

John Ippolito
Interview 290a
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Jonathan Gerland, Interviewer
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ABSTRACT:

In this interview with Jonathan Gerland former National Forests and Grasslands in Texas archaeologist John Ippolito reminisces about his career. Starting with his education at Texas A&M University, Mr. Ippolito recalls his first experiences in the field in West Texas and on the Texas coast, his path to becoming an archaeologist in East Texas, and the particular challenges of doing archaeology in the National Forests. He discusses the balance between forest management and harvesting needs versus archaeological needs, working with other government entities like the Army Corps of Engineers and the Texas Historical Commission, and how he, and later his staff, documented archaeological finds. He also discusses changes in forest management practices, fire prevention and use, and grazing within the National Forests.

Jonathan Gerland (hereafter JG): Okay, today's date is October 15, 2019. My name is Jonathan Gerland. I'm at The History Center today with John Ippolito and we are going to do an oral history interview. John maybe to get started, just tell me a little bit about where you were born and where you were raised, growing up, and how you went into the archeology field as a profession.

John Ippolito (hereafter JI): Okay, well I was born in Port Arthur, raised there, went to high school there, a small Catholic high school called Bishop Byrne. I graduated from there. I went off to A&M and was initially an electrical engineering major. Midway through my sophomore year the Dean of Engineer called me in and said, "you know you're really not cut out to be an engineer, your grades are showing it." And then he said, "if you can find another department on campus that will have you, I won't have to kick you out of school." So, I thanked him for being so candid with me and asked him if he had any suggestions, So, he slid a business card across the table for the head of the political science department. And his comment to me was, as he slipped the card was "I hear they're looking for warm bodies, I think you'll fit the bill." So, anyhow, I changed my major to political science and my grades immediately went up. I was having major difficulties with chemistry and advanced math. So, there was no way in the world I was ever going to be an electrical engineer.

JG: What did your parents do for a living?

JI: My parents, my mother for the most part, was stay at home mom. Now, she worked during the war years for Gulf Oil. She was an accountant.

JG: During World War II?

JJ: During World War II. And then for a period of time after I was born, not long after I was born, she worked for Sears Roebuck Store there, in their accounting department. She did that oh probably until the late fifties right before my baby sister was born was when she quit. My dad did a number of different things, he was up until...from the time he got back from the war in 1946-1951 he helped his father run a grocery store in west Port Arthur and Dad was the primary butcher for the store and ordered meat and all that.

JG: What was the name of it?

JJ: It was Ippolito's Grocery.

JG: Okay.

JJ: So, but in 1951 two things happened. One...three things, I was born in June of that year and about three months after I was born my grandfather died unexpectedly of a heart attack and then about three months after that the store burned to the ground. So, Dad...my grandfather had done some real estate investments around Port Arthur, so they had family property in different places. My dad and his brother decided in the early 1950's, or before '51, I guess in 1949 or 1950, to start a minor league baseball team and their first season to play was in 1950, I guess it was 1951. They were called the Port Arthur Seahawks. Well, after the store burned, Dad took over the managerial duties of the team for the '52, '53 and '54 seasons. And my uncle at the time was working for the Post Office, but he also was an officer. It was family run thing. They were an equivalent of a high single A or low double A Minor league team by today's standards.

JG: Did they play the Beaumont Exporters?

JJ: They played the Exporters, they played the team... what was the minor league team in Houston? There were teams up here in Jacksonville and Tyler that they played on a regular basis.

JG: Was it a Texas League?

JJ: It was called the Gulf Coast League.

JG: The Gulf Coast League.

JJ: There were teams in Lake Charles and Lafayette, Louisiana. I think maybe as far south maybe as Corpus Christie. Anyway, Dad did that and then in 54 they sold the club, they sold the property where the stadium was to the Presbyterian Church. The First Presbyterian Church tore down the stadium and built a church there that stayed there until the early 2000's, I think. I think they tore it down maybe right after [hurricane] Rita. It was damaged during Rita and they had already moved the congregation somewhere else and put the property on sale. But the neat thing about that is the main pulpit in the church sat right over home plate, where home plate would have been in the baseball stadium. So, anyway.

JG: Did any of your siblings, older siblings, had they gone to college? Where were you? Did your dad or mom go to college?

