

Male Interviewer: [00:00:00] Good?

Female Interviewer: Yes.

Male Interviewer: So, we're interviewing Mike Davis from Cortez, Florida, May 1, 2019. So Mike, just before we start, can you just give us a little background about how you got into fishing, what type of fishing you've done? And then a little bit about what your current fishing, what's species. So, when did you first start fishing?

Mike Davis: I'd say probably when I was about seven years old.

Male Interviewer: Seven?

Mike Davis: Yeah, with my dad offshore fishing. But I used to mullet fishing back before that when I was kids, younger. And that would mean – and this was just for recreation with my family. We do big [indiscernible] [00:00:43] net when that was legal. And [indiscernible] [00:00:48] and have a big reunion or whatever and pretty much once a month. [indiscernible] [1:00] fish king crab in Alaska. I fished swordfish [indiscernible] [00:01:05] and after that I couldn't tell you, I think I turned 18 or 19 maybe 20 I don't remember. And then, we took Andrew Gail up to about five months down or from January to May. And then we went to Jacksonville. They did repairs obviously via tank and I jumped on the boat and that you see the movie with [indiscernible] [1:39] was to get in a fish for the owner of [indiscernible] [1:46] that was my boss. And I fished that summer.

Male Interviewer: You guys went up from north to the...

Mike Davis: I fished from Jacksonville up to Grand Banks.

Male Interviewer: So, the Green Banks.

Mike Davis: Fisher Bob Brown [00:02:00] which is quite the fella, he's dead now for some – fell off of the dock.

Male Interviewer: There was a guy from Cortez that was [indiscernible] [2:08]?

Mike Davis: Toria Bugzy (phonetics). Bugzy was from Boston I think but Murph is born here and Bailey Tong (phonetics) was from up there but he came back in Fort and fished the seasons.

Male Interviewer: I get it, yeah.

Mike Davis: So, a lot of times, it fished to go from Mexico for bluefin tunas when they're available the catch them back in the day. Now it's all regulated and it screwed up.

Male Interviewer: So, you worked for Linda Green?

Mike Davis: No, Bob Brown.

Male Interviewer: Oh, Bob Brown, her boss.

Mike Davis: Yes, probably I'd say 10 years before they died. About 20 I think.

Male Interviewer: Are you coming back and forth from here?

Mike Davis: I searched my fortune. I went fishing and I loved an adventures.

Male Interviewer: And so now you are [indiscernible] [3:03].

Mike Davis: Yes, I had s family and I decided to stay. And I got a group about it. I ran several of them, private owners, which our family has been here for the last. I know two generation [indiscernible] [3:21] family, the guy were on boat [indiscernible] [00:03:23]. And then, basically run either my father's boat or one from – it was a lot. In 1930, I was [indiscernible] [3:43] down there.

Male Interviewer: That's going to become the wall to build?

Mike Davis: Yeah, the name is [indiscernible] [00:03:47]. Our son was one month old and I finally went fishing and I was just staying one month. And we had a no [indiscernible] [3:59] [00:04:00] in March and I'm not with [indiscernible] [4:07]. One kid got flown now on helicopter and the other got stayed with me [indiscernible] [00:04:14].

Male Interviewer: You brought the boat in?

Mike Davis: Pretty close. I got to go in and ready to come home. And I was lost for two days.

Male Interviewer: What was – I mean, what knocked the wheel, I mean I had like [indiscernible] [4:25]?

Mike Davis: A wave. It was blown. The winds, they only called for gale force winds and in March, you know, you don't [indiscernible] [4:37] and there is probably hasn't been one since. 106 miles up the skyway and 138 tried to work to this we called it the Fort and I was stuck in the middle. And they only called for 40-mile an hour winds which our boat can handle, not 100 miles an hour. Obviously, we almost had it. It just got to loosen up. We made it night and the day and then the next mile I go. I have experienced...

Male Interviewer: So, you are fishing here now. Where do you fish? What's the range of your fishing ground?

Mike Davis: I have been working from 150 miles and whichever direction.

Male Interviewer: North and south?

Mike Davis: Either way, maybe a little farther. Hopefully, not more fields.

Male Interviewer: So, what I'd like to do is talk about the first red tide that you remember that you have a fairly good recollection though?

Mike Davis: I know I was a little kid. I mean, it was in the base around here.

Male Interviewer: And that was in the 50s, 60s?

Mike Davis: No, 60s, 70s, 75s say 70s.

Male Interviewer: 70s?

