

Tonett and Kevin Dixon, and Steven Hall Oral History

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Interviewer: FC – Flaxen Conway

FC: OK, so I am meeting today with Tonett Dixon, Kevin Dixon, and Steven

SH: Hall

FC: Hall. Very good. Its the 4th of December and we are doing Voices for the Fisheries, we are doing oral histories so thank you so much for meeting with me

TD: Love to do it

FC: Thank you, you know we can start anywhere you would like, and anywhere anyone of you would like, if you would like to tell me a story about fishing or you wanna tell me what it has been like to have fishing across generations so you see if you...

SH: I...

FC: is Steve ok? or Steven?

SH: Either is fine

FC: How do you relate to Tonnett? How are you connected?

SH: She is my niece. My father was one that got into the fisheries and he started down here in the 30s out of Waldport

TD: I thought that was 40s but it was 30s

SH: and then he saw this whole area get devastated by first it was Russians who came in with their big trawlers and then it was the oil industry who came in with their dynamite charges. And I remember going out with him once, draggin, and we got out there past the bar and it was all fish floating...everywhere. And uh, he was so devastated that he decided he wanted to go to Alaska. And so I was just graduating from high school and uh so we got the boat with my Junior and senior year of high school down in Orange, Texas and we brought it through the Panama that summer and came up and he converted it to a King Crabber. It was an old buoy tender out of the Navy and Coast Guard and then as soon as I graduated I went up north and I started with him. He didn't retire until he was 81 years old.

FC: wow

TD: [excited] and he didn't want to, he just couldn't get up the stairs anymore

SH: Yeah, he couldn't get off the boat

FC: Right, right, well

SH: Yeah, he had a wonderful uh, you know he said right off the bat that fishing was the best thing, because he grew up as a farmer on land that didn't have water and all he had to do was he had to work it, work it, work it, work it, and he says in the fishing industry you just go harvest. And he thought it was the greatest thing in the world, and so he really was good at it.

TD: I never saw anybody love fishing the way he loved fishing

KD: He was the only guy I knew that didn't wanna retire

TD: Yea he fought it, he fought it

KD: Just loved to work and loved the ocean

SH: and it was definitely a family thing because when uh, after I got up there my mother followed and she was the first one, first fisherman wife in Dutch Harbor. And the cannery gave her a little spot to live. And then my sister, her mother followed cause her dad was working on the boat too. So they got their own house and I got me a house up there and we had the family in Dutch Harbor and it was a 350 people in Dutch Harbor in those days - there wasn't anybody there. We had the first truck on the Alaska side.

TD: No phones, we communicated with CV's. No TV

SH: There were only 2 outside phones and that was with RCA. You had to go in there when they were open to go call. Then they got some pay phones later and.

TD: Very rugged

FC: So what I love about that story is how peoples connections to each other has brought you in

TD: Yea, our family kind of migrated together whenever it uh...

SH: My mother said it was the best time of her life in Dutch harbor. She made friends there that were lifetime friends and she looked back at it as the best time of her life.

TD: Yea, well then she got involved, at...at the time she got there was a nurse that

SH: Yea...Nora, no Cora

TD: Yeah, but there was no medical facility, so you had these fishermen doing the most dangerous job in the world and there was no facility to treat them when they got injured so they would have to medivac them out and some of these injuries

SH: Weather permitting

TD: Yeah weather permitting and some of these injuries didn't have the time to medivac so uh my grandmother got um into the fight of

SH: she went around collecting money from all the fishermen and all the you know ... to start a clinic

TD: Yeah, she fought for it for

SH: for years

TD: Yeah, for years

SH: Two years, three years

FC: Well that's awesome

TD: and now they have a wonderful clinic there

TD: Yeah, I was medivaced out for just breaking my arm. I mean they didn't have the facilities to do anything so yeah you had to be shipped out for anything.

FC: Wow, thats, that is amazing on so many levels I mean really. Talk about changing a place. An industry actually changed a place right?

SH: Well you know we always came to Newport during the off season and cause they kept the house here, that I grew up in and so it was really nice to come back to Newport and you know, Newport is a fishing community so we kinda fit in both places.

