

Participant: Mr. Dean Fleck
Researcher: Ms. Deanna Caracciolo
Location: Newport, OR
Date: 8/3/2016
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DC: So it's August 3rd. We are here in Newport and could you state your name quick for the recording?

DF: Uhm, Dean Fleck.

DC: Fantastic. So thanks again. I wanted to just open up, just super open...open a dialog. Do you have any cool fishing stories? How you got into this realm of the industry? Anything like that? I'm really interested.

DF: Well I got into this because our family is in the marine supply business. Axel Englund, my grandfather, started this establishment back in 1944. My mother was his daughter. Long story short, went to Astoria, we expanded, and when I was going to school in Coquille, Oregon, which is next to Coos Bay, we bought a store in Coos Bay. He said - guess what? You're going to work. So I went to work when I was 17 years old helping get that thing going. Then proceeded to work summers from there on, and then in college come back, spring break and what not. When I was in college we bought another store in Crescent City. I said - I kinda like doing this. I want to take a break from school for a bit. And went down to Crescent City and started working there thinking I was going to go back to school. Decided school wasn't for me. And I stayed in the business, and I've been here ever since. Which as of this year, 35 years ago. So it's been a long time. And I just enjoy it. There are a lot of neat people in this industry. I'm a kind of guy that doesn't like 9-5 job where it's static. This is very volatile business as far as fishing regulation to what do we do? How do we plan for the upcoming future? How do we change with the industry as it changes? Once it's done an awful lot. So it became very neat for me to stay in this thing. Plus, the wonderful people in the fishing industry. So that's a brief overview.

DC: Fantastic. So you mentioned change. Do you have any stories about that change, or how it has changed since you started?

DF: This business is nothing but change. When my grandfather started this business it was built around the Columbia River gill net fishery for salmon. Well we all know how that has evolved and changed. And there's been change as far as environmental reasons over fishing to here and there. Certain things, but I would say over all the west coast has learned from past mistakes and now the change is directed ahead at sustainable fisheries. How do we do it? Bycatch reduction. A lot of different things like that. So that's what I mean, it's a day to day different business. When I come to work it is different every day I'm here. And that's why I like it so much, but that's why it's a challenge as well for fishermen who are involved in this industry, to make a living from it, it's something that's so volatile with mother nature, with weather, with evolving different cycles of fisheries from crab to...I mean there are so many different fisheries out here and their all cyclical. They peak and they go down, they peak and they go down, and that's a natural cycle. So you have to plan with that, but then you have water temperature and different cycles that go into that, that even exacerbate those cycles, makes it even worse or better for certain type fisheries. So going up and down and being able to adapt to what changes come your way. Which in...so on the fishing side, they get the change, so that means we have to plan ahead as well. If we supply all the gear that they need for whatever, we've gotta sit down and we have a managers meeting every year, cause we have 7 stores up and down the coast. And so we sit down...well twice a year...and okay what are we going to do? What's happening? What's happening in your neck of the world? We've got a store in Eureka, and Crescent City, going on up to Westport Washington. What

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do you see? And just kinda throw ideas around. What do you think? Where are we going? What do you think we should invest in to make sure we can cover our fishermen? So... Kinda fun.

DC: Busy job

DF: Well it is. And that's why I say I'm not a 9-5 guy. This is just constantly where you've gotta keep ahead of what's happening. Otherwise you're going to get run over.

DC: So you said that your mother was part of this business.

DF: Well she wasn't. She was the daughter of Axel, who started the business. He's my grandfather. And my uncle now is the CEO, my cousin Kurt is the president. It's still a family run operation. My brother runs our Coos Bay operation. And my other cousin Jay Englund, he is our raft shop and safety person; because we repack life rafts and check survival suits and do that kind of thing, Eperb batteries and that kind of thing. We do that as well. And he runs that part of our business. And then his brother Kurt Englund, my cousin, is now our president. So it's still family run show.

DC: Moving down the line any children?

