

Female Speaker: And it's March 6 and we are talking with just Albert. So I'm going to get on the like offshore map and then we can kind of, to some . And thank you for helping us and being here and talking to us with...

Male Speaker: Yeah, I don't usually do – talk in the park, you know. I kind of stay out that way but I got nothing better to do now so kind of help – maybe help somebody out sooner or later.

Female Speaker: Yeah. When did you sell your business?

Male Speaker: To my nephew about a month-and-a-half ago.

Female Speaker: Oh, [indiscernible] [0:00:39]

Male Speaker: He's out there crabbing right now. That's what he said. He'd be out there. He pulled like a 150 traps. We got five [indiscernible] [0:00:50] so far.

Female Speaker: Yeah. That's crazy. So why did he buy it from you knowing that it's such a bad season?

Male Speaker: He said he'd rather – he's going to try to move up north where they're killing the crabs [indiscernible] [0:01:07]...

Female Speaker: What's that? What do you mean to that?

Male Speaker: Like the [indiscernible] [0:01:10] had you all way up that way, way above Tampa.

Female Speaker: And he think he's going to go crabbing up there?

Male Speaker: That's what he's talking about. You know [indiscernible] [0:01:20] he can do it. I don't want all the way. I'm old. I'm retired.

Female Speaker: Yeah. Are there other stone crabbers that have moved further up north?

Male Speaker: A lot – all the crabbers in this area are just selling out. Everybody's selling [indiscernible] [0:01:40].

Female Speaker: Do you know who they're selling to?

Male Speaker: Whoever want – people from north in Florida are buying everything.

Female Speaker: You said Steinhatchee?

Male Speaker: Steinhatchee up that way, yeah.

Female Speaker: Okay. So what's the first red tide that you remember?

Male Speaker: probably in the 80.

Female Speaker: Yeah?

Male Speaker: Yeah. You know, it was no big deal you know? Lasted couple days and it's gone. Little fish killed.

Female Speaker: Are you from Maple?

Male Speaker: I'm from New York. I moved here when I was a little kid and I've been crabbing since I was 18 and I'm 68 now. So I've seen a couple seasons go by.

Female Speaker: Yeah. So back in the 80s, what was that – like what was that red tide like?

Male Speaker: No big deal. Like I said it last a couple days. You don't catch a couple of crabs for a week and that's it. Everything starts over and it didn't kill no crabs off or anything. Just killed fish. And like Ben said, you know, kill like catfish and stuff like that. But now it kills everything.

Female Speaker: Yeah. So back then you didn't see any dead turtles or porpoises or anything like that?

Male Speaker: No. Never seen dead porpoises for this year.

Female Speaker: And in the 80s, how often would you see red tide? Like every year, every other year...?

Male Speaker: Every couple of years.

Female Speaker: Every couple of years?

Male Speaker: Yeah, every couple of years. You know, we never see that bad. It's just gradually getting worse and worse. And in the last couple of years, it started to get terrible.

Female Speaker: And you were stone crabbing at this time?

Male Speaker: Yeah and I net fish too. I like stone crab the whole time.

Female Speaker: So in the 80s did it ever – did red tide ever affect your fishing?

Male Speaker: No.

Female Speaker: Ever?

Male Speaker: It slows down a little bit, you know. No big deal. And then picked up next week.

Female Speaker: How would it slow you down?

Male Speaker: You don't catch no – no crabs. They eat the dead fish on the bottom. They don't want to go in the trap.

Female Speaker: So you actually have trouble catching stone crabs because they have enough food, because there is something there that...

Male Speaker: Yeah. They go – you know why crawl into a trap when you can just catch a fish when it floats by you, on the bottom.

Female Speaker: Yeah, uh huh. So it would slow it down. How would that actually impact you as a fisherman?

Male Speaker: Yeah, [indiscernible] [0:04:26].

Female Speaker: So would it be, you know, if you plan to go out that week, would you just wait it or...?

Male Speaker: Yeah, we just keep on going and back then, we used to net fish too, then we go net fish in this. You know, we did either one.

Female Speaker: Okay. Did that ever impact the net fishing?

Male Speaker: Not that much really, but mostly we got the red tide in summer time and we didn't catch that much in summer time. But now, it's a whole year. You know in the winter time, it's supposed to go away, that's what they tell you. It don't go away no more.

Female Speaker: When you saw in the 80s, what – how would you know it was red tide?

Male Speaker: Well you could see it on water, red film on the water. You smell it [indiscernible] [0:05:08] it doesn't bother me but it does bother lots of other people.

Female Speaker: Uh-huh. Do you know of other people that would just avoid fishing altogether if there's red tide because of the health impacts?

