

Charles Mills: Even though it's on a decline, the reason we're not blaming septic tanks is because all of these have been here while we always had to clear water and the clean water and good fishing. So, they can't give us that hard watch that its septic tank. Now, don't get me wrong, I don't doubt that somewhere somebody has a septic tank that needs to be cleaned, and it should be cleaned. The ones who don't clean their septic tanks every five years have clean doubt, that should be a mandatory law maybe.

Karen DeMaria: \$250, we have had our stand at that a year ago.

CM: But if every five years they only catch \$200 wouldn't be so bad.

KD: No. I just remember when it used to be like \$10.

CM: I used to pay \$90. It just aggravates you be because anyone knows a septic tank, the more you clean it, the better the drain field's going to work, the less [inaudible] you are going to cause. Now when you allow your septic tank to build up to the point where you don't empty it enough, the flutter chokes up, the drain field isn't working and then when water does go out, it falls itself out and it plugs up the whole drainage and you have a system that isn't working correctly or as efficiently as it should.

KD: Do you think that the development – these houses all been here but I know even in the five years that I have lived here in Cameron, there has been a lot more houses built. Do you think that had anything to do?

CM: No, I don't think it affected the homes, I don't think homes affect keys at all. Residential homes. Now when you start renting them out by the day and using them as hotels and motels, now you're causing an overflow on your drain field. Now you may be causing fluid to go into these canals because the drain field can't possibly carry it. It isn't getting enough drying time.

KD: It is not being used as originally designed.

CM: Right. You have a residential home with the average home of four people. But now you're putting eleven, twelve, fifteen people in here for every weekend. During the week maybe, you've got twenty people or fifteen and that's what they do. This house is rented out already for dive week, for \$2,200 for the week this one over here. You know how many people off that'll be in there? I'll bet you if you don't see fifteen you won't see one.

KD: I know.

CM: Now you put fifteen people in that house, what's going to happen to the drain field? Right after they leave it comes to the next batch. So, that drain field doesn't even get the chance to settle down and dry out and get back to doing stuff.

KD: They are designed for normal residential use where you have got a peak in the morning and peak maybe later at night and you have got your slow time. It is not a twenty-four-hour process.

CM: Get chance to relax. So, those situations may be causing the problems, may, but I don't even believe that's the problem. I don't believe that it's residential septic tank problem. I think if it's anything it might be the cesspool that overflow. Cesspool, I don't trust but a septic tank as long as you have that big drain field. It shouldn't really affect anything because it never did in the past. See, we never had a problem here. We still have dirty water. You know anything I say siting here I can see it looking a little more green than it used to. Now, whatever makes it green I guess is algae. I don't know.

KD: You think there is more? Yes, there is algae. What about boat use being green?

CM: There's twice as much boat than it used to be, let's say so. There are more boats now, but they don't all come out here at the same time. They're periodically used even though there are more boats because there's more houses. A lot of these people aren't here before six months a year. They have built right here, right across this canal. Now, I'll bet you I can probably show you fifty homes where people aren't here four months a year. So, for eight months that drain feels dry. So, really, they won't tell you that when they're giving you statistics, because you know why? They want you to believe it's that so they can get mission to put sewer line from Kiowa to Miami.

KD: They will never put a sewer line.

CM: They will. You mark my word. Money talks and they will put it. Because the minute you put that sewer line in, there'll be no end to the high rises and development that will go on these schemes.

KD: I do not think they will put.

CM: Let's hope you and I and people like us fight it all the time.

KD: I work as a consulting to an engineering firm here in Kiowa part time and it is just not feasible. Engineerly designed, it just cannot do.

CM: Well, do you think it's feasible to track a garbage house?

KD: No. They got to figure out something. There is going to be something more like area. I do not know what, but keys itself.

CM: Did it ever occur to you that we have 3 million tours dumping garbage here?

KD: Yes.

CM: The 70,000 residents are being held responsible for that?

KD: Yes.

CM: What about the business fee?

KD: I am also putting a call on you as one, the tourist [inaudible].

CM: Yes.

KD: At the airport,

CM: To get in here...