DF: Well I know Kurt has got...and so far children have not been involved. Kurt has a son whos a junior in high school this year and who knows. I mean quite possibly he could slide in. You never know. His daughter chose those to have anything to do with it. An ever persons different [chuckles] so...We will see.

DC: Fantastic. So what...I'm guessing that you enjoy fishing? am I correct or incorrect?

DF: I'm very avid outdoor fisher person. Unfortunately, I get extremely sea sick so the ocean, I have to make sure I have some good pills, and I don't go out on the ocean as much as I would like to. I get horribly sea sick, but I avidly fish the bay; fall salmon, steel head, fly-fishing, hunting, that kind of thing. SO I'm outdoors all the time.

DC: So what's your favorite thing to fish for?

DF: Uhm, steelhead.

DC: Whys that?

DF: Ah, there just a great fish. They're a sea run, returning rainbow trout, but they have now since said no that's not true, they're a salmonid, but anyway. But they are very aggressive and fight hard, and their not easy to catch. So I like a challenge and it's just kinda fun. So that's my favorite thing.

DC: Any least favorite?

DF: Oh I don't know. Maybe bass fishing isn't my thing. The lake guys I see on TV fishing bass and it doesn't appeal to me much.

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DC: That's a big thing in New York as well and it never really caught my fancy either.

DF: It's the biggest fishing thing in the United States, and it surprises me, but I guess if you are going to be outdoors and fish, not everybody is as lucky as we are to have these rivers that go out to the ocean and have the wild fish that go to and from the ocean. And their quite different from catching in a lake. But they don't have that so if you are going to fish you have different perspectives. So I understand if you're going to be out and fishing, I just don't see it. Interesting on fishing, I get an international fishing magazine every month and the number one fish in the world that is sold to business is carp...yeah...you mad a funny face. Me too! I find it hard to believe, but same thing. So around the world it's a really coveted game fish and here it's like ohh...trash [chuckles] I get a kick out of it. I get my magazine, open it up and oh big pictures of guys with carp like [gestures length with hands] oh that's great [chuckles]

DC: I worked for a parasitologist once and I never want to touch a carp again [chuckles]

DF: Mmm mmm. Their gross. But like I said, if you had nothing else to fish for you might have a different opinion.

DC: So what about any...do you have any stories of highs in your careers being in the industry? Or lows?

DF: Well I guess lows would have been in the 80's for the first time ever our company was really...because the industry was contracting because of a lot of different factors, EL Nino, bad years, we had many different conspiring on top of each other, it collapsed a lot of different portions of the industry so we were very slow and having to contract, and that was kinda the lowest spot. It never was - oh gosh we are going to close or anything like that. It's just not as fun as growing and expanding. So I guess for lack of highs, I guess recently in the last 15 years, it's been so much fun cause of our growth. When I first started in this business full time we had 13 employees. Now we have like 150 plus. So yea that's been fun. To be along for this ride and always being aggressive and looking out for different opportunities and things to do. That's fun. I guess our society today, I have a hard time...my kids now are...I just have one graduating and going to grad school in outdoor...she's going to Vermont for her grad school and she's in natural resources, but she is going to do teaching and doesn't quite know where to point it yet, but that kinda thing. But competition is fun. And it seems like our society today is kinda...it's almost also ran - okay you get a trophy for participating. And that's, I get it, but that's not what makes the world go around. And not bad competition. And there's people that go crazy and go over to top, but good, honest, clean competition is really fun. We have competition in this town in marine sales and different what-not, but I'll be damned if I think badly about them, or attack. It's fun. And we still take care of the same customers, and we all want to make sure all the customers in the fishing fleet get taken care of so that they can go do what they need to do. So I get for lack of...competition is a good thing. So that's what's fun about this business. And all these guys that fish, their competitive let me tell you. All of them. If you're not, you're not going to make it. So anyway, that's my little speech on competition.

DC: So it sounds like you get a great opportunity to watch the community.