Male Speaker: Not really. You know, we're all diehard, that's how you – that's what we do.

Female Speaker: Yeah. So just I want to make sure I'm getting all this. What was the – after the 80s, what was the first red tide that you kind of saw like serious impacts from or that you notice lasted a little bit longer, you know, well...

Male Speaker: Well like in the beginning of the 2000 but nothing like now.

Female Speaker: So in the 2000s, was there's a specific year or a couple years side, you remember having a bad red tide?

Male Speaker: Not really off hand, you know. We don't keep track of a death watch.

Female Speaker: You said there was a bad one – earlier you mentioned there was a bad red tide about four or five years ago?

Male Speaker: Five years ago, yeah. I had a bad one. It killed a lot of fish then, you know, lots of stuff, [indiscernible] [0:06:18] and stuff like that [overlapping conversation] but we still went out a couple hundred pounds crabs that day, didn't kill the crabs off. This year and like I say we pulled like 600 traps. I think we had like 32 pounds and it was usually mostly offshore. I got a lot of friends there, crab offshore like Daniel Doxey, he pulled 5- 600 pounds the first day. I think he pulled 12 pounds.

Female Speaker: So back in 2014 and the red tide about five years ago, was that the first time that you saw red tide that effected groupers and...?

Male Speaker: Yeah, really, yeah really. You know otherwise, [indiscernible] [0:07:05] and stuff like that off, you know. Like Ben says it kills everything now. Every fish after a swim, it kills it.

Female Speaker: What – how long did that – 2014 red tide, how long did that last?

Male Speaker: You know a week or so, maybe a little bit longer, you know, somewhere around there but not like now.

Female Speaker: So not even a month?

Male Speaker: No. A couple of weeks at the most. It [indiscernible] [0:07:31] and it comes to your house and then everything come back to normal.

Female Speaker: How did that affect your fishing?

Male Speaker: Well it slows everything down, you know, catching up.

Female Speaker: So it slows it down but what do you do? How do you adapt? How do you...?

Male Speaker: Well like during the summer time when I was crabbing like that I was electrician in the summer time to pay my bills. And I crabbed during the winter time.

Female Speaker: It's kind of...

Male Speaker: Same with all the guy. You know, they always had something else to do to pay the bills.

Female Speaker: Were they also, is it – you know, you were an electrician. What are some of the other jobs that other guys do?

Male Speaker: A lot of the other guys, they used to go grouper fishing for the summer time and they crab in the winter time. And I think they go out king fishing and I used to go king fishing too, you know? I just think [indiscernible] [0:08:22] few years. I just grab oysters, can't kill them no more so I stopped doing that and that's when I really stopped fishing. I just crabbed.

Female Speaker: So were there other guys that you worked with or that you are friends with who also instead of finding another job working on the water would be an electrician or do some other job completely unrelated to fishing?

Male Speaker: Yeah, they do that too. You know like Bim, Bim the carpenter, when he wasn't fishing, he's a carpenter.

Male Speaker: Why didn't you grouper fish instead like for you like when you are adopting to red tide and it's slow and you said you would be an electrician but other guys would go grouper fishing so what's...

Male Speaker: Yeah, they go grouper fishing. I didn't like grouper fishing.

Female Speaker: Okay. You just didn't like it...

Male Speaker: No, I didn't like it. No. I don't like staying out there for the weekend at a time.

Female Speaker: Okay.

Male Speaker: I rather grab for the day and come home.

Female Speaker: Yeah. So, let's try to map out that 2014 red tide and where exactly you saw...

Male Speaker: I'm not sure exactly you know.

Female Speaker: That's okay. We're kind of just looking, you know, I'm really interested in knowing...

Male Speaker: Anywhere from...

Female Speaker: ...how far, you know.

Male Speaker: ... from Gordon pass to all the way pass Sanibel. If we don't go – I don't go much farther than that anyway.

Female Speaker: Okay. So here's Sanibel here.

Male Speaker: Right.

Female Speaker: And then Gordon pass is, let's see that's Sanibel, that's Gordon Pass...

Male Speaker: This is Sanibel here and [overlapping conversation] that's the cape. That's Gordon Pass right here.

Female Speaker: Okay. So let's just take this and then if you can just draw right on here, the area that you...

Male Speaker: ...that you think it affected?

Female Speaker: Yeah. That you saw...

Male Speaker: Well anything, anywhere from like Marco. There's Marco, anything north to that way like that there, this whole area here. But we don't ever go much farther in that crabbing. As far as I ever go is up here to Sanibel or to Marco. I crab in this, right here.

