

ELLEN TEMPLE

Interview 287a

June 8, 2018, at Boggy Slough, Trinity and Houston counties, Texas

Jonathan Gerland, Interviewer

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ABSTRACT:

In this interview with Jonathan Gerland, Ellen Temple discusses her late husband Buddy Temple's vision for the Boggy Slough Conservation Area. She reminisces about the times her family has spent in Boggy Slough, talks about Buddy's connection to the land, and his pride in its preservation. They talk about how the land was managed in the past and the challenges they face in trying to manage it as a working, yet diverse and healthy forest ecosystem. They discuss the different types of birds and wildlife and plants that inhabit Boggy Slough and her hopes for its future as a place of scientific research that will benefit all of East Texas' forests.

Jonathan Gerland (hereafter JG): My name is Jonathan Gerland. I'm with Ellen Temple, we are at Mt. Pisgah Cemetery in North Boggy, and today's date is June 8, 2018. We are at the cemetery, and we've spent a wonderful morning already looking at nature and seeing the wildlife, all the plants and animals above ground and below ground. So we're just going to visit a little bit, and some of this will be for the book that I'm working on. I don't know where you want to begin Ellen, but I wanted to talk a little bit about what we were talking about earlier, about how you and Buddy [Arthur "Buddy" Temple, III] and the Foundation [T.L.L. Temple Foundation] were looking at a management philosophy, and you were talking about managing for diversity. So if you could, just speak to that.

Ellen Temple (hereafter ET): Well from the beginning, you know, Buddy wanted this opportunity to manage for all the species in East Texas. He didn't want to just manage for deer. He didn't want to just manage for turkeys, he didn't want to just manage for pine, you know. He saw this as an opportunity to manage these 19,000 acres for all the plants and animals of East Texas. There is such a diversity of terrain. You've got the bottom lands, you've got the uplands, all the different soils, and so there is a tremendous amount of diversity. We don't have an inventory of all the plants that are here, but if we took a count it would be one of the most diverse stretches of land in East Texas. So, he saw it as a big opportunity. Buddy cared most about the land. He cared about it whether we were in South Texas, you know, our yard, wherever; he really cared about the land and the plants, and whether it was healthy or not. So, that would be his first goal for this conservation area is taking care of the land. So, right now all the burning and the different work that is going on is taking care of the land and it's going to take some years to bring the understory grasses and forbs back to make it healthy again where it can sustain itself. And it's off to a good start. The company had done a lot of burning, but now it's done on

a very serious level – still a working forest, but it's selectively harvested, largely and just a great opportunity to you know, manage the land so quail could thrive here again and turkey and all the birds, Bachman's sparrows. All the things, the red cockaded woodpecker, so many of the birds that have pretty much disappeared from East Texas could have a home here. Then another goal would be, that Buddy had in mind and he had started this work way back with a Foundation grant to Stephen F. Austin State University for a Forest Institute, because he said what we need is, you know, some voice for the forest and we need the kind of research on the land that tells you what the best practices are to create that kind of diversity and maintain it. And so, the research portion of the mission is a very important one.

JG: Focus on the land from the land's perspective, and not from a forest products industry perspective.

ET: Exactly. Yes, on the land's perspective on its diversity. Well, it's still a working forest, but it can be managed so that it's sustainable.

JG: So when you say working forest, that is income producing?

ET: Yes, mostly selectively harvested but ...

JG: In pine, not necessarily hardwoods?

ET: Yes, not the hardwood, but still harvested. But in a very light manner. And that is just the reality in East Texas. I think people expect to make a living with their land, but we hope and Buddy hoped, and the board of the Foundation hopes, that they can learn from the practices here and the research that we do, what would be the best practices for a working forest and still have the diversity, the wildlife, and the sustainability of the forest. What does it take? And another component besides caring for the land and doing the research on the best... you know, to discover the best practices will be to educate people and you know, the Foundation hasn't determined how best to do that. I think the thought is that you focus on educating the teachers, the managers, you know, the people who reach other people. Teachers will reach the children. And how we do that and work, keep it as a working forest, as a research area, and as a teaching opportunity, that remains to be decided but those are the goals.

JG: And all the while you've got, whether it's sons of Boggy Slough or Sportsmen of Boggy Slough...

ET: Right.