Mike Davis: Yes, when a lot of them go swimming, that ruined it.

Male Interviewer: So, but that was close by and you went off?

Mike Davis: No, I was a school [00:06:00] kindergarten when I was like 7, 8.

Male Interviewer: So, was it as bad as anything you've seen recently?

Mike Davis: Well, I was that age...

Male Interviewer: Really good?

Mike Davis: Yes. But now, I haven't seen millions of pounds of fish killed by being, you know...

Male Interviewer: So, that when just from what you remember, was it anything like that?

Mike Davis: Oh, they also had started a gillnet, therefore, when they see that coming, they would catch the fish instead of let them die in people's backyards and get the industry going.

Male Interviewer: So, you remember the fishermen, they knew the red tide was coming and they would go out?

Mike Davis: I would believe – I'm saying what I think. I'm sure there's other net fishermen on family members out of net fish but won't say the same thing. But if you can't catch it and only keep it accurate, our government count and ways of catching this fish and a lifestyle and a livelihood that's been practiced on a lot of years, on quite a few.

I'm just saying it all this dead fish could have been prevented with the right emergency. They can have an emergency closure for us because of their day that is incorrect, but they cannot have a – they will not have emergency open to keep the industry supply fish even it went to the home or something. And now, it charged our state billions of dollars for clean up which could have been very simply harvested and probably controlling, but you know, they believed it all goes into the food chain.

But there is no food chain now because of taking the mangroves away. [00:08:00] If you hadn't – and you put thousands of lawns right next to the bay with pools that pour into the bay when they shove them in fertilizer and on being in canal, so, you can see it. Not different than your pool when it turns green, they shock it, it is what happened. Everything died, it's on the bottom and you can see [indiscernible] [8:23]. So, I'm not sure if that's – and you have a bacteria that's developing and I could say, I'm not a scientist of course. But I would suggest that there's a lot of contributing things. The filter system is much important. And when they take the filter system away to go to beach or a pool [indiscernible] [8:55] a lawn because they cannot see the water. And the value of their property is not dimension roads and drainage and oil. Nobody looked at this, let's blame the fishermen.

Female Interviewer: And by filter system you mean the...

Mike Davis: Thing about every road has a drainage. How many cars you got? People travelled down that beach leaking oil out of the truck. So, remember your garage, leave your car in there [indiscernible] [9:25]. I mean then you asked [indiscernible] [9:31] go to Captiva. Got all these other places that should be built and there is no mangroves, there is no filter system and no crabs and mangrove killing the fish, now how is this going to get filtered?. And then you – and when some of those species die, then you have another one which is going to take over which you say is, I want to put it, I've had a few scientists on my boat. I'll [00:10:00] just get us back into the – what's the word I'm trying to say?

Male Interviewer: To try this?

Mike Davis: No, when you killed some, your barrier goes to the [indiscernible] [00:10:18] what?

Female Interviewer: The circle of...

Mike Davis: Well, basically, there's a word for it and so...

Male Interviewer: But I want you to kind of think back to the – when you are fishing the first red tide that you remember?

Mike Davis: Well, I remember coming down to the dock when I was a kid, you know, [indiscernible] [10:39].

Male Interviewer: But when you're on the water...

Mike Davis: Commercial fishing, when I'm 18. So, what you're asking me is when I was 16.

Male Interviewer: When you – yeah, the first one you remember when you are out there on the water fishing and can kind of describe and remember what happened at that time?

Mike Davis: Well right now, but go – well, back then, they did it. They had a closed area which is basically 20,000 or 100 – I could share that on my computer. This is called [indiscernible] [00:11:11] I'm pretty sure. Anyways from 20 that's – hang on, I got to see here. Anyway that they are on 20, there's a line and it goes just like that all come down, it's crazy but it would be with...

Male Interviewer: [overlapping conversation] [11:44] 20,000 lines?

Mike Davis: Yes, it's about 120 foot or 20,000. We call it defense. It's a lot. We are not allowed to fish inside.

Male Interviewer: Right, which is now you have to have an endorsement if want to fish in...

Mike Davis: No. There's no long lining period inside of it and don't matter [00:12:00] if we have an endorsement or not, it's close there. So, I have to go 36 miles to the west before I can even start fishing.

Male Interviewer: Okay. What's the long line...

Mike Davis: But I've seen it all the way from this bay, this last year probably 18 miles of dead fish.

Male Interviewer: 18 miles up? So, where would that be on this map if we had to draw that?