DF: Here and in our businesses all over we do, but I'm lucky enough in Newport. I think I'm more lucky than any of our managers in other towns, we have, like I said, a store in Eureka, Crescent City California,

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Coos Bay, here in Newport, up to Astoria, then in Oako, Washington, and up to Westport, is I'm sitting right on top of, and I call it the other side of the bay, we are on the North side of the bay, they are on the south, is the science community from Oregon State University, thus you sitting here, to Hatfield Marine Science Center, to NOAA, the new facility, to all the different things that are involved over there. We get to help with their research. We get to have input. I'm involved with Oregon State, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife on their sport fishing advisory committee, on different things that come down the pipe. What do we do to make this better? I've been involved in many different aspects of meetings for input. I was on the Cascade Head Marine Reserve Team [phone rings] I spent a full year and a half I think we did that to massage and how that came out as it did because it needed it [chuckles] drastically so. But that's what...I think I'm lucky to be able to live here in Newport and run this shop and I get to deal with all this...and most of them are friends, and a lot of the acquaintances that we get to comment back and forth and this and that. Like, I'll give you a quick example, Scott Heppell is a very renowned scientist across the bay and we had this summer kind of an anomaly since I can remember, cause I haven't been here that long, I think I have been here 19 years, and all of a sudden we had a sein fleet here and we had a mass quantity of squid off shore and we had kind of a fishery happening, and everybody was theorizing; we have got the warm water and El Nino happening, and the fishery down in Monterey which is where it is kinda based; the sein fishery for squid was collapsing, and it just kinda was...but it's cyclical too, it's not a bad, it's not like oh god it's over. It's not that. But they were theorizing that the warm water and stuff is getting too war, so it's moving the fish up this direction and so all these mass amounts of fishing off here were because of our warm water. And I was asking Scott about that, and Scott says - you know I don't think so. Here's why. And they have been talking scientifically what's going on, and we think they're here and that just the conditions, because of the warm water change, and you have big explosions in population, and here they are. And there was also conjecture about - oh gosh we are going to overfish them because there's no limit on it cause it's not really been a thing here before. But it has. I guess years past before my time it had happened. But with the amount of boats we had on it, there was some conjecture that - oh my gosh we don't have enough information, it's going to get overfished. Well this particular sea life grows rapidly and eats vehemently if you know anything about squid. So they are short life organism and you not really going to overfish the population. With the amount of eggs and stuff that were around it wasn't really an issue. So that was kinda a neat thing to find out. So that kind of thing. I get daily...I get to talk about different aspects of what's going on in tuna, salmon, bottom fish, the regulations, because the biggest thing we need to do here is we need to keep up on what's going on with regulations. What's going to close? What's not? Why? Bycatch issue, is that going to shut down? Like on the sport fishing advisory committee I'm on we had to move...we can fish bottom fish from 40 fathoms and in, but we had to change that and the reason that line is there is because yellow eye is the key species that we need to stay away from because we only have a small amount of bycatch in the sport fishery that we can access. Well we had a huge halibut opener which is all depths, which mean you can go out past 40 fathoms, go anywhere you want to get halibut. Well in doing so most yellow eye are a deep ocean species, so you're going out more into their native environment. And you go out there and we caught more than we've ever have in an open weekend and it put our bycatch amount at risk. If we reach out bycatch level, that's a federally monitored thing, we shut our bottom fisher down. Done. So that shuts and no bottom fishing at all recreational. None. So we take as this committee and we spread out month by month and try and figure - okay we need to make this last, okay here is our normal catch rates, and here's what we need to do to stay within our boundary. And we went out of bounds, out of our catch rate so badly. We looked at it the next month and it still was too high so we had to do something. So we had to move it from 40 fathoms, where your still catching some yellow eye, into 20 fathoms, where you don't nearly catch as

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many. So that's why we have had to do that kind of thing. And it's a lot more complicated than what I'm putting in. As you know, if you are in natural resources, you understand it's very complicated business when you have open access fisheries and that type of thing involved, and this is very difficult to manage. And we are in the middle of our 5th year after our...on the commercial side know, of the rationalization. A matter a fact I am going to be interviewed by somebody on that on whether it's working or not. It's very big wins, but there's very scary things as well that aren't happening well. For competition, for many different reasons. And gosh we could talk about this for 5 hours but anyway.