JG: On the south end and you've got IP [International Paper] that is very heavily deer hunting focused, so that's got to be balanced in there too.

ET: Exactly. So that is a factor that as we move forward would be under consideration. I mean how to do it with that? What we learned, we went to Ichauway, Robert and...

JG: Is that in Georgia?

ET: Yes, that is in Georgia and we went to discover what they were doing and what we took away from that was take your time, do it right, take your time. So, I know people say, “well when are you going to open it up to the public and when are you going to do this and when are you going to do that?” We don’t know. Because we want to take our time, we want to do it right and honor this great legacy. I think Buddy considered this conservation area probably the biggest, most important legacy that his family will leave to East Texas. And so, he was...it was one of the happiest moments of his life in 2014, I think, January 2014, when he was able to sign the papers for the Foundation, as Chair of the Foundation, to preserve this land, put all of it under a conservation easement.

JG: Where did he sign the papers?

ET: At home, at the dining room table.

JG: The dining room table.

ET: Yes, he was being treated for cancer at the time.

JG: Did he sign them as soon as he got them, or did he savor it?

ET: Yes, he savored it. I got a picture. I got it on one of my phones somewhere. It was a very special picture and then we did a lot of...

JG: Was it just you and him?

ET: No, it was the attorneys, Amy and Jack, well we had another, I think there were a couple other people there. And yes, we celebrated. He was very excited, And I know, the Foundation does wonderful work, and this is an important piece of it. But for his personal satisfaction this was a highlight.

JG: We may come back to some of those days, but to go back in time (**ET:** okay) I’m just curious, what is your first memory when you heard for the first time, “Boggy Slough?” Do you have any connections or memories of it or knowledge of it before you knew Buddy? I’m just curious. You grew up here and went to Lufkin High School and sooner or later...did you ever hear of it or know of it?

ET: I don’t think I knew about Boggy until Buddy’s cousin, Carolyn Allen, was getting married in Lufkin and she invited me to come out and join the wedding party and come out here for a supper.

JG: After the wedding or before the wedding?

ET: No, this was before the wedding and then the rehearsal dinner and then the wedding.

JG: Oh okay.

ET: That was my first experience and it was at night.

JG: And when was that?

ET: That would have been probably in 1963.

JG: In '63 okay.

ET: Because I was still in college at the University [of Texas].

JG: So, that was at the clubhouse?

ET: That was at the clubhouse before it burned.

JG: I think it was '66 maybe it burned.

ET: I think so.

JG: So '63.

ET: Yes I think it was '63 because I was still in college. So, that was my introduction to Boggy and it was at night when we came out, so I didn't get to see much, but in 1970 when Buddy and I dated – I was a widow with a young son, and Buddy said, "I want to show you Boggy." So, he took me out to their family cabin.

JG: What's now called Little Boggy?

ET: Yes, Little Boggy...

JG: There on Black Cat Lake.

ET: Yes, and the lodge burned four years before that, so this was 1970, and so he said, "Come on we'll go out and I want to show you Little Boggy." And little John...

JG: I guess he was about 3?

ET: No, he was still 2, almost 3.

JG: Yes, he and I have a birthday close to each other in August.

ET: Yes, so we came out and we had a canoe there at the cabin and we paddled the canoe with little John and I just remember the wonderful peaceful feeling that I had.

JG: Do you remember what time of year it was?

ET: Yes, it would have been in the spring.

JG: Spring, okay spring of '70 okay

ET: Yes, spring of '70, because we married July 2nd and John's third birthday was in August. So we paddled around, that was I think my introduction to what became one of my very favorite birds and that was the belted kingfisher because they were up on the stobs chattering, and saw a couple of little alligators, some nutria, back then we had nutria until the alligators grew up and ate all the nutria. And, we didn't fish, we just paddled around and enjoyed the quiet and it was a very special introduction. We sat on the porch, back then there was a fence, you know, around the little cabin.

JG: Was it a picket fence?

ET: No, it was wire, wood and wire and then it had a sty, you know the steps over it. I know little John just loved climbing those steps.

JG: Were there cattle in here still?

ET: No but I think that was probably to protect from the hogs, I'm guessing. But it had pretty much the same porch, smaller, and we sat on the rocking chairs and just enjoyed the evening so that was pretty wonderful introduction and I could tell that Buddy really loved the place.