Mike Davis: All right. This one could be a mile, what else it say? I can't see [indiscernible] [12:38]. That should be five miles in little squares where a mile is the little tiny squares and between, what is that? 40, 10, 20, that's 10 miles and the 20 here. 10 to 20, you see that? So, this number 10, 20, 30. It's 10 miles from here to here. So, if you took off [indiscernible] [12:58] So, we go like basically, the sample on my chart. Where is that? We're going to go, I've seen at 18. That's 10, 20 miles. This is 20 miles, right? We've got down to this from this sketch one, we get by that 20 miles.

Male Interviewer: And that's all the way down here. Just draw it like that?

Mike Davis: I want to say this is just to guess. You know, I'm not talking in the river. I'm talking right here on this and get that distance all the way around it.

Male Interviewer: All the way down?

Mike Davis: And some people see even farther. The distance, what I seen was 18 miles because the bait people were asking me and I kind of paid attention.

Female Interviewer: And this was the recent red tide?

Mike Davis: That's 20. See the distance again 10 or 20. These are 10 miles in between.
[00:14:00]

Male Interviewer: From here [overlapping conversation] [14:05]

Mike Davis: [overlapping conversation] [00:14:14] my dad could see them.

Male Interviewer: But this is the...

Mike Davis: As a basic.

Male Interviewer: And then...

Mike Davis: We're not saying...

Male Interviewer: Red tide was all in this area?

Mike Davis: Yes. From the 28 line which I don't remember. See, this is a [indiscernible] [00:14:45]. All right, this is up by a Panama City. Okay? What's that say?

Male Interviewer: No, this is...

Mike Davis: 29...

Male Interviewer: This is a Crystal River right there. That's Crystal River.

Mike Davis: Oh, not Crystal River. I can – well, number 29, Tampa is – where Crystal River is south of it, right?

Male Interviewer: North.

Mike Davis: Okay. Then it is Crystal River.

Male Interviewer: That's Crystal River, this is...

Mike Davis: I'm thinking another one down in Fort Myers, also in Port Charlotte.

Male Interviewer: Port Charlotte?

Mike Davis: Yeah. 29, 28 lines, I know that was a middle grounds, whatever 28, well that probably be it. [indiscernible] [00:15:28].

Male Interviewer: This is middle ground, right?

Mike Davis: This is 28 – 28, 30 and all [indiscernible] [00:15:40].

Male Interviewer: It's right there, in the middle?

Mike Davis: See, this is 9, this is the 8 and 60 miles [indiscernible] [15:53] which is about like that. See, 81, 82 that's 60 miles at distance [00:16:00] to this. As for middle grounds, I got up in the area a few years ago and I think it stayed there and developed.

Male Interviewer: So, you think that red tide was – something was out there...

Mike Davis: [Overlapping conversation] [16:18] in years.

Male Interviewer: But that was when?

Mike Davis: Something [indiscernible] [00:16:26], I'd say 26 now, six years ago, six or seven.

Male Interviewer: So, about 2013.

Mike Davis: Yes man, I can't remember the year.

Male Interviewer: You've said six or seven. It would be about to be 2012 or 2000...

Mike Davis: Yes. You could ask some sporting fisherman about it. When was the – when did it affect the middle ground and actually, it affect that inshore take all the way in there and first, that was some – that's the black tide what they called it, I called it. And it was going about 20 years ago.

Male Interviewer: It was a black tide.

Mike Davis: There was the same line started down around in April and it moved up all our coast.

Male Interviewer: But it was also, you saw in just in here?

Mike Davis: Yes.

Male Interviewer: Kind of came in like that?

Mike Davis: And the rain [indiscernible] [17:37] don't go up that way and he told me point blank.

Male Interviewer: So...

Mike Davis: But they're not supposed to tell me that so don't get me in trouble to write that down.

Male Interviewer: This bloom that you saw on around 2012-13.

Mike Davis: I was not there, I'm not allowed to go in there. So, I did go in there but I was told it was there.

Male Interviewer: Oh, you told – people told that it was there.

Mike Davis: And it was around some I mean, you'd see ruminants [00:18:00] of I mean dead fish on top of the water in places. You know, what Mike, I was basically saying it but I knew that because I've been told don't go up there by other people that has tried you know as fishermen communicate on radio and let you know.

Male Interviewer: So, you weren't fishing this area but you were offshore, so, you didn't...?

Mike Davis: I am visually seeing it now.

Male Interviewer: But were you affected by it at all up there that you remember?

Mike Davis: Well, you don't get to go fishing. There's no fish up there. You don't get to go there. Why would you go?