JJ: My dad went to A&M for one semester, the fall of '42, and when he got home for Christmas he said he had two letters arrived for him while he was home for Christmas break, one was from the President of the University saying he could come back and the other was from the President of the United States saying, "Congratulations, you've been drafted." So, dad went off to the Army. Mom went to a business college; it later became Port Arthur Business College and is now Lamar University of Port Arthur. But it had a different name before it was Port Arthur Business College and I forget what that name was. But Mom went there and learned accounting skills, a two-year deal. So anyway, Dad went off to war, and actually I guess the winter of '43 went off to basic and then he spent two years in the Pacific and was discharged in late '45 and came back to Port Arthur in '46. I have one older sister that was born in 1949. She also went to Port Arthur College initially to be a radiology technician, and her first day in practical labs she had to observe a surgery and decided the blood made her faint, so they kicked her out of the radiology program. She ended up in a business kind of thing too. The I have a younger sister born in 1959, she was a late surprise and she also graduated from A&M in '81 and she has been working primarily in the banking business and in nonprofits since she graduated. She lives down in Richmond.

JG: So that kind of sets the stage for you going and now you're a political science major.

JJ: I'm a political science major and that is going along pretty well, but I needed to declare a minor at some point. Well I had taken like three or four sociology classes.

JG: So about what years are these?

JJ: This would be 1972, late '72.

JG: Okay.

JJ: Spring of '72 is when I took, no summer of '72 is when I took my first anthropology class. The Anthropology program was established at A&M in 1972 as part of the sociology department.

JG: This was all toward your political science...

JJ: Yes, I was a Political Science major and I needed a minor, a liberal arts minor. That was a requirement back then, and so like I said, I took a couple of sociology classes because I like them. I took some psychology classes because there was a girl I wanted to meet. And anyway, so it came time to pick another sociology elective, well, Dr. Vaughn Bryant was...it was his first semester there to teach, summer of '72, and he was teaching an introduction to Anthropology, a Cultural Anthropology Class during summer session

1. So, I took that class and liked it. It was really fun and I think I made an A in it. I don't remember. So, starting the fall of '72 they started increasing the number of classes for Anthropology. Well, to make a long story short when I graduated in December of '73 with my Political of Science Degree, my BA in Political Science, I had amassed almost 45 hours of anthropology classes, and by December of '73 Anthropology had split off from sociology as a separate department and was just starting to offer graduate classes as well. So, I needed 30 more semester hours to get a degree in Anthropology, another Bachelors degree. So that was a spring and two summers.

And, so I stayed in school, there wasn't a lot of a job market for political science graduates in 1973 and '74, so I stayed in school, got my Anthropology degree awarded in August of '74. And from there I wasn't sure what I was going to do. I stayed in College Station and I did, I worked as assistant manager of a pizza store for 6 months. That was kind of fun for awhile and then it got to be really tiresome working 12- and 14-hour days 7 days a week with no break. So, then I did some other odd jobs and started graduate studies in the winter semester of '75. That semester fall of '74 I took off and then was taking some graduate level classes. I wasn't sure what I was going to do in grad school. I took political science classes that spring, I think I took two or three classes. Then, the first summer session of '75 I started a sociology class, a graduate-level sociology class and in the middle of that summer session I was out, I lived in an apartment complex off campus, was in the apartment complex laundry room doing laundry one day, next to the pool and I looked up and there was a gentleman named Harry Shafer. Harry was the archeologist on faculty and I had taken five or six classes under him. He had, so it was a chance meeting on a Sunday afternoon, we're both sitting around the pool and he had just recently separated from his wife, so he was a brand new bachelor, but we were sitting there and he said, "hey in about a week we are going out to west Texas for the rest of the summer to excavate a dry rock shelter would you be interested in coming out for a week and volunteering?" I said, "yes." No second guesses. "I said sure that would be perfect." He said, "we can't pay you but we will provide you room and board." The room was a tent and we all did our own cooking. We were on a ranch out near between Comstock and Langtry on a side canyon to the Pecos River called Still Canyon. Like I said, we tent camped on the ranch, our shower was a water hose hooked up to a windmill pulling water up off of 600 feet of limestone so the only person that got anything close to a warm shower was the very first person because the water hose had set out in the sun all day. Once that hot water was gone it was cold showers.

