

Molly Graham: [00:04] This begins an oral history interview with Scott Gudes for the NOAA Heritage Oral History Project on April 28, 2023. The interviewer is Molly Graham. It's a remote interview with Mr. Gudes in Dana Point, California. I'm in Scarborough, Maine. Where we had left off last time was your time in the internship with the Pentagon. I just was curious if you could say a little bit more about what you were doing in those – was it two years?

Scott Gudes: [00:32] Yeah, the Presidential Management Internship. Now it's called – Fellowship is a two-year program; you're in a career-conditional status, and after two years, if the agency or the government thinks you're okay, then, at least back in those days, you would convert to a career status. That was part of the reason they created it was a way to get their view of talented people out of universities/graduate schools and not get stymied by the federal hiring process or veteran's preference or whatever. So, after two years of rotational assignments, then I converted over to a position at the Office of Economic Adjustment [OEA]. And then, after one more year, I was an official career employee there.

MG: [01:23] What can you tell me about the Office of Economic Adjustment? What's their purview?

SG: [01:27] So, they're still around. They're still fairly similar. They now have their own grant funding and money, and that's different than when we were there. We were a coordinating group. There was a presidential executive order to tell agencies they're supposed to all work together on this. But it goes back to – the origins go back to the 1960s when the Defense Department closed a number of installations, some of which had been around since World War II. They realized that there was a huge economic impact on these communities. Originally, they just did it; they would just say, “We're closing your base,” and do it. Then the environmental impact law out of NEPA [National Environmental Policy Act] came along, and there was a process that was required. But OEA generally – Office of Economic Adjustment, which is part of the Office of the Secretary of Defense – we had kind of an eclectic staff. Some people had been industrial developers. There were all sorts – real property experts, things like that. But the office job was to go in and tell these communities, “Okay, we can't control DOD [Department of Defense] closing or opening, or contract cutbacks, or economic impacts from defense spending, but we're going to try to help you transition and get new private sector jobs or use the property for public uses, like hospitals, schools, airports.” A lot of air bases were converted into commercial airports. So, where you have a piece of property, it tends to be a different situation than where the Department of Defense just does big reductions in force or contract cancellations of major weapon systems. The other thing they started to get into in the '70s – I showed up in the late '70s, obviously – was base expansions, where the Department of Defense would go into a pretty rural area, like in rural Georgia, or rural Washington State and say, “We're going to put a submarine base in here.” And these communities didn't have money for the schools, for the infrastructure, or for the services, and so, in some cases where people like Norm Dicks, Congressman Dicks, was around, or Senator [Warren] Magnuson, Congress actually appropriated money to help the communities deal with these requirements. But there was sort of an issue of what's the appropriate federal cost versus what the community would have been doing anyways. So there was a lot of work on that. It's different now. I think now Congress is more likely just to appropriate money and say, “Well, you guys handle this issue and help the community.” But back then, we used to work with the Commerce Department, the Economic

Development Administration [EDA], Housing and Urban Development, the Education Department, Transportation, [and] HHS [Health and Human Services], and we really were using existing federal programs. I specifically worked on various projects. I was given a project in Syracuse, New York, Hancock Field, which was a base closure, which I worked on, and then I was the project manager. Then I worked with Guam, which was an existing project when the project manager was on sabbatical with the private sector. Then, I ended up being the project manager for Micronesia, which were all these other islands for the US that had been under UN Trusteeship. It was kind of like an international development job at the age of twenty-five or whatever. In the year 1982, I spent probably three months – no, I spent two months out in Micronesia that year, then January 1983. It was interesting. Very, very different.

MG: [05:32] Well, what's Micronesia like? It's not a place I'm familiar with.

SC: [05:36] Well, it's been forty years since I was there, so this is a historical comment. Basically, these are the islands that had been Japanese. They were German colonies, and the Japanese took them after World War I, and then the United States took them during World War II. Some were big battles: Peleliu, Kwajalein, Saipan. These were really bloody battles with the US Navy, Marines, and Army taking them back during World War II. So the UN [United Nations] turned them over to the USA in 1945-'46. They turned them over to the United States in a trusteeship. That's not true of Guam. Guam has been a U.S. territory since 1898. The United States didn't really see the – at that time, historically, didn't see the economic and political development of these islands as something that was really our problem. In the case of the Marshall Islands, we used them for testing nuclear weapons. Have you ever heard of Eniwetok or Bikini, where we destroyed these islands for human habitation? We just told the Marshallese in that case, "We're going to use your island. You can go back." Well, they couldn't go back because it was – so, the United States wasn't really the best steward, and we started getting exposed for that in the early '60s by other countries, mainly the bad guys. So, for example, Guam, which was a territory, up until President Kennedy, you have to have a security clearance to go visit the island! Here's an island that would have a hundred-something – I don't know what they are now – 150,000. They have tourism, right? But back then, they can't have tourism because a tourist must have a security clearance. So, it was basically a military-closed island. It was there for the purposes of the Navy and the Air Force. Anyway, there's a distinction, though, between Guam and then Saipan, the Northern Marianas, which elected for a territorial commonwealth rule in their case with the United States when the trusteeship ended. These other Micronesian islands, which were the Marshall Islands. Tell me if I'm rambling. The Marshall Islands, which included Kwajalein, which was a big military strategic base, where we test missiles and ballistic missile defense. The capital is Majuro. These are all low-lying atolls. I really liked the Marshallese because they have a very distinct concept of their nationalism and their identity comparatively. Then you had Palau, the Palauan islands, which includes Peleliu, where there was a big battle in World War II. You can see it in terms of scuba diving tourism and stuff because people have realized since the early 1980s. They have a very small population, at least they did back then; they had fourteen thousand people or twelve thousand people in a pretty nice archipelago of islands. But they have all sorts of internal divisions I found when I went there. I mean, they assassinated their prime minister. It was kind of wild. And then, in the middle, you have this set of islands, which came together, called the Freely Associated States of Micronesia, with their capital in Pohnpei. That includes Truk, it includes Yap, it includes Kosrae

– over a large area and a lot of other smaller, very beautiful islands. Kosrae and Pohnpei are both very beautiful, mountainous, lush islands. So, the UN said, “Okay, we're going to transition to independence.” The United States went back to these islands and said, “Okay, we're willing to give you free associated status.” This is now – I'm talking late '70s. What that meant was, “We'll keep defense and foreign policy for you, but we'll let you be independent in other ways, and we'll give you economic assistance.” Eventually, the islands voted for that, the three different nations, if you will. So the US now has an ambassador out there, ambassadors. They're basically independent but relying on the United States still, and it varies. The Japanese have had a lot of influence there. That was starting to happen when I was going out there. What I found was [that] it was quite exciting for me because it was international travel. I'd go out there, and you – I could talk about this at length because they only had – they didn't have telephones. Back then, you had to send cable messages. You had to send cables through DOD or the State Department and say you're coming. It was very small scale. You'd go to the capital in Pohnpei, and you'd come into this little office building that's like a house. You'd say, “I have a meeting with President [Tosiwo] Nakayama for today.” And they'd go, “Who are you?” And you'd go, “This is Mr. Paul Sage, and I'm Scott Gudes from the Department of Defense. We have a meeting, and here's the cable.” “Oh, yes. Well, the President's busy today.” It was very different than you might have expected. So, we developed a strategy in various islands to do different things. One of the things was business development because, basically, these little islands were very dependent. It was sad. You'd see tuna swimming off the reef, but they imported canned tuna. Over the years, they had sort of lost self-sufficiency. It was very interesting. In the case of the Marshall Islands, where the United States had its most significant interest because of the base at Kwajalein. The Marshallese had right away, as soon as the Interior – the Interior Department was the agency in the federal government that was responsible for them. There's an Assistant Secretary still for territories, even today. They had been very – I don't know – paternalistic about the islands and hadn't really seen the development of their economies as something that was their responsibility. You found that a lot of the leaders of these islands had been people like Oscar Debrum in the Marshall Islands – I still remember his name. He had been the colonial administrator for the Department of Interior or the lead local administrator. They all went on to create their own governments. Marshalls had its own parliament. Amata Kabua was the President when I went there. He had been in the family of the traditional chiefs, the Iroij, they call them, of the Marshall Islands. There, the issue was economic development, and specifically in the case of Kwajalein, we had this base – we still do – of several thousand, mainly contractors, which had been where the World War II battle had been. It was at the base of this atoll, a ring of islands that went northwest for eighty miles. That lagoon was where we would shoot test US missiles in, like Minutemen, for accuracy out of Vandenberg Air Force base in California, with lots of radars and satellite receivers. So, three miles away by water, there was a little island called Ebeye. That's where the Marshallese were allowed to live. As you might expect, the people who actually worked at the base were largely – the ones who did the cooking and the trash and landscaping, and the things that actually took care of the base operations were Marshallese, and they used to get ferried from Ebeye to Kwajalein every day. They'd work at Kwajalein and then have to leave at six or five at night and go back to Ebeye. Well, Ebeye was the worst poverty. As an American, you'd see overcrowding and pollution because they had five thousand people crowded on this little island. For the Marshallese, it was like heaven because there was beer, refrigeration, TV. But it was really bad. There were a lot of examples where the United States would, say, fund a sewage plant. By the

time I got there, the sewage plant was clogged and pouring raw sewage into the lagoon. At OEA, we were trying to work on an economic development plan and get the Army to step up. In meeting with these generals and such, it was really – you had this sense [that] the Army didn't see the welfare of the Marshallese as their problem. They had very, almost colonial attitude. I mean, it was kind of scary to me. This was back in 1982. But the United States military kind of had a colonial view of the Marshallese, a biased view of them. There was a company there that had the contract for base operations called Global Associates, I recall, and they actually were interested in working with the Marshallese. I worked on things like that in Micronesia, civic action teams – the various Navy civil engineering teams, trying to keep them in the islands. They would build little buildings and schools and things in these islands. It provided training and goodwill. The military there – each service – tended to be dominated by the Navy based in Guam. There was a point where the civic action teams were going to be pulled out because the islands weren't paying towards their cost. People said, “Well, now there's free associated status. We don't have to do this anymore.” So, Paul Sage and I, the senior guy, helped save them [and got] the Defense department to continue them. Those were the kinds of things we were working on. We got EDA amazingly to fund a small business development center for Micronesia. I don't think it actually worked at the end of the day, but we did. So, we were doing those kinds of things.

I've never been back to Micronesia. The Air Micronesia flight would come in, based in – the two ends would be Guam and Hawaii. It was under Continental Airlines. They would lease old 737s. So, they would fly in, look for how the wind sac was blowing, and then they'd come in and land on these islands without any towers or without a tower. The airport was very small scale. The electric power in some of these places was only on for part of the day. So, I've never gone back to see how they developed forty years later. But it was quite, quite fascinating. In Guam, I was a lot more familiar with it. It was a lot more developed at that time than these other islands. There we were trying to and did succeed in overcoming US Navy opposition to getting the commercial port expanded, something [that] was a personal quest of mine. The Navy had put an explosive safety zone around their ammunition dock on the other side of Guam's harbor, and it was stopping the Guamanians from expanding their commercial port, even though it wasn't really required to do that, and I worked on that at length. We finally got – or the congressman for Guam, Ben Blaz, finally got – the law changed. So they were able to expand their port. It was the one real asset besides tourism that Guam had at that time. So those are the kinds of things I worked on. At the time, I didn't think they were very significant. But now, looking back on it, we did some very good stuff.

MG: [18:21] Is this what you pictured your career to be at this time?

SG: [18:27] When I converted into the Economic Adjustment office, I thought, “Well, this is great.” You get to see all the elements of Washington, but you're still local government oriented. As I think I told you last time, I had worked in local government; that was my mindset. But I went through an epiphany about five years into my federal service that I probably should either do something different or go home to California because I never had intended to stay in the federal government or Washington. So, I was about to go. I was really thinking about going back to local government. Then I went to a Presidential Management Intern dinner, and my friend, Sean O'Keefe, who later became Secretary of the Navy and head of NASA [National

Aeronautics and Space Administration] was there. In any case, that evening, I thought, "I'm not done yet. So maybe I better start thinking about something." About that time, I was at a beach house – this is actually funny. In Washington, DC – I tell this to interns – it actually is a small town in many ways, and professional development is really about who you know, even though that doesn't sound good. When you get to the Hill, it's totally that way because the Hill doesn't even have where you have to publish the job and recruit. It's just word of mouth, and they fill a job right away. So, I was in this beach house in Rehoboth – a lot of Washington, DC professional singles go out to the beach every weekend through the summer, and they rent a house there. They sublet it during the week, and they use it during weekends. So, I was in one of those houses. There was a woman from OMB [Office of Management and Budget], there was a friend of hers who had just left OMB, and there was another woman who was in the Army's budget [office]. Anyway, there was this opening at OMB, and they started saying, "Hey, you'd be good at that." This was the Reagan administration years. I didn't think that would be a good idea. So I told a friend of mine about the job. They came back again. Anyway, I finally put in a resume, and at the end of the summer in 1983, so just about my five-year point in the federal government, I went for interviews at OMB. I won't take up too much of your time, but I was put off by OMB, to begin with. Well, here, I'll tell you this. It may relate back to everything I told you before. I went to interview there, and they had me talk to everybody. I was really put off by the attitudes towards the federal agencies; they had a very negative, adversarial view of the agencies they're responsible for. The staff seemed quite arrogant to me, actually. One of my references, my mentor in the Pentagon at that time, a guy named Colonel Jack Todd, called me up, and he said, "Hey, Scott, I think they really want to hire you." He said, "But they got two hang-ups from what I can tell." I said, "They do, huh? Well, to tell you the truth, Jack, I'm not all that interested in it." He said, "They had two hang-ups. One, they're really hung up by the fact that you went to Cal-State Fullerton. You didn't go to where they're usually to hire from. In fact, they've never hired anybody from there. They're bothered by where you got your degree." This is five years after I came in as a presidential [management intern]. Five years in, and they're like, "You didn't go to LBJ School, Princeton, Harvard Kennedy School, or Syracuse, or whatever." And then the other thing was, "The way you talk and the way you dress isn't like the way that they're used to. You don't seem to fit the social mode of OMB." So, I said, "Well, to tell you the truth, Jack, I was so put off by it; I don't think I want to work there anyways." And he goes, "Hey, Scott, they're duck hunters." I still remember this. "They're duck hunters." He said, "You're a duck. Don't be surprised that you don't like them because they're duck hunters." He said, "Now, they're offering you a chance to sit in the blind and show you how to shoot a gun and how to shoot ducks. If you're going to stay around in this town, if you're going to stay around Washington, DC, if I were you, I would take that advantage to learn because if you want to fly someplace in the future, you need to know what duck hunters do." This guy was my mentor, so I thought, "Yeah, that's a good point." I ended up going to OMB and did a 180-degree change in my career. A lot of people still think I'm a budget person because that's when I started working on the budget. To connect things, the account was NOAA that they were hiring somebody for. I was like, "Oh, this is cool. Coasts, Oceans, Fisheries, Weather Service. Weather, Oceans, coasts, Fisheries – that's all great." But I was the bad guy because, at that time, the Reagan administration's notion of NOAA was a full thirty percent less, twenty-five thirty percent less than the congressionally-enacted NOAA. They were proposing to cut the agency significantly. The Fisheries Service, at that time, was a two-hundred-plus million line office. Maybe it was like \$250. the administration was proposing to cut like eighty million, a

hundred million out of the Fisheries Service from the President's budget every year, going up to the Hill saying, "We don't do windows." Congress would say, "Yes, we do, and we will." That was a tough job.

