with--with fishing. And so communities were--or are--remain really concerned about that trend
132 for how to make sure that the access to the water, which is primarily privately owned in St.
133 George in 2003, a majority of working waterfront access was privately owned--about 67-percent
134 was--was privately held--as that conversion starts to happen communities are really interested in
135 looking to towns or nonprofit organizations to be able to partner to invest in publicly owned
136 infrastructure which is much--at much less risk of conversion and--and loss of access.

137 **00:11:34**

Key:
Shey Conover-Parts 1 & 2 = Answer
[Inaudible] = Inaudible
[Word] = Attempt at Word
[Gesture/Action] = Gesture/Action

WWF/NOAA
Shey Conover - Parts 1 & 2

January 27, 2015

138 So does that--?

139

140 **00:11:37**

141 **Interviewer:** Yeah; definitely. That's great. So I guess maybe now should we switch to talking

142 about like the project itself and how you--like what you did and how you went about doing it?

143 Do you think that like this is a good point in the conversation or--

144

145 **00:11:54**

146 **Shey Conover:** Sure.

147

148 **00:11:54**

149 **Interviewer:** --unless there is anything else that you want to talk about--about working

150 waterfronts in general in Maine but I'm sure that stuff will come up as we talk about other

151 things, but--.

152

153 **00:12:03**

154 **Shey Conover:** Sounds good.

155

156 **00:12:05**

157 **Interviewer:** Okay.

158

159 **00:12:06**

160 **Shey Conover:** [*Laughs*] So, the Island Institute started the mapping working working

161 waterfront access inventory project back in 2005. The idea was born out of a collaboration with

162 many organizations that were part of the Working Waterfront Coalition and as I mentioned
163 earlier was an effort to develop a tool collaboratively that could provide useful information that
164 could be helpful at the local level for nonprofits and conservation organizations that were
165 interested in supporting communities to protect working waterfront access and to state
166 agencies that were looking to develop strategies to protect this important resource for the State.

167 **00:13:00**

168 So one of the--the reasons that the Island Institute got involved is that we had a long
169 history of collaborative research projects and mapping expertise and so in developing the
170 methodology we worked really closely with a number of community partners to sit down over a
171 series of maps to say okay what kind of information is helpful to you in a community? What are
172 the characteristics of a working waterfront that are incredibly important to capture at the local
173 level, at the statewide level? What are we--what are we missing; what is a realistic way to go
174 about collecting the information in a way that is both helpful for decision makers and also
175 respects what can be you know very private kind of confidential information particularly where
176 you're talking about access over private land? And so there were a number of conversations with
177 our project partners to identify the--the right kind of data to collect and to develop the right
178 strategies for protecting that data and making sure that it can be used at a--with a variety of
179 different stakeholders.

180 **00:14:26**

181 Our primary project partners included Sunrise County Economic Council from
182 Washington County, Cobscook Bay Resource Center in Washington County, CEI, Mitchell
183 Geographics, the Maine State Planning Office Coastal Program, the Town of St. George was a
184 huge partner and Maine DMR and the NOAA Coastal Services Center were all--you know the

185 group of people who got together and met over a six-month period to try to hammer out some of
186 those--the data attribute questions and the--and the questions of data sharing and use policies.

187

188 **00:15:05**

189 **Interviewer:** Was that a challenging process to bring all those different types of organizations
190 and potential users of the final product to like bring them altogether and get--kind of come up
191 with like an agreement on what sort of information you wanted to collect and how it will be used
192 and what will be available?

193

194 **00:15:26**

195 **Shey Conover:** I think it was a series of really useful and helpful conversations; it was
196 definitely interesting and had a lot of back and forth for what--how do you collect everything and
197 then what--what is realistic to collect and ultimately for us it came down to if we're sitting down
198 with community members and asking them to share this local information with us what do they
199 feel comfortable sharing and how can we respect the--the knowledge and expertise that they're
200 bringing to the table and the concerns and sensitivities that they have? So it was definitely a back
201 and forth but that was the--the ultimate goal is--is getting the best information in a way that
202 supported the community's interest in sharing it.