Female Speaker: So this is – like this is your fishing area?

Male Speaker: Right. Anywhere from Marco to roughly Sanibel, that's my fishing area.

Female Speaker: Okay. So what did this look like when it was here? Was it this whole area you can kind of see that red foam on the water...?

Male Speaker: No, you see big patches.

Female Speaker: You see it in patches?

Male Speaker: Yeah, big patches.

Female Speaker: Okay. And then if you are crabbing and you go out and you start seeing patches, do you just say okay, I'm not going to catch any crabs and you go in and you wait?

Male Speaker: We still put our traps in and let them stay. We just let them sit longer, that's all. And then you'll have some other place where red tide is not, you'll catch crab there. So you go fish that area for a while and then you'll gradually move back to where the red tide was. So you'll find some crab there.

Female Speaker: Mm hmm. And was there any other year in the 2000 side affected the same area and this...?

Male Speaker: It might have been, you know, but we just put traps in this area here. I don't work on nobody else if they are catching crabs or not.

Female Speaker: Yeah. And you said it lasted for about two weeks?

Male Speaker: A couple of weeks that's all, you know, a couple of weeks. Sometimes a little bit less, sometimes a little bit more but now, you know, it's just, it's here. It just don't want to go away.

Female Speaker: Uh-hmm. And it killed what species?

Male Speaker: Like years ago?

Female Speaker: Yeah.

Male Speaker: Yeah, like some with cat fishing, something like that. You never see grouper, you know, [indiscernible] [0:12:17] fishing stuff like that and like Bim said popping out.

Female Speaker: Uh-huh. In 2014, that didn't come [indiscernible][0:12:22]?

Male Speaker: No. I've never seen it.

Female Speaker: Mm hmm. Did you notice – what would you notice first when you see like the red film in the water, when you see like...

Male Speaker: Yeah, I see the film and then people...

Female Speaker: And then would you see dead fish too?

Male Speaker: Yeah, you'll see dead fish flowing at it. And then you'll see dead fish flowing out for two weeks but they'll be all fluff from the top. They'll die and they'll sink to bottom and they'll gradually come up in dark.

Female Speaker: Yeah. So you see dead fish for a couple weeks after too?

Male Speaker: Oh yeah. Oh yeah, yeah find a lot of that.

Female Speaker: So what about the one from this past year? From this past year, this was red tide was that in the same area or was it in a larger area?

Male Speaker: Yeah. Like I said, you know, I only crab at one area. I don't go no – I don't go 50 miles away and crab. And from like Sanibel north, when you talk to Eddie Barnhill up there...

Female Speaker: Yeah, we spoke to him...

Male Speaker: He'll tell you how bad it was.

Female Speaker: Yeah.

Male Speaker: It was bad up that way. It's a lot more stuff that way than it was down towards – Gordon Pass is there and Doctors Pass – anything north to Gordon Pass, we put traps the beginning of the year. We had like 400 traps north of Gordon Pass going towards Doctors Pass and we always kill the crabs there. Didn't catch one crab this year at all out of 400 traps.

Female Speaker: And in 2014, you were still able to go crabbing?

Male Speaker: I still catch a couple hundred pounds.

Female Speaker: You'd still get a couple hundred which is less than usual.

Male Speaker: Right, yeah, right, up that area, you know, like for the very first day, we catch 4-, 5-, 600 pound. Every beginning of the year because the crab, they're all stock piled up and everything in summer.

Female Speaker: But still compared to a normal year that 2014 year was a bad crabbing year?

Male Speaker: Yeah, I think it's like 14 somewhere. I'm not exactly what year it was, you know...

Female Speaker: You said about five years old.

Male Speaker: ...about five years ago.

Female Speaker: Yeah. So were there any other years that you remember being like particularly bad for stone crabbing?

Male Speaker: Well, not really bad, you know, but, you know, we still catch our crabs but, you know, just a couple of weeks delayed.

Female Speaker: Right.

Male Speaker: It just seems to be we are catching less crabs every year, less and less crabs every year.

Female Speaker: Yeah. Oh, so it has been an over time decline?

Male Speaker: Yeah.

Female Speaker: Since when did you start noticing decline and stuff like that?

Male Speaker: Well anywhere from 2000, like in the 2000, you know, we catch a little less, a little less but then we might not catch nothing here but the guys over here are killing it, you know, the crabs migrate around. That's the way it is.

Female Speaker: Why do you think that you've seen a decline stem from?

Male Speaker: There's something in the water that's killing them and it's killing on the bottom. They had divers out there a lot of the times and they said the bottom is completely dead. The crabs don't want to stay there.

Female Speaker: When you say, you know, something like what do you think it is?