MG: [24:49] Tell me about your interactions with NOAA during those years at OMB.

SG: [24:56] The head of NOAA's budget office at that time was John Carey. John had been the OMB Branch Chief at OMB, the same branch that I came into, and he had, I believe, been the original OMB NOAA examiner when NOAA was created in 1970. And a very nice guy. He's still around in the Washington, DC, area. So, John said, "Let me help you learn what you need to learn." And then he had his various program people from his budget office like John Oliver, who may be a name you have anyways. John is down in North Carolina. John was the Fisheries guy. Suzanne Service was the Weather Service person. Eileen Shea was the research person. Daryl McElhaney as the satellite analyst. At that time, the OMB position, everything was under one examiner, a budget examiner; that was my job title. I was doing power play, fire hose – this is Fisheries, this is Weather Service. The principals at NOAA, like Dr. Dick Hallgren, the name I had given you before, they all really wanted to teach me and explained to me what was terrible and wrong about the administration's – NOAA, all the cuts. For example, Sea Grant was gone, and Coastal Zone Management was gone. You can just go down the line. The Fisheries Service, the Reagan administration's policy was that they don't believe in industry assistance. So they would support basic science, but they weren't going to do industry assistance. Saltonstall-Kennedy grants were zeroed out. Some of those things I didn't disagree with. They said, "We're not going to subsidize more fishing vessels with credit when there's too many fishing vessels." NOAA was like, "No, we do subsidize fishing vessels." But a lot of things I didn't agree with, and that was hard because, after the first budget year in November '83, when we gave what's called the "pass back," all of a sudden, I wasn't their friend anymore. That was hard. That was hard. It was hard to actually personally like all these things, and my professional job was to carry out what had already been set as policy under the Reagan administration. They weren't going to back off. But I got to work for OMB Director Dave Stockman. He's a historic figure, and everybody at OMB, all the examiners, were in awe of him. He was so smart and so on top of the budget. I got hired in September. I was in front of Dave Stockman in November, presenting the NOAA budget with recommendations. I'll never forget. That was scary and a huge challenge. I mean, I was working night and day, and it was very anxiety-producing to have that much responsibility and that much pressure to do it. But there I am in front of Dave Stockman and twenty officials at OMB at this long table in the old executive office building, the Eisenhower building next to the White House. And here's this guy who reports directly to the President [who] comes in with his long gray hair. They didn't want to fund anything. Anytime I gave an option, they want the low option. But I remember there were things like adjustments to base. Like, the Air Force had told NOAA – the Air Force launches NOAA satellites. You probably know this. They launch their polar-orbiting satellites on the West Coast on the West Coast. The Air Force turned around and said, "We don't need this launch pad anymore for Atlas rockets" – that version of Atlas, and so NOAA has to pay another eighteen million dollars per year for the launchpad because you're the only ones using that pad, which is sort of different than [what] makes sense budget-wise. You'd think you'd want to shove it in the defense budget from a political standpoint. But good government says, "Oh, no, no, the user pays." That was one of the adjustments, the base I put in. I'll never forget David Stockman starts questioning. And you

had to do five years with the numbers. So there was the first year '85 number, and the last number would have been 1990. So David Stockman pulls out his little Texas Instrument calculator and says, "I don't see how you got to that number." I said, "Well, I did just eighteen million for the ...". He goes, "Yeah, I don't get that number." And I start sweating. I'm looking at my branch chief, thinking – who had done NOAA before – "Are you going to come to my rescue here? So it was something. The first few months were like going into the deep end of the swimming pool big time. But I became one of them, and I became a pretty good budget examiner. To this day, I recommend, if you can, to young people that you should get an assignment there. But don't stay there because you don't make friends at OMB. But you learn everything. You have to do budget formulation [and] budget execution; you have to work on legislation, you have to work on regulations, and you deal with the highest levels of the agency, whatever agency you're dealing with. It's the highest level you can be in the budget process because you're the President's budget office. What changed in the Dave Stockman years is that OMB used to be a lot of GS-15s, white guys mainly, older guys who would produce the President's budget, and then that was their job. Then, they would travel and learn their programs. But what Congress did was something different, right? That's not OMB's responsibility. Dave Stockman changed all that. He started hiring younger people. He started doing budgets 365 days a year. What Congress does is essential. He wanted to work the Hill. He wanted to get the Hill to get things the President wanted, and it changed dramatically. It was a very difficult place to work. I often say I did three budget seasons in almost three years and probably about ten work years. Because literally, we were there – it's not just me; I'm talking about the whole branch. We're there at one in the morning. We're working away. It was fascinating. You got immersed in all the basic principles of budget review, of program review, and years later, that stuff is still with me.

MG: [32:12] So when you arrived at NOAA later on, you knew how all the sausage was made.

SG: [32:19] Yeah. Well, I did their appropriations on the Hill in the Senate. Then I was the good guy, so kind of made amends for all the years I had to be the bad guy. So I was funding the fleet, the Fleet Modernization Program, even though the President didn't ask for it. NOAA didn't ask for it. I was restoring all these programs proposed for termination like Sea Grant and Coastal Zone Management.. We were trying to put the "O" back in NOAA. We were doing all sorts of things. Now, for my first five years on the Hill – hold on. 1986 through 1990. So not five. First four years on the Hill, I did Defense appropriations. So I was far removed from NOAA. I did try to help NOAA out a few times with things in DOD, Department of Defense, like requiring the Air Force to pay for NOAA launchpad costs.

MG: [33:10] And you worked with Senators who I associate as strongly partnered with NOAA. Ted Stevens and –

SG: [33:16] Fritz Hollings (D) of South Carolina. Judd Gregg (R) of New Hampshire later on. Yeah, they were all big NOAA advocates. Dan Inouye (D) of Hawaii. I had a very bipartisan career, which now seems quaint. But back then, it was a different time. I got hired by Ted Stevens (R) of Alaska, really Sean O'Keefe, the guy who became later Secretary of the Navy and head of NASA. He was the staff director, and I'd known him as a Presidential Management Intern. So, I got brought over to the Senate in early 1986. I applied. I went over. Ted Stevens

said, "If you're crazy enough to come work here knowing you could be out of a job at the end of this year – we might lose the Senate – it's good by me." And then Mark Hatfield (R) of Oregon was the full committee chairman. And after I gave notice at OMB, then I was told you need to go interview with Mark Hatfield. I said, "What do you mean I have to go interview? I already took the job, didn't I?" [laughter] So I interviewed with Mark Hatfield. He was the lead Republican, a really wonderful man. So, on March 10, 1986, I started on defense appropriations. I was given all the operating accounts. It's called operations and maintenance in the Department of Defense – stock funds. Later on, I was given military personnel. So all the things that operated the Department of Defense were mine. And that first year was when the Reagan defense build-up hit the point where Congress was no longer funding it. So, I had to cut eight billion dollars out of my – I had to come up with specific cuts to come up with eight billion dollars, which I did. They were real impressed because I was a pretty good budgeteer. But I made like three billion dollars out of oil pricing because that year, the oil prices also dropped. Some of that was harmless, right? But in any case, I was not reviewing the part of the Defense budget that all the contractors cared about. They care about the toys as we would call the weapon systems. They cared about procurement and research and development, and I was the operating side. Later on, I did research and development and some other accounts. Yes, Ted Stevens not only was the chairman of Defense Appropriations, he not only was the head of the Commerce Committee later on, he was the head of Government Affairs at that time. He had run for the majority leader just before I got there and lost to Bob Dole. But Ted Stevens, by 1985-1986, was a big-time leader on that side. At the end of that first year, which was a phenomenal experience, by the way – at the end of that first year, the Republicans did lose the Senate. There were like nine or ten seats that switched in that election. So, John Stennis (D) of Mississippi became the new Chairman of the Committee and the Chairman of Defense Appropriations Committee. And Charlie Houy got kept on, and I got kept on, and the rest of the staff – the one guy who moved to the minority – the rest of staff got let go. Because that's the way the Hill is. It's not like the executive branch, where you have career civil service. After being there for about, I guess, nine months or so, ten months, I'm now working for the Democrats. But it was the same subcommittee, the same issues. Then, two years later, Dan Inouye from Hawaii, Daniel K. Inouye, who also was a big NOAA supporter, became the new chairman of Defense Appropriations, and he also kept me on. So I worked for Dan Inouye, the sweetest, most wonderful – I mean, I like all these people. John Stennis was infirm by the time I worked for him. He was in his last two years of his forty-seven years, or whatever, on the Hill. He used to talk about the troops going to Mexico; that was 1915. It was like living history. And Ted Stevens was wonderful, very smart, also known for his temper, a lot of which was, I think, put on for people, but he was a huge NOAA person, especially in Fisheries and Oceans. In Alaska, NOAA is basically a cabinet agency, and fisheries is number two or three in their economy. So, it's huge. Later on, when I was running NOAA, I had to testify in front of Ted Stevens at Appropriations, and he stopped and said, "Now, this isn't personal," and then he went into a rant about what NOAA was doing to destroy the fishing industry. So, I worked for Dan Inouye on defense appropriations. And then, in late 1990 – I'd been about four and a half years on defense, a little less than that. I guess it was October 1990; we were getting ready to conference with the house in defense. I got a call from two people that said, "Are you interested in taking over as clerk?" for what was then called Commerce, Justice, State Appropriations, a different subcommittee. I had known NOAA was in there; Commerce was in there, State – I responded, "Yeah." I got a call that said, "Senator Fritz Hollings wants to see you," and I was actually

working on my resume to try to update – I didn't have time to, and I went over there and went into his big office down in the Russell [Senate Office] Building. I had met him. He didn't know who I was, but I had met him. I traveled with him on a CODEL [congressional delegation] to Alaska with like seven senators, but he didn't know who I was. Bob Sneed, who was a staffer for him, had known me on defense, and he recommended me. I guess Warren Kane, who was the guy who had run Commerce, Justice, State, recommended me, and some other people did. He calls me in, and he says – this is how our interview started – “Yeah, I thought you might want to run my State, Justice, Commerce.” He had the old name. “I thought you might want to come over and run State, Justice, Commerce for me.” That was the interview. That’s what I said about the Hill; there's no good government; get a good name and hire on the spot. It took ten months, I think, from the time I put in a SF-171 form. I put in two 171s at NOAA/Commerce. One was to be the CFO [chief financial officer] of NOAA, and the other one was to be the Deputy Under Secretary. It took ten months from then to when I applied until I was in place at NOAA. That gives you a difference – one day versus ten months. The executive branch is all about process, fairness, and time. Anyway, I came over to run Commerce, Justice, State for Chairman Hollings and the eleven subcommittee members, which also included twenty-four independent agencies, including the Supreme Court, the Judiciary, by the way. I immersed myself in it like I did before with NOAA, where I would just every day try to learn these agencies and programs. I came over about – I want to say about November. I came up to his office and told Senator Inouye I was leaving his Defense subcommittee. Of course, he was on Commerce, Justice, State. So was Ted Stevens. The whole time I did that job, I had two senators, besides Chairman Hollings, who looked at it as I also worked for them. A year later, Inouye said, “How do you like the new assignment?” “Very good, Senator Inouye. It’s good.” So that was my break to become – kind of the difference between being a staffer and being the lead person. I did that job for eight years. The first four were really pretty awesome because we were in the majority. This sounds really bad, but there's a lot of difference between the House and Senate, and I have given lectures about that because I worked for a year in the House, and I got a sense of it. But in the Senate, senators have a lot of responsibilities. They're on several committees. They represent a whole state. They often have other duties, whether running the Senate campaign committee or whatever. Senator Hollings, at that time, was on the Budget Committee, where he had been the chairman. He was the head Democrat on the Commerce Science Committee, which authorizes NOAA as well [as] NASA and Federal Communications Commission, Federal Trade Commission, transportation issues – all that is under his authorization hat. He had like thirty staff there or something like that. Then he was on the Intelligence Committee at that time. So, they have a lot of responsibilities, a lot of things they got to do. They don't have time to get into little issues on the budget. It’s a bit scary to say this, but I had to package together – when you get ready to do a markup, meaning to draft the bill and the report, the explanatory bill and report, you’re empowered as a senate staff director – really, the term they use is clerk, which goes back to “the clark,” the person who drafts. Nobody knows this, but you’re empowered to basically do it all. Then, Senator Hollings would give me maybe an hour, at the most, two different hours, to go through what was then a twenty-something billion dollar bill and make sure that what was in the bill was what he would want to do. So you had to have this policy DVD in your head or stick drive that said, “Here's Fritz Hollings policies and views. Here's the committee's overall in terms of process.” You’d get the stick drive that says, “Here's your other members priorities.” I guess we had eleven or twelve members on the subcommittee. You got to do all that, and you got to be politically savvy. You may think a