203

204 **00:16:16**

205 **Interviewer:** Yeah; so maybe for someone who is thinking about doing something similar in
206 another area that might be something that they would want to think about is like this level of
207 effort that went in upfront and it sounds like that was a long process.

208

209 **00:16:33**

210 **Shey Conover:** So it was about a six month process with the steering committee that helped to
211 identify the--the right attributes and process for data collection. And then it was about a two-year
212 process to go out and collect the data. There are 142 towns in Maine so it was a pretty extensive
213 effort. There were a number of folks here at the Island Institute and then several partner
214 organizations in Eastern Maine and in Southern Maine to--and really the partnerships are about
215 building relationships with the folks that--with the communities that are sharing the information
216 and also helping to identify what was unique. What was interesting about this project is that
217 while the data set is helpful, what was just as helpful was the community conversations that
218 happened during the data collection process. And often times you would be sitting around a table
219 with five people from a community who would only be concerned about protecting working
220 waterfront access but they had never sat down together to have a conversation about what it
221 meant for their community or what strategies they are each thinking about to help protect
222 working waterfront access.

223 **00:17:53**

224 So it was really a special experience to be able to sit down with folks and be able to hear
225 their ideas and talk about what they wanted for their future of their community and also you
226 know often got the question well what are you learning from other communities, and what are
227 they doing, and how--how can we learn from them? And so it was--it was great to be able to
228 share those stories during the data collection process as well as being able to go back after the
229 fact and deliver them a product that hopefully they could incorporate into their comprehensive
230 plans and--and other local planning efforts.

Key:
Shey Conover-Parts 1 & 2 = Answer
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WWF/NOAA
Shey Conover - Parts 1 & 2

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231

232 **00:18:28**

233 **Interviewer:** Yeah.

234

235 **00:18:29**

236 **Shey Conover:** I don't even remember the original question. **[Laughs]** So I'm sorry; I just got
237 off into a tangent of what I really liked.

238

239 **00:18:34**

240 **Interviewer:** That's great.

241

242 **00:18:34**

243 **Shey Conover:** About the project. I--I guess one other piece that I would say about others who
244 may be interested in taking on this kind of project is the--hopefully the attributes being able to
245 share the attributes that we thought were important in Maine is helpful for other States who
246 might be interested in taking on this kind of effort. I think just as important is recognizing that
247 the definitions of working waterfronts and the importance attributes may vary quite a bit in
248 different regions. And so it is really important to be able to work with community stakeholders to
249 say okay; how--how can we capture the unique qualities and important values for working
250 waterfront access in our State to make sure that it--that it reflects those values?

251

252 **00:19:26**

253 **Interviewer:** Yeah; I think that's really awesome that you guys did that--that way and just like
254 reading through this report and realizing that you got information, you know you worked with
255 and you know got every coastal town to participate in some way and I thought that was amazing,
256 like I would never go into a project like this and--and just imagine like I'm going to get every
257 single town. I would just be like well, some of them aren't going to want to do it and that's fine,
258 but you guys like--you went to every single town, right and you--?

259

260 **00:19:53**

261 **Shey Conover:** We did. And the--the level of interest and participation varied a little bit in each
262 town and a lot of that often was based on the level of pressure that communities were feeling
263 around this issue or how--how much they were already addressing that challenge. And so in
264 some communities, there were day-long meetings that--that spanned a lot of different topics but
265 that went into a lot of the details of how to protect the strategies for protecting working
266 waterfront access in addition to sharing the--the data and the stories about different types of
267 working waterfront access both that are currently town-held and that are privately held and--and
268 often those privately held ones came with--with stories about you know kind of the history of
269 that property and--and the families that have used it for generations and--and that was really
270 great to communities that said we don't have very much but this can be a very short
271 conversation; here's the one public access that we have and we're happy to share it. But um it
272 was--it was--there were often multiple conversations that led up to collecting the data you know
273 that starts with a letter about what the project is that goes to attending a select Board Meeting or
274 a Harbor Committee Meeting to say here--here's a little bit more about the project. Here's how
275 we would like to go about collecting it and how we would anticipate sharing your information

