

**Participant: Terry Thompson**  
**Title: Lincoln County Commissioner**  
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**Location of interview: Newport**

Terry: Well that's been always one of my problems with these kinds of projects. Is you don't know the questions to ask. You'd be better off if you had an old fisherman ask an old fisherman because the questions are different when a fisherman talks to a fisherman than when somebody comes in and talks... like I was interviewing Wilburn Hall whose an old time fisherman that fished sharks recently. And of course if... you wouldn't even know that he fished sharks. If I mentioned it, well what's the biggest shark load he ever caught? Soup fin sharks were Vitamin A back in World War I, real valuable. He had a little boat, he went out here on a spot south of the...inside the rock pile. He had 42,000 pounds of shark livers in two days. Well... to you that's like okay, that's, that's just the livers. So figure the liver on those is maybe a third, forty percent, I forget what it is but... basically somewhere around 100,000 pounds of, I forget the exact numbers that he told me. But do you realize the volume of soup fin sharks that are on this coast and may still be there? But we don't have a technique to catch 'em because they don't really like to go in drag nets. They're fast enough to get away from 'em which is the way they survey stocks out here. They make so many assumptions in biology that drag...or...a tow-net is catching a true representative example over and it's, it isn't. We have this blue rock up here that doesn't go into a drag net and it's in volume and...they make these assumptions that they're catching everything that's there and then consequently there's huge errors in a lot of our stock assessments. So...

Deanna: What type of shark is in the waters?

T: Soup fin shark.

D: That's like the name of it?

T: Yeah.

D: Oh, okay cool. I didn't know.

T: I was just saying is... an interviewer, if you don't know the subject very well you will ask questions, you will get good information from me. But it would be a lot more information if you had a biologist from ODFW and a fisherman sitting there asking the questions. You'd have a different type of question. So, shoot. Let's see what you got. \*Laughter\*

D: Okay. \*Laughter.\* I'll try. Since you warmed us up so well. Um, alright, so we're just gonna open up the recording so we know exactly where we are in it. So it is August 1st. We are here in Newport. And would you be able to state your name just for the recording?

T: Terry Thompson.

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D: Fantastic. So, um, thanks again for meeting with us of course. That amazing introduction that I am not sweating over at all. So I just wanted to open up. Like I said, I'm looking at the fishermen's point of view of this project. And Courtney's looking at the community point of view, community leaders, so I wanted to open up by the dialogue very loosely and just see if you had any particular stories or even just your own history. I'm sure you have plenty of stories. But any particular stories...

T: An old fisherman, or excuse me, a young fisherman's always got a story. An old fisherman can't remember which one to tell you first. So, go.

D: Well, um, how about we start with how you got into fishing.

T: How did I get into fishing? I knew when I was five years old I wanted to be a fisherman. My dad worked building on the dock and dredge and he brought home some crab one day that he caught off the end of the dock. And I can remember playing with wax crab pots and I designed a boat out of wood and I was, wanted to be a fisherman. That was what I wanted to do since I started. I loved to go fishing when I was a kid. I'd put a pole in the water and catch shiner perch and bullheads and stuff like that. And when I got old enough I could walk down to the dock. My dad would let me stay up where the dock was, had a rail at that time, and I'd fish all day. That's what I do. And I'm still... old man. I get up in the morning when the weather's good and I go hunting or fishing. Or, I don't go hunting so many but I go fishing for either commercial with a small boat out of Depoe Bay or I go crabbing in the bay or clam digging or ...if there's, that's what I do. I like to fish. I've fished all over the world and it's, it's been a good living. But it's...has its social problems too because you're always busy. And most people don't want to get up 'til 8 or 9 in the morning, so...

D: So, what has motivated you the most in being a fisherman?

T: Money. I mean, that was...when I was a kid, I wanted to fish for just the love of fishing. It was, it's a way of competition and you get a valuation for how hard you work. If you don't work, you're not gonna make any money in that business. If you're not willing to get up in the middle of the night and do things and...you're not gonna make any money in it. And I wanted to do that. And I had friends in it. It was...first, when I first started when I was 16 running a bigger boat on my own I'd already been on tuna boats up to 800 miles off sea, when there's only 1 or 2 tuna boats and no electronics. I was just brought up going to sea. And so when I bought my own boat I was, you know, motivated. The first year too there was no young fishermen, but then other young fishermen came on board and there was some competition, is part of it. I like...I'm a competitive person, so.

D: Good. Fantastic. What exact fisheries have you been a part of?

T: \*Laughter\*

D: You can start down the list.

T: Ahhh. If I start down the list, the very first fishery I was involved was fishing herring off the back of a dock for 2 cents a piece. And I sold 'em to the local sports shops here. And I made enough money there to build a dory, a 14 foot dory that I rode out in the bay. Which that's another side story. The benefit of all that rowing, all the years of going up and down the bays and rowing all the time was I got in great shape. I became a world class distance runner from that. I was actually one of the...going into the Mexico City Olympics in July I was ranked number one in the world but I quit and went fishing 'cause I couldn't afford...there was no money in track and field in those days. So, but it was a passion too. And it was...enhanced from fishing 'cause when I was 15 years old I was in great shape 'cause I rowed everywhere. So, there's other benefits to this. But nobody rows anymore. I still have a rowboat that I have and will use once in awhile. Anyway, I'd row out in the bay when I built my own boat. Then I started to catch more fish. Did that. And when I got into college. I went to the University of Missouri two years, then I came back to Oregon State, which was the best move I ever made in my life, was coming back to Oregon State because it was the right university for me. It had the fisheries, it had the oceanography, had the things I was interested in. I graduated in education but my real motivation in life was to try to understand the ocean better and fish. So... that's a good story. Now you want species?

D: Uh, yeah. Or how about you just tell me your favorite fishery that you've fished in?