DC: Could you give me synopsis of that?

DF: Well, the rationalization has taken an open access fishery and made it a quota fishery. Which okay, in doing so, now the have's become - we have quota. And on the good side, it's taken it...it has helped all of our species that we have been fishing on are going up in abundance, bycatch has been going down. It's really helped in that aspect. It really has. But on the bad side, now you have groups that own a large quantity of quota. That's ownership that becomes - we have it. So concern is...you mentioned earlier the aging of the fleet, this is one aspect of that. So young person such as yourself gets out of college and says - you know what, I'd like to take a look aft fishing, that looks interesting. It's wide open. I like the outdoors. I don't want any constraints on myself. I want to go out and go do it. Well, you can't do that. You have to go buy quota and able to make that happen. If you're not born into a family or something to where you could get something handed down. You are going to have to go ...if you don't have money you will have to work somewhere else to get some money to buy a permit. One. And then buy some quota to go fish the permit. So it becomes very expensive and very difficult for a young man to climb the ladder. How this started when I was a kid, and I'll never forget, I almost went and did it. When I was 17 the salmon fishery was just really peaking. It was 1979 and it was going crazy. People were driving down with dory boats, you know trailorable boats, going out salmon fishing and coming into my store with wads of hundred dollar bills buying gear. It was wide open, a lot of fun, people were making money, fish everywhere. Gosh it was just incredible and I'm like - man this looks like a lot of fun. Well not very much longer it collapses for a lot of reasons. Environmentally - and we can go into that for days, and days, and days as for why. Hatcheries hurt lots of different...cause we were doing some bad practices at hatcheries at that time. But a lot of the...the guys that your talking to now that are up in the upper echelons of our business. Owning big boats. Owning hake boats. Owning Alaska trawlers, bigger rigs, that kind of stuff. They all started down there. A majority started in a dory. Jumping in here as kids, love fishing, love the outdoors, that kind of thing, and sailed out here and started salmon fishing. That's kind of the incubator of what started a lot of these businesses. That incubator is kinda not there anymore. I mean for young folks to try and do that, you really don't have that really open door that can...so you can start climbing that ladder, because you've got this permit system. So that's kind of the bad side of it. And I don't know the answer to fishing it. I'm an entrepreneur type thinker, a free enterprise, government control, Stimese, a lot of different things. But that's why I'm kinda sitting here rotating in the middle on this rationalization situation. Anyway that's quick, brief, very quick.

DC: Yeah from the people I have spoken to, everyone seems to have a different take on it. It's very interesting to hear about it. It's come up in every interview I have done so far.

DF: I'm sure. It's the biggest thing that's happened to our industry, ever; in my opinion. And we have had to plan for that. Now has that hurt us? Somewhat yes, somewhat no. It takes guys that say are on the edge, that are not making it, their gone. It's taken and put it so now you have ownership. Your able