program is horrible, but you know that that would be really stupid to propose cutting it. Then again, it's like what I talked about before. I mean, part of what you're paid to do if you're a good staffer – if you're a *good* staffer – is to realize it's not *your* bill; *it's the people who are elected's bill*. There are a number of staff who don't understand that. So that includes programs that you might think are wasteful and useless. But he likes it, or she likes it, right? So I remember TV Marti for Cuba. One time, the House cut it out. I was in front of the senator. I was like, "I got to tell you. It's not working. It's easy to jam." Senator [Hollings said], "No, I know about – I talked to Jorge [Canosa]," who was head of the Cuban American [National Foundation]. "We're going to get [Fidel] Castro. We never turned off Radio Free Europe because it was jammed." You know what I'm saying? I used to try to do a lot – his real love was NIST [National Institute of Standards and Technology] above all else. NBS, National Bureau of Standards – he led the conversion into the National Institute of Standards and Technology. He had created several grant programs like the Advanced Technology Program and the Manufacturing Extension. That was his real love. But he also loved NOAA. But at that time, he was more focused at NIST. But we did a lot of good things. He was an amazing guy. He had grown up on Charleston Harbor, and he had a love for the ocean. His house was on Isle of Palms. This is an interesting aside. I probably should not forget to say this. It was an interesting thing I learned. The oceanic senators, like Dan Inouye, Fritz Hollings, Ted Stevens, and Judd Gregg were the people who also carried the atmospheric side of NOAA. They were the ones who really stood up for the Weather Service, for NOAA satellite programs, for climate research, and you'd get nothing from these people in the middle or the Midwest. When I was running NOAA, I remember meeting with Senator Sam [Brownback], a senator from Kansas, thinking he would care about tornado research. He didn't care a whit about it. It's really interesting. But the period of time that I did the job, the House really didn't assign a high priority on NOAA. They had the programs that they cared about parochially, but they always would come with a bill that was hundreds of millions of dollars below the Senate. We had to fight all those things to take care of NOAA to make it happen. And then, when the Republicans took over when I went to the minority in 1994, I rode downward from the majority – for the first time. I hadn't stayed [in the] majority in 1987. For the first time, I was no longer in the majority. Now I'm in the minority for the first time. The new Republican House majority went after things. That was the Gingrich revolution; they were really partisan. They proposed abolishing the NOAA Corps and fleet.

MG: [47:54] Tried to.

SG: [47:55] Well, they did it, and the House passed the bill. As far as the House was concerned – by the way, I learned when I got to NOAA, there were Clinton political people at NOAA who were behind that. I had no idea [that] while I'm out helping save the NOAA Corps that there were people at NOAA who were out there trying to do-in the NOAA Corps. But the House passed the bill that just said, "On October 1, there's no NOAA Corps." I'm sitting down with my house counterparts; I'm like, "You know you just can't do that, right? I mean, you can't tell these officers on October 1, 'You're no longer an officer; you have no pay.' If you're going to do this – which we're going to fight and stop you – but if you're going to do it, you got to do it professionally. You've got to phase the thing, legislate a transition. You got to figure it out. They have contracts with the United States Government. They've been appointed. You got to convert them over to Coast Guard officers or something. But the House Republicans were

simplistic. They were just like, “We're going to burn down the government. Don't bother us with details.”

MG: [48:54] This has been a recurring theme in the interviews I've conducted. Narrators have pointed to the 104th Congress as a real turning point for NOAA and the country and when things became divisive and tricky.

SG: [49:09] Yeah, I'm sure that – two years before that, my minority colleagues started acting kind of strange. John Shank, who worked for Senator Warren Rudman (R) of New Hampshire and for Pete Domenici (R) of New Mexico, we'd always done everything bipartisan, together. He started acting strange because, in January 1993, the Democrats were riding really high. They had fifty-nine votes in the Senate. They had the Presidency. They had the House. They had the Senate overwhelmingly. The Republicans were feeling really horrible. And so Bob Dole led the Republican fight against Clinton's first stimulus bill, which sounds quaint now – it was eighteen billion dollars – compared to what we're talking about nowadays when people were doing a trillion-dollar bill. It was over the Budget Enforcement Act limits, and Dole eventually succeeded in killing it. It was a huge rallying thing. But at the time, I remember thinking, this is really kind of weird that they're opposing – it depends where you sit how you see it. Two years later, during the Gingrich revolution, it was crazy. Phil Gramm (R) of Texas managed to push Pete Domenici out of the chairmanship of the CJS, Commerce, Justice and State subcommittee for the Republicans. For him, this was – he didn't care about NOAA, and everything was, “We're going to fund the FBI.” It was part of his presidential campaign. So, that was a very difficult – actually, in terms of my education, that was a very difficult time because, in 1995, *everything* became partisan. What had been a very bipartisan, collegial subcommittee suddenly became divisive. My job became to fight back. It was very hard for me to make the conversion. Most of it was way outside of NOAA. There was some NOAA. They had things like they were abolishing the Legal Services Corporation to do legal aid to the poor. I mean, they were doing a lot of very – Cops on the Beat was zeroed out because that was Clinton's program. Drug Courts were zeroed out. Justice Department, Violence Against Women programs [and] Advanced Technology Program at NIST were zeroed out. It was all very in-your-face kind of stuff. I suppose, from my perspective, that's right, what you said. I'll tell you another thing that changed in the Appropriations Committee. The leadership on the Republican side was getting involved in very minute issues in the Commerce, Justice, State bill. Like, “Here's the number you can do for Cops on the Beat,” which was zero. But we went to negotiate – Bob Dole and the Republican leadership – there were a lot of reasons for this, and I won't bore you with it, but they were going into minute programs in NOAA or in the Commerce Department or in whatever – Justice Department – and saying, “Here's what the number is.” Senate leadership had never played such a role before. That period of time resulted in a government shutdown in December and then a long shutdown for two months, or whatever it was, at the beginning of the year. Maybe a month, I guess, at the beginning of the year. It resulted in a government shutdown if you recall it, and that actually helped Clinton because he looked like normalcy, and the new majority looked like radicalism at the time. But Clinton started doing a new emergency program. So anytime a program lacking any appropriations would stop – like the State Department stopped doing passports, then the Clinton Administration said, “Oh, that's essential. That'll continue.” We won a lot of those issues. And then the Republicans realized that they had really screwed up because Clinton had won the public debate; people viewed them as being extreme and Clinton being

more normal. It kind of resurrected his presidency. It didn't help all the people who lost in November 1994 who had supported him – all the Democrats who had lost who had supported him, especially in the House, actually. By 1996, the Republicans were desperate to just concede and get out of there – recess – because they thought they were going to lose the election. So, I was in all those negotiations between the White House and the Congressional leadership. Then Chairman Robert Byrd (D) went home, so I was supposed to be speaking for the Senate Democrats in Commerce, Justice, Science because Fritz Hollings wasn't there, either. It was really quite fascinating, but it was a bad process and Clinton on almost every issue/program. In 1997, Ted Stevens took over the Appropriations Committee for the Republicans. There was more bipartisanship that came back, even though he could be partisan, too – he'd have to for the leadership. But things got better. Chairman Hatfield would have done that. But he was marginalized because he was against the Balanced Budget Amendment and line-item veto, things like that. So, I was in the minority. Being in the minority is not a whole lot of fun. I could make some analogies for that. By 1997, I started thinking maybe I should move on because this isn't what it used to be. I had a NOAA detailee named Karen Swanson-Wolfe who said, “Hey, there are these positions at NOAA. You'd be great. You should apply for them. I initially said, “Nah.” Because, remember, I had been a GS-14 when I left OMB, and now it was twelve years later. So, I went ahead and applied. I thought it was ridiculous the amount of paperwork you have to do for an SES [Senior Executive Service] job, but I applied for these two SES jobs. It took a long time but I ended up getting the more senior position. I ended up becoming the Deputy Undersecretary, which had been made into a career job. It was a general SES position. Diana Josephson had it. She was political. Bill Daley wanted to reduce the number of political appointees, so the position came open, and I got it.

MG: [56:06] Before I asked you more about that, in the OMB position, were you overseeing the National Weather Service's Modernization and Associated Restructuring [MAR]? I think that's where your name has come up in other interviews.

SG: [56:21] Oh, yeah. Yes. Not exactly, but before I came on the scene, there was a study to modernize the Weather Service and to change the weather office structure they had, which were big weather offices and state offices, and smaller offices called WSOs and to coalesce those down into weather forecast offices, about hundred-something through the country, and that included modernizing the radars at the same time, including all the technology – AWIPS [Advanced Weather Interactive Processing System], which was the information and data integration system. That had all come along by the time I arrived. I inherited a policy that said, “We'll fund radars for the areas of highest” – don't laugh, but I inherited a policy that said, “We'll go ahead and fund what ultimately became NEXRAD [Next Generation Weather Radar] for the areas of severe weather, but we're not going to do them nationwide.” As a young examiner, I tried to take on the issue with questions about why we needed this, why we needed that. The joint office was, in my view, quite arrogant, like, “Just shut up and fund our program.” I could talk at length about that if you want, but I got burned pretty bad by all that.

MG: [57:33] How?

SG: [57:55] Well, they wouldn't really answer any of the questions that I had. They would come up with answers that were really – I learned later on – kind of half-truths.

MG: [58:07] Who would come up with answers? The Weather Service?

SG: [58:07] Well, yeah, in part, but the joint program office. NEXRAD was a program of NOAA/Commerce, FAA [Federal Aviation Administration]/transportation, and the Air Force/DOD. So it was like sixty percent NOAA – this is the funding profile – sixty percent NOAA, twenty-twenty, or something like that. So, I'd ask the question, “Why can't these ...?” I started learning there were commercial Doppler radars already out in existence, which they had downplayed. So I'd ask the question, “Why can't these commercial Dopplers do what we're talking about?” And they'd say something like, “Well, they're five-centimeter radars,” meaning the radar band length, “and NEXRAD has to be ten centimeters,” which is a different wavelength of radar – has more distance, you can punch out further. Well, it turns out that ten centimeters – I learned later on – was reserved for the government. So it's very obvious why there were no ten-centimeter radars commercially available because that spectrum was reserved for the government spectrum. So you could build one at ten centimeters, but you could not turn it on. But they didn't say any of that. They just used it as a reason why commercially available doppler didn't meet the specifications. I got in a bit of trouble because there was one political appointee at NOAA who really wasn't in sync with the other politicals from Mississippi. He came by, and they were telling me, “No, no, there's all these commercial radars.” So, I went down to visit a manufacturer of Doppler radar – not on my own, but as an OMB examiner. I went down there and set an appointment to go to – I think it was called Enterprise Radars. I spent a day with this guy, who was the head of the company, to try to learn about their radars, and he was the one who was telling me stuff like, “Well, the reason why we don't build that is the following.” So I started learning that there was a whole lot of misinformation here that really wasn't fair. Then he said, “Well, don't take it from me. The Weather Service has one of *our* radars in Montgomery operating now.” I was like, “What?” [laughter] He said, “I'll show it to you.” He called the chief meteorologist. I drive up to Montgomery, and there's this Doppler radar that's running in the Montgomery Weather Forecast Office and doing forecasting from this little company, which nobody had ever mentioned. Nobody at NOAA had ever told me this. I had a fascinating little trip. I came back. Well, the Weather Service meteorologist-in-charge in Montgomery had called up to the southern region or to headquarters and said, “Who's this guy?” So I created this calamity of pissed-off people at NOAA and the Commerce Department – “How dare you visit a weather office without our clearance?” I hadn't really even thought about it. John Carey, the guy told you about, said, “I'm very disappointed in you.” I said, “Well, okay, I'm sorry about that.” But there's a whole lot of stuff here that you guys haven't – either you don't know, or you haven't admitted to. I don't see why we should ...”. So, what I wanted to do – this is naïve now in hindsight. I wanted them to do a field test to show what a commercial Doppler radar could do a NEXRAD prototype. It was a little stupid because what they were doing wasn't developed yet, but I didn't think about that at the time. They just kind of blew me off.

Then, there was a plane crash the following year. That was all 1984, maybe 1985. There was an airliner crash in Dallas. It might have been an L-1011, a Lockheed plane. Somebody, probably with the National Weather Service Southern Region, told the press that “we had a radar that could have stopped this, but OMB cut the money.” At OMB, as an examiner, you're supposed to do your work but not be seen and not be heard. In this case, the OMB Head of Public Affairs called, “I need you to talk to the press.” Usually, it's like, “Just give us the info. We talk to the

press.” So, I’m like, “Oh, shit. They want me. Me, literally, to represent the administration?” So I’m on the phone with these reporters and starting to sweat. But when I heard what they said, I said, “That’s not true. It’s just not true.” It’s possible NEXRAD may have been able someday to do a better job of getting wind shear or whatever, but it probably would need to be a separate FAA program called Terminal Doppler Radar, which is different – but it didn’t matter. It was out there. So, they won. The right thing happened, and years later, I visited some of the NEXRAD competing contractors – I went with NOAA Weather Service – I think Joe Friday, the head of the Weather Service, to visit – I think it was Unisys, maybe. Unisys was one of them. I’m trying to remember who the other – I think the other was Raytheon. Anyways, they were the two contractors that the joint office had funded to come up with NEXRAD proposals. Years later, I pushed for investments in NEXRAD to do more tornado detection. But what’s amazing to me – so yeah, that may have been what you heard about it. Yeah, I wasn’t the good guy on that. But my job was – I was inheriting a policy that said we’re not going to fund what they want to fund. That was in President Reagan’s budget estimates.

MG: [1:04:16] If it makes you feel better, that’s not the story I’ve heard. I’ve heard that it was your visits and other people on Capitol Hill visiting sites and getting to understand the technology that helped make the case for these new advancements.

SG: [1:04:33] Well, later on, we did things like trying to make it more sensitive, so you could detect precipitation better and things like that. But what amazes me is – I’m talking about a period of time that was – let’s see, that would have been 1990 – thirty-five years ago. The NEXRAD is called an 88-D radar. So, that’s the year that it was – ’88. Later on, I was pushing for things like the phased array radar. The bottom line is the Navy had radars that don’t have to do this kind of scan and search. It’s in the Aegis System, which I worked on at Lockheed Martin. Thirty-five years later, we don’t have a new radar program on the books to replace the current radar. But they’ve done upgrades to the software; they’ve done upgrades to the detection, the sensitivity, but it is kind of interesting. Our country’s priorities always surprise me, given the number of lives and property impacted by severe weather every year.