T: The one I can make the most money in the quickest. Well, it changes by the ocean environment. You can't say which is best. You have a good day in any fishery and you're smiling. You have a bad day and you're not very happy. Everyone comes and goes. You just try to be in the one that's the best at the time. Um, from herring fishing I went and... I was 16 when I bought my first salmon troller and went salmon fishing. And struggled the first year. Older boat, equipment was breaking down and...not used to the bad weather on small boats. I'd been on lots of bad weather on big boats. And I'd been around small boats before but... I'd fished with my dad a little bit but... and after that I went on a salmon troller that um, I went to Coos Bay and then down to Eureka on that boat. I got appendicitis and got left in Eureka. I think I was 14 years old and here I am. I was in Fort Bragg, California and had to figure out how to get home because I was left at the dock. I mean they had to leave and I was, went to the hospital and they decided it wasn't bad appendicitis. So then here I am 14 years old and I learned how to get around up and down the coast and who to see and where people were and doing it at a pretty young age so... 16 I made much money tuna fishing offshore and I ... rather than buy a new car I bought a boat. And you know it's... that was the main thing. And I struggled a lot the first few years but it's normal with starting any new business. Then I went from salmon trolling. Of course salmon trolling and tuna fishing mixed together. And the next big fishery I was in was shrimping and made good money there. And then went trawling for bottom trawl and then I fished just a little bit for the Poles [sp?] in joint venture. My boat kinda got in a bad deal and so I never...and it being a fiberglass boat I couldn't expand it easy as the other boats that did in steel so... I didn't stay in the hake fishery very long. Got out of that and went back dragging. I like to be by myself. A lot of guys like to be in a big fleet and you know. All kind of camaraderie. I'd rather be off by myself so I always tied the education from oceanography that I learned to ocean sciences. And so I liked to explore. So I'd be off dragging or...and I designed my own bottom gear for doing bottom analysis and all kinds of stuff and tried to learn why fish did what they did. And so.... lots of years experience. It's not all written down in a book but man I could go on forever about why

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fish do what they do and why certain bottom, certain feed conditions, certain weather makes fish move. And that's, that's the part that I still enjoy. It's not the money anymore. It's just the learning what these different organisms do in the ocean and how they relate and how they live and breathe, trying to understand them. They may not have a very big brain but they sure are smart. So...

D: Yeah, they're creative. So what about your family? Has your family played a role in fishing?

T: Well my dad was a fisherman. Oh yeah, definitely. I mean, um, we didn't fish together very long but he's always good for advice. Um, he owned like 90 some boats in his life and never made very much money. I was .... he owned various parts of 90 some boats. He sold boats too. But he... I was the guy that was the other way that was always the conservative pay for everything, don't go in debt, just move up when you have more money and can afford more and so I didn't take the risk. I watched what happened with him and so it probably made me even more conservative so that I kept more money in reserve so when things went bad I could live through the bad times. 'Cause that's what happens. The thing that usually causes fishermen to lose their boat is first, number one, divorce. I've watched more boats lost to divorce. I've watched more boats made bad decisions in the weather, especially years ago. Not so much today with modern weather forecast. And uh...then not keeping enough money in reserve so you can live through when you have an El Nino or a bad fishing period. Or if you have a major break down and so that's...one of those things that people just don't...but, number one was always divorce. I watched more boats be lost over divorce than anything.

D: What do you think causes that?

T: Well, a good fisherman's gone all the time and he's under stress. And you're actually, you're tired, you're...in the old days without all the electronics and stuff, I mean you're under a lot of stress and then you come home and you 've been being beat up and you're on edge all the time and you come home and your wife will say, "Oh, honey the dog pooped in the back yard." It's just like it, it's just not the same thing as what you're used to dealing with and so...the fact that you're gone most of the time is the biggest factor. And then a lot of times in fishing you have bad periods and you know, the pressure builds up and it takes an unusual person. There's some great success stories of women in the fishing business but there's some huge problems along the way too. Nobody ever gets through this business without having some problems somewhere so. But that's, that happened a lot. Now as the boats, on the bigger boats today, you know it's more of a big business type operation but still on the small boats it's...you gotta have somebody that's willing to work with ya. The most successful, in the old days when we salmon fished, were the husband and wife teams. There've been some fabulous husband and wife teams that made a lot of money and worked together in the ocean too, as well as just taking care of the books on the beach. And of course if you have families the women have to take care of everything without a lot of help maybe for six months. And she's got her routine and then all of a sudden here comes this guy who messes up their routine and it takes some adjustment. That's why.

D: So then building off of that, what would you say is the most challenging aspect of being a fishermen is?

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T: Staying alive.

D: Could you elaborate?

T: Well...if you don't stay alive, if you don't make it. Screw up in the ocean, all the rest of the things are inconsequential. The most challenging thing is you stay alive. Then you can work out the rest of the problems. I mean... you don't make, get to make very many mistakes. If you make a mistake you lose a boat, you ... like I say, today is a lot different. You get good weather forecasts and good electronics. In the old days, I mean it was tough goin'. 'Cause you didn't, you're in the fog and the best you can do is have a little radio direction finder that tell you where the radio station was and then you have to try to feel your way in and of course it's in the dark and if you didn't run in the dark you didn't catch as much fish and.... and of course without anything around you wonder when something's gonna go bump in the night. I can tell you lots of stories of those kinds of problems. I mean I woke up in the middle of a log raft one time off Reedsport. I'd been driving... running down the coast for seven or eight hours and I got tired. And I slept for an hour. It was about 3 o'clock in the morning. I get up at 5 o'clock. The boat's sitting here literally in a log raft and I had to push my way out of it. Now what's the chances? Apparently there was a log raft broke up in Reedsport or something and they drifted in the ocean. But when I shut down I either was about to hit 'em or I was drifted into it in the middle of the night but I was just like...what's the chances? Because if I'd a run into it in the middle of the night I'd've probably sunk the boat. And here I am sitting in a bunch of logs. I couldn't believe it. And that's, that's luck. Somebody's just taking care of ya.

D: For sure. Oh my god.

T: I mean, it was just, that was ...that one you got up in the morning and go how in the world did you happen...why did you happen to shut off there? So...