276 and the information that we would be able to provide back to you if you participated and then
277 coming back to--coming back to collect the data and then going through a round of fact-checking
278 so that after we originally collected the data each community kind of received a draft map and
279 data source to say let's make sure that we got this right before we deliver it back to them and
280 ultimately wrapped it up into the larger inventory project.

281

282 **00:21:58**

283 **Interviewer:** Nice. So it was a drawn out process?

284

285 **00:21:59**

286 **Shey Conover:** It was a drawn out process [*Laughs*] over--over two years and I think when we
287 started it in 2005 we thought, "We can do this in nine months!" [*Laughs*] But it really--spending
288 the time to make sure that you're building the right relationships is--is incredibly important and
289 respecting the--the concerns and making sure that you can have the conversations about how the
290 information will be used and who is the best person to work with to collect it and making sure
291 that we're able to close the loop and provide the information back to communities.

292

293 **00:22:33**

294 **Interviewer:** Okay; definitely. So you mentioned that, you know, they had these meetings and it
295 in some ways served as a way to get people talking and maybe people who were already
296 concerned but this just provided them the reason to start talking about it and doing something
297 about it, like were there any examples of where something like that happened and it turned into

298 like a--like a--like a project that a town took up and they were like oh, we wanted to do
299 something anyway and now we're going to do this kind of thing?

300

301 **00:23:04**

302 **Shey Conover:** I would I guess give a couple of different kinds of examples. Often where there
303 has been a really detailed follow-up project this--the issue was already a pretty major concern.
304 Folks were definitely interested in talking with us and seeing this as one point of information in a
305 longer conversation and data collection effort about how to invest in their--in their community. I
306 would use I guess the Town of St. George again in that they started by helping us understand the
307 important kinds of information to collect and identifying what their existing waterfront access
308 resources were. And then wanted to take it one step further and so contracted with a company to
309 kind of identify for all of their shoreline whether it currently provides working waterfront access
310 or not where--where are the characteristics that would be really important for our--our fleet and
311 for public access that--that where the areas that have that--those characteristics so that they can
312 identify properties to say okay if something were to come up for sale here--here's an area that
313 has potentially really a high priority for protection or here's where we're meeting about half of
314 our guidelines. So that was--that was really interesting.

315 **00:24:50**

316 One of the other things that has been really--that I'm proud has been continued to be used
317 is that the Working Waterfront Access Protection Program which is the bond program funded by
318 the State has used our access as part of their review process so that towns that have wanted to
319 apply to that program to receive bond funding to help purchase and protect working waterfront
320 access have used our maps to identify the unique characteristics for the property that they want to

321 protect, to identify how it fits with the--the other kind of assets in their community and why it's
322 important to protect the property that they're--that they're looking to. So that--that's a way that
323 the information has continued to be used and then another way I think is less kind of--another
324 example is less specific community driven but one of the--our--one of the reasons for doing the
325 inventory was an interest in the conservation community in identifying potential roles that they
326 could play in protecting working waterfront access and their--it was information being collected
327 about kind of scenic, the value of different scenic properties or the historical value of different
328 properties and our information helped to feed what--what are some of the working waterfront
329 heritage and current high-value properties that--that both support important economic
330 development for a community but also are really important for maintaining the heritage of a
331 community.

332 **00:26:49**

333 And so land trusts have asked for information for the communities that they partner with
334 to say, how does this fit within our conservation priorities and are there ways that we could be
335 talking with communities about supporting working waterfront access protection as well?