Male Interviewer: No, I mean, in your fishing offshore, were you affected by...

Mike Davis: No.

Male Interviewer: No, okay. Did they say...?

Mike Davis: No, that I know it well, the next year, those fish that are in there once I was close, it's getting overpopulated. They tend the fisherman outside of them. So, therefore those are dead. You are not getting the same amount of fish getting pushed back out.

Male Interviewer: So, the years after that, did you see a decline?

Mike Davis: Yes, all, yeah. Still?

Male Interviewer: In which species?

Mike Davis: Red group or blue group, all species, because, you know, there's no food, there's no nothing, you don't go up there.

Male Interviewer: Were you doing in a net fishing in those days?

Mike Davis: No. They quit net fishing, yeah.

Male Interviewer: And you didn't do any cast netting or?

Mike Davis: No, I used to when I was a kid, I mean, when I was younger I took a couple years off cast net and I always do. And then, I mean, it has effects like this last year. I mean, it was a major, major [indiscernible] [19:38] where the fish were.

Male Interviewer: And this – so this is the last – this is last year. Did it affect at all [indiscernible] [00:19:45].

Mike Davis: No, it did affect last year. This was five years ago or so.

Male Interviewer: Okay. So this last year, it was this area here and what kind of – what species were you seeing affected by it?

Mike Davis: I'm trying to tell you, from [00:20:00] five years ago it did, not last year.

Male Interviewer: Right. But you said – I'm talking about last year. You drew this line, so that this was all red tide in this area, right?

Mike Davis: I'd say five years ago. That's the one that affected the middle ground and affected that...

Male Interviewer: Okay, this one?

Mike Davis: All right. All other year, it is 27, 30 is where we are at right now. [Indiscernible] [20:27] north about 50 miles to south of here.

Male Interviewer: Okay. So, that would be...

Mike Davis: And Fort Myers, this was last year was 18 miles out.

Male Interviewer: So, this was all...

Mike Davis: Oh, five years ago roughly.

Male Interviewer: This color in here right now...

Mike Davis: But I'm saying what I've seen this from this area right here. Last year affected here all the way down the Fort Myers on that 80 miles offshore. That is what I

do because I came in from several different directions over the year. Now, above us very far, about probably 30 miles. I didn't go up there but I heard the other captains telling me, don't go up there, it's screwed up.

Male Interviewer: So, this was on...

Female Interviewer: Sutton Island.

Male Interviewer: Yes.

Mike Davis: And the funny part is what they didn't see. How many sharks did you see on clean up?

Male Interviewer: I'm sorry?

Mike Davis: How many sharks did you see on clean up?

Male Interviewer: I didn't – I wasn't – I didn't see any of this red tide.

Mike Davis: Okay, here's another question. What is the best way to count fish? The ones that washed up on the beach and classify on a certain species or groundfish or grouper or snapper or blue crab. It had everyone on dead on the beach, we can't go [indiscernible] [00:22:00] [00:22:00] but they won't tell you exactly how many killed, how many lives, how many left. And they [indiscernible] [22:18] for the fisherman going there and gets what I'm saying about the clean up?

Male Interviewer: Well, you are right. I mean, they aren't prepared to do it. Like I said, they've never done [indiscernible] [22:35] but it's something to think about it now, there's going to be a fish kill. Is there a way that they can, you know...

Mike Davis: All right. There's so many canal that's, you know, on this either side, western side or don't matter which one. This fish will go back in that canal. Now, that stuff pushes in the outside of the canal. And it moves into the back that's where you see all the mullet dead in the backyard because they don't have enough sense to hold their breath and swim through it.

Male Interviewer: So...

Mike Davis: They think okay, I'm safe back here. I'm just fine for a minute till it's just like putting the gate up. I ain't going to get out. You're not here and it keeps moving to you. Keeps moving in there and then they all die. Then it's too much of it to swim through. Nobody tells them, come on, you got to go.

Male Interviewer: So, you said from Cortez down 18 miles out?

Mike Davis: Yes, Fort Myers for sure I do that.

Male Interviewer: To Fort Myers. You said Charlotte Harbor and Fort Myers right here. What would 18 miles [00:24:00] be almost two of these you say, that's 20, so that's about that far. So, not here but in this area?

Mike Davis: I don't see, you're good. I'm not offshore so I don't see what's in this area but from the beach when I come through, I'm coming home to Cortez this way. I'm down here coming through or you know different directions. You know, when I seen it, it first started recognizing it. It was on 20 miles and you [indiscernible] [00:24:40] because they are bottom fish.