Male Speaker: I don't have the least idea.

Female Speaker: But you don't think it's red tide?

Male Speaker: I don't think. I think it's like something else. We always thought it was maybe something from [indiscernible] [0:15:55] they put all that, displacement stuff in the water, you know, tens of gallons of that and it's finally drifting its way down here. You know, they told me people that live up here said, the oil on the bottom [indiscernible] [0:16:09] everything were 20 feet deep, like slug on the bottom that's killing the crabs, you know, some things got to go somewhere. So I don't know. I'm no scientist. We are just dumb crabbers.

Female Speaker: Yeah. Well that's, you know, one of the reasons we are here, obviously is to talk to you because you spend all this time on the water and, you know, you have those – this local ecological knowledge that's so important. So why do you think it's killed the crabs this year?

Male Speaker: I think it took the oxygen out of the water or something. They put up [indiscernible] [0:16:47] the beginning of the year, went bad and he said man, blue crabs just crawl out of the water to the beach. They are trying to get away from that. You know many of them because I used to blue crab too and I've never seen a blue crab crawl out of the water, you know, have a – get away from something. They didn't want to die, so they are crawling up on the beach and they die on the beach.

Female Speaker: When did you stop blue crabbing?

Male Speaker: I don't know, maybe six or seven years ago, I used to blue crab.

Female Speaker: For any particular reason?

Male Speaker: We've had a hard time selling them. We only caught them in the spring time and on the beach when they had the migration. And that's the only time we have a blue crab. We don't crab up the tide because we are too busy stone crabbing. And it was just something else to do to make a little extra money and we had a hard time selling them and, you know, and then when you do catch them, they don't want to buy them when they got too many of them and the market wasn't there. Now they beg for them. Now they are begging for blue crabs.

Female Speaker: So in this area, you know, you said that the diversity you spoke to, you said the bottom then?

Male Speaker: Yeah.

Female Speaker: Has that ever happened before? Have you ever heard of anything like that in this area at all?

Male Speaker: Nope. They said the bottom's dead. Everything on the bottom is dead. All the sea life there like [indiscernible] [0:18:14] and stuff like that, everything's dead. There's something down there that's killing it.

Female Speaker: Yeah.

Male Speaker: So I don't really know.

Female Speaker: So it was bad in 2014 and – for stone crab.

Male Speaker: Right.

Female Speaker: Because of the red tide.

Male Speaker: Right, but like I said it only last a few weeks but we still caught crabs the rest of the year.

Female Speaker: And it's still also just been declining since 2000?

Male Speaker: Right, oh yeah.

Female Speaker: So was 2014 worse like say, you know, around 2014, was that worse on the next year or did it just keep declining going down?

Male Speaker: No. they – like crab you know, in some years, you have a better. In some years, you have, you know, slower years.

Female Speaker: Okay.

Male Speaker: You know, everything goes up and down.

Female Speaker: Mm hmm, but overall...

Male Speaker: Overall, you know like I say one year, you'll have a real good year. And next year, you'll make money but you're not going to make that much.

Female Speaker 2: What would you say do you remember your best year?

Male Speaker: My best year is when I first started. We build our trap in the water anywhere and it would be full.

Female Speaker: Yeah, and that's not the case now.

Male Speaker: I had an old wooden boat, built one we crafted by hand out of wood and, you know, like I said I fish from Gordon Pass here and never had to go no further. You know, it would be full every single time you pulled them, every couple of days. Now you got to let them sit for two to three weeks, maybe I'll catch a couple to pay for your baby.

Female Speaker: Wow.

Male Speaker: Catching enough to pay for the baby if there's anything there.

Female Speaker: Uh-huh. So are you still working as [overlapping conversation]?

Male Speaker: I'm retired.

Female Speaker: Okay.

Male Speaker: I still work but I'm retired.

Female Speaker: Yeah. Are you still going out and fishing a lot?

Male Speaker: Yeah, I still go with my nephew.

Female Speaker: Yeah?

Male Speaker: Yeah, like I said I go on Saturday [indiscernible] [0:20:18] I just got tired of it and I figured, you know, I better sell it while it worth something and in the next couple of years, you are not going to be able to get a [indiscernible] [0:20:35] right away,

a tag away with so many people don't want to sell, it'll be down to [indiscernible][0:20:40].

Female Speaker: How many people do you know in Maples that have sold out?

Male Speaker: Well I know the – I sold completely out. Rick right there, he sold a bunch of tags this year, sold a bunch of tags last year. Pat out there, he just didn't put a straps in the water because he want kingfish instead. Then Jack Hale, he sold a bunch of tag. Jim Billy Weeks, he sold tags. Bill Pilcher, he sold tags. Like I say Eddie Barnhill, you know, the guys up that way there but he's selling out up there completely. They're completely selling out up there. They don't want to be involved [overlapping conversation].