FC: Yeah, so you had a fishing community in both places. Right? I mean community is a place, like Dutch Harbor being pretty different. What was Newport like back then?

SH: When uhhhh, I graduated high school, I'm a baby boomer, so there was 101 kids in my class and i think there was only 120 in the senior class now

FC: oh! You know what I just?... I'm sorry. I'm...I'm not sure I started this. Did I start it? [referring to camera]

TD: Oh I'm not sure

FC: I didn't!

TD: OH! [Surprised, laughter]

FC: Shoot, I'm sorry

SH: oh that ok, that's on tape! [Laugh]

TD: Yeah, that ones on tape! [Laugh]

FC: As it should be on tape

TD: [continued laughter]. Well that's good that you figured it out half way through

FC: Yeah, there ya go see. That's why you have young people do this. Okay, so we were just talking, we don't have to go over everything but we were just talking cause we have it on tape and that's great, about how Dutch Harbor, what Dutch Harbor was like what Newport was like. We were talking about the 50's right?

SH: 60's. '67 was the year I graduated high school.

FC: Okay.

SH: So I went up there then so it been almost 50 years now and we fished around Dutch Harbor we were fishing in the bays, and uh there was...there was no fish and game there then so you needed a

small crab that the cannery didn't want, they just threw it over the side and what happened was the crabs grew up within a couple years and there was a bunch of crab in all the bays by the canneries. And we could fill up right off the dock

TD: Oh that's funny!

SH: Got an 80 average right off the dock

TD: [laughter]

SH: and the captain came down and said "don't yell it so loud! They can hear you on the dock"

All: [laughter]

FC: How nice is that huh?

TD: Well those days are over

SH: and the boats, there were no boats that were built for king crab. It was all conversions. They were all you know, a lot of wooden boats that came from San Francisco area. They were old sardine seiners and uh there was a lot of accidents and a lot of boats disappeared. You know the crab industry is one of those that we have big pots and you wanna get them all out as fast as you can but in the first few days, first few years there was no fish and game, there were no seasons. We fished all year long and uhh...until we wanted to go home

FC: Right

SH: And

FC: All open access? Right? Anybody could get anything?

SH: Yeah

TD: It wasn't an over abundance of fisherman back then so

SH: there wasn't a...

KD: It didn't get like that until like the late 80s/90s

SH: It was probably about 60 boats up there during most of that time and then they started building king crabbers

TD: mhmm

SH: and then I mean you couldn't Marco made a fortune selling beautiful crab boats and they were...then fish and game came in and uhh, all the regulations. They moved us from a summer fisheries, to a fall fisheries and me I was going to college at Oregon [laughter]

FC: Its ok I see [laughter]

TD: [laughter]

SH: and uh, and so I couldn't get fall term because I was always fishing during that time

FC: right

SH: so...so uh it became really hard my senior year I couldn't go back and get that because I couldn't never get those...those classes that were offered. So I finally, I didn't even get a diploma after 5/6 years [laughter]

TD: [laughter]

FC: and after all that work

SH: Yea and but you know I decided, I decided early on that uh ...the fishing business is a great business. When I was a senior in college they made you go out and see what you were gunna, how, what, I was a business major so they sent me Montgomery Wards and I. There was a cubical about the size of this table the guy was in. And he said I'd be making about \$700 a month. And I said \$700 a month, I'm making more than that a day fishing and so I was gone. I went home to my apartment I got all my stuff and I went to Alaska. And uh I was done with college. And ya know that's been 50 years so [laughter]

TD: Part of the reason why it's hard to age out of this industry, because it's hard to find another career after you make that kind of money

SH: Yea you can't

TD: I think, and...And because it's a youth driven industry, I think that the years you go to get an education or you train to do something else your busy working hard in the industry and so by time you're ready to get out it's hard to find something else to do. So it's a tough industry to get out of.

SH: Well there's no retirement thing for it you know

TD: Yea

SH: and so you...you know, like my dad, you stay until your 81

TD: Yea but he could have gotten out he just refused to because he loved it so much

SH: I know but still you know, and...And uh you know then you get into all of the developments of rationalizations and all the codysharers and it's been the best retirement program that I could have imagined.