D: Coincidence.

T: I've been over the....tow boat in the fog. These are old stories. The old ways of fishing... there was a Umpqua River navigation tow boat on a foggy, dark evening. And I could hear it blowing in the fog and I'm going like, "Wow, that thing's getting close." And so I'm just idling hoping that I'm gonna see it. And next thing I know I can see the guy, he's about 20 yards from me. And I recognized what it was. There's a big rock barge behind it. Well luckily there was just enough light. I could see this guy motion for me to go over his tow cable. Because he'd stopped. He, I was close. But the barge of course keeps moving. And I had to go from where I was, across his tow cable or this great big shovel nose barge would've just buried me right there. I was going like, okay, if it had been an hour later I could never have seen that guy. So, no matter whether you're good or not, you gotta be somewhat lucky. And I was lucky. There've been a lot of good fishermen have had accidents at sea. But they just weren't lucky. But I've had my narrow close calls. I had a time with a.. I have I guess more affection for foreign fishing, fishermen because of some incidents that happened. But in those days the foreign fleet was here and of course all, all... most of the guys on the west coast were, hated 'em being here. They were catching a lot of fish off the coast that... it, we thought should've been ours. But there was two ships, I didn't know at the time were tied up to each other unloading. And I was going tuna fishing and I went, I could,

it was when I had a radar. I could see the blip. But all of a sudden I saw the blip come apart and they'd untied. And I was in a very...a 36 foot boat. And I could see the bow of this boat and this Russian captain had to've thrown it in wide open reverse, he'd a cut me in half. Because I thought it was a single ship and I was crossing his stern. Instead when they broke loose, 'cause their radar was probably interfered with the other boat's radar until it got, come apart. And I was right underneath the bow and...if he wouldn't've done what he did I would've been killed. So after that happens to you, you got a little more respect and wasn't too many years later that there was a group called the Z squad, which is famous. They were out of San Francisco and down in California. They were great fishermen. Had nice boats and they were wild and we were out there and we got...kept... we start talking to a guy called Valerie on one of the Russian ships. Uh, nice guy. He was from [unsure]. He was talking about what was it like to be a fishermen on his boats. We just got to know him and uh so we declared peace on Russia. And we...a bunch of us got all kinds of women's nylons, candy, cigarettes, you know, everything. Playboy magazines. And we went down and we traded with the ship that was tied next to the, their freezer boat that was taking stuff back to Russia. And we pulled up alongside and...the different boats threw stuff over and they'd hit the deck with all this stuff. Of course all the Russian guys are grabbing stuff and then they gave us back some Russian money and they didn't have a lot to trade with us that you'd really want. Anyway, so there was, they got Comisar [sp?] I think they call him. He was the Communist party leader. He stopped it. Well I had a girl that was, when we started this thing she was a waitress with a short.... I, maybe I shouldn't tell this story but we'll see...She was just a friend. I said, "Do you want to go see a Russian vessel?" Well at that time it was big news here on the coast. So she went down with me. It was about a 5 hour run to where they were at and so I brought my stuff up and, and I'll never forget this guy dove off the side of the boat and that... those ships are high. Swam over, tied the stuff up. Of course she's still got her cocktail dress on and she comes up and like this over the boat and waving at the guys. Didn't think anything about it. Just kids having a good time. We went by, waved and they gave us some stuff and then we took off back for port. About three days later I get this letter from the, let's see, who was it? It was the Coast Guard or the...anyways... from Washington, D.C. One of the big, I think it was Department of Commerce saying that I was to desist all contact. They had had a complaint from the Russian government that I was trying to incite Russian sailors to defect to the U.S. \*Laughter.\* I was like, "How far from the truth can that be?" \*Laughter.\* You know, kids do stuff that... I just....it was never anything that even... I think because she had a short dress I guess that we were... I never would have even imagined such a thing but that's what happens is you get these agency people or the guys....so.... I was to cease all contact which we really didn't have a lot. Anyway this guy named Valerie who was, who we'd done all the talking to that kinda caused this...'cause you know unless you make what you have are some kind of friends with these guys so we had a kind of a...and all of a sudden he's not there anymore. They said they shipped him back. Probably because of ...he'd built a relationship with the American fleet, but I think that relationship helped make us realize that we're all fishermen. It doesn't, we got talking. We're all fishermen. We may be from a different country but we're still there to do the same thing. The guy in one sense, I always like to think that he instilled part of what today was the peace that eventually led to the joint ventures. I mean, so... just kids decide we always kidding we said we declared peace on Russia. Now the U.S. can learn it from us.

D: That's fantastic.

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T: Yeah. But... you know...I've never been a person who particularly liked government. It's amazing that I'm a person that's a government official now.

D: Yeah, that is surprising.

T: Yeah. I still get frustrated. I'm really frustrated with the Coast Guard today 'cause now that they're under Homeland Security the attitude of the Coast Guard has changed completely. They don't want to work with anybody, they just want to pass a law and protect their ass. That's what my impression is. They don't try to find out what's behind it. And I see it more and more and more happening all the time here. Just like in the bays. Now they... you can't go below the bridge or can't go below buoy 7 without, if the weather's rough, when, on the flood tide you couldn't be in a safer place. But they're sayin' oh well somebody might race out across the bar. It's just, it's, it's...somebody trying to protect their ass in government all the time. And I'm a government official and I watch it all the time here and it...I'm still. \*Laughter\*.... a person who's willing to take a chance to try to find out what's, you know, try to do things quick and make it work. So...

D: Yeah.

T: Ask me another question. I'm full of stories.

D: I would love to. So, um, you keep mentioning the old ways. And I wanted to know what exactly do you mean? So, what have the changes been from when you started 'til now?