MG: [1:05:53] I just want to check in and see how you’re doing on time and if you want to keep going.

SG: [1:05:57] Yeah, let’s keep going if it’s okay with you. I don’t know if this is more detailed than you want.

MG: [1:06:04] It’s perfect. You’re making my job very easy.

SG: [1:06:07] I’m remembering things as we’re talking.

MG: [1:06:12] At this point, was it typical to hire a Deputy Under Secretary of NOAA who was external to the agency?

SG: [1:06:21] No. The Deputy Under Secretary – and I knew this going in. The Deputy Under Secretary was sort of like the chief operating officer for the agency. It was the third-ranking

person. It also was the ejection seat person. Back in the Bush administration, the Deputy Under Secretary was blamed for GOES delay, the geostationary [operational environmental] satellite, which I worked a lot on, on the Hill, to try to fix. NOAA has the geostationary [satellite], which is the imagery that you see on television. The bottom line was that they had one that died too early. They had only a two-satellite procurement that went forward during the Reagan administration before I came on board. And that was for NOAA GOES Satellites G and H. NOAA uses letters when they're on the ground and numbers in orbit "just to protect the innocent," so nobody knows which ones which. So, G and H. They only bought two. In 1986, not long after the shuttle blew up, NOAA's launch, with a Delta launch vehicle, which had had like ninety-nine launches in a row, blew up and failed to reach orbit. I guess it's NOAA-G. NOAA was down to one satellite "in the barn," ready to go. As you know, they fly two on orbit, one West, one East, and the program to replace it came out – in 1991, we learned it had all sorts of problems. Loral had just bought Ford Aerospace and then found out that – and it was really ITT, which had the main instrument at that time that it wasn't able to produce. In the Senate, we stepped in to try to do a lot of things to stabilize the program. And through some smart gimmickry on our part, we were able to put in 100 million dollars for a GOES contingency program. The House agreed in conference. I can explain that if you want to know why it was gimmickry, but it worked. CBO [Congressional Budget Office] and OMB agreed to it. We got the House to agree to it. But it was almost like the story of Hanukkah because NOAA should have been without any geostationary satellites. And these satellites were supposed to last – I think it was a three-year design life back then for the Hughes Aircraft "spinner" class of satellites, the G-H. And this one satellite, GOES-H, lasted way beyond its life, so no one in the US, Canada, or Latin America ever went without any geostationary coverage. It was like the Maccabees' menorah that burned for eight days or so. It was really pretty remarkable. But Loral bought the program, and we had a special hearing on the Hill in the Senate of our committee and Senator Hollings' Commerce, Science, Transportation, too. So, Senator Hollings had a joint committee hearing of his appropriations committee and his authorization committee. We had the head of NASA. We had the head of the GOES satellite program. We had the head of NOAA, which I guess was John Knauss back then. That was a very dissatisfying hearing because nobody in government was stepping up to the problem or what it would take to fix the issue. Everyone was pointing fingers. And they were like, "Well, we don't know. We're going to work on it." We had the second panel that was the private sector panel, Bernie Schwartz, who was the head of Loral, committed to the committee [that] he was going to fix this and get the satellite launched. He had bought Ford Aerospace. He had bought the program, and he was going to fix it. But we did things like we were trying to get the Europeans to move one over to the west. We were doing all sorts of stuff to try to take care of the gap. That's what the money was for that we put forward. And we did. We got it appropriated. NOAA got an extra hundred million, which back then was a lot of money. How did I get off on that?

MG: [1:10:50] I'm not sure. This was before you were Deputy Under Secretary.

SG: [1:10:55] Oh, yeah. That's why you asked me the question. I forgot the name of the person. But one of the deputy undersecretaries lost their job because of GOES, because of the delay. Ray Kammer got appointed to be the acting. I don't know if you know Ray. He came out of the budget process like I did and later became the head of NIST. But at that time, Ray was the Deputy Under Secretary, and he did a great job basically stabilizing NOAA. Then, when the

Clinton administration came in, in '93 – so everything I just talked about was '91/'92. When the Clinton administration came in, in '93, they appointed Diana Josephson as a political appointee. I want to say the guy's name was Greg Castle or something like that – the one before Diana. It's in the back of my mind. That's why I said it's an ejection seat because when system development went wrong, that person got the blame. So Diana came in; she was the third-ranking, but for the first part of the Clinton administration, she was the only political beofre Jim Baker got confirmed. She was a great person.

MG: [1:12:18] Yes, she seems interesting. She went from the ACLU [American Civil Liberties Union] to NOAA.

SG: [1:12:24] I didn't know she was at [the ACLU]. She was at Space America. There was a SpaceX predecessor thirty years ago – this idea of commercial space isn't taht new. She was one of the executives of it, along with some former astronauts like Deke Slayton. Anyways, Diana held it down. Later on, AWIPS went bad. AWIPS was having lots of issues around 1996-1997. Bill Daley, the Secretary, was kind of a tough guy. He was somebody who would hit the ejection seat [and] say, "Fire them." That's sort of what would happen. When he took over after Mickey Kantor was Secretary following Ron Brown's death in 1996, he decided there were way too many political appointees at Commerce. So he said, "We're going to reduce them by a hundred," some huge number. Diana ended up being the person who got the NOAA ejection seat. So, Diana got kicked out, which was really unfair, in my view. But anyway, then a guy was acting, Bill-somebody for about a year, who was a career guy. From the Hill, I had pushed to create a systems development office at NOAA. It came out of a study that General [Lawrence A.] Skantze at the Air Force had done of NOAA that said the problem is that NOAA doesn't have a professional acquisition group, and it needs to have that. So he recommended they create a system development office – SPO, system project office. The reason why things like GOES – that you had advocates like the head of NESDIS [National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service] who weren't necessarily acquisition people. If you look at the DOD model, you always have an acquisition entity, right? I'm not saying DOD does a great job, but they certainly go through the process, and they certainly know what's going on, even if they screw up. Whereas NOAA never knows if the acquisitions are not on schedule until they are not. So, with satellites, NOAA transfers the money to NASA to be their acquisition agent, and then they just rely on NASA. I always had a problem with all this. So we were pushing for [the] creation of a SPO, and this guy, whose name I'm forgetting, was the head of the SPO, and then he came over as the Acting Deputy Under Secretary. He was there when I got there. I replaced him, so to speak. I went back into the Executive Branch as a career person. I had been a career person for eight years before I went to the Hill. But there are a lot of people who looked at me saying, "Well, you worked on the Hill; you're a political." To be honest, I was in this very strange role at NOAA where I was in a gray area between the politicals and the career staff because while I was back in the career civil service and I had been in the federal government by that point for twenty years, I guess – is that right? Yeah, I'd been in the federal service for twenty years, starting as a Presidential Management Intern. Anyway, I thought of myself as a career person. But having said that, based on the fact that I had spent so much time on the Hill, I was a lot more politically savvy than the "politicals." So the Secretary and the Deputy Secretary liked me. I mean, the Deputy Secretary really liked me [and] thought I knew stuff. I was in a weird sort of position. Long before I became acting head of NOAA, Dr. Baker, the head of NOAA, or Terry

Garcia were often outside Washington, DC, traveling on Monday morning. I was often the agency head at the Secretary's Monday morning meetings. So, there'd be the head of ITA [International Trade Administration], Census, NIST, and MBDA [Minority Business Development Agency], and then there was me. It was kind of a weird thing. So, I was career. They made it back – what Bill Daley did was when he cut all those politicals [was] they took the Deputy Under Secretary position and made it into a career position. It was a general SES. This is getting into the weeds. But a general SES can go either way, career or political.

MG: [1:18:18] Yes.

SG: [1:18:20] I'm trying not to get too much in the weeds.

MG: [1:18:23] Tell me how you were received and what those first few months on the job were like.

SG: [1:18:31] Wow. It was very exciting. It was different. Everything was different. The Hill and the Executive Branch are really different. I learned that when the Department of Commerce decided to move some of our people like my Head of Human Resources, Stu Remer [who] I totally depended on, and I was fighting to keep him there. The political appointees were like, "What are you doing?" I remember the number two at NOAA was saying, "What are you doing? The Secretary wants to move these people." I'm like, "On the Hill, you would really go to bat for your people. They don't want to leave NOAA."

MG: [1:19:15] He would have been a good ambassador for the work you were embarking on, sharing the who, what, where, and why of the agency.

SG: [1:19:23] Terry?

MG: [1:19:25] No, Stu.

SG: [1:29:25] Stu Remer, our head of HR, was phenomenal and a "mensch," a decent human being. In fact, Stu and I did a trip – he wanted to travel with me. I did a trip to Seattle. I visited all the labs before I chaired the Diversity Council. I was told, "You're the chair of the Diversity Council." They were meeting in Seattle, so I did a day or two days of meetings with labs. Stu was blown away and said, "Do most Hill staff know all this program detail?" Everybody – I learned – at NOAA think Hill staffers are stupid and political. They were really shocked that I knew the programs. It's like, "Really? You're not supposed to know programs. You're supposed to just be a staffer." It was really interesting. I was really quite hit by – NOAA had depended on the Hill to save it for years. We used to have a saying at OMB that people at NOAA could not drive home without stopping at the Hill because it was pretty obvious they were running rings around the administration. And that was true. I mean, they really were upping the push for Congress to restore funding. Everybody was freelancing. It's probably still true. They were great on the Hill. But what I was shocked to find was that there was generally a very negative view of the Hill and especially of staffers. There was also a view that they don't really know much except in some cases. I was pretty surprised by all that.

Anyway, to answer your question, it was great. A lot of what you're doing in a new job is learning all the informal stuff about who's on first, who's on second, who you can't trust. One of the things that hit me that I remember – this wasn't just in the very first part; it was over time, but I always just assumed all the political appointees were on the same team. I remember during the Clinton administration, boy, that wasn't my experience. I came to realize that's not true at all. These people are throwing banana peels under each other. It was wild. It was really wild. You traveled more. I liked getting out of Washington. I liked seeing stuff in the field. You start doing the drive to Silver Spring every two days or so. You got staff meetings. I remember this: the weirdest thing was on week number two – it might have even been number one, but I think it's my second week – I was asked to go to some meeting on the Hill with several federal agencies in Senator Lott's office, Trent Lott (R), who had been the majority leader or probably was the majority leader. I think Terry Garcia, NOAA Assistant Secretary, asked me to go. I go to this meeting. And there's NSF [National Science Foundation], and there's this admiral from the Navy, and I probably shouldn't put it on the record because what I'm going to say is not the best.

[Recording paused.]

MG: [1:22:36] Off the record, you mentioned Bob Winokur. I was wondering if you could talk about your colleagues and the other directors of the line offices. This was a real dream team. You had Nancy Foster, Admiral William Stubblefield, Rollie Schmitten, and others.

SG: [1:22:51] Yeah, I loved those people. I loved Nancy. When she died, I was really involved in trying to name stuff and get a scholarship in her honor. She was very wonderful. She had all the professional creds, but never lost her kindness. They were all really solid, most of them anyway. The line offices really – the whole issue with me in my tenure at NOAA, and I think in that interview I gave you, some of that was already in there, what I knew from my experience, both at OMB and on the Hill doing their appropriations for eight years, is NOAA could always be so much more than the parts of NOAA. Part of it was getting people to realize they work for NOAA and to market and support NOAA rather than just their little stovepipes. The Weather Service is the most difficult. They never wanted to – I remember being out at a Coastal Day in Delaware. The Weather Service had a booth, and NOAA had a booth. The guy from the Weather Service came over to me and said, "This is really great. We wouldn't mind working with NOAA," as though he didn't know he was part of NOAA. He didn't. I always was trying to get One-NOAA to get people to support the agency. I was big on having lapel pins that said "NOAA" and do things for morale across [the agency.] But the real leadership at NOAA, the real things that happened, are done by the line offices. I knew that going in. Bob Winokur was great, and Greg Withee, his deputy, was great and later on, became the head of NESDIS. The head of the Weather Service was Jack Kelly. Jack was a very strong personality, but he had a really good sense of management, of leadership, of the "this is where we need to go" kind of thing. Research was in a lot of turmoil. I'm trying to remember who the people were. Joe Friday had been – there was a revolt in the Weather Service back in 1997 – you probably know this already – where five people from the Weather Service went up to the Hill to testify against the Weather Service President's budget. That was under Joe Friday's leadership. It wasn't his doing, but he couldn't stop it. I don't know that he could have. I think Secretary Bill Daley wanted a change at the Weather Service. So he brought over General Jack Kelly. Joe was moved over to

Research. And then, when I got there, I think Joe left, retired. So there was a churn going on about who was running Research at that time. NOS [National Ocean Service], as you said, was Nancy Foster, who was just – I just had a real warm spot in my heart for Nancy. And Fisheries was Rollie, who had been a state director of fisheries in Washington State. And then later on, after he left the directorship, he became the head of International Affairs, Deputy Associate Director of International Affairs. It was a very strong team. The issue was always trying to get them to work together. That was something I worked on the whole time I was at NOAA. At the end of the Clinton Administration, so this would have been 2000 when it was clear I was going to be the acting head of NOAA for some period of time, whether it was a week or ten weeks or ten months, I did a facilitated meeting of the leadership of Fisheries and NOS because [what] I saw as one of the biggest problems was the competition and bad feelings between the two line offices. The animosity was spilling into public view. In Fisheries' opinion, NOS was going into their turf and making decisions that were counter to what should be under the Magnuson Stevens Act. I won't go into all that. I brought them together, and I said, "Look, we can't afford this." For a while, it was like the era of good feelings, except the then-head of the Fisheries Service refused to come to the facilitated session. Her answer to me was, "Just tell them to stop getting into our business." There's also other competition between the various parts of NOAA. What I found over time at NOAA was the deputy line office directors, the deputy assistant administrators – is that the right term? Now I'm forgetting. The deputy assistant administrators – the deputies were the ones who were generally the most NOAA-oriented. It was easier to get them to see the need to have the agency work together than it was often the line office AAs. Often, the heads of the line offices were into this sort of turf thing and competition with the other lines.