FC: Right

SH: And I fought it every inch of the way. I went to all the meetings and said "are you guys stupid? how can you take a federal resource and privatize it and even if you are givin it to me, your only giving me half of what I would normally be catchen." and so I though that's not right and uh so I went up there to those meeting and it was a farce. I'd go into those meetings and I was probably the most experienced fisherman in that meeting and you get 3 minutes to talk. The little light goes on and you start talkin and uh I begged them to just ask me a question so I could just answer and give ya, you know, what goin on out here. And not one of those people would respond. It was almost like it was bought and sold product

TD: The decision was already made

SH: It was already made they were just doin it

TD: appease

SH: yea, to appease the public. And it irritated me so bad that I finally decided to quit goin. Then they gave it away and I'm rich now because of it. So you know I really was stupid

All: [laughter]

FC: You know, I really appreciate that. The whole conundrum between staying in or using it as retirement. And if you use it as retirement, are you making that decision, you know, then to tell any of your kids - don't go in. Cause I am going to use this as my retirement. Like do you have to balance whether you're handing off part of your business to your kids or you're keeping it so you can sell it and retire?

SH: I'll tell you what I did

FC: Yeah

SH: I have 3 boys that were fishing last year

FC: Mhmm

SH: and uh, I put them all on crab boats, all on boats fishing the same crab that I was fishing, which is a deep water golden crab. And uh, I told them - this is your college education. Make the best of it. And so now here they are...one 3 years, ones 2 years and 2 of them are 2 years done. And they love the industry, yeah so you know. I think that some people are just geared more... Its hard to find a job. Doesn't matter if you have a college education or not. It's hard to find a job. And uh this job, it pays for a college education. It pays you while you are going to college. So you know, you start at the bottom and work yourself up.

FC: Yeah, exactly

SH: And uh you know may the best succeed. It's a deal where the strong survive

TD: Well and I think there studies out there that say there certain hereditary factors that gear you more toward certain industries, um you know, I think that in the fishing industry, I think that you have to have a strong work ethic and not need a whole lot of sleep, and I mean there just certain and...I mean its stuff that you can't do if you're not geared for it. I mean its impossible for some people to do.

FC: Yeah, you're not necessarily going to learn that in a class

SH: I have a son like that, that grew up and didn't like it

TD: Yeah.

SH: So he came home, but I don't know where he's headed yet but maybe to college [laugh]

All: [laughing]

TD: Yeah, it's not for everybody that's for sure.

FC: Right. Well so what, you know like, a lot of times over the years guys have talked to me about how they learned what they are doing by on the job right? And so, but what happens, you have to have continual youth going in in order to have that learning keep going. Because at some point if you have enough of a break, then who are they learning from? I mean you know, are they...are they learning from 50 year old guys, are they learning from 40 year old guys, 30 year old guys? Are you following me? You know what I'm saying? So it's kinda like, that's I think a challenge with this, same thing with farming. You know it happens with farming there guys that wanna go into farming but they don't know how to farm.

TD: Mhmm

FC: Are there guys coming into fishing that don't know how to fish?

TD: Well some, I think some boats like to have them without a whole lot of knowledge cause they like to train them the way they like it. So if they are coming from a different boat that has taught them a different way it's kinda frustrating for them and they get stuck in an idea that isn't quite what they want. So think there a lot of boats that hire fresh.

KD: Yeah

TD: Just for that reason

KD: Cause you get guys that, you know - I know how to do this or that, and they you come on and some guys don't like to hire that because they are set in their own ways and that might not work, you know, on our vessel or whatever, but

FC: Yeah

KD: And if you get young kids that wanna work and learn, that's, that's good

TD: You have a pretty young crew

FC: What's the average age of your crew?

TD: Uhh now, its young, I'd say 26 or 25, on the big boat yeah

TD: well the age is higher than a 20 year old so

FC: What's making them come?

KD: Money

FC: Money?