T: Oh, forever. When I started fishing was the freest business you could be in. There was...I couldn't go salmon fishing before April 15th. I had to be done salmon fishing before October. I had to keep fish that were over 26 inches. And other than that, they left you alone. You know you had to buy a license. And so I could keep halibut, I could keep anything that I caught. Of course salmon trolling you didn't catch many of that stuff. It was mostly salmon. I could go where I wanted. I could go to Canada if I wanted. I went up and fished off the Canadian coast. I went all the way to Morrow Bay. I went where I wanted. Now, you gotta have a permit. You gotta have all everything else. You gotta watch out for marine reserves. You gotta watch out for any closed areas. You gotta have practically have a lawyer on board and you better have a science degree because if one of those fish is just a little bit different than the other, which you get some of them can get a little bit hard, which I do have a science degree and I can tell the difference. You're gonna get a ticket for something. And of course there's somebody always around wanting to give you a ticket. Just uh, if you go down here even in a skiff in the bay, I've been stopped as many as 6 agencies in a single day and you tell me how that makes any economic sense to put that much effort in this bay when you go to other places. You don't see anybody. It's because the agencies are here. And it's what they've got money, they gotta get spend, do their quota. They're out there just basically checking life jackets in the bay. I do some sport fishing and stuff so I, I get, I go, "How does this make sense?" So, the other one of course is the biological side of change. You know in those days it was pretty much just if you could figure out how to catch 'em you could catch 'em. And you had to figure out how to get a market. So a lot of times I would get, kept trying to catch a new fish and try to build a market for it. And was successful with squid and box crabs. I drug box crabs and then the crabbers found out that they were there and then they had a poor Dungeness year so a lot of guys went out and caught

most of 'em and they didn't come back real fast but...um. Anyway, helped to develop a market because I brought in a few every day on the back deck to the local markets and they found that they were good to eat and stuff so. And then I do a lot of exploring. I'd go to San Pedro and learn how to fish squid or I'd go to Hawaii and learn how to fish tuna over there, hook and line fishing. Or I'd go to Mexico and fish something down there. You, every, all that information it may not directly relate but over time you can stick that information together to try something different. I started some of the earliest black cod pots out here. And then I brought 'em in shore and tried to figure out how to catch lingcod and black cod. Never successful. Catch a few but never was able to really catch enough to make it work. So I went and put 'em in the aquarium at that time. We didn't have an aquarium like this. The undersea gardens where all the species were. They gave me permission to put the pots on the bottom so I could actually sit there and watch the fish go in the tunnels and see what they did, which gave me ideas how to improve it and so I was able to improve the gear some. But, things like that. Different species would go in different ways and then I'd take the pots and put 'em off the back of the dock and see what I could catch after I'd improved the tunnels. I spent a year messing around with that stuff. Can't say I ever made a lot of money from it but I had other fisheries that I went on to do. But I'd still you know tried to understand the fish and how they move in bays. I used to have a skiff tied to the dock and I'd go down and try to figure out how to make little sea bass bite in the bay. I used a little tiny hook and stuff and they were just moody, moody fish. There was way more fish there than I could ever get to work on hook and line. Now I'm an adult and I'm still fishing those fish up there. They're still moody, moody fish and they still don't want to bite all the time. \*Laughter.\* Nothing's changed. I never learned figured that one. I'd do good at it, but I mean, maybe better from it but...

D: So what about any changes to like fishermen themselves? Have you seen any changes to the fleet?

T: No, because fishermen always come in pulses. When I started there wasn't any young fishermen in it. And I actually wanted to teach ocean science. I got the right when I was in school to go to oceanography which unusual at that time for a fisherman to have oceanography and education background. And then I spent a lot of time taking fisheries courses so I kinda got the whole picture which is, today there's students doing that but in those, that days that was really unusual. They wouldn't even let me in the ocean, they didn't want to let me in the oceanography department but I was a teacher well I'm interested in this and so they finally gave me a deferment. I could at least go into general oceanography, which I learned more out of that course than anything else. So, um, how's it changed? There's these pulses of people as the fishery's successful like the salmon fishery was real successful. There was a group of guys that were about 50 years old when I started. And they were willing to teach me 'cause there wasn't a lot of young guy around and they'd help me out a little bit. Not a lot. Most of 'em, a lot of 'em are Norwegians and Scandinavians. They didn't tell you what to do but they would indicate that they were going to do something and if you knew how to read between the lines they were telling you that you oughta do something. And so that was a group. And there was a group about the time that I started, a pulse. Today that's the guys that own the big draggers and trawlers and stuff around today and have been very successful. And now I see their kids because it's gonna be passed father son. Mine was passed father to son but there was a bunch of people to start about my period that weren't from a fishing family. And now these kids, I see a pulse of them coming. Lot of time fishermen come in these, these pulses. So, how has it changed? Far more dangerous

when we were younger. Way more dangerous than today. With all the modern electronics and all the stuff that goes on and... if you're on a big boat it's, it's all, it's a pretty safe business. It's not the same as it was then. I mean we killed a lot of people. If you go down, walk down the Newport waterfront, that sidewalk and look at those names, you'll see that most of 'em were in the 30s, 40s, 50s and 60s, up into the 70s. And then today you won't see many, many names added to that sidewalk that have died at sea. I, one day I didn't even know that was there. I was busy doing some... I had to walk from Englund Marine Supply down the dock and I'm just going "Holy cow. All these guys I knew that didn't make it." And I knew some of the stories, and some I didn't know what happened to 'em. But it was pretty emotional. Walk down there and realize how many people used to die in this business and how few do today. So... that's how it changed I guess.

D: That's good to hear. That's a good change.

T: Well, yeah. It's a good change but it's also super regulated today. Remember that was total freedom in those days. And that's worth a lot. Freedom's worth a lot. I have a problem. I had... I'm a person who likes to keep things free and try to keep things as open as possible. Accessibility to species. Today the biologist, he's paranoid, forced by the Endangered Species Act. I mean, I understand why. I'm not beating him up for that but he's, he's always gotta take the most defensive approach on everything so.... and same with Coast Guard. They're trying to cover their ass. Because if they have a major accident then it makes 'em look bad. That's the Commanders. The young people in the Coast Guard, I've got to know a lot of 'em like at Depoe Bay and I'm like, these guys are the same guys that I knew years ago. I mean they're, they want to go do it. So part of it's maybe caused by age of the people we let be in charge.