JG: Was the fire pit still there?

ET: The fire pit was there, it has got new brick now it just crumbled but yes, the fire pit was still there. We spent every...since we were married in 1970 we spent every single Thanksgiving there and continue to do that. Our family and Buddy's sister Chotsy, and her family, and then his dad and Lottie, and it was fun because we were just a small group and it just grew and grew and grew. (laughter)

JG: Your family?

ET: Family, yes. Sometimes we even spent a couple of Christmas's there in the cabin and I remember going out with Buddy and Arthur and we took John, I think we had Whitney, Buddy's daughter, and went out in the woods to get a pine tree.

JG: For a Christmas tree?

ET: For a Christmas tree, they're not easy to decorate, but they smell good and we would get a pine tree and we would get greens and holly with the red berries on it and bring that into the house and use what we could get from the woods to decorate, no plastic, no plastic in the house just natural.

JG: None of that tinsel stuff that was so popular in the '70s?

ET: No, it was...the kids wanted to use some of that, but we always used a real tree.

JG: Icicles I think they called it when we were kids we used icicles, made a mess.

ET: That was fun to go in the woods and get your own tree. And I remember that we also went looking for rich lighter pine, the kind that you find a stump and then you could cut, chop a chunk of it, and then chop it into kindling. Buddy used to chop it into kindling and we would use that to start our fires and it was fun to go through the woods and look for rich lighter and I know the first time I smelled it smelled so strong I was just stunned.

JG: Very rich!

ET: Very rich with rich lighter. Over the years Buddy shared what he loved about Boggy with our family and we still feel very tied to this place and I'm so grateful that we have a little piece of family land, it's separate from the conservation area, so we are so

very grateful that we can continue to enjoy it and our children's children can enjoy a piece of land.

JG: How has the forest changed? We use that word, I guess what I'm getting at is more of a landscape question, what you've seen, the understory, the size of the trees. Since '70 to now, I guess that is 48 years of history there. Have you noticed anything that you can comment on or some observations about changes?

ET: Well there were a lot, there weren't as many small trees; they hadn't grown up yet. These are, a lot of these are just like 60 to 75 years old. So, they would have been small then, so there were a lot of big trees and it was more open. It's starting to open up again, but it was more open then.

JG: Was it more open in '70 than now?

ET: Yes, and when we'd drive through, I could hear the quail calling and that was a thrill. Quail calling and occasionally see a turkey crossing the road. So, it was more...

JG: Now they tried to stock some in the mid '70s didn't they? Did they stock some out here or was that other places?

ET: Well maybe they did. I wasn't familiar with that.

JG: But in '70 you remember I mean some?

ET: They did stock some quail and maybe they did stock turkey. I know they tried quail, but the habitat wasn't quite right. I don't think they did that until the '90s, but a lot of the understory had grown up and if it's too dense, quail can't make it. So in that sense, it's come full circle in a way, because now with all the burning that Robert is doing out here it's opening it up again and really setting the table for the return of quail. There is so many species that require that kind of open understory.

JG: We can hear the wind blowing through the pines.

ET: Yes, maybe that will show up on the tape. Wouldn't that be nice.

JG: We can hear the wind blowing through the pines.

ET: Oh, gosh this is beautiful.

JG: Feels good doesn't it? You can hear it and see it before you feel it.

ET: Yes, beautiful. So, this has been a special place for our family, all of our family, the extended family for many, many, years, many, many years. And when... you know Buddy grew up in these woods and at the end of his life, he was back in the woods and very happy to be here; very happy to be here. So...

JG: Besides the family gatherings around the camp or the clubhouse and those kinds of activities, as far as saying getting out, were there any favorite things that he liked to do? Favorite things you liked to do?

ET: Well I mentioned, you know, hunting for the rich lighter pine and cutting our Christmas tree, just loblolly pine, try to get the fullest one. And we occasionally, I remember, we were all gathered on the porch and here came some of the guys up to the porch and they had captured a little wild hog.

JG: Little piglet?

ET: A little piglet, brought him up to the porch. And one of our favorite things to do was to go for walks and just enjoy the hollies and all the different kinds of trees and the birds. Then a real highlight was when the eagles came back. And after they banned DDT the eagles regrouped, and they started nesting and we had a nest in Boggy Slough at Black Cat Lake and that was a thrill. I remember Buddy said I never thought in my lifetime I would see Eagles back in East Texas and now they're thriving. So it's amazing how a small thing like banning...it's a big thing, but banning a pesticide like DDT, how it can affect the environment and reintroducing fire to the forest, what a positive turn in the health of the forest that has made. So, it's amazing how you learn as you do, and we want to learn more.