Female Speaker: From what you've heard, do you think the red tides worse up there?

Male Speaker: Always, 10 times worse, 10 times worse.

Female Speaker: With this one when you – when you saw it and you said this past year was in the same area because this is the same area that you fish...

Male Speaker: That's only – I only fish this area, don't go nowhere else.

Female Speaker: Yeah. Was it the same – did it look the same? Was it also patchy?

Male Speaker: What? This year?

Female Speaker: In this year, yeah.

Male Speaker: Oh no, it's all over.

Female Speaker: It was everywhere.

Male Speaker: Everywhere, everywhere.

Female Speaker: And you've never seen it like that before?

Male Speaker: No. Like I say [indiscernible] [0:22:05].

Female Speaker 2: Was there anything – were there any species that weren't killed this last year?

Male Speaker: No, it killed everything.

Female Speaker: Killed everything?

Male Speaker: Everything.

Female Speaker: And then did you ever think that, you know, maybe we are going to try fishing in a different area or going farther out or why did you stay in the same area?

Male Speaker: Well I fish, you know, anywhere from like, right on the beach to like 40 foot. I don't want to go much farther in that because too far and running everything to what time you paid fuel, this and that, time. Rick's got traps 45 miles away right now, out there in 80 feet and catching up on. So he has got that much more fuel, time [overlapping conversation]...

Female Speaker: In the past year did you experience health impacts from it?

Male Speaker: No.

Female Speaker: No?

Male Speaker: No, it didn't bother me.

Female Speaker: Doesn't bother you?

Male Speaker: No.

Female Speaker: Do you have a crew?

Male Speaker: My nephew...

Female Speaker: Yeah.

Male Speaker: He works with me.

Female Speaker: He works with you too.

Male Speaker: Yeah.

Female Speaker: And it didn't bother him either?

Male Speaker: He'll call, you know, humble that a little bit but he's still there go crabbing every day.

Female Speaker: Yeah. So you are fishing. You were trying to crab in the red tide in the past year?

Male Speaker: Oh yeah, we had to go and try to make a little bit.

Female Speaker: Yeah but...

Male Speaker: Got nothing there.

Female Speaker: Nothing there?

Male Speaker: Nothing there.

Female Speaker: When did you hear about the bottom being done?

Male Speaker: Over the last couple years. They said it's getting worse and worse and worse, bottom has to be dead. Nothing grows on it no more.

Female Speaker: Why do you think that happened?

Male Speaker: Something in the water killed oxygen or something on the bottom where the [indiscernible] [0:23:51] grows.

Female Speaker: Yeah. If you have to say – okay, so say this past red tide and the way you've explained it to me, if you had to put it on a scale of 1 to 10 for how you thought it...

Male Speaker: Ten.

Female Speaker: It'd be 10. What would the 2014 be on that same scale?

Male Speaker: Maybe three.

Female Speaker: Wow, okay.

Male Speaker: Maybe three. Like I say it only lasted a couple of weeks but then the rest of year it was okay. We still pull crabs, you know, crab is not like fishing. You know, some years it's better and some years it ain't. You know, crabs move around. We got to follow the crab a little bit.

Female Speaker: Do you ever fish inshore or any areas?

Male Speaker: In the beach, on the inside?

Female Speaker: Yeah.

Male Speaker: Yeah. Catch a lot of crab now on the inside. They are running away from the gulf. My nephew has lots of traps up in the rivers, catch crabs in the river.

Female Speaker: What is – did you see red tide get up in the river?

Male Speaker: No, you don't see them everywhere.

Female Speaker: Okay.

Male Speaker: You will see [indiscernible] [0:24:47] Pass a little bit but never seen up the rivers like that.

Female Speaker: So you could still go crabbing in the rivers with that...

Male Speaker: Yeah but you don't have [indiscernible] [0:24:59] it's only a certain much space. You can put traps anymore in the rivers [indiscernible] [0:25:03] you can't put it in the middle of channel so you got to see them on the edges, here and there, then certain places you got to have, you know, little bit of rock, little bit of bottom, just to put on a the sand [indiscernible] [0:25:17]...

Female Speaker: Where a lot of crabbers trying to do that, try to put...?

Male Speaker: Like I said there's only a couple of fish on the inside like that.

Female Speaker: That fish on the inside?

Male Speaker: Yeah.

Female Speaker: Do you think that push – that the red tide pushed more crabbers inside?