KD: You pay \$50.

CM: Well, if you live here, you only pay a little bit.

KD: A dollar here and there or once a year you pay for a permit sticker you stick on your car or have a car but you got to.

CM: But here's the other thing to think about. 3 million tours compared to 7,000 people. You wonder why we have a garbage problem but they're blaming us for the garbage. We who live here are being blamed. That's a lot. Now why not leave our garbage bill alone, maybe whatever it is today, just leave it there. It's too high anyway, but leave it there but don't raise it anymore, but from now on hit all the people in business to pay the difference. If they need X number of dollars let them pay the difference.

KD: There was someone who had made a comment about if there is actually a town or a group that is doing where you are charged by how garbage you put out on the street. It is a wave type thing I feel it goes along to recycling programs. Some town did it where it was you pay a flat fee in the year and then your garbage is weighed. This way you find these people whose residential houses that have thousands of people coming through there because they rent them out. You would know because of the garbage. I mean, that would be something interesting. I do not know if it works.

CM: Now you're going to have to hire more people on the county payroll. There goes your taxes up again. So, there's only one way to stop. You got to stop advertising the keys number one. Just stop and more word of mouth is good enough. In fact, that's too good because that's going to bring.

KD: Give me the comment where we were talking about changes in what you observe washing up in here.

CM: Yes. The sea weed. We get a lot more sea weed in here now on a west wind than we ever used to get.

KD: Is it sea grasses?

CM: Sea grass.

KD: Turtle grass or long thin?

CM: It's the long thin.

KD: Long thin or is it the wide stuff like that?

CM: It's not sea grass.

KD: There is sea grass that looks like a pig.

CM: Well, it's mixed. You get a little bit of everything in here. In fact, I even did get some sogas. We even got a little bit of that in here but deeper, knock that off. So, the last time from those floats you will float up here all the way over there and all the way to the shallow water where we had it dug out. Did we had this privately dug out sogas [inaudible]. This was whole facing was completely full of weed one day, which we never had in 20 years.

KD: When did that happen?

CM: Just recently.

KD: Last year or two?

CM: Well, but there was a mixture of weed. I know there was eelgrass. I could see the eelgrass. To see that much grass dying off worries me because that's not a good sign. Now, I don't know whether it was from the storm knocks, I don't think the storm knocks that much loose. When you are done you see that doing, you don't see it breaking loose.

KD: What about shells? You built pretty shells here.

CM: We haven't looked for shells in five years so we don't know but over the years going out there we never had a problem finding shells. In fact, right now, little Kiowa there is a bunch out there right now. That's where we used to get a lot of ours but by the central were hand-picked. Just like the helmets you have to dive them in different depth but we did all pre-dive on no tax.

KD: You also do not go into – it is a comment, you have made earlier that it says you collected one or two from an area. You did not go into an area to take everything single one?

CM: No, we handpicked them and like I say, this is a twenty-five-year collection. So, took twenty-five years and half of this one my brother technically because he helped us but he doesn't have this cabinet in his house. So, he's waiting for me to build him one to give him the shells, but he hasn't moved down here from it yet.

KD: You built each cabinet?

CM: Yes

KD: We have a lot of finding color. My husband and I were talking about moving to a family stand. Right now, everything is on Worldwide Windows stuff and got thinking of getting these cabins plus the shells. He does all those shelves. [laughter] He has been traveling South Pacific a lot lately and bringing back the shells. The same thing it brings back collection of one or two just for us to have collection and that is it. We usually try not to kill anything if we call help it but it happens to be.

CM: Well, if you want the shell to last then be right. You have to catch them alive because we take the dead ones and they really don't look good. These were all alive but of course we didn't waste the cons. But that's beside that point, the point is we did take them alive but, in those days, we took only a few. It wasn't until the Marielle Group came over and they found out where they were and they went annihilated low key. They just cleaned it right out. They took every, I mean we saw shells, these big con shells with holes in them lay on the bottom that they pulled the meat out. What they do, they pop a hole full of meat out and throw shell and it was scary. We got mad and people wonder why are you mad at the Cubans? I don't dislike Cubans, I dislike the ones that came here and did the things they did. They happen to beat Cubans but this is like I hate all Cubans. I just didn't like what the ones down here just like fish traps. That's the first thing they built when they came in Everybody knows you can't find a grouper off Cubans. I mean they're eating panfish. Well, we call panfish, they're eating.