JG: You were saying earlier that Buddy said something along the lines of, "if we manage for the birds we will be doing good." Is there, can you talk more to that or did I say that right?

ET: No that is...yes he said if we manage for the birds it will affect all the forest.

JG: All the other creatures.

ET: All the other creatures.

JG: So, don't manage for deer, don't manage just for this or for that, but for diversity, which all that would be included.

ET: Right, and this is a fire dependent eco system and so managing for the birds means burning.

JG: Right and don't put out corn for the deer, but manage the whole 19,000 acres...

ET: For food.

JG: For food, which would become in essence a food plot. That you would have a 19,000-acre food plot instead of 100 different deer stands with corn feeders at them.

ET: I think that is what Cliff Shakleford said that you just...the whole forest is a food plot (laughter), which... that is the way it should be.

JG: We were going back earlier to how the mindset changed over 100 years ago when management started focusing on one thing, which led to focusing against something else, whether it be mono cropping agriculture or managing for one tree type. If you're just going to be about pine and then you start planting pine plantations, and if you have deer

and you start growing bigger deer, and there is consequences to all those steps and actions.

ET: Right.

JG: And that is kind of in the history, even of this property, especially in those earlier days of cattle ranching for 25 to 30 years and then changing to more of a pine philosophy before there's a realization of hardwood bottoms and respecting that, you know, managing to maintain that. Somebody told me once, it was actually a hardwood forester that I interviewed, and we were talking about how Temple did do some things differently and, you know, and that was a question I always had, "what do you mean by that?" He said him being a hardwood management person, which when you talk to someone in the Forest Products Industry and they say management, they're talking about harvesting (laughter). But anyway, he said something along the lines that you could tell it when you were on a Temple managed land, just stepping on it and walking across the land, and the difference was where they introduced the pine. It wasn't what they cut or didn't cut, it was where they planted. And the difference was, in a lot of the other operations, they tried to grow pine maybe where it was kind of marginal – talking about the bottoms, to get pine to grow wherever it would grow, and naturally in certain places you didn't have plantations down there in the lowlands, and so that is what they started doing. Now Temple did that on certain tracts, but by and large that wasn't their philosophy.

ET: And they protected this area.

JG: Boggy Slough was always a little different.

ET: A little different.

JG: I know Jack tells a good story there about, he said Mr. Temple would always ask him how many acres do we own and he would tell him how many million they owned and he said well I think you can find all the timber you need without touching Boggy.

ET: Without cutting Boggy! (laughter)

JG: And I think that may help explain some of the more recent, like you said, some of the challenges you were saying even in '70 it was a little more open even than it is now.

ET: Yes, it was!

JG: So, I think again it goes back to what you were talking about a balance, there is that balance. You can't just say hands off and do nothing for twenty years.

ET: No, that day is past. Well probably it's never been hands off. We talked about that earlier and...

JG: Right., there's always been some sort of interaction.

ET: We talked about that earlier the prehistoric people were burning or they were somehow manipulating the land to make sure they had the fruit and the nuts they needed

to eat and then the Indians did the same and the settlers did the same, so we can't not be involved. We are part of this forest community, human beings are, and we have a role to play. Figuring out, I think this conservation area gives us the opportunity to figure out the best role that we as humans can play in this forest community, keeping it healthy, diverse. When I say healthy, I mean diverse and ...

JG: Is that some kind of a hawk right there?

ET: Oh yes! It looks like it.

JG: I don't know how long it was, but somewhere along the way Temple Inland or I.P. [International Paper] did stop burning for a few years there right before the Foundation bought it, because I know when Jack and I drove over it right after the Foundation got it we couldn't even see where the chimney was of the clubhouse that burned in '66. We drove right by it and couldn't see it.

ET: Yes, couldn't see it?

JG: It was so overgrown, there were so many vines.

ET: That was one of the first things Buddy did once the Foundation acquired the land. He opened that up so you could see. And there was a little pond, he called it Buddy's special pond.

JG: Yes.