KD: Yeah

TD: Well one of them is dating out daughter or so

KD: Uhu

TD: I'll use that one

All: [laughter]

SH: You know you want youth too because of injuries

TD: Right

SH: In the fishing industry there's a Jones Act and its very devastating. It cost a boat is whole....it'll cost a boat. It has pain and suffering. So if you break, workman's comp, you break a little finger you know you're going to get maybe \$3000 for that little finger. In the fishing business I had a guy get \$600,000 for that little finger. So you know the insurance companies, I don't know how they even insure boats, but uh seems like the younger the crew, the more they wanna be there. And if they are there, they will work through the injuries, the old guys want out. They want that retirement, they want to take a few bucks and get out. They, you know they, once they ruin their reputation with a suit, they will never work again, but they take it.

FC: So when the old guys want out, are they sellin to other old guys or are they selling to...

SH: They've got nothing to sell

FC: Well what's your retirement then?

SH: My retirement is actualizations. I was in the right place at the right time.

FC: Right

SH: That doesn't exist anymore

KD: You need a crew member or something, unless you have money away. Or stashed

TD: Or even being boat captain, there's no...There's no, unless you are a boat owner, there's nothing to fall back on

FC: Right...so that's...perfect that s what i was hoping, well not hoping you'd say but what i was trying to get at was you know, how do people get quota? How do they buy in and get quota.

TD: You have to be in the right place at the right time. There's some like, there's some, there's some boat owners that maybe don't have children that want to be in the industry so they'll let their captains buy into the boats, or they'll let...you know. But it's pretty rare. I think it's pretty hard

SH: It's getting rarer

TD: Yeah, it's pretty hard to get into the industry unless you're already in, or you have a way in

All: [mumbles]

FC: So are these, I'm sorry sir, so are these 20 year olds that are coming onto to your boat, do they just not know that or do they just go - you know what I just want to come fish for a while or what

KD: yea pretty much

TD: It's a great way to make money

KD: Yeah, yeah



SH: And then it becomes addicting because its good quick money, its hard work, its clean, its a a lot of them it's just going out onto the ocean and getting away from everything they get involved in here

KD: can't spend money while you're working

FC: Right

KD: That's what's different about going to Alaska, and like fishing out here, day fishing, cause you might go out for 3 or 4 day come back but you come back to your family. Up there not how they did it, most people you leave for...

TD: Yea most families don't follow

KD: When my kids were young man I was working 9/10 months out of the year. And Tonnette was a single mom

FC: Right

KD: I mean she had lots of family, support but

TD: Yeah, but every pregnancy, he barely made it for the delivery

KD: Yeah

TD: Like he...one of them he had to have a doctor call the airline to get him in the first in line to get out of Dutch

KD: Cause you can get stuck in Dutch trying to get out for weeks sometimes I mean the weather but

FC: Wow

KD: That's when I was fishing up there a lot

TD: I don't know but I think some of these guys, these young guys, that don't have the opportunity to go to college, maybe don't want to go to college. This is a great chance for them to make the money they couldn't otherwise. And you know maybe they will stay in the industry and work as long as they can and save up and buy a different business and do something else with it but yeah...

KD: If you're smart with your money, you know

TD: And I've seen guys save their money and get into other businesses doing it too

SH: Yeah, a lot of them went into the salmon industry

TD: Mhmm

SH: bought small boats

FC: What other businesses

SH: In the fisheries?

FC: Yeah like...

TD: Or can be a mechanic if they are a decent mechanic, you can, there's lots of different side, like welding or you know there's lots of side businesses that go into...feed into the industry that you can...Um mending nets or I mean there's a ton of different businesses that kinda tie in.

FC: Right...right. Yeah so support businesses and support services and everything

TD: Mhm, mhmm

FC: So, I mean wow, you make me wanna get in

All: [laughing]

FC: Hearing you talk about it you know I'm too old but... So what is it, why aren't more people getting in?