D: Yeah. Regulation. So, changing direction a little bit, did you have an opportunity in your lifetime to pass on your fishing legacy to any children?

T: My son is.... well, my wife didn't particularly like the fisheries necessarily but he decided to go a different direction. He's five time All-American track. He just went to San Francisco yesterday. He's a track coach for University of San Francisco. He was captain of the University of Oregon track team. Real successful in that area. I offered him the boat and then I told him I was gonna sell out if he didn't want it. I don't think he fully understood what I was offering him and the money and stuff 'cause that boat woulda made a lot of money for him but money wasn't his factor 'cause I had made enough that I'll probably be able to keep him going when I pass away so. But he's doing what he wants to do and that's, that's what I want him to do is do what he wants to do. Um... I don't... in one sense I'm kinda glad [inaudible] 'cause the regulations and the gov...creep with the government isn't... If you're looking over your shoulder all the time because some cop wants to bust your ass you just...I mean... and you face so many fines and penalties in the ocean. So many of 'em. You know. Undersize this or you gotta fish that come up the wrong size or it's got blue eyes instead of green eyes, it's, I mean... and the regulation. I can't imagine even in a day how many regulations you face. I suppose you ...probably close to a thousand a day of different things you could get a ticket for if you're at sea. For just, I mean there's always something. There's a fine if you don't have your life jacket goes out of date, there's a fine if your you know fire extinguisher isn't registered. It just gets ridiculous. So... I don't know if I want him to have to live like that. I'd rather be him... he's got an exciting profession where they're not

trying to bust you all the time. And that's, that's the game out here in fishing today is whether or not we can bust this guy. Coast Guard, I mean you'll be in the middle of a, I think in terms of us in a big shrimp lead up off the Columbia River. We're just, we're doing good on shrimp and here comes a Coast Guard guy, of course he's got a gun and all that. Steps on my boat and he wants me to stop. Of course is then when they, they're a little better than that now but he wanted me to stop and I got two nets, \$40,000 of nets, if I stop...and then I said look I can't stop, I mean I got boats going this way, I stop, I start drifting off, I'mma have all this gear tangled up. He just didn't know. Didn't know enough. He must've been new. But this was when they first started and anyway so, we finally convinced him that I couldn't stop, that I'm under a lot of pressure. There's boats coming every direction. Just... just let me get through to the end of the tow and he finally backed off and let me go but he...he, what am I gonna do? I got drag nets by me. I can't cut and run on him. \*Laughter.\* There was, never even got a violation but I just like, "You want me to stop?" \*Laughter.\* "What I'm doing. Like I can just stop like I'm a car?" \*Laughter.\* I'll never forget that one.. Just...\*Laughter.\* \$40,000 of drag nets. All this stuff would've just been a big knot and then some other boat would've cut across my stern... \*Laughter.\* 'Cause not everybody, everybody knows what they're doing out there but not everybody's on the same channel. I couldn't have told 'em. It was pretty funny. "You want me to stop?" \*Laughter.\*

D: Did he apologize?

T: Oh, he didn't know. He just didn't know. They're better trained than that now, but he didn't know. He didn't know anything about fisheries. It's back when they first started doing it. It was pretty funny. Today I laugh at it. I wasn't laughing though. \*Laughter.\* So...

D: So, with these changes have you seen the motivation for young people to enter changing?

T: If you're single.... and you want some excitement and you love the ocean. If you don't love the ocean, don't do it. And you want an opportunity to make money. It's still one of the best opportunities out there. You can make good money if you get on a big boat and if you're willing to work hard. If you're not willing to work hard, if you're not willing to get up at three o'clock in the morning, work without sleep for two days, don't even think about being in the fishing business I tell people. And you better be in physically good shape. I'm lucky I've been able to stay in physically good shape. I don't drink. I quit drinking when I was younger. Never used any drugs or anything like that. If you have any of those problems, which there are people in that business but they always crack up pretty fast because if you make money and you start playing that game, you...if you watch the Deadliest Catch you can see what really goes on with guys that are... smoking, drinking, all that, is they usually have trouble early on in life. There's a lot of pressures but if you stay healthy then you can go a long time in the business. And it can be rewarding financially. But you have to be willing to give up social life and a lot of... A lot of fishermen in the old days were single. Today I think there's more of 'em that run bigger boats and more business-like and their wives are a part of it. And they make great teams if everything works out but...

D: Interesting. So, what about, I've heard a lot about possible barriers for young people to get into fishing.

T: It's really hard today. That's one of the tragedies of the limited entry. Um, I don't know how you build yourself up from the bottom up today. You also have to be able to get a job on a big boat and then get a chance to buy in as a captain or get a chance to buy in. It'd be really tough to get to the... because today the businesses can be passed on in the family. In once sense I wish my son would've stayed so he could've kept boats and financially he'd probably been better off fishing but like I say, his case he has things he wants to do. That's great. I just want him to be happy. \*Laughter.\*

D: But have any of those barriers changed more recently? Like when did the change start to...?