ET: It was right down there a little seep almost

JG: It was a little stock pond for the livestock.

ET: Oh, was it?

JG: It shows up on those '33 aerial photographs.

ET: Oh, does it?

JG: Yes, it was down there.

ET: Well he just loved to go down there and see if he could catch a big one.

JG: I remember him saying everybody called that big pond Buddy's Pond they built in '50 and he said that wasn't my pond, my pond was the little one where I could go and sneak away from Dad. (laughing)

ET: Down the hill.

JG: It wasn't that far away, but for a six or seven-year-old boy that was a long way. I remember he told me, that was a way he could get away from his dad to go down there and try to catch a big one.

ET: Yes.

JG: He said that was my pond. That big one was just what everybody else called it. I think what happened everybody knew that was Buddy's pond and maybe his dad said well I'll build him a pond and he built that big one.

ET: You knew our kids were lucky to be able to fish, our kids love to fish and that is another kind of wildlife that we have here, although they're actually stocked. But then there is the river and that is not stocked. 18 miles of river, although that is conservation area, but you know, on that little bit of family land it's just 680 acres, but we've had the opportunity to fish and the grandkids love it! They just love it!

JG: So, what is the role that, you know, there are certain people that have clubhouses on the family land, and do you know some of the history of that?

ET: You know I don't. I think Jay Shands told me that his dad owned Little Boggy, that little cabin, it was tiny and when the lodge burned, he offered that to Arthur. So, I guess those who were, I think it was for club...well H. J. wasn't an executive of the...I think they must have had that hunting club and members of the hunting club could build those little cabins and so there are still quite a few of them.

JG: I think John McClain has it now, but that was Judge Minton's and his may have been the first one.

ET: Oh, was it?

JG: And then Kenley's is the one that is right next to it on the left going to his. And of course, Kenley and Minton were brothers in law, so they had the only two going back to at least the '30's. And then the one that Trey Denman has now, that was actually the Silvers'. He was one of the pasture riders, Mr. Silvers lived there and then later Grumbles. I forget all the different ones, but they were company employees.

ET: Oh, and Buddy had the cabin, his cabin was Rayville.

JG: Yes, that was the old Rayville house that was moved. I think Buddy moved it from Rayville to near where the clubhouse burned. Do you know when that was? Were y'all already married?

ET: It must have been before, no it was before '70.

JG: They shut the ranch down in the '30's. I know Kenley was still using it up into the '40's, but I don't know. If Buddy moved it though, it wouldn't have been, Buddy would have been an adult.

ET: I think Buddy moved it. I know that was his little hunting camp. And, then so...

JG: He may have moved that after the lodge burned, I bet, in '66.

ET: Yes, because he used to stay in the lodge with his dad. His dad had a room on the corner, and he had a room next to him.

JG: I bet he moved it there afterwards.

ET: Yes.

JG: So, between '66 and '70, I guess.

ET: And then I think just the hunting club was for, you know, it started out I think for executives of or maybe just good friends of the companies, or at that time it would have been good friends of the family, wouldn't it? And then when it became a public company, people who worked for the company. That is how it evolved into a place where some of them, not everybody who was a member of the hunting club had a cabin.

JG: I think somewhere in there was the transition to Scrappin' Valley, as more of the company entertainment spot, and this became more of a family club more than company. Whereas this was earlier always, since they discovered there were deer here, and there was actually a financial or business benefit to entertaining customers, county judges, lawyers, whoever was a friend of business.

ET: That with the lodge.

JG: Yes, and that kind of ended in '66 and I guess, you know, I think they already owned Scrappin by that time, but I think there was a transition...

ET: There was because...

JG: Scrappin' was more of the "company" entertainment and this became more of a "family," I guess. Would that be a fair assessment?

ET: Yes.

JG: Okay.

ET: I think...well family and executives. And after it was a public company it was executives I think, you know, who had the cabins. But the chili making that they did every year in February, started there at the little Boggy cabin, and then the first time I went to the chili making was in 1971 with Buddy and that was out at Scrappin' so I never went to the chili making at Boggy. We called it the Boggy Slough chili making, but it was at Scrappin'.

JG: But it was at Scrappin' Valley?

ET: Yes, then...yes it was a big lodge with lots of room.

JG: At Scrappin'?