MG: [1:28:37] In that article you shared with me, you outline your priorities. You were new on the job, and you talked about what was important to get done. Can you remember what that was and how successful you were in those areas?

SG: [1:28:51] I didn't keep that in front of me, but I skimmed it when I sent it to you. I just remembered it. It was after I was there for a few months. Part of it was when you apply to the SES, they're trying to get into how you look at things. So some of that had been baked into my head about I got to have a message. What was interesting, when I look back on it, was how consistent that was to what I tried to do in the agency. I am very focused on the people of the agency. My focus on funding adjustments to base, which then fund things like pay raises and inflation – I had the view that everybody was focused on selling some program, but if we didn't do those things, it would hollow out the agency, and you'd be fooling yourself because the money you put in for programs would end up paying for these must-pay bills. Unless you're going to lay off a lot of people, you're going to have to finance pay raises and cost of living adjustments.

Infrastructure continued to be a big issue. I was able to help in a few of those areas. We had a problem with Suitland while I was there with friable asbestos being found while installing satellite equipment, and we ended up getting two new buildings for NOAA. One was in Suitland for satellites, and one – because of Lou Uccellini's passion and the assistance of Dr. Margaret Palmer – ended up being University of Maryland.

MG: [1:30:26] Is this the World Weather Building story?

SG: [1:30:31] Yeah. I was doing a town hall out in Suitland. This goes back to what I was telling you before. One of the staff raised their hand and said, “Why does Congress keep doing all this pork?” I said, “Well, we got money added to the appropriations bill to start planning for our building.” I think it was the satellite building I was talking about, and I said, “Senator [Barbara Ann] Mikulski came forward and did that five million dollar addition. You guys all think that that was really important, don’t you? Getting out of asbestos? Well, it turns out that sometimes pork is in the eyes of the beholder. You think that's pretty good.” So yeah, we worked the Hill. I was always – that was my orientation. We worked the Hill. OMB wasn't going to add it for us. So yeah, we got our people out of there. The University of Maryland component was – Lou Uccellini’s view – Lou Uccellini was the head of NCEP [National Centers for Environmental Prediction] at that time. This is long before he became head of the Weather Service. He came forward and said he'd rather stay right where he is. The whole idea of having another building in Suitland was unacceptable to him. We started looking for other locations. Actually, I knew somebody who was at the University of Maryland, and she connected us with the key university leaders. We went out and had a meeting. I brought Bob Winokur with me, and Bob was real big on this. He was big on the idea and Lou Uccellini. We started working on this idea with the University of Maryland – what if NOAA were to locate NCEP and some of the weather research people up at the university? And they liked it. It tends to be a synergy wherever NOAA has a facility with an educational component. That eventually happened. It finally happened long after I left NOAA. Actually, the person I talked to at Maryland was Dr. Margaret Palmer, who never got credit for any of this. She was the inside person; we got the ball rolling.

MG: [1:32:52] I thought you played a role in – there was going to be a second building in Suitland. You said, “We need to put this issue back on the table,” and then that's when it ultimately went to the University of Maryland.

SG: [1:33:06] Yeah, the original effort was to get a building at Suitland to replace the building. The buildings in [Suitland] – I don't know what it looks like nowadays. But back then, you had these buildings that looked like the Navy Annex Marine Corps building used to look next to the Pentagon. They were World War II era. And after they found – they were drilling holes for these cables for satellite computers and systems when they realized there was asbestos. So, as part of that, GSA [General Services Administration] – I mean, if you would have gone there, you would have seen these foil-covered ductwork going outside the windows. It was horrible. It was part of why we were able to get a solution because it was pretty obvious it was bad. But it was Lou Uccellini who came forward. He just protested. He said, “We got to move.” They would have been happy to move to Boulder, Colorado. But as I told them, in those days, it was just as likely that US Senators would have moved them to Mississippi or Alabama. That’s kind of how the thing – the University of Maryland component wasn't original on my part. I said we need to look at the metro area and likely Maryland. I think Bob had something to do with that. I think maybe Lou did. I'm a little hazy on all of it, but I do remember Margaret Palmer was the person I talked to who then talked to some other people who got us set up to go over there.

MG: [1:34:29] I will share Dr. Uccellini’s oral history, where he talks about this in more detail.

SG: [1:34:37] Well, it all ended up great. We're no longer in asbestos buildings. NOAA has a nice satellite facility that's a NOAA satellite facility. There was a proposal long before I came. Maybe somebody mentioned this. There was a proposal before I came to NOAA to relocate NOAA satellites to Goddard with NASA. By the time I came, the rollout of that got blown up, and it got in *The Washington Post*. People on the House Republican side were incensed. But by the time I got to NOAA, the view was that NASA is taking over too many things that are NOAA's responsibility, and maybe it would not be such a good idea to relocate to NASA. Personally, I think that's right. I always felt that NOAA was too reliant on NASA in its satellite programs to the detriment of the program sometimes because NASA is interested in doing R&D [research and development] and trying some new sensor, whereas NOAA has got an operational mission. When I went to work for aerospace contractors later on, I found out that I was absolutely right. I had people complaining to me that NASA was requiring changes in satellites that were costing NOAA a lot of money that was unnecessary. But NOAA was happy to pay for it. So lots of money was added to the satellite budget, which was always really high, that wasn't necessary. That's worth a whole different tape, but it's an interesting issue. When I was at NOAA, I asked the satellite service to look at what it would cost for us just to hire Aerospace Corporation or someone else to do what NASA does for us. There were also issues of NASA taking credit for NOAA programs, showing GOES imagery, and putting NASA's logo on it. NASA has gotten into – I just saw the other night – they're really into doing climate stuff, forecasts, and acting like it's just them. They never mention NOAA. But on the other hand, I always use NASA as – what's it called? “The Benchmark” is that term people used to use back then because NASA is really good at marketing. They were good at marketing to kids. They were good at marketing their products. They were good at One NASA. You don't tend to see the divisions of NASA marketing themselves, like NOAA line offices do occasionally. So I used to use NASA as a benchmark, saying we need to be more like them.

MG: [1:37:18] And they're good at getting funded.

SG: [1:37:20] Yeah, they don't think so. But yeah, comparatively, they're *a lot* bigger than NOAA. I know a lot about NASA now that I worked in the aerospace industry. Anyway, sorry, I diverted. So yes, we did that and facilities. I'm trying to remember what other facilities we did. We got people back into Building One up in Silver Spring, which is where – I wanted to buy the property next to Building Four. Of course, the problem is NOAA can't do all this on their own because GSA has the lead, but there was a vacant lot next door, Building Four, next to the wave pool. I was like, “We should get that,” but it became a condo or apartment building. Yes, I was very much into – I could tell you all sorts of other facility and infrastructure stories. I was really big on computer modernization. I was really big on the fleet. I had already done – I already worked on that on the Hill. But I was big on basically the tools to do our job that allows us – NOAA. Sorry, not us, but NOAA – to continue to do its mission in the future. I was really passionate about that. And investing in our people, investing in our facilities, in our research technologies. But yeah, I was big on all that.

MG: [1:38:44] In that article we're talking about, you said that NOAA had the best logo.

SG: [1:38:53] I think it does. Actually, there's now a private sector company that tries to use the same colors. They just don't have the seagull in between. Yeah, actually, we had a competition – I'm trying to remember this now. We had a competition in the employees – we had a competition for the thirtieth. I was really big on the thirtieth anniversary of NOAA, which now seems very ancient. Jamie Hawkins, who just passed away actually – he worked in several line offices. He won. It was "Our Seas, Our Skies: Thirty years of NOAA" that won. Then, we had another one, which I really like. I think it has survived, which wasn't Jamie; it came up another way. It might have been through our diversity council, but it was "Science, Service, Stewardship" because it kind of encapsulates everything that NOAA does without saying the line office names. We used to have that on a lot of pins. I have NOAA logos with that underneath it. I was really big on how you change – NOAA came about in 1970 by adding some building pieces that already existed. Some of them were in ESSA [Environmental Science Services Administration]. Some of them came from outside, like Fisheries. NASA, except, I think, for aeronautics, didn't have that problem. But how do you create a sense of identity of the whole is bigger than the pieces when human nature is to identify at the lowest tribal or clan unit? I was always fascinated by that. I was also fascinated [by] how companies do it. I was always – that was a little bit in that article. Starting on the Hill, I would visit TRW and meet with the CEO and talk about things like that – about how you motivate employees and how you get people to think of the company overall. That's a whole other set of interviews. But I was always focused on that. How do you get people to see – meaning employees at NOAA – how do you get them to see a payoff by supporting the whole agency? It was always tough, but Rollie helped on that. He started having people say "NOAA Fisheries" instead of "NMFS" [National Marine Fisheries Service]." Now a lot of people still say NMFS. But a lot of people say, "NOAA Fisheries." Weather Service? No. They didn't want to say "NOAA Weather." They don't want to say "National Weather [Service]" – at least when I was there. They want their own logo. Twenty years later, maybe it's better. But NOAA Research? I think Dave Evans helped on that, having people at OAR [Oceanic and Atmospheric Research], which is not a really great name, saying, "NOAA Research." We had some successes.

MG: [1:42:16] We're now calling ourselves NOAA Voices.

SG: [1:42:24] Did you have John Oliver on your list to talk to?

MG: [1:42:28] I think he might be on a future list. Yes.

SG: [1:44:33] He'd be good. He'd be good because he's done a lot of pieces. He worked in NOS, and he worked in Fisheries, and he worked in NOAA budget.

MG: [1:42:41] Cheryl Oliver helped spearhead this NOAA Heritage oral history collection.

SG: [1:42:44] Yeah. They live in North Carolina now if you need their address. You probably have it.

MG: [1:42:48] I know she's a big fan of this work.

SG: [1:42:54] She did the fiftieth [anniversary], too. I think that the interesting thing was when I skimmed that article I sent you that a lot of that stuff – I was there almost five years. But five years later, I probably would have said the same thing if I were thinking logically about it. I mean, Lori Arguelles was very nice about that. She wanted to do an article. I was already there about five months at that point. I had a chance to think about the answers ahead of time.

MG: [1:43:26] In researching for this interview, it was clear that you were in the field quite a bit. There are so many pictures of you rescuing pelicans and participating in cleanups.

SG: [1:43:42] Yeah, I used to be big on getting out there with constituents and NOAA employees. Bring a kid to [work] day. I was really big on education/outreach. I know some people, like one AA, thought that was wrong that I was that focused on it. But I thought it was really good for morale. Employees really liked that. We had an annual “Bring Your Kid to Work Day” in the auditorium in Silver Spring. People really liked that. It helps motivate people to come to work. We did the thirtieth anniversary, and I had this idea that we were going to give a plaque to every employee who had been at NOAA for thirty years, the full thirty years. I thought there were maybe eighty people; there were like eight hundred. I said I would go to any facility and present it there if there were at least ten employees, and it turned out there were a lot of places where we had multiple employees. Those were rewarding visits.

MG: [1:44:57] One of the goals you mention in the article was to introduce youth to careers in ocean sciences.

SG: [1:45:06] We did some scholarship programs. We did some after I left NOAA – the Hollings Scholarships. It recognized Senator Hollings. That program is going along well. The Minority Serving Institution program. Robert Mallet, the deputy secretary, was really big on the whole issue of saying, “You don't have enough people of color in the sciences.” We did it in a positive way, I think. We created these Centers of Excellence, and they still exist. There was an effort at one point to get rid of it, but the program has succeeded. Actually, it was harder to sell on the Hill than I thought it would be. I remember that. The interesting thing about that – Robert, the Deputy Secretary – Robert Mallet – put money in like three bureaus' budgets – Commerce calls us bureaus. NOAA is a bureau to them – Census, I think NIST and NOAA. We were the only ones that made that happen. We got the appropriations committee to give us fifteen million dollars. The others didn't want it. They didn't fight for it. Actually, now, the program has been around for probably twenty years. My guess is there's people working at NOAA that came out of that program with PhDs. Same thing with women. The Nancy Foster Program, we got a little – I mean, OMB tried to stop it. In fact, I remember that one of the more difficult things ever was a hearing on the Hill about the Nancy Foster Scholarship, which was our baby put together, and OMB was saying I have to go up there and testify against it. I have to testify against something that I was pushing and helped create behind the scenes.

MG: [1:47:12] I know we've been jumping around, but I want to focus on the years 2000 and 2001, around when you took over as Acting Administrator. We've been talking for two hours. So I don't know if this is a good time to take a break or if you want to keep going.