336

337 **00:27:10**

338 **Interviewer:** Awesome. So it sounds like these are certain types of communities coming
339 together that maybe don't normally like commercial fishing and conservation organizations and
340 historical societies maybe even, like is that something that kind of came out of this?

341

342 **00:27:25**

343 **Shey Conover:** Absolutely; I think it--it started not as a result of this project. There was a really
344 unique project that happened in the Town of York that was completely separate from--from this
345 project but really helped to highlight another kind of stakeholder group that we should consider
346 at the table and to say what kind of--we need all of the unique partnerships that we can get to
347 protect this important resource and how can we make sure that we're including information that
348 is helpful to those organizations who are--who are looking to--to be a part of protecting that--that
349 access?

350 **00:28:08**

351 But it was really the--the York Land Trust working with a couple of fishermen in the
352 Town of York to help identify how you would--what are the legal structures that you would go
353 about protecting working waterfront access as a conservation as part of conservation
354 land and writing the covenants and all of those kinds of legal aspects that--that it takes that has
355 really been a model more broadly for fishing and conservation partnerships.

356

357 **00:28:43**

358 **Interviewer:** Awesome. So I guess I was curious; some of the like the numbers that come out of
359 this report like the numbers of miles of working waterfront that are left and the number of
360 locations like I don't know if you want to talk about any of those or like were any of those
361 surprising to you that you--?

362

363 **00:29:10**

364 **Shey Conover:** Maine's coastline is--Maine has a 5,300 mile coastline; before this project there
365 was thought to be about 25 miles remaining of working waterfront access. One of the goals of

366 this project was to identify is that--is that true or is it more or is it less? We found it to be
367 slightly--slightly less; some of the--some of the information was--wasn't surprising that the
368 majority of access identified was privately owned and more vulnerable to conversion--was not at
369 all a surprise but was helpful to identify the characteristics of that private access to understand
370 how best to protect it.

371 **00:29:55**

372 One of--a couple of more shocking things for me was the idea of prime working working
373 waterfront access. One of the--this happened during the data collection or I guess data attribute
374 collection process to say you know what--what do folks consider the most important
375 characteristics of a high-quality working working waterfront and three that came out pretty
376 strongly for communities was that it should have all tide access, that it should have adequate
377 parking and would have access to fuel. And so what was most surprising to me was actually the--
378 how few properties currently have all three of those qualities and of those how even fewer
379 actually currently support commercial fishing access.

380 **00:31:01**

381 So 81 of the 1,500 working working waterfront access points were identified as prime
382 working waterfront access with those characteristics but only 62 of those [support commercial
383 fishing activities].

384

385 **00:31:16**

386 **[End Shey Conover-Part 1; Begin Part 2]**

387

388 **00:00:00**

389 **Interviewer:** Okay; so this is tape two recording number two to go along with the interview of
390 Shey Conover at the Island Institute on January 23rd. We had some technical difficulties, but I
391 think they're fixed now so we're going to try to pick up where we think we left off.

392

393 **00:00:20**

394 **Shey Conover:** Great; so the--I'm pleased that the information has been able to be used at a
395 variety of different levels. At the community level it's been really great to see the information
396 used both to support community applications for the Working Waterfront Access Protection
397 Program bond funds to protect particular access points. It has also been really interesting to have
398 communities approach us asking them--asking us to share the data with potential community
399 nonprofit conservation partners who they want to work with as partners to protect their working
400 waterfront access and similarly to have regional organizations approach us asking for
401 information from--from the communities to help. Whether it's a conservation group often it's to
402 help include as a data point as they're identifying priorities for future conserved lands or also
403 working with state agencies like the Department of Transportation or the Coastal Program to
404 make sure that it's included in--the information is included in their inventories of public access
405 and those kinds of things. So it's--it's nice to see it being used at all levels and to have the kind
406 of cross-pollination and inclusion with complementary studies that are happening around the
407 state.