SH: the jobs are less. There's less jobs cause of rationalization. I mean in the crab industry up there, there were 360 boats when they did rationalization and now there's probably 60...maybe 100 boats I don't know. But uh, you know, where I'm at and I'm out from Dutch Harbor I'm west and it's all deep water crab and there were only 4 boats that really fished it and then when rationalization got close everybody came out to qualify so they'd get a piece of the pie. And so there were 10 boats that got permits and uh. It makes it hard to...to uh...buy into that industry, you can't do it. But, the natives use on the other hand, they have access to uh differed taxes, they have access to federal money they can borrow, and so I see the future as the natives are going to own the Alaska fisheries

(00:22:04:10)

SH: Because they...number 1 they set it up so that they can't spend their money on anything but into the industry. So if they make 5 million dollars they can't put it in a well, they can't put it in school, they can't put it in their community. They have to put it into the industry. They've changed that a little bit now and they are allowing them to do that but they have to pay taxes on it before they can use it and then so they take this tax free money and they buy out the industry and right now they own half of that industry that there were 4 boats fishing...uhh... steady, you know? They own half of it now.

FC: Hmm...Wow

SH: And they own 2 of the 4 boats that are fishing

FC: Mhmm...Ok so you said, earlier you were saying there's 360 boats, I don't know if I got the numbers right but...

SH: 360 when they did rationalization

FC: Right, ok

SH: That's just in the Bearing Sea, red crab industry

FC: Right, ok so it went from 360 to you said around 60 or something like that

SH: I think it's about 100 maybe yeah. I sold out because everyone... they are leasing their quota share now for 70% of the value of the crab. So that means that that crab is 100% and this part is going to the boat and to the expenses of the boat, to the crew, to the captain, to the fuel, to the insurance, and this part is going to the guy that's leasing it.

FC: Right

SH: That's me...I'm on this side

FC: at 85%, which is a good side to be on for you

SH: Yeah but mines only 56.8%, I get

KD: Not so good

SH: So I'm about here but you know I just signed a 5 year lease with a guy for that quota share

FC: Right, so you lease him the quota, he fishes it, what happens after 5 years? Can you get to lease it to somebody else?

SH: Yeah he has the option to do it again and he's been, this is the 10th year that I've been with him. So, and I just signed for another 15 years so that will be 15 years. And I make about a million dollars a year off of him.

FC: Right

SH: And I have no crew, I have no boat expense, I have no insurance, fuel, injuries...all the injuries

TD: Got big taxes though

SH: Yeah I pay a lot of taxes

TD: [laughing] pay a lot of taxes

FC: SO what I think is interesting about that is, your right! So rationalization has been good for you because it's been your retirement plan. I mean I'll get...I wish I'd get a million dollars. You know, I'll get a little check from the government when I retire every month to keep me alive right? But you have this thing that you can then sell to somebody else. Can you...I'm sorry lease it or whatever

SH: I can sell it, I could lease it, I could borrow against it

TD: It's a commodity, he can do whatever he wants with it

KD: Goes to the highest bidder

FC: Right

SH: Right now I'm in the act of putting it in my kids name on the corporation that owns it. SO I have 12 kids...11 kids and so

TD: Can't keep track

SH: Well I've been married 4 times so

All: [laughter]

KD: He's a fishermen, I'm only getting married once

SH: 7 of them are going to get on my corporation and so I'm in the act of getting them on there so that if the government changes their plan they're already on my corporation. And so it will take 20 years to give them their full share which is what they'd get when I'd die but you know in the end I'll still be making \$300,000 and that will be enough when I'm 87.

All: [laughter]

TD: I'd hope so!

SH: [laughter] Yeah, I'd probably be on my 5th wife by then!

KD: Hope not

TD: We are holding onto this one

FC: So do you ever consider when you think about who you are going to lease to, the age of that...

SH: That person?

FC: Yeah, yeah

SH: They need me, they need me. Not so much that they'd hire my kids, my kids are actually working for the competition because they're not as good. Their whole program isn't as good. It's a naive cooperation and uh they got, what I call them bus drivers that run their boats and their trying to figure out how they are gonna retire on this thing so they are trying to buy into the boat and theirs not enough money to go around and you know the kids are learning. They're learning a lot. Economics even [laughter] so...

KD: And the boats that are fishing like you crab, they are fishing it for like 32% or whatcha say?