SG: [1:47:29] I can keep going. I probably have to leave in about an hour because I'm going to take my mother to – my mother's ninety-four. I think I probably told you that. So, yeah, we can keep going. Relative to being acting, people told me when I got hired that, at some point, I was going to be running the agency. I didn't really focus on that very much until during the year 2000. And then I realized, “Holy shit, they're right.” Even if Gore wins, he may – administrations make a lot more changes when they're the same party than people realize. And I started to realize that. So I started thinking more that way. You should put this off the record right now if you can. [Recording paused.] So, you start to realize that, but as I got closer, I also realized if Gore doesn't win, then people may just look at me as a Democrat and send me out to the provinces. I started thinking about that – maybe I can become the head of recreational fisheries in the Fisheries Service. They don't care about recreational fisheries, and maybe nobody will care I'm out there. I care about recreational fishing. As it got down to the wire, I guess I remember more focus on all that. I went on vacation with my wife down in the Keys – Big Pine Key – and I fished for about four or five days. Senator [John] Breaux was trying to get a hold of me on something. When I came back from that, I was very focused because the election happened. If you recall, there were the hanging chads. It wasn't until – was it December? – the Supreme Court – I don't remember the exact date they finally made their decision, but Robert Mallet called me in. Again, the Secretary's office liked dealing with me. I'm not sure if that caused problems at NOAA or whatever. But then it was Norm Mineta and Robert Mallet. They called me in, and they gave me the letters that I was supposed to deliver to the political appointees. I just brought them down to Dr. Baker's office, and they said, “Basically, you are to resign by the following date.” So at that point, I really knew I was it, but I didn't know if I was going to get the same treatment; I just knew it wouldn't be on day one. I kept thinking about what would I – I never knew if I was going to have a week, a month, two months, three months. I never knew how long I would be in that role. I just knew on day one, on January 20th at noon, I was in that role because there was a letter from the Secretary that specifically appointed me. So, Don Evans, the new Secretary – it started out it – the whole transition was sort of incremental because the Secretary and the General Counsel, Ted Kassinger, showed up as the only political appointees on day one. So, Secretary Don Evans had a meeting with all the heads of the agencies. He didn't know much about Commerce. NOAA really surprised him. It's like most secretaries; he had no idea the biggest “bureau” was an environmental agency. So, we had a meeting with the Secretary. Then, I kind of decided I was going to – whether it was a week or a month or whatever, I was going to try to run the agency and do what I think is right and see what we can do that I thought should have been done or could be done. I had a meeting of all the line administrators and maybe the deputies, where I said, “I'd like you to think about what we could do. I want some creative ideas from you about what we should try to accomplish during the transition.” I don't mean papers for the Secretary and how to indoctrinate the Secretary or whatever. I mean, what kind of things could we do that probably are below and what things maybe we should bring up to the Secretary? So the kinds of things that I did during that period of time were the thing I told you about – employee of the month and partner of the month. We did TVs in Silver Spring. We did a nationwide electronic newsletter. One thing I felt was we don't do enough to get information outside of Washington so that people feel like they're part of the whole. We started doing more communications. I started doing an email about every three weeks to employees across the spectrum, saying, “Here's what I've been working on.” One thing we did – I knew that my weak spot – from my time at NOAA and before NOAA, I knew that – I know you deal with Fisheries, but I knew that our

vulnerability would be Fisheries because it's a regulatory agency because it upsets people on the Hill. Secretary Bill Daley wouldn't even let NOAA Fisheries Deputy Director Andy Rosenberg come anywhere near his office. I mean, there's just a long history. Secretary Norm Menita said, "I have a four-letter word tattooed on my head: F-I-S-H." I knew that can be a vulnerability for all of us, including me. I had a lot to do with getting Bill Hogarth to come up to Washington, and that was a year before that. So Bill was acting; that made me feel good because he's politically savvy. But my problem with Fisheries had always been that nobody worried about management, that everybody was doing regulation. They're worried about this fisheries management plan change that's going to come forward. So I re-assigned John Oliver, who was close to Hogarth, to go from NOS to Fisheries. Basically, this was the kind of thing I did that we got away with because of the turmoil. I created two deputies at Fisheries. We had a deputy, Rebecca Lent, to deal with regulation. That's who Bill wanted. Regulation, meaning most of the regular work of Fisheries. And we brought in John Oliver to actually run Fisheries, to make sure it was managed. I think that second DAA may even exist to this day. Now, Margaret Davidson at NOS was all pissed off at me. I don't think she ever forgave me. But I think we brought Alan Neuschatz to be the – I think we brought Alan Neuschatz to be the CFO at NOS. I brought Jamie Hawkins over to be her deputy. Jamie was in the Weather Service. And she was not happy with me. But I would do it again because, in terms of NOAA overall, that was our big vulnerability. And Fisheries ran better. There was a real effort in the Office of the Secretary to raise Fisheries issues up to the Secretary's level, again. People from New England were complaining as they always do. I went in to see Secretary Don Evans. He and I developed a pretty good relationship. We had him out to Silver Spring. We did a big "Welcome, Secretary Evans." We managed that relationship really well. He liked us. I went to see him about a month into the transition, I guess it was, and I asked if I could just talk to him alone. I said, "Look, if you wanted to run Fisheries, you probably could have done that a lot sooner in your career before you ran the President's campaign and made lots of money in the oil industry." I said, "Here's the thing. I don't want to deal with Fisheries. I'm telling you, it's generally not good – people are always upset. It's either going to be the environmentalists are upset, the recreational fisheries are upset, or some level of the commercial fisheries. There's always upset people because you're rationing scarce resources." I said, "Now, a lot of people I know are trying to get you to get involved and get you involved with the Hill on fish issues. But if I were you, I wouldn't do that. We only have one political appointee in our line offices, and that's NOAA Fisheries, and that's Bill Hogarth. I've been trying to re-delegate everything from the NOAA headquarters to Fisheries because I believe that's the way it should work. If I were you, I wouldn't let your people get you in the middle of these things." I still think that was the right advice to give him. I think he largely agreed. Sam Bodman, later on, when he came, agreed.

So there were a lot of things that we tried to do that were different than the previous administration that I had seen the way they did things. It turned out that they didn't have somebody to replace me. I was sort of the top three NOAA positions, I guess you could say. I was the Deputy Under Secretary. I was the acting administrator, and I guess I was the deputy administrator or Assistant Secretary as well. I continued to go out to the field. I said I would always appoint somebody back at headquarters to be the acting so that I could focus on where I was going and things would be fine. I was rotating that among AA's and the general counsel was upset at me because the acting general counsel felt that that was his role, and I didn't see it that way. So I would say to Jack Kelly, "Could you be acting?" Or to Bill Hogarth, "Could you

...?” I'd go do a West Coast swing or something like that. So the time kept going, and that was fine with me. We got our first political appointees in about the second week, maybe the third week. We got somebody out of the campaign who had been told the night before, “You're going to NOAA.” We put him down in Dr. Baker's vacant office so he'd have a big office and window. He lasted about a month, I guess. He was all right. He didn't try to – he didn't try to politically muscle us or anything. And then Sloan Rappoport and Stacy were the next two political appointees that showed up, and they knew something about NOAA. I think we put them down the hall as well. But it was sort of a time continuum of the – I'm trying to think of a movie where [inaudible] – but people kind of got replaced. So Scott Smullen was my head of Public Affairs, doing a really good job. And without telling us ahead of time, on Monday, a guy shows up who's a new political appointee who has been appointed as the head of public affairs. And then Mary Beth Nethercutt shows up; Marlene Kaplan is no longer the acting head of legislative affairs. But that sort of thing, you just kind of accept it. I was never given a head's up. It's the way it is. I figured, at some point, I'm going to be the same thing. But for me, it didn't happen until – I think that I heard Vice Admiral Conrad Lautenbacher's name in July, that he was the guy they wanted, and he got nominated to the US Senate in September. Then he didn't get confirmed until December. For me, there was a big difference between January 20 and July when there was no heir apparent. By the time he came in, I knew I was trying to get his input, but he was a very ethical guy. He didn't want to do anything until he got there. We had a lot of stuff happen. We had a crisis with the Secretary in about March. We had an issue about the marine sanctuaries on the West Coast. I don't know if any of your previous interviews ever showed this or whatever. There was an issue about expanding the sanctuaries. I had a reporter call me, and I didn't have time [so] I asked Margaret Davidson to talk to him. I didn't think anything of it. The following week, I got a call from the Secretary flying to Buenos Aires. He said, “Hey, buddy, have you seen the *LA Times* today? I was like, “No, sir.” He said, “Well, you need to take a look at it.” So in the *LA Times*, there's this article about expanding the sanctuaries. Somebody in probably marine sanctuaries at NOS had leaked our internal papers to the press. We briefed the Secretary's office on what was going on, and that stuff all showed up at the press. When Margaret talked to the reporter, she said some stuff that the Secretary's office found kind of inflammatory, like how we're approaching “marketing” to them; we're trying to deal with these people “like businesspeople.” It all really didn't go well. I had to meet the Secretary in Crystal City just back from South America. I was apologizing. I was ready to resign because they were pretty pissed. It reversed a lot of what we had done to build goodwill with the Secretary over the previous two months or so. He was classic Don Evans. He said, “Hey, that's okay. Buddy. You know what to do. Go take care of it.” That was it. I thought, “I bet he thinks I can fire people. I bet that's what he's thinking.” We had a big setback. It was a while before I got the Secretary's office to trust us again. Climate change was an issue. We appointed Dave Evans to work with the White House. Colin Powell had gotten pretty interested in trying to do something on climate change, and Vice President Dick Cheney in the White House shut that down at the time. It was inconsistent with what they wanted. I don't know. And ongoing personnel stuff/human resources issues were the most bizarre. That was true before I became acting, but you get a call that says the FBI just arrested one of your employees. That's a true story. I mean, things like that. It was a phenomenal time for me. Kind of scary, too, because you're out there exposed. I testified in Congress like twenty times. Nineteen of them went well. One of them went really bad.

MG: [2:03:59] Tell me about that one.

SG: [2:04:02] A big program that I advocated was Ocean Exploration.

MG: [2:04:07] Yes, I wanted to ask you about that.

SG: [2:04:08] I always felt like – and this was before the transition. But I felt like NASA got the lead on space exploration, but we don't do anything – there aren't that many real ocean programs within NOAA compared to the Navy, for example. I felt like ocean exploration is something that – there's tons of places and animals that we haven't found while talking about going to space. We got the program going, and I marketed it, and the Hill funded it; it still exists. There was a joint hearing that was called between the Resources Committee and the Science Committee. It was Ocean Exploration and climate change. Maybe. I'm not sure. But I went up feeling very good about it. I again had a Navy admiral on my right and, I think, NSF on my left. I used to get them upset because I wasn't a scientist. It isn't a PhD. It was going pretty good, and then it diverted in two ways. One, it became an aquaculture hearing. Representative Eni Faleomavaega, the Congressional delegate of Samoa, was upset about imports of fish. Then one of the Republican members, who doesn't believe in climate change, started attacking stuff. I was ready for that. But then they wanted to know technical differences between a supercomputer model for weather versus climate, and I realized I didn't really know. It's just something that never really occurred to me. One of the people who was behind me wanted to be the head of NOAA, and you're used to – you become used to, when you're testifying, little pieces of paper that come forward to try to help you if it's not something you were already prepared for, right? A little piece of paper didn't come forward, and I started to sweat it. I really didn't have a good answer. I just didn't. I really was sort of – so that hearing didn't go well. That's an understatement.

MG: [2:06:23] But you did get the Ocean Exploration program.

SG: [2:06:27] It already existed before this. And it thrived partly because Jeremy Weirich was on the Appropriations Committee for a few years. He had worked in NOAA and Ocean Exploration at one point. But yeah, I mean, other people saw the point. At a later date, when I went back to the Hill, we got Bob Ballard his own vessel from the Navy, and Chairman Ted Stevens put in like thirty million or some big number in the Defense Appropriations Act to convert it.

MG: [2:06:56] Did you work closely with Craig McLean around this time on these efforts?

SG: [2:07:00] Yeah, Craig was in the Ocean Exploration office back then. I knew Craig for a long period of time before that. Craig was involved in saving the NOAA Corps. My deputy, by the way – I never mentioned that my deputy was a Corps officer, and I had a fight with the Clinton Administration people to make that happen because they had not wanted the NOAA Corps to be around.

MG: [2:07:34] And who was your deputy?

SG: [2:07:36] Rich Behn. When John Carey left, I brought Rich Behn, who was a captain at that time. He later became an admiral and the head of the fleet in the NOAA Corps, OMAO [Office of Marine and Aviation Operations] to be exact, not just NOAA Corps.

MG: [2:07:50] Can you say more about the President's Panel on Ocean Exploration? Was that connected?

SG: [2:07:54] Yeah. So, during the Clinton Administration, I was advocating this idea [that] we really should be doing more, and Dr. Baker, being a scientist and an academic, said, "Well, we need to have a panel that basically tells NOAA, 'Here's what you should be doing.'" He got Marcia McNutt of the Monterey Bay Aquarium Institute to chair a panel. It worked, and the report was good. But they got themselves absorbed in this turfiness about it. Like, "Well, that's NSF's mission." So they came up with this idea that NOAA should do non-hypothesis-driven exploration. You could ask Craig McLean about this. I don't necessarily agree with it. But it was a way of saying, "This is what NOAA should be doing." That part I didn't agree with, but it basically became an academic underpinning. It's like when the Obama Administration decided they wanted to get rid of space exploration or they wanted exploration for exploration sake – to privatize it, really [and] give it to Space X. They created a panel chaired by Norm Augustine that told them to do it. It's a very typical bureaucratic government/public administration way of doing things. You have an outside group tell you what you want to do. So that's what that panel was. It was nice. Nice little booklet. It was good.

MG: [2:09:28] There's currently an oral history collection focused on the panel that will be coming to Voices eventually.

SG: [2:09:34] Oh, good. I don't remember all the people on it. I do remember Marcia McNutt chaired it.

MG: [2:09:45] Something else I wanted to ask you about – in February 2001, a big report came out on the harmful effects of algal blooms.

SG: [2:10:00] Yeah, that started much earlier. There was a Pfiesteria outbreak in the Chesapeake Bay in the summer of '98 or '99 that got a lot of attention to this. People were swimming, and they got Pfiesteria. I don't know if it exists; there was a lot of talk about a harmful algal bloom prediction system and warning system coming out of that, that NOAA would do. That was a bread-and-butter kind of program that we got going. I probably should have mentioned to you that – you know my background. My background is: I have a Master's of Public Administration [and] a history degree. I've got a decent amount of savvy, but I don't have science cred, and I certainly don't have a Ph.D. People used to call me "Doctor" sometimes when I testified, and I said, "No, I'm not a doctor." I know that used to bother the head of, I think, NSF. She gave the clear vibe – what are you doing in the panel? But I kind of knew that. It didn't bother me, but I knew it bothered some in the institution. That was sort of a reality. I know I joked about it at various times. I remember I met with – the first week I was acting, or the second week I was acting, I was a lunch speaker for – I think it was a climate group of scientists, mostly NOAA people, down to what used to be the Southwest Waterfront. I came forward, and I said, "I know some of you are concerned that I don't have the right kind of background. Why? I'm learning

[inaudible] today. But I learned ENSO Data is not an Italian baseball player. I didn't realize. But I'm going to get with it." So, I used to work at it, but I generally had a pretty good understanding of stuff. But I didn't have an understanding of – I didn't [ask] ahead of time about supercomputers for long-term climate change versus weather. It never occurred to me to ask until it was too late. Yeah, I testified on oyster restoration in the Chesapeake Bay before the Maryland legislature. That was kind of a fun hearing. I was with the head of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and the head of the Maryland DNR – Department of Natural Resources. Wayne Gilchrest, a very nice congressman from the Eastern Shore, was chairing the hearing, and they had Maryland people. It was one of these things where, when you're running an agency, you don't have a whole lot of time to focus on any one thing. So you're reading these talking points and background papers the morning of or the day before. I was doing pretty good. I was talking about Dermo and MSX disease and the restoration – all that. And then Congressman Gilchrist said, "Well, Mr. Gudes, what do you think is the number one problem of all these things you talked about?" Again, I'm waiting for a little piece of paper to tell me what I should say, and it doesn't come from the staff behind me. I said, "Well, Mr. Chairman, I'd have to say the disease problem because no matter what we do on restoration of habitat, no matter what we do to try to reduce the harvest or whatever, if the disease is going to reoccur, then we're going to get set way back to stage one. I was winging it because I didn't know the answer. Then, the head of DNR said, "Yes, I agree with that." It was like there were trumpets blowing. It was like, "Thank God." It was always a stretch.