T: Well, the biggest barrier is when you go to limited entry or individual fishermen's quotas really created a big barrier because there's so few people who own the quotas that they pile so much quota onto 'em that there's not a wide variety of quota. That, it's gone. I'm really worried about the changes to community levels. Now back to government side of it. Um, as you create more piling on of quota into a handful of few boats. Well, if Seattle has more money than Newport they can come down and offer the money for the quota here. This community loses. I watched, I figured, 16 million dollars of boats in about 30 days sail outta here. Business just gone. And nobody even noticed it. If we lost 16 million dollars worth of hotels around here they'd just, they'd go ballistic. That's huge loss. Well the quota, the boats were bought up by people who had more money in Seattle. And so there went the quota. Bang. And the community's out the money. That's the part that they didn't see in this. And today is these boats more and more and more of 'em are not owned by people here locally. They had the quota but somebody comes along with more money, they're gonna sell. And locally, our young people don't have the money to do it. Their dad may have had a King crabber and he wants something... to get in it. So, yes, to answer your question. Has it changed? Yes. The quota system has definitely changed the ability for young people to get in the business. Used to be you went salmon trolling. You worked your way up. Now there's this quota that locks it in. And they....it's just changed a lot. There is less discard in the ocean in the fisheries 'cause everybody's pulsing into a stock. Like, whiting. They almost, the stuff now, those guys... or they may be Petraly [sp?] spawning. They'll go fish on them which I have a problem with. Uh or they'll go fish on black cod. Whatever the big bun [?].and a whole lot of the boats go. A lot of these other species, that are less significant and aren't worth a lot of money go and harvest it. Uh, the rock fish conservation had a huge effect on the fleet because this, this part, this coast because it's about 25 miles out to where you can fish and so um the 70, 65 to 75 foot trawlers that were there all sold out 'cause they were fishing on these less productive fisheries inside and so they had to sell out to the bigger boats off shore. And so there's...it's a big. Our barrier here is like huge. It's like a third of the entire grounds is now locked down that where these boats that were then, that class of boat fished. No boats fish there at all anymore. Gotta be... I hear stories of the big stocks of fish. It was probably overfished but it's come back. But there's nobody, a lot of those...green-striped rock fish. Nobody's fished green-striped yet. There's a lot of rock fish that were marketed and sold here that are small rock fish. The big boats now they got pulsed into the fishery that's the most financially ...viable. But the other stocks go unharvested. English sole is another one. Just goes completely unharvested. Thousands of tons or millions... it's big. Markets don't particularly want to pay a big price for it and if you have a smaller boat you have to pay for an observer to go with ya. They cost you like 500 bucks a day and you're maybe only making a couple three thousand bucks a day. By the time you pay all the expenses and crew and stuff you have nothing

left. You paid for the observer. Where with a big boat that's going out and making 5 and 10 thousand bucks a day, 500 bucks a day isn't a big deal. So it wiped out...the observer program and the rockfish conservation wiped out the intermediate class that allows fishermen to move up.

D: Interesting. Yeah. Do you have any... (referring to Courtney)

Courtney: Yeah. We can transition a little bit more. I'm taking lots of notes, too. Sorry. We can transition to the community side, so... Maybe a good place to start is talking about how you made that jump from fisherman to local elected official. What inspired you to do that?

T: I am the most unlikely politician you'll ever run into in your life. Um... I've always been interested in politics. I was in Newport and my parents moved to Salem and I moved over there and now when I'd run in Bush Park there just south of the Capitol I... met Hatfield when he was a young man. The kids I went to school with had parents that worked at the Capitol. I started going over there. One of the girls went to the Capitol, um, that I knew. She was, had something to do with...anyway I knew her and all of a sudden one day she called up and said we need a fisherman to come and testify. This is when the Russian fleet. Of course I was a kid and they were bringing Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife together at that time. It was the Fish Commission and the Game Commission into one of those. And they, she kept calling me up and say, "You're the only fisherman we know. Commercial fisherman. Will you come and testify?" So I started coming into the building when I was really young and knew my way around. And always in the back of my mind, you know, maybe someday. Well then I was fishing off Westport in a bad storm and the boat started drift down into another boat and my watch alarm went off and I had... 75 foot shrimper and the crew that night had broke a hydraulic line and had oil on their boots and there was two steps going from my state room down to the galley before you went up a ladder. And went that alarm went off I jumped outta bed, slipped my boots on and I hit one of those steps and I fell backwards. And I...one of the steps jabbed right here into my back. I couldn't hardly move. I got upstairs, I tied myself in the seat for two days and they brought me food and I fished and because it was easier to actually, with a shrimper, to do that. I didn't want to run in it was so rough. I just said... [inuadible] was killing me. And so I got home and I came home and I knew I was hurt but I didn't ever go to the doctor. I went about a year and a half. I went to the doctor a couple times and they kept saying I had the flu. I finally went to a doctor over here and he said, "Terry. You're not a whiner. We're gonna find out what's wrong." And they gave me like an ultrasound. They found a tumor the size of a cantaloupe inside of my stomach from...and I went to a doctor and he gave me a couple days to live if I didn't get it operated on and they operated and they thought it was kidney cancer. Well it turned out to be a cyst on the top of the adrenal gland and I...when they removed it, they thought I was gonna die. He came in the next day and said, "We got it out, but it doesn't look good." Well it turned out to not be cancer. He said, "I do operations everyday and that's only the second time I've been wrong." I lived. So he told me to try to find a new occupation. So I went down, I went down here at one of the local bars that night and uh I knew the State Representative Katie Reikin. And she's...I ask her, I said, "Do you ever," this is how unlikely this would be. I said, "Do you ever think about not being the State Representative?" And she said, "Yeah." Well it was about a week before the filing deadline to file for office and I said, "Well, I'd be interested if you're..." She said, "Well tonight, do. (??)" So I went home and told my wife and I just had a son. I said I'm gonna run for state office. I already had a down payment on a house in Hawaii. I was gonna move to Hawaii. And lo and

behold I mean I had, unheard of, I had no financial support from Salem. I had like \$20,000 to run a campaign against a person with \$120,000 but I had a lot of local support. A lot of local people stepped up and helped me through that first year and I won by a very large margin. So, all of a sudden I went from this kind of shy guy. \*Laughter.\* Well I mean not shy but... to State Representative in the formal capitol. And I struggled. I mean, but, I was told, 'cause I'd never done a lot of public speaking. I'd done a lot on the radio and I was told just, to always tell a story and, and pretend like you're on the radio just talking to people like you would on a boat. And tell 'em what you think. That's how I got started in politics right there. Just, a quirk of circumstances. I still go back fishing but I fish in a small boat and I try to stay out of the really bad weather, but... If the crewmen hadn't had oil on that, broke that hydraulic line, it never happened. You just don't, I look at the circumstance that happened, I just, I've always believed if you see something and don't look at it just keep going and make it happen and so. My wife helped run my campaign the first year and so many local people pitched in. The fishing fleet pitched in and gave me... I remember one lobbyist came and he says, he looks at my campaign contributions, he says, "Terry, most people in politics get big campaign contributions." He looked at me, "Do you know anybody that has more than fifty bucks?" \*Laughter.\* Because that's what they could give ya for tax deduc...so all the fleet gave me fifty bucks. Well you get 500 fishermen giving you fifty bucks you got a pretty good campaign. \*Laughter.\*

D: Oh yeah.