SH: uhh 56.8

KD: Well some of its more than that though

TD: Well my feeling is...

SH: 70% in the Bering Sea and...

KD: Yeah

SH: For king crab and its 50% on Peleo

KD: So there's not a lot of money left in the pie after the lease

TD: They still make decent money though, they still make...

SH: You know they're trying to get them to not take so much, but it's driven through economics so if there 60 boats out there that want your quota, they have to compete with all 60 boats and so you know that's one of the reasons that I went out west was because I couldn't, 350 boats, I was not, I was right in the middle. Every time. I could never be number 1 and never the last and it just got more complicated,

more gear on the ground and so I migrated toward these deep water crab cause no one wanted to go there. And then we evolved the fisheries into a long line thing where we had 75 pots on one string and we could have a pot on the rail every minute. But we had huge hydraulics, we had huge everything because of the power of what we were pulling and no one else wanted to spend, I have 2 million dollars just in gear. And so no one wanted to buy them when I was done. They just sat in Adack. Until finally I had to give them away almost, but you know that whole industry got evolved by a few boats because nobody wanted to put the money back into it. Those guys didn't need to put a million dollars, they were still making good money over there. But that evaporating cause the red crab is going downhill, it's losing like 17% every year. The Peleo goes up and down, it's a junk crab. And it has a lot to do with the ice coming down from Knomb and the years that it comes all the way down, everyone's pushed into a little piece of the Bering Sea and so they end up fishing on it and it just becomes...the crabs start lookin like a graveyard. Their all black, and their all missing legs and you know you pull a crab up, and it's so cold during Peleo season and they automatically, they have a mechanism in their body where they can just release their legs because it's so cold. And so you get a little hockey puck of a crab and it's so terrible. I mean it drove me nuts

TD: [laughter in background]

SH: So you know, you go to fish and game and you ask - how can you allow that? Why can't we fish this in the summer time? Cause we used to fish Peleo in the summer, we went all the way up to Saint Laurence Island

KD: Yeah, I mean the weathers better

SH: Yeah, and the crab are better in that time of year. And uh you got 20x the grounds to fish. And there underneath the ice. See the crab enjoys the plankton underneath the ice and they live off of that. So when the ice moves, they move. So if you wanna catch a Peloe, you have to lay right on the ice. But when the current changes and that comes over your gear you've lost that gear because it freezes around your buoy and then it cuts it off. Cause the crab pot won't move how the ice does. And so you know, stuff like that, Fish and Game, they don't get the picture. They sit in their office and they write a book that's this thick and they say this is the day that the seasons is gunna open. Well in 1980, they opened up the season and the crab in the Bearing Sea were molting and they said, welp, the seasons open. SO one boat goes out...all the boats have to go out. So everything that we touched, that we threw back died. Everything that we took into town, 40% of it was dead. But you'd think Fish and Game would take responsibility for that, they don't do that. So now you see it down here, they do it down in Oregon, they take responsibility, and they see that thing in their belly. They say we aren't going to open up the season. But up there they just ignore it and one of the problems we are having right now, in this industry that I'm still in, this golden crab, is that there's 2 areas, ones by Adak, the other is Seguam Island. And their 2 different schools. So when I first started, the line went right down the middle of this one. And so I went to Fish and Game, and I put in a change that would change this all to one area. So Fish and Game decided that it was a good idea but then they tweaked it. So they were taking the million pounds that I was catching over here that was actually in the Adak in those days, and they moved it to Adak. And so when they did that, they were catching a million pounds less over here and a million pounds more over here. And so now were 20 years later from that and this area has go a 100 average, this one has a 7 average. And when that happened they were both the same. But they don't...they just can't see, or they won't listen to someone that out there on the fisheries who can tell you exactly why