Male Interviewer: So, nothing out here?

Mike Davis:

Male Interviewer. Just when you got up into that area about 20 miles out, you'd start seeing him. So, what did what did you see?

Mike Davis: I've seen increase of sharks.

Male Interviewer: Dead sharks?

Mike Davis: A lot of it. No, live ones.

Male Interviewer: Live ones?

Mike Davis: That means, okay, I catch the grouper but I don't get them in the boat. Turn on my hook and sharks were coming. When you catch 15 sharks or when you have 20 or 30 baits off, there are sharks. When you catch it, you can see the big ones. What do you think is down there? Actually really, there's thousands of sharks out there now.

Male Interviewer: So, do you think that's as a result of the red tide?

Mike Davis: Absolutely.

Male Interviewer: Was it pushing them out?

Mike Davis: Absolutely. They are all smart enough.

Male Interviewer: Okay.

Mike Davis: And they can go from top to bottom versus the mullet in that.

Male Interviewer: So, that's how it's been affecting your fishing as you see more increase shark activity?

Mike Davis: And more trash fish [00:26:00] moved out.

Male Interviewer: More trash fish and what, when you say trash fish...

Mike Davis: Trash fish means basically pinfish guards. Bottom fish, all kinds of bottom fish. That means I have to take more bait.

Male Interviewer: More bait because they're eating the bait that's on there...

Mike Davis: Before I even catch, yeah.

Male Interviewer: Before you get the other groupers on there. When you did come – what kind of species, dead species did you see when you got into the red tide?

Mike Davis: It's for basically sharks, top water fish like mice and stuff to come in different times of the year, and shellfish, didn't see any of them. Certainly – mainly bottom fish because that's what it affects, it moves in and most bottom fish are on call rocks or flat bottom which is like limestone flat bottom. So, if you're in North Florida what it looks like, that's what it looks like down there for miles, you know, two miles stretches and that's where the fish is now. It says on top of it, they got a two mile swim to the next rock, say a [indiscernible] [27:13] to get to the other side, they got to go through all of the [indiscernible] [00:27:14]. Now, what do you think down there? You watch it on TV very easy, you're seeing every shark very easily, what he did, he swims there and hangs out, takes his [indiscernible] [27:30].

Male Interviewer: So, your fishing change in the sense that you had to take more baits because there are more sharks out there and, you know, pinfish and groundfish out there.

Mike Davis: And also showed that I'm catching this because of the unnatural amount of – which was normally out there isn't as normal as it has been since the red tide. There's twice as many [00:28:00] if not more.

Male Interviewer: Since the red tide...

Mike Davis: Yes.

Male Interviewer: [Overlapping conversation] [00:28:02] So, you're still seeing the ramifications of...

Mike Davis: Families and basically 200 hooks. I'm losing 1800 a trip, okay? That's usually a grouper. So, I'm losing 1800 hit whether that's one pound or which is doubtful. You search anywhere, a big shark, there is not one. You got a little one, you'd rather have a big one, that's easier or simple. So, each trip if you just say I'm going to say just one say legal fish, that's 1800 hit times four is what? 5000 pounds of fish. I'm losing and that's why they're math it's not coming up because the predators are eating the damn

fish off the hook. That's why they're saying there's no grouper. There is that we just can't get them but...

Male Interviewer: But you guys have had trouble with sharks in the past, right?

Mike Davis: They all migrated too. When fish was not there, every food source, they will move. Now, they are there.

Male Interviewer: They are there so they know the fish were...

Mike Davis: And the fish were there. All the trash fishes and everything have moved out towards us.

Male Interviewer: So, has there been any other changes that you've noticed out there? And this is – when you really talked about this red tide, would you say this is a classic red tide or was it different colors or different...

Mike Davis: It wasn't same at all. I mean, it was stronger, it burnt your skin if you got in it. I got to do a little net fish a little mile around it this fall and you could feel it.

Male Interviewer: You could?

Mike Davis: Oh yeah.

Male Interviewer: The respiration and stuff like that?

Mike Davis: Oh, yeah. You got to do what you got to do. Nobody pays my bills.

Male Interviewer: Right. So, anything else that – any other types [00:30:00] of water color changes or things that you can always sense?

Mike Davis: Absolutely, they'll change. It took time and it took – I was net fishing in the bay a few months ago for ladyfish and there was a handful in certain types of fish now the blue crabs are coming back of course, because they're eating dead, whatever is left out.