ET: Yes, and so many people came there, like Lady Bird Johnson and Liz Carpenter.

JG: Now that was after the Time deal wasn't it?

ET: Right.

JG: Yes, because that was in '73.

ET: Yes, all the Time executives. There's I think the History Center has the book...

JG: Yes, the guest registry.

ET: And people came in from all over the country to Scrappin' Valley. Scrappin' Valley was different; it was long leaf pine country this is short leaf loblolly country. It was long leaf pine with clear streams, our streams have a lot of that tannic acid that turns the water brown, but the streams at Scrappin' were white, the sand bars were white and the streams flowed clear, there were seeps and pitcher plants and it was different. It was long leaf pine country. It was very different from this, but oh my gosh it was beautiful. You could walk through those woods in the fall along the creeks, it was open; unbelievable really. Lots of quail, very beautiful. I was fortunate in my life to be able to see and to experience this kind of forest and also a long leaf forest. Very lucky. Not everybody gets to have that opportunity so, I loved it. I've always loved being outside, grew up outside with my folks, you know hiking and paddling and still doing it.

JG: You were talking several times before about some of the trips you would take with your dad and that was important to him to take some road trips and picnic and things.

ET: Yep! We just, well he grew up in the northern forest and he hunted and trapped in the early 1910s, in 1915, 1916, '17, '18, in that time when it was just wild.

JG: Wow, that is when Boggy was just been logged and they were starting to ranch and everything just for perspective to the '10's. That is when your dad was growing up then right?

ET: Right.

JG: Okay.

ET: Yes, he was born in 1910 so he was growing up...

JG: In the late '10's yes.

ET: He was probably seven or eight when he started getting out in the woods trapping, but when you think about it the lumber, the paper, that is my family. My dad was paper making and the Temple family was lumber and also paper later on, but the plants are what unite us really, in so many ways. I mean my family, I was in book publishing business, so that is paper.

JG: Exactly.

ET: So in a way we live off the land in a different way than the original people did, you know, the Indians they lived off the land, the berries, the fruits and nuts and game but the divide where the humans are still living off the land but it's different way of doing it. Our challenge is for the future, is how do we as our population grows, how do we live off the land in a way that keeps it healthy and sustainable, so it can give us all the gifts. You think about all the gifts the land gives us. It gives us oxygen, the plants give us oxygen, the clean water, you know. I mean, water percolates through these forests and how do we

sustain that for the future. We hope that Boggy Slough will help answer some of those questions.

JG: I keep thinking that we are sitting right here at the cemetery and all these people with tombstones here and all their experiences here, and I don't know if they could have ever imagined we would be... someone would be sitting here talking about such things, you know, (**ET:** yes) with the lives that they had and what we're still learning about what they went through and their connections to the land.

ET: Well Jonathan driving around with you this morning and learning about the families who settled on this northern part of Boggy Slough, close to this cemetery, you know, down the roads and there was a school here at Pisgah, and that was just so delightful to hear about the little girl who loved her home, the little Christie girl.

JG: The pretty flowers on the hillside and the birds.

ET: The birds and the trees and the elm trees and that was very special.

JG: And it was right here, it wasn't just abstract poetry, it was real, that was the real thing.

ET: Right here.

JG: Right here, they went to school here and some of those accounts said...it was actually one of Charlie Harber's older sisters, she was interviewed by a fellow that wrote a book on Kennard and she said that they would have school going on when they would be having a funeral occasionally, and the teacher would always pay attention and if they were really good, the teacher would let them come out and watch. They always wanted to see who it was, and of course it would have been a community thing too, so nearly everybody would have known who it was and, you know, a community funeral or whatever, you know, but I just keep thinking about especially those Christies and the hard lives they had and the feuds and the killings and shootings and those funerals. We just got through walking by the dad and the twin boys that share the same death date and just to think about, you know, 105 years ago they were right where we are burying their daddy and their brothers and just all the strife and everything that was going on with that.

ET: And look how peaceful it is today. I mean all that, it was, I mean, I think living off the land was hard.

JG: Yes, we know and we hear things about earning a living and working the land, but we don't truly appreciate it and understand it because we don't have to.

ET: Yes.

JG: They had to.

ET: They had to and they had to get it all off the land.

JG: Whether it be the Indians or those settlers they had to do what it took to stay alive.