KD: [inaudible] and butterflies and sandfish and pork.

CM: And I couldn't believe they were eating this, triggerfish and what's the other one?

KD: Prawn?

CM: Prawn fish.

KD: Could be prawn fish. [laughter]

CM: Trigger fish and there's another one that shape like that. Well, I guess it was trigger fish mostly I know and jacks. A lot of jacks didn't kill on that because that's all they could find. They'd kill everything else. Now you take out here are hogfish. The hogfish are awful small. I'll tell you another thing, porkies now orange juice or something. You like coke? Diet free?

KD: Yes, that is good.

CM: Turn just as green as Hillsborough caught by in that next five Hillsborough got even darker green actually. Then now Boca was like Hillsborough used to be. It was taking its toll. It was already starting to show. Now my wife and I are responsible for that right boulevard, that artificial reef. I put over 1500 tires or 2000 tires or maybe more than that myself on that reef. We went out there with the cement wrapped around the tires. The whole bunch of tires and we put them on the boat, take out, dump them. We'd be taking out tires and thumping them and if divers running out right behind us with plenty of room in the boat, and tires would be on the ramp area where we were going out of. They would run back their boats down the ramp and they wouldn't take one tire out. I got almost got the fist fight with them. I'm dropping tires in

air, putting their tanks on done over and I yell over, "Hey come here." The guy swam over says, "Guys, explain something to me. We are trying to build a reef here. You're going to dive while I'm dumping tires. You came out of the same ramp I did. How come you didn't put tires in your boat? Bring it out here and t dump it so you could dive your own droppings. Guys, it's because we got suckers like you that do it." Now when you hear stuff like that you start to wonder what kind of people are we raising in this country?

KD: That is a lot of what the problem is. It is like you look at the crime, look at the schools

CM: That's a personal thing.

KD: Yes, I know. Is there anything else that you would like to tell me that you have not told me so far? Anything that you think is important as far as changes that you have observed?

CM: Well, the whole environment, everything, even our trees and bushes and shrubbery. I mean people are coming around now with the blowers and blowing seawalls and blowing stuff into the canals. You sit here now and you see our mile-long line of leaves floating out the sea now. You know that you never used to see. You see coconut palm branches everything floating out. People just throwing it in the canals that you never used to see. That's progress because people moving in the newer generation of people coming. The people in the last three to five years are altogether different. Their attitudes are different, their ideals of the keys are different. Not all of them, actually always those who care but the majority that are moving in they have a bad attitude. I got people over here; they're renting the house and those are the biggest violators. I really think the people that own their property probably aren't. There are some, I'm sure most of the people that own the property probably aren't as bad a violator and I say as bad a violator as the guy that rents. Because people who rent, they don't care. They figure they're going to be gone whatever. But I see that I don't like is Normandy invasion out here every lobster day when we have the two-day special season. These are supposed to be sportsmen. They're animals, they're not sportsmen. These people are absolutely insane. What they would kill to get a lobster. I mean I almost got chopped off.

KD: They are making a lot people have it.

CM: Yes of course, of course. I'll admit I'm not a very good sportsman but I use tanks because I'm old. Hey, I can't stand the water anymore. My rear rate keeps wanting to come up.

KD: I am a plotter [laughter].

CM: So, I put tanks on. Well, I don't go anymore because one year out there, I forget what year, Renee and I used to go out and John the two of us because John came out with this inferior infection is equilibrium. If that's bothering him it's time to get dive. So, Renee and I went out one day and my son, the three of us rather, and we're diving and luckily, we had tanks on. I just started to come up and I heard this motor coming and man I stuck down and I got the wash in my face. I'm looking at this guy is crazy. There are five hundred boats here and is willing through this. We got to die of flare up and everything.

KD: They do not understand that five they do not care.