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to invest in your boats and into your fishery. We lost the amount of vessels that we used to have. It's narrowed it. And yet the vessels that are there are healthy. They pay their bills. They aren't late payers. You know, we don't have to worry about that; paying their bank loans back. They do that type of thing. So it's kinda cleaned that portion of it up, but it's...expanding isn't going to happen. Your finite. I mean, yes we've increased some quota. A matter a fact in our...and there's the tough part. So we are trying to do that and get increased quotas for our guys to fish, but they're not able to catch it all. Because of constraints; bycatch, and this and that's, because of science that says - oh no this is at this point, but they know it's not. And yet because our assessments aren't cause up to where...what we know where we are, we have to go by what's on paper. And it becomes very difficult to make a living out here. When you're up against those kinds of constraints. Here's an interesting story on that. Mid water trawlers has an office upstairs and I talk to them all the time. Which is another neat thing. And their one of our bigger customers as well, of course the whole fleet is our customer. I talk to them quite often, and I knew that talking to Heather, who's their secretary, and they were...or I don't know what her title is. It's more than secretary. She really runs that thing, and does their political outreach, and lobbies for their group and so on. But she was planning their getting the head of National Marine Fisheries. I forget her name off the top of my hear, she was an ex-astronaut. Great lady, okay? And they are planning her coming down. And they're going to have 9 of their underlings, or I hate to say minions, but that's all I can think comes to mind, and that's not very attractive. Anyway, that's how we think sometimes. Anyway come down to go out on one of our trawl vessels here in Newport. Plus, see all of our science and what we are doing, but go out and actually watch a net. Because none of those folks that are making laws for us know how it works. So they are going to get hurt. And all these folks that make decisions up and down the line go out and go do that. They came to me - can we get some life rafts, so that's where my role came in to get enough life rafts for them to go out legally and do all this fun stuff. And then all of a sudden I went up and said - hey are you about ready to go? Oh god this panic, I don't think we can do it. And I'm like - well what's going on? National Marine Fisheries own rules prohibit, and they were going to set a net out with the cod end that's open. So you're not going to catch anything. All you're going to have is a camera so you can see how it works. Fish going through it and out. No catch of any kind, but y law they could not set in a zone because they have closed the ocean for certain...it would have taken them 10 hours to travel far enough to set a net. And this was coming down from the boss of the National Marine Fisheries Service. And they had to tell them we can't do it, cause we would have to go out to far. I mean that's the kind of things we are up against. So here these guys are trying to make a living, and the rules that they have in place are really something to try and work around. So I got a kick out of that. You know here we are trying to show how this works and what it was, and we are not going to hurt a damn thing, but because of their own federal law they couldn't do it [chuckle]

DC: that was Katherine Sullivan? President of NOAA?

DF: Oh yeah

DC: She was here for the last council meeting

DF: Yes. I understand quite a lady. I mean if you are an astronaut, hey, you're a pretty smart cookie.

DC: Yeah, shes big into the atmospheric stuff

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DF: Yeah

DC: Anyway, you mentioned that this rationalization could be a type of barrier for young people. Are there any other barriers to young people to get into the business?

DF: Umm...that's one of the biggest ones. And it's not just that particular thing, but all of our fisheries now are pretty much, you need permits and what not. And there's a few folks are getting into it. We have some, but it's...as we move away from open access, it takes it away for the young folks. The ease of getting into it and making it go. But like I said it's a double edges sword. You know, when they are there most of the time, they're a lot healthier, but it becomes quite difficult for young folks to get into it who aren't born into it, that understand it. To jump in would be kinda difficult on your own. I think I know of one in this town right now that came out of school and his dad helped him buy a boat and he's making it. One. The other young kids I know have been born into it and know it. And are being assisted through. At this time. Now who knows if that will change. I doubt it. We will see. I mean, you look at our business and how we are going to keep supplying. Ah, here's the other thought that escaped me. So the other part that concerns a business like myself where we supply supplies to all the businesses, you have companies that are big, Trident, Pacific [Pacific Seafood] they are some of our better customers, but they go buy supply houses. That's happened. I'm not going to mention who or what. That is...has happened. Now, so you have a fish plant that owns a supply house, that can go buy direct to a...right from a manufacturer and what not. S that takes away more, and more, and more from the...just the Ma and Pa shops that we can help supply or service, that kind of thing. Well they can go [flips hand in away direction, indicating "go away"/"go out of business"] The fear of getting so big they start conglomerating. Like our whole economy right now seems to be headed into companies buying out other companies, and getting bigger and bigger, and bigger, and bigger to make it. And that's kind of a scary thought for me. I'm at the not end yet. I've got quite a number of years I'm going to be in this. But for the future of this down the road, I'm kinda concerned like that.

DC: Do you see a lot of boats being sold to these companies?

DF: MHMM [nodding in agreement]

DC: Currently?