Male Interviewer: So, would they affect [overlapping conversation] [00:30:28]?

Mike Davis: There's more blue crabs. Well, they say that it does, you also got to think about the stone crabs in this area last year. Maybe certain ones do get affected. That or maybe they moved up across the river where they come along that our guys had run 80 miles to [indiscernible] [00:30:47] out there.

Male Interviewer: Oh, really?

Mike Davis: And be back, yeah.

Male Interviewer: They ran all the way up across that river?

Mike Davis: Well, we figured out last year they had a pretty good season, what's the difference? Oh, we had a red tide, now there is none. I mean, guys trying a hundred traps and catch two crabs [indiscernible] [31:07].

Male Interviewer: So, when you want say you are net fishing few months ago.

Mike Davis: Yeah, I'm trying to think when. January and December, I got in a little bit, you know, I like to catch mullet for dinner. When I failed it, go fishing with a buddy, whenever you need somebody, I'll jump on the boat from around. It's good to get – like to go to the bay still. I wanted to see what was going on.

Male Interviewer: What was mullet season like last year?

Mike Davis: It was disastrous for everybody not [indiscernible] [00:31:48]. They swim, they migrate. They can go on the brackish water, even to swim in the brackish water but when you have too many [00:32:00] one thing or twice as many of another thing, another thing will always did damage and you know...

Male Interviewer: When did you stop seeing red tide last year? Do you remember about the time that you stopped seeing it?

Mike Davis: Well, I was at a work to those months but I remember saying that, man, August was a pretty bad month, that's when I stopped fishing. I made one trip in September and still there. You can smell it too I mean, and I hold my own gear so when you – when your bait comes out, you get splash by the water and I take my t-shirt off and I would smell it the dead smell in my shirts, on my skin, luckily, we got showered every time and wash often freshwater on the deck as like we used to. So, I mean what was down on the bottom? Nobody drugged a net down there. Just go, this place really not, you know. I'm all for conservation very much for so but the way elimination is and how things were done. Sometimes, it is thinking too much and not enough common sense at times.

Male Interviewer: It's an interesting proposition that you have about [overlapping conversation] [00:33:48]

Mike Davis: It's simple watch the damn National Geographic, the wolves follow the [indiscernible] [00:33:58], will follows the [00:34:00] hyena, follow what, they are right behind that lines, lines are following up. Everybody got to move. So, this affects something. You know what next year is going to be and that's what they try to determine them but they can't determine it because they don't have enough time.

Male Interviewer: So, what – so, say this year, this fishing year and you're going out there. What – are you looking for signs of red tide? Will you be able to – are the things that you're looking forward?

Mike Davis: Well, we'll see. There ain't going to be no doubt about it.

Male Interviewer: Is it the dead fish or are there other thing or did that change...

Mike Davis: Oh, you smelled dead fish, different bunches some of them be no bait inshore or the way offshore. There were bunches that will move around. Some fish will make it, some will get stronger and some won't. You don't know what's done. I'll bet there's not enough bait on it. And, of course, after they said [indiscernible] [35:00] the Gulf, certain mile and certain temperatures and it takes off. [indiscernible] [35:14] to get there? Where's the filter system? What used to be natural living, there's so much pollution going in the water.

Male Interviewer: And so, so you were talking about the black mangroves and other things that filtered that water and kept it cleaner?

Mike Davis: And checking, you know, what else like cops go check. Like I get to check [indiscernible] [35:39] you know that I don't have all in my bill or I got to find it. I get it and pose to the check and look, it's real simple. I mean, about [indiscernible] [35:55] or crabs anymore. There's no mangroves. Why do you think you should [indiscernible] [00:36:00]?

Male Interviewer: So, right so...

Mike Davis: It watches onshore. How you got it? The way you think at it.

Male Interviewer: So, you are saying all this development on the coast and the traffic and stuff is funding all these things out there so, I mean, so you think this red tide is worst – is it the worst you see last year?

Mike Davis: No. But that black tide around 20 years ago, it was pretty bad. It killed some coral down in a glaze, so that's something there. I don't know what it was but it was that reached out you know, almost 35 years what should be about 40 miles and they've got all the coral itself, so that was the worst I think I've ever seen. I don't know if this is the same but you can look that up in the news somewhere it will tell you about it. That was probably about the worst. This is the longest and that it's stayed this is probably the worst that I've seen because for one, there's no gill net and where they had a conservation way of taking care of the mess before it got to be a mess or open up net fishing or something to take care of it when it used to be. You didn't see it because you were handling all fish, so...