Male Speaker: I would think so, yeah but we don't want to ever fish inside that many traps. You know, we always had a few, you know, here and there just to play around, the way in or on the way out but now we put traps in the river just to go crabbing, catch something.

Female Speaker: Yeah, uh-huh. And those too this past year, you didn't kind of catch anything in those or you have to be a little bit more lucky with those? How does that works?

Male Speaker: What...

Female Speaker: ...with the – in the river putting traps so that...

Male Speaker: This year we catch more – kick more crabs and everything already outside.

Female Speaker: Yeah. Which usually you're just putting them there...

Male Speaker: We just do that just to pass our time and then come in and out and just see what's there but now we're actually putting traps in the river. So you can make a little bit this week, or otherwise you don't make nothing.

Female Speaker: Why do you think the red tide doesn't go up and doesn't get in those areas?

Male Speaker: I guess it gets flushed out fast. Don't have time to get up in there and kill everything.

Female Speaker: Yep. So how long do you think it's going to be to recover from this past year's red tide?

Male Speaker: I don't think it's going to recover.

Female Speaker: No?

Male Speaker: Years and years I think, [indiscernible] [0:26:41] I've had enough, let him do it. He's young enough. He can do it. I don't do aggravation no more.

Female Speaker: Mm hmm. Were you worried about, you know, self – you know, what you say about stone crabs having declined a lot and then this past five year, do you think that your nephew is going to have success for the north, you know...?

Male Speaker: No, yeah but he said he wants to go north but they are [indiscernible] [0:27:10] they will be killing crabs up here.

Female Speaker: Do you think there's any management decisions or anything that you think could be a possible solution or can help us in some way or anything that pops in your head?

Male Speaker: Not really. The only thing I can think they could do it is, you know, once they start letting all this water out in the river up there, out of the lake every year, you know, it seems to be getting worse and worse and worse. And now more water every single year now. I think they are trying to dry the lake out or something, I don't know.

Female Speaker: So you think the water being discharged out of that [indiscernible] [0:27:52]...

Male Speaker: Oh that has a big, big effect.

Female Speaker: Yeah?

Male Speaker: Big effect.

Female Speaker: Mm hmm.

Male Speaker: Really big.

Female Speaker: Have you ever seen that water?

Male Speaker: Oh yeah.

Female Speaker: Where do you see that?

Male Speaker: About just south of Sanibel.

Female Speaker: And then where do you see – let's draw that too and kind of talk about what that looks like.

Male Speaker: Well here is Sanibel right there. We crab right there. We've seen the black border right there, and we always try to stay south of it, away from it.

Female Speaker: And can you draw it and then just where – wherever it comes out to?

Male Speaker: Well we don't go much farther than that. That's where we used to crab and all the water comes out of the river and walk straight out. You can see – you can see on television, the one they had all the pictures on television.

Female Speaker: Yeah.

Male Speaker: One side of the water is green. Other side of the water is black. That's the water coming out the river.

Female Speaker: What is that – what does that look like? You know, have you seen that in red tide at the same time?

Male Speaker: Not really because to me like that changes with the tide, everything changes with the tide. But with this year, with the red tide, you know, it didn't change. It stayed that way, all day, all night, never changed, because there's so much of it. It just washing back and forth, back and forth.

Female Speaker: And it's just kind of blackish, greenish water?

Male Speaker: Yeah. Well the green water would be the clean water. And the black water is the bad water.

Female Speaker: Okay, mm hmm.

Male Speaker: You know, that's a lot of fresh water, you know, we know that. They've turned brackish, you know, like this – this area with green. You see up there, it's like chocolate, brown.

Female Speaker: Yeah.

Male Speaker: I will go Okeechobee fishing sometimes. You can't see that far from the surface. It's solid brown. Nothing to live with that.

Female Speaker: Yeah. So how do you think have – how do you think they interact with each other like when you talk about this water from Lake Okeechobee and...?

Male Speaker: I think that's a big part of it.

Female Speaker: How do you think? Tell me more about like what part of the play is and like how you think it impacts the environment?

Male Speaker: I think it pollutes the water.

Female Speaker: Yeah. Do you think that it has to do with red tide that they're connected or...?

Male Speaker: I think that might be part of a problem that caused the red tide.

Female Speaker: Uh-huh.

Male Speaker: Like at Fort Myers. I don't think there's a chart fishing on the left up there. They all went out of business. Who wants to go out there fishing and catch nothing. And the water looks terrible.

Female Speaker: Yeah.

Male Speaker: And it's getting pretty close to the same here. You don't see the boats go out that much anymore because there's no fish. A big day for them on all the little charter boats like these headphones over there, is a couple of runs, that's a big day.