T: So, that's how that happened.

C: Yeah. Wow, interesting. Can you speak a little bit more about the community of Newport more generally? About the people who live here, the local economy....

T: This is the most amazing community and I'm so proud and I don't mean this politically, it's the truth, to be involved with this community. Because we're a mixture of tourism, we're a mixture of fishermen. But the marine science center over has changed this community as much as anything. I mean they let 'em build that place for a buck which is still a problem with fishermen 'cause we think the property, the port should've gotten more money than that for it but, it's changed so much that it's been a great addition. In the fishing industry, because we're right here in one little small community and you have all these different agencies, ODFW, the marine science, all these different people. You get to know 'em personally. You don't get to know 'em as necessarily you go to a meeting but you're around and you get to ask 'em questions, you get, once you get to know 'em. They all have their expertise and you can tap it all together and that's what makes this fleet so successful is the technology through gear repairs and all the different things the... excluder devices is one that we're, we're leading everybody on development of excluder devices because we have underwater cameras that ODFW started and now that's a far [?] that the boats are putting their own cameras on the nets to make things, to see how they work and how things are working. And it's gonna keep growing. It just, you have a vast amount of skill on the marine science side and you have a vast amount of skill on the fishery side. It's just trying to bring it together and that's, you do it simply 'cause we're in close proximity. And we're, we're getting more and more too on the oceanography side of fishermen willing to cross. It's, it's a tough barrier. You wouldn't think that bay was that wide but we still are better than any other community at that. We're communicating all the time and I'm willing... OSU Extension was a

critical component. Bob Jacobson was the first Extension agent. He had a lot of barriers to break down and I, he was a friend of mine. We were roommates for a long time and he had a lot to do with the success of the fleet. And it builds on, success builds on itself. So, I... Extension, whether it's in agriculture or fisheries is a critical component to getting the science that goes on at the university level to correlate with the people on the ground.

C: Yeah. Can you expand at all on the role of fishing in the economy, in particular?

T: Redefine the question.

C: Can you talk about the role that the fishing fleet plays here in the economy? Either Newport or in Lincoln County

T: Oh, we did a study. I, that's one of the things is... OCZMA, Oregon Coast Zone Management Association, used to do a study about every ten years. Well they've kinda gone away so I convinced the other commissioners we should do our own study and so economically it broke down every part of it. And it's important that we do that every ten years. I don't know what's gonna happen after I'm gone but uh fishing industry's the, well the very largest part of our economy is seniors and their transfer of money from Social Security and all that part. But as the job base part of the economy fishing industry's I think around 10 or 11 percent of the entire county's economy, even though it's all sent here. Tourism's right below it. In fact with as much as things have picked up I wouldn't be a bit surprised that we're pretty level with that. We're the smallest agricultural, farm gate agriculture. It's down about five tenths of a percent of our economy. The other one though that's really staggering in the last four years is marine science. We went from about one percent to four percent. Partly come from NOAA and them being involved here. Um, so, I mean you're...and then timber which is up around six and it of course depends on the market and, but, our timber here is so much wrapped up in federal lands that we can't harvest on anymore that the spotted owl really kicked us in the teeth and now the federal government doesn't pay any money in through the Common School Fund to the county. So it's, timber industry, we still have a lot of trees and there's still economy. But we don't have the mills. Georgia Pacific's important because of the paper mill here but as far as cutting logs and we cut the logs but we ship 'em all off to other counties so it's, it goes outside the county. Other counties benefit from our production. We don't necessarily benefit. It's an interesting report because... in the fishing industry if you look at it it's like a saw tooth. It's, and it's just the industry, the ocean gets good and goes down and improves and goes back and forth. And, but it's going up. It's steadily going up. I'm not discouraged. Where tourism'll tend to be more, a little more smooth in its, its uh...chart. And then timber industry's pretty stable. Each of these different...has its own chart that's different and the fishing industry has... That's why I say you always gotta have some reserves to get through the bad times because when you look at our chart it's clear as can be that it goes up and it goes down. It's... world markets, world economies, regulations, but long term it's still going up. And I think it'll go up in the future. Price of food goes up. We do supply some of the best, high-quality seafood in the world.

C: Yeah. Can you speak to the role of fishing in the culture or the way of life here in Newport, aside from just its economic contribution?

## Graying of the Fleet – Voices from the West Coast

T: Boy, that's a wide question. I like a little more defined questions.

C: It's a big question.

T: So break that down.

C: I was just curious about what it means to have a commercial fishing fleet here in Newport, aside from its economic contributions. Does it contribute anything to the way of life or what it means to live in the community? Like, those relationships with fishermen or it can be...

T: It creates stability. It creates... most of the people in a coastal community that doesn't have a harbor like ours, or doesn't have the marine science center, they think of the ocean about their boot tops. They, I mean, I get a kick out of people that are "Oh, I love the ocean!" And I ask well how, how much do you get out there? How much knowledge do you have about her? "Oh, I surf." I'm kinda like, "Okay. So you get out a hundred yards." \*Laughter.\* There's another 5,000 miles of ocean depending on which direction you wanna go outta here. Four thousand miles of ocean. I don't think that's a very good example of the ocean. Well that's, when you get a fleet that travels to Alaska. That goes to New Zealand. That fishes you know off of California and that and you got research vessels that are doing research out there. All of a sudden and you they all come back and they all got a few stories and experiences. It makes you a community that really is about the ocean. And most communities aren't. Does that make sense to you?