JG: Cold yes!

JJ: So anyway, I went out there planning to stay a week and ended up staying 8 weeks that first summer. And I came back to College Station in mid-August and we were cleaning up artifacts and whatever and putting away gear, and Dr. Shafer came in to the lab one day and he said, "hey we have a contract starting in early September for 3 months down in the Freeport area would you be interested in being a shovel hand?" I said sure!

JG: Was that what you were doing out in West Texas?

JJ: Yes, in West Texas everybody did everything. That sight was called Hines Cave and it had 9,000 years of continual cultural occupation starting about 11,000 BC, up 'till well... starting about 9,000 BC up to 0 AD, maybe the first century. So, there were Paleo Indian artifacts, there were archaic artifacts, there were some late archaic building into the early ceramic period, all though there were no ceramics in the shelter. There were two sites actually on the top of the ridge above the shelter, fire ring sites that had ceramics. There was enough age overlap between the carbon-14 dates we were getting from those sites and from the shelter. There was probably about a 400 to 500-year overlap. So, there may have been some connection between those sites and the cave. But it was, there were 9,000 years of occupation and about a meter and half, meter and three quarters of fill, so of course, the interview can't see this but about four and a half feet to five feet of fill.

JG: And you did everything?

JJ: We did everything. We excavated; we did profiles...

JG: And you enjoyed it since you were there 8 weeks.

JJ: I loved it! It was great! A lot of that had to do with the socializing that went on after we got back to camp because every night was pretty much the same story. Even though it was middle of summer we built a campfire. We would sit around with cases of beer, two or three people had guitars, so there would be singing going on and beer drinking and we would stay up until one or two in the morning and then we were up at 5:30 because breakfast was at a quarter of six and by 6:30 we were headed off to the site. We were camped about two miles from the site and there were no roads going down there so we hiked from camp to the site every morning. We carried empty backpacks going and then we carried full backpacks coming back that were full of rocks and artifacts and what have you. Then when we would get back, we would catalog all the artifacts and...

JG: Didn't have four-wheelers and...

JJ: Didn't have four-wheelers and even if we'd have had four-wheelers, you couldn't have... you might have gotten within a mile of the canyon rim, but you weren't going to get any closer than that it was just too rough. So, I came out that summer in the best shape of my life even though we were, like I said we drank a lot of water and we drank a lot of beer. The last night out there we drank a lot of mezcals and tequila because we would go into Del Rio every three days, we had a rotation of folks, every three days we would go in to buy groceries and ice and pick up supplies. Most of that being a couple of days supply of beer. We would probably go through a couple of cases a night, there were 15 of us, I think. And so, you know, there was this constant thing on that. We would work 10 days on and have 4 days off. Some of those times on 4 days rest we would head back to College Station. We'd take a Suburban full of artifacts and what have you and leave at the lab in College Station, clean up and do laundry. Several times we just stayed in Del Rio and got hotel rooms in Del Rio where we could get a hot shower and eat a meal in a restaurant rather than our own camp cooking. So, we ended up doing that for 8 weeks primarily that summer. Then when I got back, I got offered an opportunity to work

on a contract project in Freeport, in the Freeport area. It paid minimum wage, which I think at the time was maybe \$2.65 an hour. I got \$10 a day per diem to cover lodging and food, which at the time I felt rich, you know. That was more than enough money to survive on. There were three of us I guess working on that project, so we rented a beach house at Surfside, split the rent three ways and in 1975 that was total rent may have been \$100 a week, or no it was a \$100 a month so it worked out and then again, we were buying our own food.

JG: What was the job? What were you trying to do?