Female Speaker: Wow.

Male Speaker: That's a big day. But they'll still go because that's how they make their money. You know, they don't care if they catch any fish or not, you know, but us we got to catch something.

Female Speaker: Yeah, I know. It's totally different.

Male Speaker: Totally different but it is important but [overlapping conversation] [0:31:01] they still make their money if they catch anything or not, not us.

Female Speaker: Yeah. Have you found any issues with the media's talking about red tide and has that been an issue for you like selling [overlapping conversation] [0:31:13] or anything?

Male Speaker: Yeah. They don't – they don't care about the crabbers. They don't care about us, not a bit.

Female Speaker: Do you sell – when you sold your crabs, did you sell them here?

Male Speaker: Yeah.

Female Speaker: And the price was good and everything with that?

Male Speaker: Yeah, yeah. Right now the price is high as we ever seen it because there's no crabs.

Female Speaker: Yeah. Yeah, I definitely notice that.

Male Speaker: No crabs here for everyone, no [indiscernible] [0:31:39] you stoned a place. My wife's in the kitchen cooking now.

Female Speaker: That's good. I think we might stay for lunch.

Male Speaker: Don't have lunch.

Female Speaker: No?

Male Speaker: No, just dinner.

Female Speaker: Okay. So I'm trying to make sure that we covered everything. Are there any other environmental changes you've seen in this area?

Male Speaker: Not really. You know, just like Pim said, you know, population but I think more of it's coming from up that way coming out [indiscernible] [0:32:16] like I said it's 10 times worse up there than it is here.

Female Speaker: Do you think it starts up there and then makes it – make its way downtown?

Male Speaker: Oh yeah, it will. It flows out both ways.

Female Speaker: Do you ever – yeah, go ahead.

Male Speaker: I think it will run east coast or come down over on the east coast. They get it over there bad too.

Female Speaker: Yeah. So when it – you know, when you talk about it moving south, have you ever seen a red tide event that didn't start farther north?

Male Speaker: Not really. Like we don't – like I said we stay in this one area long but everything seemed to kind of worse, you know, [indiscernible] [0:32:51] tide everything washes around and I think that's the main cause of that way.

Female Speaker: So do you kind of know that it's coming? Like when you hear about it further north, you know that it's going to come further south?

Male Speaker: Well it might come this way more, depends on the wind. The wind has a lot of [indiscernible] [0:33:11] know which way the wind blows and then they got the tide, everything else.

Female Speaker: Are there any clues or, you know, any way that you can tell that there's going to be a bad red tide that year...?

Male Speaker: No, there's no way, no. It's just happening more and more now and getting worse and worse and worse. I can imagine what it's going to look like this summer when the water gets hot.

Female Speaker: Do you think it's going to come back?

Male Speaker: Oh I think it's going to come back big time. And it can be worse. Right now the water is 74, wait until the water gets 85 then you can see some bad red tides and that can tell you [indiscernible] [0:33:51] it kills it off but it doesn't kill it off no more.

Female Speaker: Yeah.

Male Speaker: You know, we hardly ever seen red tide in the winter, never. This winter right now, you see red tide.

Female Speaker: Mm hmm. But you saw it in the winter in the past ever?

Male Speaker: Nope, never seen in winter like that. See in the beginning of the year when the water is still warm, like in October – October and first part of November like the water is still warm. Once it get – the water gets cold, we used to never see red tide, never. But now we can see it all the year.

Female Speaker: Is there anything else that you wanted to add?

Male Speaker: Not really. Like I said about it [indiscernible] [0:34:41] I just give you my info on it what I think, you know, it's just going to put a lot more people out of business.

Female Speaker: Yeah.

Male Speaker: A lot more people.

Female Speaker: What do you think people will do, you know, the guys that you know that are on the – are selling out, selling their traps like how are they adopting? Do you think the fishing commercial in this area is...?

Male Speaker: Pretty well done.

Female Speaker: It's pretty done?

Male Speaker: Yeah.

Female Speaker: And what do you think – what do you think for places that, you know, what do you think that means for this area?

Male Speaker: Well there's not that many fishermen anymore. There's only a handful left, eliminated all that already so you only got a handful of us. Like you see it right here. That's our whole fleet that should be at the dock except for one boat.

Female Speaker: That's all the – covers in Maples?

Male Speaker: All the [indiscernible] [0:35:34] in Maples but they are still in a couple different places. There's one here, then we got [indiscernible] [0:35:40] down the [indiscernible][0:35:41] and the Lake City down that way, then [indiscernible][0:35:45] only got two boats.