408

409 **00:02:06**

410 **Interviewer:** Yeah; so when somebody comes to you or to a community and says we want to
411 use some of the data that was collected from this in our efforts to do something similar does that
412 have to go through like a review process like to get permission?

413

414 **00:02:23**

415 **Shey Conover:** So the--the data permissions that the Steering Committee drafted have a couple
416 of different levels. Information for public access data – so, properties that are publicly owned
417 that allow open public access are available and can be freely distributed. The information that
418 community shared about privately held or private--privately held property or property that you
419 need special permission to be able to use is still considered public information but one of the
420 things that felt really important for communities was to understand who is requesting the
421 information and why and so any time we get a request for the full data set we ask folks to--to
422 contact the officials in a community to identify you know why--why they want the information
423 and to get permission before we--before we release the information which is you know just a
424 good--it's a great courtesy for communities and it also encourages that conversation about where
425 there may be overlapping interests in this information and preserving working waterfront
426 properties.

427

428 **00:03:48**

429 **Interviewer:** Awesome. So if somebody in another location were thinking about doing
430 something similar would you have any advice for like things that you would do differently,
431 things that you would definitely keep the same or like if you were to update this in the future,
432 anything that you would want to add or do differently?

433

434 **00:04:11**

435 **Shey Conover:** The--the most important aspect is including communities in the conversation
436 from the beginning to identify what are the priorities that are important and what information is--
437 do they consider really important to share and--and what information are they willing to share. I
438 think the other recommendation I would--I would give is--is to build the--a broad base of
439 partnerships for both communities and organizations that are working along the coast that have
440 the relationships with the communities that can be partners for our data collection effort. It--it is
441 a very intensive and time-consuming process and so partners are really important both from
442 making sure that they're--the information can be as helpful as possible to as broad a group as
443 possible but also to help with--help with the effort of--of data collection and bringing in partners
444 who have strong community relationships means that there are a number of organizations that are
445 continuing the conversation with local communities and that can act as resources for those
446 communities once the data is collected.

447 **00:05:33**

448 So I think both of those are really helpful. And one of the challenges frankly that--that we
449 faced with this is that it was--it was a two year data collection effort that we undertook now 10
450 years ago and it's really--I'm really happy that we're still getting requests for the information
451 and that it's still being used, but we have not gone through and done a major update of the
452 information. And so at this point we have a good baseline but have less information about where
453 things stand now.

454 **00:06:07**

455 We've had a couple of communities who are very actively still using the data so if
456 something changes they'll call us and--and make sure that we update it in our database which is
457 really exciting. But in other--other communities we're not sure how much has changed. And so
458 that--that's just something that I guess I would caution folks to consider is--is really helpful to
459 get a baseline and to be able to use that information and a part of the conversation should also be
460 is this part of a longer-term study that we anticipate updating or are we looking for a baseline
461 that allows us to develop strategies to protect what we currently have?

462

463 **00:06:46**

464 **Interviewer:** And so you're still figuring that out like the door is still open to maybe--?

465

466 **00:06:53**

467 **Shey Conover:** I would say we have been primarily focused in continuing to participate in
468 Maine's Working Waterfront Coalition and supporting the efforts of the National Working
469 Waterfront Coalition and understanding strategies that are being used to support working
470 waterfront preservation more broadly. We haven't talked at this point about doing another major
471 data collection effort although two years ago we did reach out to about 10-percent of the
472 communities to fact-check, I guess to--to just touch base and say how is this information being
473 used? Are there major changes that you're seeing to your--to your waterfront?

474 **00:07:39**

475 So it's--we have a little bit of an update but it--it certainly isn't the comprehensive effort
476 that the original inventory collected.

477

478 **00:07:54**

479 **Interviewer:** So I think you've you know covered it pretty well and touched on most of the
480 things that I was imagining that we would talk about. So I don't know if there's anything else
481 about the inventory that you want to say that we haven't talked about yet or if you want to talk
482 about any other work that the Island Institute has done that it like relates to or fed into. I guess
483 I'll leave it up to you of where to take it from here because I'm looking at my list and I don't see
484 anything that we haven't talked about yet. And I'm sure there's things that aren't on my list that
485 are important--.