JJ: We were doing surveys for the Corps of Engineers on some proposed projects they had. Two of the large areas were reservoir sites for dredged materials out of the intercoastal canal. On that segment of the Intercoastal Canal from San Luis Pass almost to the Brazos River. We had two large, and I forget what the acreage was on those, maybe 2,000 acres apiece, areas that were designated. They built levees dug them out a little bit and that is where they pumped dredge material to reclaim it. Then the other part of the project was an expansion of the ship channel coming from the Gulf into Freeport. And that expansion, I don't know if it ever was completed because we found the site of a place called Fort Velasco, which was right next to what was then the Coast Guard station down there, and Fort Velasco was an outpost built by the Mexican Government in the 1820's. It was taken over by Texian forces in 1832 and was used primarily to provide safe passage up...what was that river? It is not the Brazos; it is what the Brazos used to be because the Brazos changed routes up near Clute. I forget what this arm of the river is called. I will have to look at a map, but anyway it provides access to the Port of Freeport and also to the, now in modern days, to the intercoastal canal. Now, Fort Velasco was built to provide security for shipping coming into Freeport area and we found just through our historical records research the location of where it should be. We did enough shovel testing and recovered artifacts indicative of that time period to say yes, we think it is here. It is in Surfside. It's in a subdivision, you know, a residential area and the Coast Guard station had like three acres in high fence that the station sat on and there is some Port buildings and what have you. That was part of the widening was because that was already property in federal ownership. It wouldn't have to be acquired. They were going to move the Coast Guard station to accommodate the widening of the channel.

Like I said, we recorded Fort Velasco and provided data on that, nominated it to the National Register of Historic Places and when we did that, it put the quietus on that segment of the channel widening, so they had to go back and re-engineer and take...this would have been on the east bank of the channel, they had to go re-engineer and do the widening on the west bank of the channel. Well the problem with the west bank of the channel was there were two World War II era armaments in that same area that were going to have to be removed. And now in 1975 those didn't meet the age requirements under the National Register. They weren't quite 50 years old yet. They were maybe 35-40 years old. So, that was all the Corps of Engineers needed to say okay, we will go, we'll proceed forward with that. Again, this was 1975, we spent three months, September, October, November, down there doing that work. We wrote the report over Christmas, December of '75 and into about March of '76 ['76] we finished the report, submitted it.

And I don't think the project ever actually got implemented until sometime in the late 80's early 90's. Corps of Engineers did three more archaeological projects around Fort Velasco and there were elements of the Fort that were discovered, but the overriding conclusion was that most of the evidence of the occupation had been removed and was destroyed. So anyway, that was my first job and I was able to stay employed as an archeologist starting from September of '75 until I retired from the Forest Service in 2011 and actually, I kept doing consulting work until 2017. So I built a fairly decent career without having a graduate degree. That is a bit unusual. I was fortunate in that I was able to fall into places at the right time, get particular positions and all that. So, but I worked primarily as a field archeologist for most of 1976 to '78, then 1978 I did my first job as a project supervisor and all these were with A&M. We worked all over the state. We did projects in West Texas around Iraan and Sanderson. We did projects in central Texas in Milam County, Rockdale, Taylor, Georgetown area. The first project that I was project supervisor on was actually a land exchange for the Forest Service. They were exchanging some acreage for...

JG: U.S. Forest Service?

JJ: The U.S. Forest Service. They were exchanging acreage over near Huntington off of 2109 to I think it was Louisiana Pacific. They were getting that land in exchange what is now called the Star Tract. That is the long leaf timber country out around Scrappin' Valley, the lower end of the Sabine National Forest in Sabine and Jasper Counties. And of course, all those exchanges were value for value exchanges, so they were giving up the land near Huntington came to about 6,000 acres. The Forest Service acquired upwards of 10,000 acres in that land exchange over in long leaf country.

JG: And that was for both of you to consolidate?

JJ: Yes, consolidate boundary lines. A chunk of the property going to Louisiana Pacific had been surveyed and was to become a lignite mine. LP had an agreement with Shell Oil to mine lignite out of that acreage. Now, that never came about because in the meantime the whole lignite operation turned out to be not financially viable in the state of Texas, even though you had mines up in North East Texas for the steel mills up there. You had a large mine near Rockdale providing lignite coal for Alcoa Aluminum, a big plant there in Rockdale. And then you had that whole strain of lignite that stretched all the way down towards San Antonio in probably a 100-mile wide swath. So, you had lignite mine projects in most of the late 70's until the mid-80's all along that strain of lignite where it had been mapped geologically, but very few of those projects ever came to fruition. Probably the biggest one and I worked on that project, the biggest one was over outside of Carlos, in Grimes County, the Gibbons Creek Facility. They built the power plant there initially as a lignite powered plant. Texas Municipal Power Agency [TMPA] was the...had been established by the State Legislature in the late 70's, much like our municipal utility districts are today. But TMPA was given eminent domain powers to acquire land for a power plant, a cooling lake and then lignite mining. Big time legal controversy ensued over that and it was led by John Henry Faulk, the noted Folklore humorist, he lived up near Madisonville. Because lignite operation was stretching all the