CM: They don't care. They want to get to where they must know a spot. They want to get there. They think they don't understand the keys. They don't understand that you can go out there anywhere on those two days and find lobster.

KD: I think a lot of what I have heard, I mean and my own personal thing is that he has got people now driving boats who before never would have been able to. Because now you have got Lorenzo, now you have got all these fancy equipment better. Makes it easy. Anytime Dick and Harry can jump in a boat and drive it now. Whereas before it took more skill to find places for Loranze, who did more sighting he had to know a little bit more. There is more technique now.

CM: Yes, now you just write a number down, you come back, boom, you are right there. Three things are killing us here. Already said it a hundred times. I know tourist is the biggest killer. Greed is the second biggest killer or you can reverse that if you like. The other one is the fact that people trying to reap when they are here because they're only going to be here for a short time. Those of us who live here, I don't know if we would be doing that if we only had a few days if we didn't live here. I don't know how many of us that live here would do that. But those of us who live here I guess it's just like a lot of people say "I see your boats sit here a lot of times" Because I won't go out when it's rough, I go out when it's calm and they say, "But you should have been out." I said, "Hey, why?" I mean the fish are there, you just got to find them. So, the three things that that hurt us the most is the fact that when these people go out there dive and they turn over the coral, they don't care about the environment. Garbage is flowing up on the beaches. What really takes me off is they get the kids from the school, grab and clean the island. It's really nobody's business to clean those islands except the people in business should go out there and hire the kids and pay them or give them a case of coke or something to go out and clean the island.

KD: Did you notice the cruise ship that got busted for dumping trash?

CM: Yes.

KD: You know where that was, do you? It was five or nine miles south that Kiowa. Right up here.

CM: That is not on our territory.

KD: That is what and overhearing some conversations between some fish trappers down about Tortugas because fish trappers still league down toward Tortugas then in the golf. Talking about stuff finding in the traps and apparently it is common for them to get crews lying cups in their traps getting up into the funnel.

CM: But again, it's the old story, no one will help us. The politicians refuse to help. I can show you if you want the numbers. I mean it just take my word for it because it takes too longer. I've got every national fishery, all of them in here. I've had as high as \$300 phone bill calling these people begging them to change the rules, or change this or change or make a rule. Do this put an

end to this fish traps. They say, "Well they can't fish trap anymore." I said, "They are fish trapping." Well, they're not supposed to and blah blah. I said, "What do you mean they're not supposed?" They are because they have an appeal going right now and then once you file an appeal you can still trap until it's settled.

KD: Well, the judge says no, they did not get the injunction. Basically, any fish trap you find in the South Atlantic is illegal. But there are ways of getting around the law and these people do not care. There are not enough marine patrol people. There is not enough enforcement. Then is hard when you have judges who throw out these cases.

CM: The only way you get them to give the marine patrol ran numbers for where the traps are.

KD: We try that. You sit there and they get around to it maybe in a day or so by that time the traps are gone. Because down here it is a small community and where gets around real fast. Then the other thing is now that you got wire lobster to traps being used. There is no need for wire lobster trap why? Again, greed and lazy people.

CM: They don't have to dip them.

KD: They do not have to scrub them. They do not have to maintain as much it is easier you do not have to worry about.

CM: But they should make them use the same type of mouth open. How did they not make them do that? That's what the reason for that opening on [inaudible].

KD: The definition of lobster trap is three by two by two or three by three by two, something like. This is the dimension and that I think it is like they never stipulated anything else. They will change that. They will correct that but still, as long as you can have wire but you save wire itself, you going to have wire fish trap.

CM: A lot of guys were putting wires around the traps years ago to keep the turtles from chewing a lot though. Turtles used to chew a lot though. That's another thing I know that they kill them at. You all know they're killing turtles but I don't know why they get so upset over them. They are killing them around the islands day in and day out. I mean you go anywhere in the world they kill the turtle. So, the few that the fishermen are killing around here really isn't going to hurt. Well even I'm not saying it's right but is going to hurt turtle. Yes, well look at the green turtle line up there. I mean I'm Ross, but what I'd like to know is with all the investigations going on over the years and all the complaints just like that island out there. You saw my name in the paper about that island. I'm sure you did. I mean I complained. I told them.