486

487 **00:08:40**

488 **Shey Conover:** Yeah; I think I would just want to add one or two things about kind of this as--
489 as a partnership effort and kind of the ongoing relationships that--that we have with folks in
490 Maine and--and across the country to protect working waterfronts.

491

492 **00:09:03**

493 **Interviewer:** Yeah.

494

495 **00:09:05**

496 **Shey Conover:** Okay; oh it's still--sorry.

497

498 **00:09:10**

499 **Interviewer:** We you know we can edit all that stuff out but I like to just leave it on so we can
500 not worry about it.

Key:
Shey Conover-Parts 1 & 2 = Answer
[Inaudible] = Inaudible
[Word] = Attempt at Word
[Gesture/Action] = Gesture/Action

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501

502 **00:09:15**

503 **Shey Conover:** Absolutely. I just completely forgot that it was still on.

504

505 **00:09:18**

506 **Interviewer:** That's good; that's what you're supposed to do so you can feel comfortable
507 around it.

508

509 **00:09:22**

510 **Shey Conover:** So the--the working waterfront inventory project was you know was a great
511 project that--that happened in 2005 to 2007. We're pleased that it was a collaborative effort
512 among a number of partner organizations and communities to gather the information and to get it
513 packaged. Just as important as the inventory is the ongoing relationships both at the State level
514 with Maine's Working Waterfront Coalition and then also the--the relationships that--that has
515 developed around supporting the creation of the National Working Waterfront Network and
516 ultimately it's about relationships and being able to share a variety of different tools that folks
517 are developing to support and protect working waterfront access as a really important resource
518 for the State of Maine but for coastal communities around the country.

519

520 **00:10:24**

521 **Interviewer:** Yeah; awesome. All right; anything else that you think we should touch on?

522

523 **00:10:34**

Key:
Shey Conover-Parts 1 & 2 = Answer
[Inaudible] = Inaudible
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WWF/NOAA
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524 **Shey Conover:** Not until I hear it and think oh god; did I say that? *[Laughs]* Or I didn't say
525 that? *[Laughs]*

526

527 **00:10:46**

528 **Interviewer:** All right; well I don't think I'm supposed to end it in any special way so if there's
529 nothing else that you think we should talk about right now I think we covered a lot of really great
530 topics and this will be really useful and interesting for people to learn about. So I feel good
531 about--

532

533 **00:11:03**

534 **Shey Conover:** Great; well thank you.

535

536 **00:11:04**

537 **Interviewer:** Thank you very much for taking the time to do this and to share your experience
538 and knowledge and hopefully this will be helpful to other people in other areas.

539

540 **00:11:14**

541 **Shey Conover:** Absolutely; I'm happy to share--I guess let me know the best way to share any
542 images that would be helpful and if it seems like there's something or another question that
543 emerges--I'm happy to--

544

545 **00:11:26**

546 **Interviewer:** Okay.

Key:
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[Inaudible] = Inaudible
[Word] = Attempt at Word
[Gesture/Action] = Gesture/Action

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Shey Conover - Parts 1 & 2

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547

548 **00:11:28**

549 **Shey Conover:** --provide whatever information is helpful.

550

551 **00:11:29**

552 **Interviewer:** Yeah; yeah maybe we can figure out some way that--

553

554 **00:11:33**

555 **Shey Conover:** Is Natalie the best person to work with on that or--?

556

557 **00:11:38**

558 **Interviewer:** Um, probably 'cause yeah my role is to pretty much just collect this stuff and then

559 hand it off. Hmm; I guess I'll turn this off now. We don't need to record.

560

561 **00:11:53**

562 **[End Shey Conover - Part 2 Interview]**