way up from along the Navasota River from just south of Highway 30 almost all the way to Madisonville, taking in towns of Bedias of course Carlos. That project did come to fruition. They mined lignite there for about 4 or 5 years, then discovered they could get hard coal from Wyoming and a much cheaper rate so they shut the lignite operation down and did all the reclamation work and started shipping hard coal from Wyoming in to fund that plant. Then that plant was converted from coal to natural gas sometime in the late 90's, early 2000's, but it is still operating. We did that project. I worked on just a small segment of the survey and then did two site evaluations for historic sites that we were recording. Anyway, so going back the '78 project that I did over here outside of Huntington was kind of my foot in the door with the Forest Service. I got to know... my contacts with the Forest Service were a guy named Duane Strock and Clint Sykes, was in that picture, then Duane's boss was a guy named Mitch Gurganus and at that time the forest did not have an archeologist on staff. They were trying to take care of their Section 106 compliance needs strictly with contracts. So, anyway to make a long story short, the year '78 goes along and right before Christmas in '78 I get a call from Dewayne and he says, "hey we are thinking of putting an archeologist on staff here in Lufkin would you be interested?" Well I had a couple of things in the works and was still in grad school because I was working and going to grad school at the same time, so I said "Well give me to after New Year's and I'll let you know." He said, "okay that is fine."

So New Years comes and goes and about mid-January, a big project that we had bid on and been told we were awarded fell through. So, in the case of most things, economics were going to come into play as far as my future because at the end of January I ran out of funding under the contracts that I had been working under. This new contract that we ended up not getting that was going to fund me for the rest of that year. So, I called DeWayne up and said, "yes, I'd be happy." So, the original set up was a program called The Intergovernmental Personnel Act [IPA]. It was an act that was passed under the Carter administration in '76-77, sometime during that period. What it set up was the ability for people from academia to go work directly for Federal agencies through an agreement where they wouldn't be hired into the work force per say. They would stay with whatever their pay scale was or whatever entity they were working for, their retirement benefits would stay the same, but they would basically be stationed in a federal facility doing work for that federal agency. And that is how I got into the Forest Service was initially under an Intergovernmental Personnel Act appointment. They were for two- years duration and kind of the ideal of the program was that it gave people an opportunity to work within an agency and see whether or not they liked it and then work from there on something more permanent. So, that is how I came to Lufkin in February of '79 to work with the Forest Service under I.P.A. I was a staff of one. I was responsible for all compliance projects on all 666,000 acres of the National Forest and Grasslands. I was assigned a vehicle. It was a 1966 Dodge power wagon with about 300,000 miles on it, three speed on the floor with a granny gear. The neat thing about that on some occasions I could take, especially on the Grasslands if I was going across a pasture, I could put the truck in granny gear and get out and walk alongside it if I had to. And, it wasn't a very easy driving truck but it was functional. So, anyway '79 and '80 I'm on the I.P.A, it was for two years and I was asked if I would be willing to extend for another two years. I said, "sure." At that point I was settling into the job and I was enjoying it.

JG: Who did you report to?

JJ: Dewayne Strock was my immediate supervisor and like I said Mitch Gurganus was our...

JG: Did your assignments come through him too?

JJ: Assignments came from Mitch to Dewayne to me.

JG: And Mitch is who?

JJ: He was the Recreation and Fire Staff Officer, Mitch Gurganus, G-u-r-g-a-n-u-s. Now Mitch left the Forest Service in early 1980, went into private industry and the guy that came in behind him was a fella named Jim Page. Jim was here until about '86 or '87.

JG: So, what were some of the typical jobs you did?

JJ: Mostly had to do with timber sales and at that time we were still doing clear cuts, 40-acre clear cuts, so we would...

JG: So, these were already established plantations?