We did a hearing on pollution in – I think it was – the Senate. No, it was the House. Congressman [Ben] Cardin said, "Well, can you use the same models you're talking about in the Chesapeake Bay to predict where pollution would go with sludge?" I didn't know what sludge was. I thought, "I have this great opportunity to plug our programs." I said, "Yes, Mr. Chairman. As a matter of fact, we can do X-Y-Z. We have Dave Kennedy in the office of [Natural Resource] Damage Assessment, and we have these capabilities. We can tell you where it'll be in three days." And then a little note comes forward and says, "We don't do sludge." Somewhere on the record, in the congressional prints, it has me saying, "Well, Mr. Chairman, I stand corrected. My staff has pointed out – this is why we have good staff here to back us up because it turns out what I said to you was not accurate. We do all this for sludge." Most of the time, it was fun. Sometimes it wasn't fun.

MG: [2:14:56] Does NOAA now do anything with or about sludge?

SG: [2:14:59] I don't know. [laughter] I don't know. They're telling me all the time we can say if something enters Baltimore Harbor in five days where it is going to be because we know the tides, we know the currents. I was wrong. But it was all a stretch. It was probably the greatest experience that I ever professionally had. There was the outside stuff that comes along. Somebody tells you, "You have to talk to the National Hurricane conference," or that kind of thing that goes on. You got to do the press thing, the press availability for the start of hurricane season. There wasn't that much in the Fisheries world, but there was most other places. "Go dedicate this estuarine reserve" or things like that. And that's all fun a great opportunity. Most of the time, it's fun. And then there's the Hill stuff, and then there's the internal stuff. How do you try to get –? It's all about leadership. But how do you get those twelve thousand employees, of which – I don't know – three thousand are in Washington to move in the direction that you

want? For the most part, I think most people would say that that year was a pretty good year for morale, at least until 9/11, I think. We left Lautenbacher an agency that I believe was better off than it was on January 20th of that year. 9/11 was a whole other set of things. That was something I'll never forget.

MG: [2:16:53] Can you talk about it?

SG: [2:16:55] Yeah, sure. I was already clear I was going to be dethroned, so to speak. I was assuming I would have to either leave NOAA or [move] to some other level. I didn't think they would want me to stay as Deputy Undersecretary. I had to deal with [periodically] being a bit down about that. I remember being in the office on Sunday. It was kind of a warm day, and I was working on things and opened up the windows – I think 9/11 might have been a Tuesday, or maybe it was a Wednesday. So, on Tuesday morning, I was supposed to be at the State Department with Bill Hogarth on tuna dolphin issues with the Mexican government. You probably know the issue that the Mexicans – in the way they fish for dolphins, they don't get the dolphin – at least at that time, they don't get the dolphin-safe sticker. NOAA was maintaining that. The courts were – it was partly a court case. So the Mexicans were coming in to convince the Bush Administration [that] things had changed, that they were actually complying. So I had a statement, and I was reviewing it. That morning, at about seven, I went to the State Department. I was in their little room for meetings. The State Department was getting pissed off at me because I was trying to put the statement into my own words rather than reading the exact words. Bill Hogarth showed up at some point. The Mexican officials were with Paula Dobriansky, Undersecretary for Global Affairs, up on the seventh floor of the State Department. I had Brian Pawlack with me. He was one of my staff on detail from a line office. He's now the controller of the Fisheries Service. Brian came running in, I don't know what time it was, and said, "Hey, Scott, a plane just hit the World Trade Center." I think I said, "(Brian?), that's terrible, but I got the Mexican Minister of Fisheries. I got to focus on this." And then, at some point, not that long after, he came back in and said, "Another plane hit, and you need to see this." So the State Department has TVs in the lobbies in the aisles. I came out and saw it. I was like, "What is going on?" And then I came back in, and not long after, Hogarth came and said, "We got to get out of here." I said, "But we have the Mexicans about to come in here." I'm not getting it at the time. I'm not understanding really what's going on. He says, "Yeah, we can do that anytime." We got to get out of here. So right about the same time, the State Department put up a thing saying, "Evacuate the building," and this woman came running down the hall screaming. I came outside of the State Department. My pager – we used to have pagers back then – from Lee Porter, my assistant – said, "Call the office," and then it went dead. Then we heard a boom, which it turns out was a sonic boom, an F-16, but people thought it was a car bomb. Then I think we saw the smoke from the Pentagon. I started walking back to the building; there were just cars all over the streets. Everybody was evacuating the buildings. At the time, I remember thinking – by then, I knew it was supposed to be a terrorist attack. I remember thinking, "Well, this is really bad because the least safe place would be to be out on the street." I didn't understand that the real risk was another plane. So, I got back to the Commerce Hoover Building about – I don't know – fifteen minutes later, twenty minutes later, walking there. I recognized one of the guards. I saw somebody in their car, and I yelled, "Where's the secretary?" They said, "He's been evacuated." I came up to the guard and asked if I could get in. Since he knew me, he let me in. The building was empty. I came up to the fifth

floor. My deputy was still there. My assistant Lee was still there – administrative assistant. We walked down into the Secretary’s suite, and Deputy Secretary Bodman, Ted Kassinger, the general counsel, at Pat Thorne. Anyway, they were there. The building was basically empty except for [us], and we stayed until nine that night. We were trying to figure out – you're sitting there, and you're supposedly at the headquarters of an agency that's not only in Silver Spring but spread around the country, and you're trying to figure out – we thought there were Fisheries people on the Boston flight. It turned out there were DC school kids on the Pentagon flight that National Geographic was taking out to Santa Barbara to the Channel Islands Marine Sanctuary. You're trying to be in contact with all the NOAA facilities around the country. As it turned out – we didn't know this that night – we lost two young Navy enlisted men in the joint Ice Center. They were not NOAA employees, but they were in the joint Ice Center. I remember their names. After that, it was surreal. It was like, “What's the right thing to do?” We had employees stuck in town that were in training [and] couldn't fly home. We had people outside of Washington [who] couldn't fly back. That whole period started – I guess it changed the world, sort of. Not just changed the world but changed some stuff at NOAA. So we started trying to figure out what we could do to be helpful, so OMAO was flying radar images of the area. Somebody in Fisheries and Bill Hogarth came up with the idea [that] we could get Fisheries officers or law enforcement Fisheries people to help jumpstart the Air Marshal program. It was just an amazing time. Even when things got better, the general counsel didn't want to have any of their people fly again, which could shut down all Fisheries actions. I just said anybody who's not comfortable flying shouldn't have to fly. But if they're willing to do it, we certainly could use people to allow the agency's work to continue. I testified on the Hill with the head of the Coast Guard. I got one question, and I think he got like twenty. But I remember it was just like, “What can we do to help? What can we do to have some continuity?” I remember Don Evans met with all the headquarters employees and gave a pretty moving speech. We decided we should hold a town hall in Silver Spring. We did that, and I did that. After that, it was a whole change of things, like continuity of operations. We violated our reprogramming guidelines, and we set up an Office of Homeland Security to do things like figure out where would NOAA retreat to for headquarters. I think we decided Asheville was the right place – and communications, things like that. [Matthew Michael] Flocco and [Edward T.] Earhart were the two Navy enlisted guys in the Joint Ice Center. Flocco was from Delaware, and Earhart was from Kentucky. Somebody in NOAA NOS came up with the idea of naming sea mounts for them. We had to clear that with the Navy because they were obviously Navy personnel. So we did. Actually, I went out with the Navy to their communities to present their families with a picture of the sea mount that had been named. It was something. It's not only something for the nation; it was something for – it was surreal.

MG: [2:26:59] Yeah, I'm curious what those days and weeks were like afterward.

SG: [2:27:06] Numb. They were numb. But you were trying to get on top of things. They're little things. I'll give you an example. I'm remembering as we're talking. I had this idea, and I decided to use the administrator's discretionary fund – at the side of Silver Spring that faces the Metro – to put up a NOAA sign. NIST has signs on the highway; they'd say NIST is the next exit. Census does. So, we don't. And we're off the interstate. But I figured we could put an electric sign up that would have NOAA in lights or whatever and then give the weather, some weather data. Then anybody in the Metro would see that. People who were coming up in Silver

Spring Metro stop. I thought it was a really great thing. We were trying to figure out how to do that, how much. Well, when 9/11 happened, I got the word [that] employees don't want that. They don't want people to know where NOAA is. So it was my corporate identity initiative in conflict with fear and safety. So, we dropped it.

MG: [2:28:29] They were concerned it would be like a bullseye?

SG: [2:28:35] Yeah. You don't want anybody to know. Personally, I thought that's not going to make a difference, but they don't want people to know where they are. So, it'd be safer not to do that. Anyway, yeah, the world changed. Washington, DC, changed. I'm sure NOAA changed in some ways. I got in trouble later on with the Hill for helping jumpstart the air marshals because that meant that there were Fisheries law enforcement officers who weren't doing something on the Fisheries side, and fishermen were complaining. So I remember I got screamed at. I remember getting screamed at by one of the appropriations staff. Like, how dare I do that? How dare we do that? I was like, "Well, one, I testified on the Hill. I realize it's not the Appropriations Committee, but I testified to the Commerce Committee that we had done this. And two, it's 9/11." They didn't scream at me about trying to create a little office on security for 9/11 and in the future for continuity of operations. Maybe they missed it. I appointed a NOAA Corps officer to head it up. But I mean, technically, I was violating appropriations law that says you need a reprogramming, but a reprogramming takes six months or more. But yeah, I got screamed at. I didn't appreciate it. But that's one of those things; you can't scream back at a Hill staffer. It was like that Trent Lott meeting – what I wanted to say versus what I said. That was a period of time that, I think, for people who didn't live through it, they could never imagine what it was like, but it was horrible. We had our town hall meeting. In fact, a year later, I said we should do another remembrance of 9/11, and we did. I don't know how long that continued at NOAA because, obviously, people don't do that now. And like I said, I didn't get it at [first]. I wasn't getting it. I was so focused on this meeting with the Mexicans at the State Department that I wasn't really understanding what was going on.

MG: [2:31:06] How did that issue resolve?

SG: [2:31:10] That's funny. I just thought about that. I don't think I ever did meet with the Mexicans after that. I don't think it got rescheduled. Or maybe Bill Hogarth did it without me. I don't know. But the other thing was, I probably should mention that I gave a lot of thought to how to help Admiral Lautenbacher or, before that, whoever the next person is and when it was him, how to help him so that he could take over. There's a lot of thought and transition stuff. And then the other thing that's kind of funny or not funny about NOAA – I probably could write a book about this, but the AAs started, without getting any permission or anything, going around and meeting with Admiral Lautenberg. It was very typically NOAA. I think Lautenbacher learned this when he came in, but there's no real control about how things work. They all started to go see Lautenbacher to tell him what their views of the world were. But when he came in, I think things were pretty well prepared for him. Although he was really shocked that the Navy would have a very sizable headquarters and staff, and at NOAA, they do not, partly because the Hill limits it. But he was always really very shocked about that. At least that was my impression, and he said so.

MG: [2:32:53] It sounds like you were prepared for his arrival. But how did you prepare for your departure? What did you think you would do next?

SG: [2:33:02] Yeah, that's interesting. I had this idea that I could just take a job within NOAA. I thought the recreational fishing job would be perfect. NOAA Fisheries did not in my view back then care that much about recreational fisheries. It was an SES job. Some Fisheries staff called teh sport/insudstry "playing with food." I could just help recreational fisheries and not threaten anybody up above. So when the new group came in, Admiral Lautenbacher was great, but he had some people with him that viewed me as a Democrat. They were making my life difficult. I thought, "Well, it's time for me to go. I had too many years in the federal government just to leave the federal government. I thought, "Well, maybe I'll go back to the Hill." I had a job lined up in the Senate Appropriations Committee Defense Subcommittee, just to go back to almost where I came from. At that time, the Democrats were in control again, so Senators [Robert] Byrd and Inouye approved it. Then I went to tell Lautenbacher, and he said, "I need you here. I'd like you to stay." We had this long talk, and I thought, "Well, I've been unfair and rushed to judgment." So I called the Hill back, pissed them off, and told them I wasn't coming. I stayed at NOAA about another year, a year, and three months. I did a few things. I chaired the NOAA program review at the admirals's request, which was looking at other ways of doing business [and] how NOAA should be organized for the future. A lot of these things were things about getting out of the stove pipes. But there was more of the "Hey, you're not a political; you can't do this treatment." Even though in the previous administration as the career Deputy Unders Scretary, I had done such duties. So I had a share of sort of the outside stuff because there's too much requirement for the few people on top to do it – not politicals, but the few people at the highest level to do it. I was supposed to go to – a lot of this had to do with my own ego and sense of right and wrong. I was supposed to do some public event with Steny Hoyer in Maryland, and the night before, I get told, "No, you're not doing that event. You're not a political appointee." Then I was supposed to do a speech at the conference for the recreational fishing community in Tampa, and I got removed from that. The one that really got me, though, was when they were doing an event for the NOAA satellite building that we had talked about earlier, and they scheduled it for when I wasn't in town – the building I had busted my ... to make happen. They didn't even check. I just decided I'm a problem; I got to go. So, I called some people on the Hill. I went back to the Hill, but I went to the House side because they had an opening, and the Senate didn't right then. Jim Dywer, House Appropriation Staff Director , was wonderful; he made an offer that was too good to turn down. The Republicans were in control in the majority, so I went to work for the Republicans again. I went to the Foreign Operations Subcommittee, and I did foreign aid the next year. Then I went back to the Senate a year later at their request.

