

Narrator: Jonathan Hurd is a licensed captain out of Port Allen, Kauai. He fished in the Mauzone of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands from 1995 to 2009 and currently fishes in the main Hawaiian Islands.

Jonathan Hurd: On the East Coast is where I grew up yeah, in Long Island, New York, and then I moved to Hawaii of course for surfing, in 1970. I started out living in Kapaa in an area over there called the Lihi, yeah, the hut where all the fishing boats went out. So, my first trips to Northwest Hawaiian Islands, I think is 1982. I brought over Aikane 49, it was owned by a group of doctors out of Anchorage, Alaska. And then got out of that boat and built my own boat which is over here at the club. And fished, started out in 1992 I think is when we got Mau zone permits, when the permit system came about. Southwest Bank, Twin Banks, slow trolling at Necker. We did a lot of uku tagging, electronic tagging, spaghetti tagging, we did a lot of tagging with deep sea fish over there. We carried observers, we carried biologists with us that watched all the movements, the seals, the birds, to see if we had any interaction. So we did a lot of science. We brought back a lot of fish that was brought to the federal government, which was examined by scientists over there. So a lot of research took place in those years for the fishing community. And it was a lot of extra effort, we got paid for some things, and not paid for others. But as fishermen, we already proved that we have taken care of everything. We had observers on our boats. We've gone through vessel monitoring systems, observers, catch counts, supervised unloading, supervised loading. We have submitted lists of our garbage, what we bought at the grocery store. What garbage we brought back, after we came back from a fishing trip. Then of course, was the economic studies out of Silver Springs, Maryland. Sending economists out here to tell us we're not making any money, you're using too much fuel, and your economic prowess is not strong enough to survive. So the permits went from 12 down to 10, eight and whatnot, but everything as fine until Pew Trust coming in to tell us that we were absolutely not worth any money, that we should actually give up our permits because we're gonna be put out of business anyway. So why don't we just give our permits to Pew Trust? So, we had several meetings, and then we had a meeting with at that time, Neil Abercrombie. I think there was 10 or 12 of us in a room. And he was there in the room telling us that, "Well, if you don't give up your permit, you're not gonna get anything. You better give up your permit to him, he'll offer you something for your permit. Congress will never help you." Well, he wasn't standing up to help us as working fishermen. It was pretty hard for me, an older part, an older person at the end of my career, to be forced out of that work. The government offered us a formula of how to buy us out, which was based on previous gross and previous fishing trips, which we didn't make any money on anyways, so obviously they didn't pay us enough money for giving up that right to be able to fish there. But now we see the momentum now starting to slowly swing back, that other fishermen in the Western Pacific are tired of the monument system, our brothers in CNMI, our brothers in Guam, and American Samoa are tired of being kept out of fishing grounds. They're very productive, because the government tells us those are specific monument areas. Because now we've cut off taking fish out of those areas, we're gonna have to buy more fish from overseas. That doesn't help us here economically on the island. It doesn't help younger fishermen, now. It doesn't help anyone, what's really gone on right now. I think that the fisherman is not held in as good a position, I think that because of NGO's and just the general environmental movement, that fish have feelings, so we're killing those fish and they have feelings. So, if you talk to really young children, they seem to feel that yeah, well Grandpa, why did you kill that fish? Well, so we can eat it. Well, we don't really have to eat it. And then they have the resentment of gee, do we really have to eat that fish? So, I think society has changed

that, you know, generally society has changed that. You know, now I'm what, be 69 this September and I'm still working, still hoping for another four or five years, to be able to continue fishing. And again, we're hoping we can get the monument areas open, so that some of the older timers like myself and some new guys can get a chance at better fishing grounds in Hawaii.