that is. They think oh it's something else - it's El Nino or you know. And El Nino doesn't go down to 300 fathoms. [Laugh] So there's not that, and it's such a big area that they don't wanna survey so one year I did do a survey. I did it with the head Fish and Game and Dutch Harbor and we pulled up 3 pots that took them all day to...they were all this size...cause we put small mesh on the pots for them. And they had to tag every one of those, well they didn't wanna do that. They were done, and they never used anything with that, and those crab are now...they are all...it's a huge industry on this side, it's a bad industry over here. They need to shut this one down, and they need to do this one double. But they don't take responsibility. It's the same thing as crab that were molting. It's just not in their book, it says this is the way its going to be, so as industry, we get our own analysis from a guy in New Zealand that is a specialist in this industry and industries, all kinds of fisheries industries and he tell them this is a model that you should use and they literally will not listen to him. They just blank him out, then finally last time they said - "look we are gunna do this, we aren't going to put any more money towards this project at all. We are done with you". So you get beat up by your own government because they don't wanna listen. I just don't understand that reasoning and the government should be for the best for the industry. They just don't seem to have...

TD: The industry that's feeding their country. Yeah and theres so many government agencies that are fighting each other and over regulating and on top of eachother and they dont communicate

34:39:20

KD: People making rules and stuff that dont know what there...you know?

SH: Its a federal resource that the state manages, so they try and get money out of the feds to do it, they get money out of us. We pay for all the boats that bought out. We pay 5% back into the industry to pay for those guys that bought out.

TD: Same thing they did here

SH: Yeah, you know by the time you get done theres so many lines of taxes and stuff that...I mean I dont mind, I dont mind paying for that kind of management but they have got to manage. They cant let out industries go to hell because they dont wanna listen.

FC: So I really appreshiate everything you are saying, its greally great. Do you think you have part of this perception because youve been in the industry for so long? I'm not saying it's not real, I'm saying if your a 20 year old guy on Kevins boat, are you goign to be seeing it the way he is seeing it?

KD: I mean in a way

TD: I dont think that anybody thats just on a boat is dealing with the regulation. Yea they dont know and they dont understand. You dont get any of that, you dont have to deal with any of that

KD: Yea as a crew member

FC: Then how are they going to learn all of that?

TD: Well if somebody is interested in running a boat then they sit up in the wheel house and they ask questions

KD: Thats just a whole other part of it

TD: Yeah thats done at home. With our boat, I managed the paper work and he managed the boat. It took 2 of us to do it. I mean , he was out fishing, he could not have managed everything else...theres no way

KD: Yeah, guys that are successful, like my boss, hes handed off now to his son-in-law, but it was a full time job just managing the boat and going to all the meetings and just traveling everywhere. SO its a 5-7 day a week job

TD: Yeah

FC: Right, which is not even fishing...

KD: Yeah, hes always had his boat fishing and making the money and thats where when a bunch of these reels were coming in we couldnt afford, I mean I was working in fishing, I couldnt afford to quit fishing to go to all these meetings and stuff.

TD: And fight for the small guys.

KD: Yeah

TD: What happends is the small guys are never represented. Its always the big voices that are heard. And so it is a game that there is no winner when it comes to the small...

SH: Oh theres winners...

TD: Yeah, theres no winner when it comes to the small guy

SH: And the crab rationalization there was a guy that owns trident, Chuck, and I started fishing when he was a captain, and then he lost the boat, and then he decided to not fish anymore so he bought a catcher/processor became really successful because he could go out when we were on strike and he was putting in millions of dollars before we even started fishing. And then he bought a whole bunch and now he has camerries and everything.

38:00:00

SH: When he came out of the meeting in Kodiak, and they agreed to go his way which was 90% of the product has to go to the cannery. 10% can go to the fishermen. So if I go out there and get 100,000lbs, 90,000 of it has to go to the cannery that I historically deliver to or whoever has bought those rights...

TD: Which is rediculous

SH: Cause they trade those rights like crazy and 10% I can take anywhere. Well in the past whenever the people in Dutch Harbor didnt pay the price we just took them to Kodiack, and they would pay us the

price. And so thats a 3 day run, and next trip in they were paying the price. And so that economics was dont being able to shit. Well he made it, cause he owned the cannery, he made it so 90% went to him. And you cant take 10,000lbs to Kodiak, they wouldnt want it, it wouldnt be enough for them to mess with.