KD: Curtis Kruer is a biologist. He is one in the lawsuit against Monkey island.

CM: I don't if I know him or not. I'm bad on names. I even used to know all the guys that worked there on Monkey Island. If I see them, I know who they are but I can't remember the names. Now my wife if she was here she can tell you all their names.

KD: [laughter]

CM: She remembers names like.

KD: That could be my house right there. There is nothing else.

CM: The other thing is that along the seawall for instance. Now this whole development was designed to have seawalls the way they have them. They come in here and they tell people they can't build a seawall that's crazy. If they got to say that now first of all, the seawall is actually helping to keep all the dirt debris blowing into the canal and is as far worrying about the environment for the fish let them put stones in like John did over there instead of concrete. But as far as I'm concerned, an area like this don't worry about this what you need to protect is what's over here. All these mangroves and all those mangroves that are in the water and run up to the low tide or high tide mark, whichever way you want to go. In my case I would like to see the high tide. If they protect that and fight and stay on that, that does good than worrying about seawall. But see they get so petty, they go after a guy raise came by the seawall and here's a guy out at a Monkey island out here. They're eating up all the mangroves. Thousands and thousands of bushes. If I go out and cut one down, they go fine me \$500. We used to trim alongside of my brother's house over here we used to trim that about well whenever. We will trim it shoulder high or a little over so he could look over and you get that sound of breeze into the house. We just trim it. One day I started trimming lucky for me I didn't notice that Loren couldn't trim Lopez come by and Lopez ask "What are you doing?" I said, "I'm trimming the mangrove." "No, Charles you can't do that the more." I said, "What the hell they passed down? Well because this year, thanks for telling me." But you know I always cut these mangroves just luckily, he caught me was the strangers. Because Vinny and I go back to when he was rocky. I mean he knows I don't break the law.

KD: You do not purposely break the law, right?

CM: If I do it's an accident. Now with the fish rules, if I don't have my lawyer with me, I might catch some.

KD: What I advise people with the fish laws we and have that problem trying green extension service county the guy who is the marine extension agent Doug Gregory.

CM: I know Doug.

KD: Doug used to work in Gulf of Mexico. He used to be fishery biologist for the Gulf of Mexico Federal Fishery Council. Doug grew up in Kiowa. But Doug has three notebooks right above his desk. South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, State of Florida. If you have a question about a size limit or what is legal where, call him up and he sit there and he always has the most recent stuff right up front. He makes a point of making sure that he is up to date with everything he knows so that he can make sure everyone else understand. It is a big help because we call him up. My husband is very active the Fishery Council and he has a question. He calls up Doug. He says, "Doug, I am going to go out this way. I was thinking about this fish, what size limit or what is the count because it's

cold close season and this and that."

CM: Well, I'll tell you a story that happened to me about when this size limit's first came out. First of all, I'm opposed to size limit, daily limits on both but I'm opposed to size limit. I don't care how big or small they are. I'd say you can only get ten of these, five of these one of these, eighteen of these whatever. That's fine because here's what happens with size limit fishing. Anyone who's ever fished out here knows. You go out there in seventy feet or sixty feet or and I can't use hand line or a rod, you bring them up too fast they pop. You unhook they're too small, you throw them over, they float. Sea goes, come down, who knows, whatever pelican frigging something comes down and snags and poor shark comes up or could come up and nails so you can kill that fish anyway. So, everyone who fishes any place any length of time knows the system goes up. If you have four or five people on your boat, which I normally have four at least. Wow. They're throwing them over and they're floating. Come on. If they are able to or capable of it takes them long. I've never seen one yet but they say if you wait long enough sooner or later they will be played enough to go down. I have never seen one yet. Next thing you look behind the boat, there's all pelicans and seagulls and they are all catching only fish about.

KD: What your attitude about, spawning season closure.

CM: I've stayed there for a hundred years. I said that before it even had rules. I could never understand why this state.

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