ET: Yes. And my appreciation keeps growing for the challenges that they overcame to have a life out here in the forest.

JG: You see those photographs, men and women alike, you know, and they look like they're 100 years old or something and they're in their forties, no older than their forties and just a hard life. We take so many comforts for granted, air conditioning and running water and clean sheets every night, just clean clothes. They were pretty much self-sufficient. They still...that is part of that transition period too of, it was even different from the 1850's to 1900. And of course the 1900's is when the railroad came through here, you know, that changed a lot. A lot of the boys were leaving the farms then, going to work to get away from the land. It is kind of ironic a lot of them ended up still digging in the dirt whether they worked on the railroad or cutting down pine trees for the sawmill.

ET: Yes.

JG: It was a way that they could leave the...even T.L.L. Temple supposedly left his mule in the field. You know, that is what Arthur Jr. used to always say that he farmed one day then he moved from Virginia to join his older brothers there in Arkansas, said he left his plow in the field.

ET: Oh my gosh!

JG: He said that is not for me.

ET: Well you have to admire the people who were able to make a... scratch a living.

JG: Yes exactly!

ET: Out of the land when they just had small plots and they somehow managed it. So, I do admire that.

JG: Just real quick, you were talking earlier about the need to have maybe a scientist, or I don't want to put words in your mouth, but someone who understood soils, what is going on below ground as much as, you know, we were talking a little bit about landscape and how that is kind of an outside-looking-in term and seeing just visually.

ET: Yes, the surface.

JG: Yes, what you see the surface, yes.

ET: Well we are just starting, and I think that will be part of the research here, you know, the life underground in a forest is like a big tree underground and it just sprawls out.

JG: Talking about the roots and the soils and...

ET: The fungus and the microbes and all the life that goes on, under on the forest floor.

JG: Within the soil.

ET: Within the soil that sustains the trees and the landscape above the soil, and how over time with intense use, how do you keep that health of the forest floor, you know, respect it and keep it healthy. Those will be questions for the future that we hopefully can discover. So, we have a lot to learn.

JG: I mean if you stop to think about so many little things like all the cattle they had up here and think about the soil compaction of the cattle and then today with big logging machines and equipment, you know, compacting the soil and the road work that is done and then mulchers and it's all labor saving, but even all those... your footprints are a little larger and deeper, more...it's totally different than a few dozen people out with mules and crosscut saws, when you bring in heavy equipment.

ET: But they've learned and I know there doing it at Ichauway and Robert is doing it here, you know, trying to manage the logging so it has a lighter impact on the forest floor, you know protect the floor. And I think we can all learn from those practices, you know. Try and discover the best practices here and then help spread the word and you know restoration is an evolving science and we have so much that we don't know, especially in East Texas.

JG: And we still don't know, I don't think, what to restore back to. When you talk about restoration.

ET: And there is no really going back to it.

JG: Your idea may be different than somebody else's.

ET: Well there is no...I don't think there is any...

JG: Restoration to what and at what level?

ET: Yes, and as we've said, humans have manipulated...

JG: There is no such thing as a virgin forest.

ET: No, they've manipulated it for a long, long, long time and at least in this part of the state.

JG: Right.

ET: On the west coast there is some redwood forests I think that haven't been touched, so they don't take that kind of restoration. But here, you know, we have an opportunity to do that work on a pretty big scale.

JG: Yes, and it's a good size. It's not too large, but it's not too small It's not going to have impact beyond it either. I guess there is always going to be challenges such as Chinese tallow...

ET: And hogs.

JG: ...and hogs, and then what the neighbors do or don't do.

ET: Yes that is a big...yes because you want to...one strong case for having conservation easements all along the river where land owners decide well, when my kids inherit this I don't want them to be able to chop it up, to fragment it. I want it to remain intact along the river and protect the river. I think more and more people are recognizing how important that is. Maybe eventually the Neches River on both sides will be protected. I hope so because it's better for the river, much better for the river. So I, what we learn here, we want to share and they're doing that in forests in Virginia and South Carolina, what forests they have left in Georgia and Alabama and Mississippi, Arkansas and East Texas is just late getting to that discovery phase. We haven't done a lot of the science here, and so, there's a big challenge, but a great opportunity for Boggy to lead the way.

JG: Okay, thank you very much.

ET: You're welcome!

END OF INTERVIEW