DF: Yeah. When I first moved here, that was a big concern of ours to start. We had...if you look around the store here, I've got pictures from when I first moved here. We were shallow draft out here. Nobody would pull their boat up here. And we built it here so people could come in and we could put their wire on, on these big vessels. So in order to make that happen, I finally...I think I bought a pizza and I forget what and I said I'd give you free splicing or something like that to get a boat in here. Got them in and then I thought - we god how am I going to get this out there? So I took pictures of it and I put it on the counter and it still wouldn't do anything. So I was like, hell, I blew it up. I put it on the wall. And that kinda started to steam roll. So now every boat that came in wanted their picture up on the wall. SO now there 130 or 150 pictures around the store of all the vessels that were... Of course a lot of them are gone cause they were purchased and bought up by fish plants. And I understand a fish plant. If I'm running a fish plant, I want to...so...here's the complicated side of the business is when it comes down to price negotiations and what not well...fishermen can stand strong and say - no we are not going for that. Well not when fish plants buys up a bunch of boats and becomes...and I don't want this going out

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[chuckling] but that is a concern and there are a number of...part of the rationalization was some of the plants got part of that rationalization. They have quota. Now they have boats so they can put their quota to that boat and maybe say - well I don't need any, you will have to go somewhere else. I'm not privy to all the ins and outs but I know that is part of what's going on. So yeah. So these plants start owning vessels; these big companies. And start buying supply houses and start...it makes it a lot more difficult.

DC: Yeah I never thought about it that way.

DF: If you were on my side you would

DF: SO when I sit down and I need to plan. Like we just had 2 containers arrive today of trolling wire. So a set of trolling wire for these vessels are about 30,000 dollars per vessel. So I have to spend many hundreds of thousands to stoke that for them. So if they say well we have...this companies going to do this, well I have to plan, well what are we going to be doing down the road to have this sitting here in stock. Because you can't just order, it's a commodity. Comes from overseas and takes about 120 days to get. So you have to plan out what you are doing, that's the part that's different every day. The crystal ball I'm talking about. And then you've got this part of it happening and that's kinda the newer stuff that we are trying to put in our new thought process to hopefully cover that as well. Yeah. Natural resources is an interesting business to be in.

DC: So would you...what would you say is the most challenging part of being in the business then? Would that be it or is there something else?

DF: Yeah, I ...gosh...there's not just one. It's all but put all that together and then I guess the environmental side that's attacking. The consumer side, or the...and I say consumer side because we are doing this for the consumers. And it's not done to rape and pillage and to take the last fish or any of that, or we are going to get rich and that's all we are doing it for. We're just capitalist pigs out here just wasting the natural resources out here in our oceans. That's not how it works. But it's viewed upon like that sometimes by a few environmental groups who want to shut down some of these fisheries in any way they can. That's a big, big problem. And I'll say it's changed quite a bit. There's some groups that have evolved as well as us. I mean we were hell no, we will never talk to you in a million years. And I've changed my opinions over the years considerably with different groups that will work with you, as long as they do what they say. But we have been screwed over a lot. By groups that say we are doing this and then bam, you just get nailed. And so that is one of the biggest...so when you have groups out there that are wanting to shut something down no matter what, they will say something to your face, but that...it's just a game. And they will go around you and shut you down in a heartbeat. I don't work that way personally, and our industry...we are here to work. We aren't here to take and kill anything. It has to be sustainable for us. We aren't here to, you know like I said, to take the last fish. That's not what we are here for. It needs to be sustainable, but we want it to be. Let's talk about this. Maybe you've got a good point. But some of these groups, they don't have that, and I was sitting in on one of our Marine Reserve Meeting, sitting behind a lawyer from, I'm not going to mention the group, and another girl and they were talking about their testimony and this came up, and what I just said was real. They were saying - we are doing this, and we just sat in the meeting and said no we are talking about this. I heard the whole thing clear as a bell. They are coming after it, absolutely. And we will do that, they were looking for any tool they possibly can, and they will come after you. They buy, cheat, steal,

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whatever they can do to make it happen and get money. So that's where...our biggest front is going to be access to stocks that we can get for the public. And like if we miss a bycatch or we...something that just happened, it can shut us down. Then what? We planned for this and they say - no can't do that, you're gone. That's a scary proposition. That's probably my biggest fear. Because if you plan out into the future and then your able to go say...boom, nope, then we aren't going to sell anything, the boats aren't going to sell anything. Cyclical. Want to buy a store? [chuckles]

DC: [chuckles] I trust it with you [chuckles] So do you think there is a real threat to Newport's fishing industry or the fishing culture here?