KD: Wouldnt be worth you to take it there

SH: And he knew that so you know it was all political. ANd it was funny becuase I wanted Senator Stevens to understand what I was up against, so I sent him \$1,000 and I said I would just like to talk to you on the phone about what we are doing here. I got a letter back with my check that said you cant bribe a Senator. Thats what it said, and in the end, thats what he got kicked out for - with bribery.

All: [laughter]

FC: Maybe the offerative word was it was YOU

SH: Nah it wasnt me, \$1,000 was nothing to them compared to the hundreds of thousands of dollars that Chuck Bundern was giving him. Thats where the difference was. And a lot of it got formed because of money. And so we didnt really have the voice that was big enough to get herd because we didnt have...and crab fishermen, its the same down here, they're all that was, because we fight amongst ourselves. You know it kinda reminds me of the indians, the old nadies they hear, when the white man came in they couldnt fight the white man because they were all fighting themselves. And its the same thing out there, we couldnt get anything done with everyone together because we hated that guy, he was pulling my gear back in 1980, I know he was, he coarked me or he did something

FC: I was just hearing about that the other day actually, cause I was talking about how fishing to me, at least what I have learned over the years is kinda compeditive comrodery, you know like you guys stick together on one hand and on the other hand you know your kind of ... so the stories that Steve telling ring true for down here as well?

KD: Yeah pretty much, I mean its different you know, but all in all kinda the same

SH: They can take all the crab of a certain size right? So the crab fishery stays open forever

KD: Yeah, yeah

SH: Until like a month before or something

FC: So rationalization is good for a few individuals, tell me about how its not good.

SH: Yeah...its not good for the generations to come. Unless your like my kids and your going to inherit it. But you know with the government theres no tellin whats gunna happen

TD: Yeah...

SH: And I didnt think it would last 10 years and I would get thought this. I would figure the government would say "we made a mistake, we are running it throught Congress and your going to lose that"

FC: Right, give us the money back

TD: Yeah



SH: Well to give us the industry back, but it hasn't happened and so now after 10 years I think well they will probably at least give me some money for it to get me out. But then I see the future as they want Alaska for Alaskans. They want the natives to have it. And the natives, if you have ever hired a native on your boat then you know that he doesn't work for you, you work for him. I don't care if he is your bait boy, you work for him. And because, that's the way their program works now. These coops are a bunch of small villages and then each one gets a take out of it. And so they give their people money just like the casino in Spirit Mountain. They gave all of their natives the money off that casino and the more kids they have, the more money they get and it's all, it's not government but it's kinda like that...

FC: like a system

SH: And you know when I got there the Privloss was a terrible place because those natives up there, they were all slaves with the Russians and when the government, when the US bought it, they just paid them off. They call it their corn beef days when they just gave them food. And so they didn't fish, they didn't do anything but harvest seals up there and so there was no real money to be made but the government subsidized it. And so they have, the natives up there have that mentality that Alaska is there. And it probably should be, I don't have anything against that, but you know Stevens plan will probably be that...it probably won't be the federal government comes in and gets me, it will be the coops coming in and getting me. And they are going to offer me more money than I need [laughter] because they have it and it's all tax free. They are building themselves up so they will own the fisheries in Alaska.

TD: Well you know, I don't feel like their finding their making mistakes up in Alaska because they are coming down here and doing the same thing. They are basically doing the same thing with rationalizing the groundfish. They are following that plan in other fisheries so their not feeling...

SH: Yeah, but their reason is, what I said early on, is their privatizing a federal industry. The feds, the government, all the people of the United States own that resource and their giving it away to guys like me. I'm just a clog in a wheel. I'm just here this day, then it will all get privatized and it will go back to however they want it. So that control is where...by controlling us.

FC: So one of the arguments that's often used for privatization is that it's going to be better for the fishery. Like the fishery itself. Do you find that true?

SH: It is. It is. That's why they call it rationalization.

TD: Well it makes it safer too

SH: Well we were falling out there. We were losing 3 boats a year at least. Sometimes 3 in a night and with the big crab pots and the big boats, you think you could go through anything. I've been through sneaker waves that are 60 feet high, and no boat survives that. Especially if you are caught at night or sideways.

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