Female Interviewer: Do you know about how long it was here for?

Mike Davis: What?

Female Interviewer: The red tide last year.

Mike Davis: I know it's gone. This is it then.

Female Interviewer: Yeah.

Mike Davis: You know, every form of bacteria develops with these stronger ones. I'll say this is down fishermen to talk [Indiscernible] [00:37:51]. So, how long, how do you know?

Male Interviewer: Well, and I think that's a good question. [00:38:00]. So, what do you anticipate you think it's going to...

Mike Davis: I think it gets stronger and keep getting stronger. There's nothing to compare to with. And now you got all that bacteria that's off the dead fish left in the water, and you think that's going to go away? What if it's another hot summer? Hotter it is and you get sewer? You get wait till trouble because the storm of course there's always something that's going to overflow or to going to open the gates, alpha killed thousands of little fish there one year they were dumping shit here and there they got fined. I think the whole state of Florida needs to be protected. Not abused, that's my theory. I was here right after the Indians, so, I might have a little bit but it don't count because I'm the last of the crackers around here.

Male Interviewer: Is there any [overlapping conversation] [00:39:00]?

Mike Davis: I mean, you will have [indiscernible] [00:39:03] system, there's nothing. Everybody wants to live the life that they don't want to share and my life will never be duplicated again [indiscernible] [00:39:24].

Male Interviewer: No.

Mike Davis: You know, I'm still in here. I mean, I know how to make a fire you know what Larry Wood is?

Male Interviewer: Yeah.

Mike Davis: Okay, I see you get it. Does he know how to pick it out of woods all those sort of things? You never know in the future what you might need that's not passed down?

Male Interviewer: Do you think your – will your son to continue occupation you think? [00:40:00]

Mike Davis: I hope so. He's got something to get back, you know, he's hard worker.

Male Interviewer: Is your dad still alive?

Mike Davis: Yeah.

Male Interviewer: How old is he?

Mike Davis: Seventy eight.

Male Interviewer: Seventy eight. He doesn't do fishing?

Mike Davis: No, he lives in Kentucky.

Male Interviewer: Why that's?

Mike Davis: He's retired. He decided to live.

Male Interviewer: Is there anything else, any other environmental changes you've seen out there that we haven't talked about?

Mike Davis: It just about manmade. You know, and you're never going to stop that until there's control or something on. Even now, I mean, if you can't see it by now, what else is going to happen. You know, sewer systems, so much that is not contested. But if there's no fish that means the tourist want and the industry wants fish and they want to go catch them and they want beautiful bait then again, they won't be able to see it. Just like going to the beach. So, many people go out there on a Sunday and backed up till 3 o'clock in the day. They say build bigger bridge, build bigger beach. How you're going to build bigger beach [Indiscernible] [00:41:22] and I'm just down country boy cracker fisherman and this is something...

Male Interviewer: Well, I mean, you guys have gotten knowledge and that's what we're trying to get...

Mike Davis: We can now afford to fight – I mean, it's more like you know, we made a living, we are not politicians. We are not – we're going to do whatever the government tells to do. And go okay, try and figure out the way [00:42:00] to work with it as best we can. So, there you have it.

Male Interviewer: That's all we got unless there's anything else that you want or got anything that we didn't cover something that we didn't...

Mike Davis: Just I hope if you – I hope I don't get harassed by that.

Male Interviewer: No, but I will tell you...

Mike Davis: Because I believe they are the big help also. And they have an opinion but sometimes the politics and even the younger ones can't say what they want or even if they write it down, it never get if it's not what they want to hear higher up, it's not always going to be documented.

Male Interviewer: Yeah.

Mike Davis: And I know this is after I know that through I had to take observers off and on through the year. And they don't, you know, I'll go up and sleep and they're not writing down or write shit. They are killing every grouper. I wish I could have them you know, [indiscernible] [43:09] but they won't pull up the fish because their fingers are hurt. I try not to [indiscernible] [00:43:22] but I've seen. And they do the same and they say sometimes I get it someone really nice you know. Someone will say that you know that my boss will write down what they want to write down. And that's kids and let's see I pay them, I think they make [indiscernible] [00:43:40] certain days effort they make more but if you can get some of [indiscernible] [00:43:54].

Male Interviewer: How often do you...

Mike Davis: They are out [00:44:00] there all the time.

Male Interviewer: So, do you have an observer on your boat like...?

Mike Davis: Every three months, sometimes they will pick you out at random.