DF: Of course. I do. I absolutely I do.

DC: Do you think it has the power to end fishing?

DF: You know, there's always a threat. I don't care when, what, hopefully no. I think we have come far enough today that I think our stocks are rebuilding and what now. I think we are in pretty good shape. But is there that threat? Oh yeah. Mhmm. Well here's...and this group has come a way. And I will mention their name. It's The Nature Conservancy. A friend of mine used to be at ODFW [Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife] just took a job with them. I was happy to see that because it brings some more o the balanced picture. The Nature Conservancy before when this rationalization thing started was buying out permits. There's a good article in the last Pacific Fishing, or Fishermen's News, on what's going on down there in California. They purchased a lot of the trawl permits in California. Now they own them. Now you have narrowed the amount of boats, and now they are struggling because when that happened plus all the marine reserves that came in in one feld swoop, which was a...in California it was railroad. That was a bad situation. So here they have all this fish that they are allowed to catch, and Nature Conservancy wants to, because we have this amount and we invested in these permits. Well they couldn't go out and do it because the infrastructure went away. So now you don't have a fish plant, you don't have any place to go sell your product to. So what do you do. It's a quite an interesting conundrum. When you do that you have ramifications. So they are tap dancing down and they have come up with some...and that's why I say go read that article, and it's got a lot of interviews with the boats that are down there and are fishing and how they are doing it, and what they are doing. And they made a success out of it, but it's not over. It's still a very big challenge to do.

DC: Interesting

DF: It is [chuckles] it really is.

DC: I'll have to find that article.

DF: I might...I don't...I had it sitting on my desk. I might still have it sitting up front. I can't remember. Yeah no kidding.

DC: Anyway, changing topic a tiny bit. What attracts young folks to the business now? Has it changed since these owners have kinda started to in that salmon fishery?

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DF: Umm...I guess so. I guess the attraction is independence. Where you're not going to a cooperate office. You're not...I think a young man that is here, I don't know if he graduated or not, he just got married too; I think that was his attraction, is he didn't want to deal with that. And that's great. That's what this is. It's very independent. Your own boss. You do what you want. You work, you don't. You make it, you know, it's all on you. And you're not having to answer to anybody except the environmental groups and the government [chuckles] But, I guess that's about it, is the same as it's always been that way, but it's tougher for them to get in. Because before you would just jump on the back deck of a boat and start out. And then you could make enough and buy a small boat, and then I'll just start working up. And that's how it was, and it's tough to go be a deck hand and on the rationalization again, gosh there's too many subjects, that's one of the big issues is deck hands got no piece of that pie, none. So their...even guys that have been out there a long time, they got nothing. So they don't have, yeah...anyway, that's another issue.

DC: So what's the average age of owners? Is that what you would call them?

DF: Gosh...I wouldn't...You know it's getting older all the time. It's not getting younger. I mean I'm trying to think of all the guys that I know are my age. I'm 54, so there's a few guys, but like I said, the young guys that are coming in are coming up from families. In their 30's now from families and what now, but they were the ones I'm thinking of were born into this. Not that many that aren't. There's a few, but gosh I can't think of any that aren't [coming from a fishing family] but one, Luke [shrugs] yeah.

DC: What about deck hands? Average age...

DF: That's younger than the owners by quite a bit of course. But I don't know. You see quite a few young guys doing that, but...and they make good money. Especially on the draggers and what not [phone rings] but yea I don't know. I really don't. you would have to talk to some of the owners. I really don't know. But you're not going to see that deck hand...very seldom are you going to see somebody that ends up jumping and buying a boat and starts climbing the ladder.