C: Absolutely. Yeah.

T: Yeah.

C: I want to get back to some of the things that Deanna was talking about. Talking about the barriers to entry for young people and the quotas and how difficult it's been for new people to get into the industry. As a local elected official, do you have a sense of how that might impact the community if over time it's more and more difficult? You mentioned already some of your concerns but I don't know if you have any other thoughts about how that might impact Newport over time.

T: Well, it's, I think the biggest impact is if you don't have a barrier for the young person to come in to buy into the vessel somebody else'll buy it. That quota's gonna be gone and you're gonna be less, have less fish landed in here under the modern management system. They really screwed that part up. Um, under the quota system there's less jobs than there was. Higher paying jobs for the people that are there but less overall jobs. There's still some small boats but they can't get from the small boat to the big boat operation where the real money's at. Um, the other thing is the biology. They keep locking it down more and more. Like to say you can't fish forage fish. Or you can't, you're gonna block everybody from...uh you can't have krill. Uh, not saying that there's a fishery there that's a viable fishery. But as you lock the doors to things you have no access to even do the research to find out if they're could've been done. It, today if you have a net on board that...a boat can't go out and do the research kind of work that I did. I carried an extra net that was small mesh to see what I could catch when I went to 500 fathoms with a mesh this big. Build, had it built with a special liner. I built my own design nets to do research on species

that today you wouldn't even be able to think about going out and doing the research on your own because all the regulations would stop you from doing it. You'd never be able to find out all that information. It'll just, when I die it'll all just go away. At one time National Marine Fisheries service called me up and asked me if, they thought I could catch juvenile dover sole. They'd been trying to catch 'em for, they had like 50 of 'em in their samples of these little planktonic dover soles. They had some plankton but the ones that were just sitting on the bottom. I said, "Well, let me design a net for it. Find out." So I took a shrimp net and rigged it so it'd dig the bottom. Put a little bit of chain on the bottom of it but didn't put any roller gear on it and then I went out here in the, above the north end of the rock and I said, "Well, what depth do you think they might be in?" "Well, the first samples we got were in like 70 fathoms." So I went out and dumped at 50 fathoms on sand bottom 'cause you just rip the tar out if you got around a rock. It'd just destroy...if you had to go buy that net it'd probably four thousand bucks for the net that I built for 'em with it. It came down and went to a little bitty quarter inch mess nautilus liner inside of it. And the first tow I made I think it was like 800 of 'em I had. "And said oh, I think this works." \*Laughter.\* I wound up doing surveys and for soil and man... it was this grant. Soil and management service. Up and down the coast in two or three locations for several years. I got into some really wild stuff doing research work. I did seismic... 'course they take, it looks like a tower and they put a vibrator on the top of this seismocord [sp?]. They said, "Do you think you could figure out how to do it?" Well I had to go get our fishing fleet electronics man design this thing and I don't have a date, or used to dumping over the side so I figured out how to put 'em out on the end of uhh... outrigger and... a nice seismocord for the department, the Washington Department of Econom...Ecology and the next year I come and seismocord the Columbia River and it was interesting. They said, "Oh you gotta have these three point anchor-systems." And I said, "It ain't gonna work. You can't get that kinda stability on this." So I just put a, built a big... I mean I probly lost money in the contract to do it but I wanted to see if I could do it. Build big chain anchor, chain. I could size... I... they get about 6, 7 cores a day and I was doing like 20 cores a day 'cause we could just swing it over, pick it up, pull it out, slip it back in, go back over. And I even seismocord right up next to the jetties 'cause they were interested in the jetties 'cause I could stick my outrigger out this way, the boat's safe, and... I did a bunch of that stuff that probly was a little bit dangerous but I wanted to see if I could do it. And so I get to do all this neat science that today, they're still struggling with trying to do seismocords out here, but you gotta... I brought, they brought up a real sharp team from New Zealand. They knew how to make gear work. They'd just never seen it done on the boat like this. And so we just kinda stuck it all together and once we'd stuck it together people wanted to hire us and away we go. We'd do you know two weeks of that a year. It was fun.

C: Sounds like it.

T: Well, it was...that, that was one of the fun stuff, is inventing something to do something in the ocean that nobody ever did. Figuring out what their.... I like that, when they call me up and they said, "Hey, you think you can do something or do you think you can catch this fish?" And I smile and say, "I don't know, but I'll try." And that, it's fun. Catching new fish that... but I'm running out of those species I guess as I get older. Now there's this blue rock species. There are so many of 'em up here in the winter. They never survey in the wintertime. They only want to do summer surveys 'cause it's convenient for 'em. That frustrates me. Or they take some data from somebody in California that doesn't even know there's a separate species. I told 'em this wasn't the same

species. They finally did last year. I've got, I got a ticket for keeping a species that isn't even the right species but they didn't recognize it 'til after I got the violation. I caught three fish more than it was but, it was like... I told 'em at that time, I said, "This isn't the species you think it is." Well, I got the ticket and then they find out three months later I was right. There is a separate species. Just stuff like that. I get frustrated. I don't... and they did their job. The cop did his job. The court did their job. But... all I can do is tell 'em. But if they're not willing to go out in the wintertime or they're not willing to go do, explore all the time in the ocean... that's... that was the nice thing about having enough money to be able to just do it for the exploratory part. Today you, regulations stop you from doing anything like that.

C: Well, my last question is more hypothetical but what do you think would happen here in Newport if all of those quota or all those family-based fishing businesses were sold?

T: Oh, you'd still have boats come here and deliver the fish and you'd think you're good but the real dollars to the community wouldn't be there. [Conversation about what time it is, Terry has to leave for meeting right away]. The real dollars, wouldn't be there 'cause the money... the profit margin the boat would go to wherever the community that owned the boat.

C: Alright.

D: Makes sense. Yeah.

T: I could go on for another hour. \*Laughter.\*

D: We appreciate it. We know you're super busy.