Female Speaker: Yeah.

Male Speaker: You know, they'll take the same thing down Aaron Goodwin. You talk to Bill Pilcher. He's been around forever too.

Female Speaker: Mm hmm. Yeah, I definitely want to go...

Male Speaker: And Billy Weeks, he's been crabbing forever too. I know him forever.

Female Speaker: Do you have any questions that you want to ask?

Female Speaker 2: Just thinking back to you mentioned you've seen 2018, the first year you've really seen big kills, so you mentioned Groupers, Pompano, right?

Male Speaker: Yeah.

Female Speaker 2: Any other subspecies you remember seeing where you've seen snappers, where you've seen sharks or just everything?

Male Speaker: Like this year?

Female Speaker 2: Yeah.

Male Speaker: This year everything.

Female Speaker: This year, everything...

Male Speaker: They've seen dead sharks, snappers [indiscernible] [0:36:37] fish, thousands of turtles. They were bragging about how such a good crop they had on turtles last couple years, just it will kill everything off.

Female Speaker: What about seabirds, did you notice any?

Male Speaker: I heard that there were seabirds down at Marco, this is just hearsay what people tell me, was flying along and just fell out the sky dead down Marco, those little [indiscernible] [0:37:05] eat the fish, just fly along and just drop dead. But they won't tell you that. So that's just hearsay. I can't prove it and I didn't see it but had, you know, fisherman talk. You know, they hear so. But like I said this is the worst I ever seen it and I don't see it get any better, any soon.

Female Speaker: Back in 2014, when you had that bad year that you said it was kind of the first like, really bad red tide that you remember seeing...

Male Speaker: Yeah, about a couple of weeks.

Female Speaker: ...do you think it was – did you think then that it was going to get worse?

Male Speaker: No. No, because it got better afterwards.

Female Speaker: Yeah. So this one, when it started, you know, back...

Male Speaker: It's just the same, yeah.

Female Speaker: ...did you think that you were in for just a couple weeks?

Male Speaker: Yeah, I thought – you know, we thought. No big deal. We still put our traps in the water. That was before season started, you know. So we still put all the trap in the water and we are getting ready and we just been...

Female Speaker: Just [indiscernible] [0:38:10].

Male Speaker: When the guy is out there going grouper fishing and king fishing, a lot of guys fish really offshore for crabs when you see this red tide 20 miles offshore, we never seen that offshore before. It's always usually closer to shore, you know, 6, 7, 8 miles, 10 miles, not 20 miles plus. Water completely turned coffee, look like coffee, black color.

Female Speaker: So the ones, the red tide you remember seeing in the 80s...

Male Speaker: No big deal...

Female Speaker: ...were those even – were they this far out?

Male Speaker: Yeah. That's all. Nothing that far you know? A few miles offshore but it never really affected stuff offshore. We fished offshore a little bit more, not by the beach. I like to fish by the beach. And this year, it was offshore and by the beach. We caught more crabs and close to [indiscernible] [0:39:07] than they caught offshore. [Indiscernible][0:30:09] come to get [indiscernible][0:39:13] fished the same place out here like 40 foot of water out here. He moved his trap 60 miles south down with a marathon to go crabbing and he caught some crabs. I think his first day like 12 pounds the first day. They don't pay the bills.

Female Speaker: No. I mean it doesn't [overlapping conversation] [0:39:36]

Male Speaker: No, [indiscernible] [0:39:38] he's a diehard. He's a good crabber too. He can gets a crab, like a lot when he lose money.

Female Speaker: Yeah, I know. That's, you know, it's really hard to hear that, you know, this area used to not have this issue and it's just really been this past year that it's been bad.

Male Speaker: It's the worst year I've ever seen since I've been crabbing. And I don't see it getting any better anytime soon.

Female Speaker: Yeah.

Male Speaker: I want to see what the summer has to do.

Female Speaker: Yeah. You know, I think everyone else went in and say that it's going to come back in a big way or not. Hopefully it's not as bad but we'll see and then, you know, this is a big help because gathering this information is a really an important part of setting the basis for how we're going to try to fix this. We're trying to look at this issue.

Male Speaker: What can I say, you know, lots of people are selling out of crab business. You know, why our license still worked a little bit of money. You know, this happened for a couple more years. You can give your license away. And then you still got to pay the state your fees for nothing.

Female Speaker: Yeah. Okay, so I want to get you – I want to have you sign one of these and then I also want to know if you have, you know, some of the other crabbers here that you didn't put me in touch with, that would talk to us...

Male Speaker: You can talk to James Kirk, good luck...

Female Speaker: Okay so I call them and they told me that they must, I...