DC: Man, there's so much to learn

DF: Oh yeah.

DC: So what do you think this aging is going to do to Newport?

DF: That's a good question. You're going to have to have folks jump into it. I mean there's enough money there...I don't know. Maybe the owners are going to hire out. And I will say, here we go again, another subject I neglected in rationalization, what's changing, and the answer to this question better is...so owners now aren't running boats. they're managing. Even to the point of hiring folks that don't even fish and managing their quota. Cause not it's a dollars and cents thing, and a guy can do that without ever having known how to run a boat or what not. SO they get deck hands and guys to run their boats.

DC: And they used to...?

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DF: They were owner-operators...everybody came...that's where they came from. So that's kinda changed that to become management rather than owners and what not going out running it and then sending it down or getting somebody else to buy the vessel and that stuff. And that's changed drastically.

DC: There is just so much that goes along with this.

DF: Oh yeah, and we are just scratching the surface. That's why I say something keeps popping into my head that I forget about. But that's a big one. here's another thing that's never happened before since rationalization started. Some of my friends that have been running some boats for years, and years, are now running boats for the larger companies that have bought vessels. But rather than...when your owner-operator, or traditional deck hand, or traditional skipper working for somebody else, you're getting payed a percentage of your catch. Of what you go out and what you do. Take out fuel, takeout food or whatever and your percentage of what you signed on for...say it's 15%. That's what you get paid. Well these companies now have changed that game, are now paying you, say you're going to work for this company, we are going to pay you a salary. We are not going to pay you percentage by the trip. Here's your salary. Plus, we are going to give you health care, a retirement account. That's a totally new concept in the fishing business. And that has happened real recent. And for some of the guys it's a really good idea, some it's not. I mean it's all...but that's happening today and it's pretty new.

DC: Seems to offer some stability...

DF: Yeah. But are you losing or are you gaining?

DC: So this is my last formal question for you, but what is your personal connection to the ocean?

DF: My personal connection? Hmm, I dint know. I've never thought about it. But I will say that I discuss with my wife, and with folks about - oh what are you going to do? Are you going to retire and what not? God I don't know if I will ever totally retire. I mean that's not my style. I've gotta be plugged into something. But the other thought of that is...I like to fly-fish, I like the outdoors, I go hunting out east, I go to South Dakota, I've been around doing that kind of thing. I've drifted the Deschutes River, John Day and down, and I love that country. I don't think I will ever be able to live, or if we ever decide to retire somewhere else, be away from the ocean. I don't know. It's just part of me. I grew up...or born in Astoria, grew up in the coast, and it's just part of everything I do. I don't know personally I guess it's like...god I guess I sound cliché saying it's the mother of everything that I like to do. I mean fishing going up and down the rivers, to the clam digging, all the stuff I enjoy just kinda revolves around it. Our weather, our everything. God I sound cliché as hell, but I don't know how else to put it. But it's just part of my being. I don't want to be away from it. I moved from Astoria, I was running our head office there, and the closest thing I could say that was similar to where I couldn't, was the Columbia River, is kinda a living, breathing thing. It's a neat thing. that was hard to be away from the Columbia River to be here, but having the ocean here it takes the place of it I guess. Sounds really stupid but, I don't know. I don't know. I just enjoy talking about it and talking to everybody that's on it. From all aspects. From, like you say, from the studying it, to the science, to understanding what makes it tick, and understanding why it does good here and not here. It's kinda...pretty neat.

DC: It's a bit of a cliché questions [chuckles]

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DF: Gosh it was, yes it was. That was your fault [chuckles]

DC: But anyway that's my last formal question, but I don't want to miss anything. Do you have anything that you can think of that I should have asked?

DF: Oh gosh. I have no idea [chuckles] I'm just the...I just shoot from the hip so I have no idea

DC: Oh that's totally fine. I just wanted to make sure I didn't silence you.

DF: If I do I will call you.