MG: [2:36:30] Were you on the Foreign Ops Subcommittee during the Iraq War?

SG: [2:26:33] Yeah, I was responsible for all the Iraq reconstruction money. I had to go to Iraq. I didn't want to.

MG: [2:36:39] What did you say you were responsible for?

SG: [2:36:44] At that time, State Department operations was back in the Commerce, Justice, State bill. It was a year after I left the Appropriations Committee that they reorganized. The foreign ops bill was foreign operations, export financing, and related programs. So it's [the] Executive Office of the President appropriations for foreign aid. It's USAID, Agency for International Development. It's the export/import banks, and regional banks. It's military assistance, law enforcement, and institution building. We had a staff of only about three people. My responsibilities were economic support, like the economic support fund, military assistance, foreign military financing, training foreign military people, law enforcement, and counter-terrorism. And then regionally, we divided up, so I had the Middle East and Southeast Europe. I was supposed to have Asia, but my boss had done Asia and didn't really want to actually let go of that. But I did some issues there. But I spent a lot of time on [the] Middle East. I spent a lot of time on the Balkans. The Middle East stuff that we had – when I got to the Hill, the US had just liberated Iraq, and now it was about the recovery. So there was an initial supplemental, which was like two billion dollars. And then there was a second supplemental in the summer and fall; I think President Bush asked for twenty-two billion dollars. And then we included support for Afghanistan as well, which they didn't request. But yeah, that was my area. It was basically the Coalition Provisional Authority, the State Department, [and] the nonmilitary aspects to recovery. I went to the Middle East three times that year. I went to Montenegro, Serbia, Croatia, Bulgaria, [and] a lot of places in Southeast Europe, where we were still doing democracy building programs at that time. It was actually a great experience. I mean, to be honest, it was a very sugar-coated job. I didn't quite realize it at the time because I had gone from having a big office and two assistants and a deputy to, “Here's your little piece of this room and your computer station.” I was back to being a staffer. I was very conscious to be a good staffer and not try to be an executive anymore. And so that's what I did.

MG: [2:39:27] What was that transition like for you?

SG: [2:39:31] It was okay. The bigger transition was the differences between the House and the Senate are so extreme that I was having a bigger problem learning how to be a good *House* Appropriations staffer. Much more into detail, much more member interaction, much less autonomy in decision-making as a staffer. The House floor is totally different. Just eons different. The House rules really control things. In the Senate, you have rules, but you don't have strict rules. So I mean, it was just in every sort of way different. I learned a lot that year. I met King Abdullah of Jordan. It was a lot of good experiences. In terms of House Foreign Operations, I probably should have stayed there, but the Senate came back in to recruit me in December. Jim Morhard, the staff director, said, “Senator Stevens needs me to come back to the Senate.” I didn't know this, but they'd let go the guy who was in the subcommittee that I used to run, and he and Senator [Judd] Gregg needed a new staff director or clerk is the term they use, as I said before. I was in a meeting with the Israeli Embassy about – I guess it was – defense, and they came in and said, “We really need you to ...”. So I decided I really felt more like a Senate person, so I went back.

This is actually funny. Not funny. Peculiar. So the whole thing with Lautenbacher, and before him [D. James] Baker, was they wanted to break out of these NOAA line office stovepipes. They have their own money; the appropriations go that way. So Baker had his strategic plan and a way of looking at NOAA that wasn't line office-based. So you have multiple line offices in

each strategic plan. I wasn't really big on that. But that's what *they* wanted. Then Lautenbacher came in. He wanted the same thing, but he changed the strategic plan a little bit. When I went back to the Senate, and I'm running Commerce, Justice, State Appropriations again, I spent an enormous amount of effort – and I had a NOAA detailee come help. I got NOAA to send a detailee to the Hill. I did this enormous effort to appropriate money by strategic plan category and to show the crosswalk between the line offices and the strategic plan. So we would instead be appropriating money by healthy coasts and short-term weather warnings. You know what I'm talking about? The way the two administrators I had worked for really wanted to run the agency and viewed the agency. It was a huge amount of work. People thought I was nuts. So, our CJS bill appropriated funds by strategic plan area, not the line offices; it would have strengthened “One NOAA.” So when we came out with the appropriation bill, the Administration immediately appealed and said they were against it. NOAA said they opposed it. I was stunned. I'm like, “You cannot be serious!” So I said, “Fine. We'll put it back. We'll recede to the House and put it back in line office structure.” It's one of those things that still is a mystery to me. The funny thing was that when I went back to Senate Appropriations – and that was difficult, too, because they had fired my predecessor, and the staff was upset and everything. But when I went back, I had all this knowledge from being inside an agency. So, with the reprogrammings, I was telling my colleagues, “Don't you understand how long it takes to get a reprogramming transmitted up to Congress? And then you sit on it.” My minority colleague – that was the democratic side – wouldn't approve any reprogrammings. None. Zip. I'm like, “Do you have any idea what this is doing?” So one of the things our bill did that year was it doubled the amount of money – and it's pretty minimal, but we doubled the amount of money you could transfer and you don't need a reprogramming for. So, instead of \$500,000, I increased it to one million dollars. Well, the House was absolutely opposed to that. “How dare you? You can't do that. Too much flexibility.” We compromised at \$750,000 in conference. So the number went up to \$750,000. The year after I left, they put it back to \$500,000. They still have all this micromanagement bill language in there. You can't create offices. You can't do anything without a reprogramming. In any case, I was able to do some good. The House cut NOAA really bad that year; there was a billion-dollar difference between House and Senate. Representative Frank Wolf was adamantly wanting to cut NOAA; he made us trade all sorts of stuff to get back the NOAA money.

MG: [2:44:34] What gets cut when that happens?

SG: [2:44:40] In those days, the NOAA tables went on for pages. So it's all specific programs. Anything that we enhanced – like we had the “O” in NOAA initiative, so we were trying to do more ocean exploration and more coastal management. Obviously, that got cut in the House bill. They zeroed out the tsunami programs, which they didn't seem to realize later on that year when the tsunami hit Indonesia because I heard the House Chairman Frank Wolk talking a year later, priding himself on providing tsunami funding, which they had zeroed out in the House bill. It's specific. You go back in 2004 – I'm talking about 2004, fiscal year 2005 – you can look at the tables. They're there. They cut everything. I'm sure it was different for the last few years now when the Democrats were back in the majority in the House. I'll bet that they funded NOAA a lot. But back then, the Republicans really – NOAA was one of those agencies they just officially liked to not like. Behind the scenes, you get into conference, and once they gave up on the

topline number, they would bring in all their earmarks that would say they have to have it. It was pretty humorous, in a way.

And then, I got moved to the US Senate Budget Committee by Senator Gregg, which I didn't want to do. I tried to talk him out of it.

MG: [2:46:26] In 2005?

SG: [2:46:29] Yeah. So 2005 and 2006, I was the majority staff director of the Budget Committee for Senator Gregg. In 2007, I became the minority staff director when the Republicans lost the majority. That, again, was a heck of a learning experience. I was part of leadership. I'd sit in the leadership meetings with the Senate Republican Leader in the morning. It was very interesting. I thought that given that a majority of my time on the Hill had been with Democrats, they wouldn't trust this new guy that Chairman Judd Gregg was bringing in. I said the same thing to Judd Gregg. I said, "You realize that of my [then] fourteen years in the Senate and Hill, only two have been with Republicans." He said, "So?" "Okay, I just want to make sure you know." By the time I left the Hill, it's still true that of seventeen years on the Hill, I think twelve were with Democrats. But the Republican leadership was really great. They didn't seem to question my loyalty at all. It was my Democratic friends who seemed to be upset. Again, my career was always I worked for either side. I was a bipartisan professional. That doesn't exist so much anymore on the Hill. It's not respected anymore; let's put it that way. So the Budget Committee was a very difficult job, a very different job. It's big picture. It's the debt ceiling and revenue estimates. It's five or ten years of spending. You never get into anything as specific as NOAA. The closest you get is environment and natural resources budget function, discretionary and mandatory spending, taxes – the whole deal. As far as I know, I'm the only person to go from majority to minority, first with the Democrats, then with the Republicans. So 2007, the Democrats won. I was like, "I think twenty-nine and a half years in the Federal Government as a career person is probably enough." So I left and started doing private sector stuff.

MG: [2:48:29] I know we're almost out of time. But can you give me an overview of the work you've been doing since then?

SG: [2:48:36] Eleven years after my government career, the first year, I was Vice President of Government Affairs for the National Marine Manufacturers; that's recreational boats below sixty feet or so. So largely American-made manufacturing. The engines, a lot are made overseas, but the boats themselves – US. So think Grady-White, Pursuit, Sea Ray – think whatever you look at over there in the harbor up in Maine. I represented those manufacturers. It was a really good job. Seven or eight months into the job, at some fundraiser, Lockheed Martin saw me and came up with this idea, and they started recruiting me. I turned them down. And they made it clear I was being an idiot financially. I said I need to finish a year in this boating job. I can't leave before one year, and they agreed. So after one year, I went to work for Lockheed Martin. There was some serendipity in that because that coincided with the 2008 stock market crash and recession, and the recreational boating industry really got hurt. I would have had to lay off most of the people – I had twelve staff, and I would have had to lay most of them off. I wouldn't have been able to do that, I don't think. I got lucky in that regard. I went to work for Lockheed

Martin Corporation and the aerospace industry. I was vice president for legislative affairs for Space Systems, Missile Defense, and Strategic Programs at Lockheed Martin. There's a lot of being a lobbyist in that. It's got a lofty name, but a lot of it is going to the Hill and representing the company with staffers and members. But the programs were interesting. That's why I said I actually know a lot more about space programs than I did when I was at NOAA because now I was on the manufacturing and development side of them and saw some of the things that NASA was requiring NOAA to fund. We had the GOES contract, for example, at Lockheed Martin. Lockheed had GPS [Global Positioning System]. I did both civil and military space programs and stuff we can't talk about. It was a great learning experience. It was financially much better than any job I'd ever done. They take very talented people and stovepipe them; they call it swim lanes – “stay in your swim lane.” After six years of that, the American Sport Fishing Association had an opening, and I thought that would be fun. I did a huge stupidly financial pay cut and took that job. It turned out it really wasn't so much fun because fisheries is just contentious. I knew that. I'm mad at myself for not remembering just how divisive and – they all hate each other. I love recreational fishing. And again, this was representing manufacturers; it was the rods, the reels, the lures, and all that. Fisheries is difficult because everybody says they're pro-conservation, but they want the other group to conserve. Just not my thing. I decided finally it was time to move on. They put out a press release that I retired. I didn't say I retired. I retired without knowing I retired, but I've been retired for four years.

MG: [2:51:56] You've mentioned your wife, Ann. Can you tell me a little more about her, how you met, and your life outside of work?

SG: [2:52:04] She's a registered nurse. Until recently, she was an operating room [OR] nurse. I met her at – there was a group of women at the beach. I talked about the beach before. The Circle Avenue Club would invite people – invite guys to come to these wine and drink events, and she was a guest of somebody. That's how I met her. She seemed amazingly nice. That's how I met her.

MG: [2:52:40] What year were you married?

SG: [2:52:44] '91. August '91.

MG: [2:52:49] Well, what have we not talked about? I know we've talked for a long time today, so you're probably sick of talking. Is there anything I've forgotten to ask you about? And I'm sure there is.

SG: [2:53:01] A lot of times, I'm just remembering things about NOAA while I was talking. I'm sure I probably said some stuff I probably shouldn't have. But I think I caught some of that ahead of time.

MG: [2:53:13] Well, maybe we can do this. I can transcribe our conversations. If you're seeing that there are gaps or more to cover, we can get together and do a little bit more.

SG: [2:53:21] Yeah, that'd be great. Yeah, I'm out here in California for about three weeks. And so whenever – whatever you need. I appreciate what you're doing. I was just at an event at my alma mater last night, and they were talking about oral history.

MG: [2:53:38] Oh, yeah? Well, let me turn this off so you can tell me about it.. But before I do, I want to thank you for your time and all the stories.

SG: [2:53:43] That's fine. [Recording paused.] When I was running the budget committee, that was the year 2005-2006, and then I was in the minority in 2007. Most committees on the Hill have a history and an explanation of the process that they deal with. The Budget Committee did not. So I started this effort to do a history of the Budget Committee. One of the advantages we had is that the Budget Committee was created in 1974, so some of the initial nabobs of the budget, the real leaders of it, were still around. The hard thing was that everything on the Budget Committee is partisan. It's the opposite of the Appropriations Committee and what the Appropriations Committee used to be. I couldn't even get – the Democrats realized I was sincere, but I couldn't get them to even do one unified Christmas party for the committee. “No, we do our own,” they responded. So when I did the history, they needed to sign off for the Senate to approve publishing, it was really hard to get them to do it. Even so, when we finished the thing, there was one area of contention between my staff and their staff over some numbers that were in there because – I won't bore you with it, but 1993 reconciliation score-keeping was a problem. But one of the things we did in doing this history was interviews – oral history – about the initial time of the creation of the Budget Committee. We didn't get the original staff director, but we got the second staff director. It was really good, and it's printed. When I left, Judd Gregg, in his closing statements, said something about that, which [means] he probably thinks I probably was more proud of doing the history of the Budget Committee than the Budget Resolutions, Budget Reform Bill, and Reconciliation.

MG: [2:55:31] I would be curious to check that history out. I always think it's important for an organization to take a look at its own history, especially if it's complete, critical, and accurate.

SG: [2:55:43] Yeah. That's harder. [laughter]

MG: [2:55:46] I'll turn this off again. Thank you.

-----END OF INTERVIEW-----

Reviewed by Molly Graham 7/6/2023
Reviewed by Scott Gudes 10/24/2023
Reviewed by Molly Graham 2/12/2024