Male Interviewer: Yeah. But like through as fishing season, you have not always a couple times?

Mike Davis: Yeah. If they pick my boat, we'll get 60 of them. I will not mention any boats, so, the government kind of keeps an eye on it. So, we're randomly picked out. And that's how they collect their data that they want. They'll get me in trouble now and I'll be arrested even shortly. Keep that in mind. They can harass me and arrest me. So, I'll probably say something, you don't want me to kind of [indiscernible] [00:44:41]. Just think about that when you write something down [overlapping conversation] [00:44:50]

Male Interviewer: We're not going to get you in trouble but we appreciate you taking time to sit down and talk to us...

Mike Davis: But you know some in net fisherman, you know, can you [indiscernible] [00:45:06].

Male Interviewer: Does Kenny Snook (phonetics), Is he still fishing?

Mike Davis: Yeah.

Male Interviewer: And Chris too?

Mike Davis: Oh, yeah. They still get and that's my favorite people to fish with. Someone I want to say [indiscernible] [00:45:22].

Male Interviewer: We interviewed Kenny when we did the all history project with the school from [indiscernible] [00:45:31]. And we did Mark – we had Mark Taylor talking about the stuff some of the old time and sometime.

Mike Davis: It'd be longer table we are about to pick it and you try to pick it.

Male Interviewer: I haven't talked with but [indiscernible] [45:49] fish market?

Mike Davis: [Indiscernible] [00:45:51] They get too young and kept a new fishes in Alaska.

Male Interviewer: Oh, yeah, I knew, yeah that we talked.

Mike Davis: He's very informative about [00:46:00] those guys from that fish and this year and...

Male Interviewer: I wanted to talk to Wayne Campbell the other day, [indiscernible] [46:07].

Mike Davis: Wait a month and [indiscernible] [00:46:07]

Male Interviewer: Yeah, we are going to be here for a couple of days and trying to get more, more guys to talk...

Mike Davis: What's this for anyway?

Male Interviewer: Well, if we got [overlapping conversation] [00:46:19] we're trying to get like I said, the state records on red tide are not that good. And so, we are trying to get fisherman as to kind of give us a map of historically, what the red tide, what were they like? You know, what happened? How were you affected? What species were affected? So, we are trying to get these maps and then kind of combined them and try to say historically, these are the red tides that these guys remember and this is how far they went. These were the species involved. You know, this is what happened to them how they have changed fishing practices like you said, you know, that's interesting. I mean that I don't think anybody I've heard talked about more sharks being forced out and then...

Mike Davis: [indiscernible] [00:46:59].

Male Interviewer: Oh, yeah. No, I've seen the photos...

Mike Davis: 30 years of sharks now. 30 years of sharks now that to try and figure out when hurricane is coming, because they will leave the bay, that's a fact. So, of course and plus [indiscernible] [47:20] so, they need to eat, they need to get a [indiscernible] [00:47:24].

Male Interviewer: But I was going to tell you once we kind of – we'll have a little write up, we'll report on this and we'll try to get it down here. I'll give it to Karen, she'll make sure that you guys can...

Mike Davis: But you know, you got to think about, we'll think, you're going to leave the big packet, there is plenty to eat. So, why are they not leaving? We're on that. That's why we're not catching any. I'm guessing [indiscernible] [00:47:47]. You know, you used to [00:48:00] maybe a 1000 and that's that'd be barracudas and other stuff.

Male Interviewer: That's a 1000 per trips.

Mike Davis: Yeah, that's more or less. See, you cannot – you'll live while you [indiscernible] [00:48:11]. You know you don't stay there a lot of times. You know one day might be 50 and the next day they lose two and then gone. If you're coming through just like red fish going down the bay, what do you see from them? Every poor little fish is probably coming out of the water. Every [indiscernible] [48:37], what are they done? Now, standard fields [indiscernible] [00:48:45]

Male Interviewer: Can you get secure and bringing them up, you know, you know what kind of sharks they are?

Mike Davis: [indiscernible] [00:48:58].

Male Interviewer: [indiscernible] [00:49:04]?

Mike Davis: Yeah. I'm seeing less little ones than we used to. There are some [indiscernible] [00:49:10] I'm not saying any of my little ones. But we would catch sometimes that in a day you might catch 20 in a day and then the next day you don't. Now even see one or two a trip. Are they looking into that, I don't know. Everything can be controlled in my opinion, I don't mean nothing but I have one...

Male Interviewer: It's your – it's a big help you guys sitting down with us. So, we appreciate it, Mike. [49:58]