JJ: They were already established plantations for the most part, again it was even aged management, so you know. I would get a project proposal. It would be about a two-acre log landing and then 30-40 acres of clear cutting. So, I would go out prior to the sale and look at the area that was going to be the log landing and then I would go back after the sale and look at the area that had been clear cut. They were thick plantations. You weren't going to get anything done, you couldn't see the surface of the ground, to look for surface artifacts. There wasn't enough elbow room within the plantation to do shovel testing, so you weren't going to be able to do any shovel testing, so I worked with the Historical Commission informally to get an agreement that when it came to even age management, I could look at the clear cuts after they had been harvested. That way I had exposed surface. I could see land forms more clearly and I had room to shovel test the areas where I needed to shovel test. Most of my work for those first five to six, probably dozen years, was doing timber harvest, pre-timber harvest surveys of one type or another.

JG: Pre-harvest surveys?

JJ: Pre-harvest surveys of the log landings and the roads. We had a process built...3

JG: But now when you say surveys, you're not meaning archeological surveys are you?

JJ: Yes, archeological surveys where I would go out and walk, say walk a proposed route of a road, a road of the timber sales...

JG: But you wouldn't do any shovel test?

JJ: I would do some. At that time, we were still working under the premise that I was looking for surface artifacts to indicate where sites were. I was looking for land forms and surface artifacts.

JG: But this is already an established plantation?

JJ: This is already an established plantation.

JG: Tons of disturbance.

JJ: The land forms had already been modified even in those areas where you had mature timber the land forms had already been modified many, many times over. So, I was doing shovel testing as a supplemental survey technique, not as a standard survey technique. And then starting in about '85 or '86 my philosophy changed to where when I would do a survey it was shovel testing at known increments where they did 10 meters, 20 meters, whatever, down a road. If it was a timber sale or something more like that...

JG: Was that your decision?

JJ: It was my decision because at that point I wasn't finding much and I knew there were sites out there. I was building a database of areas that had been surveyed and what level and a database of sites had been recorded. I had all of the data from the surveys that were done in the late '50's, early '60's for Toledo Bend, Sam Rayburn and Lake Conroe. We had...right before I started my tenure with the Forest Service in '79, the Forest Service had a contract with the University of Texas Archeological Research Laboratory where all the site files were curated for the state and they still are. That contract was to provide an inventory of all sites within the Forest Service claim boundaries and administrative boundaries. So, the way that contract went forest maps from the time were sent to TRAL.

JG: And that is T-A-R-L.

JJ: Yes, TARK, and set down with forest maps and with corresponding quad maps and then plotted the locations of all the sites that were in the records. So, we had virtually all of Sam Rayburn, virtually all of the Texas side of Toledo Bend, and everything on the north side of lake Conroe. These were plots on maps, site forms, references to any publications to those sites.

JG: And that is Forest Service lands, Angelina, Sabine, Sam Houston.

JJ: Angelina, Sabine, Davy Crockett, Sam Houston, then the Caddo and LBJ Grasslands. The LBJ Grasslands were in Wise County and the Caddo Grasslands were in Fannin County.

JG: So, all those work for the big lakes that was all at TARK?

JJ: All at TARL and all the artifacts were covered from that and all the burials were covered from those projects. Of course, one of the things I discovered is that a lot of that data wasn't much help to me particularly on Rayburn and Toledo Bend, the emphasis, the survey emphasis, was on locating large village sites in the flood plains that were going to be inundated. There was very little attention paid to what ended up being the shore line margins, which were the ridges where your archaic and early ceramic sites were going to be found. You know, the villages were all late ceramic or late prehistoric and they were all down in the bottoms and closer proximity to the channels. So, in terms of trying to do any kind of predictive modeling, I had tons of data if I had areas equivalent to the Angelina River or the Sabine River or Attoyac Bayou for instance, or the San Jacinto River. If un-inundated areas of those water sheds then I could take that data and build a model, a predictive model on where sites might be. But, I had virtually nothing on the shoreline margins, what are now the shoreline margins, and we knew there were sites there because they had already started eroding out. All along the shores of Sam Rayburn you've got sites that were not recorded during those surveys because they were outside of the flood pool but they ended up being right on the shoreline. A young man named Cary Webber was the, one of the Corps of Engineer employees on Rayburn when I started working here. Carey also had an anthropology degree from A&M. He and I had some classes together. He was about two years behind me, but he got into recreation management and that line of work rather than archeology. But archeology was still a hobby to him, so he took it upon himself to start recording sites and collecting artifacts along Sam Rayburn, along the shoreline and when I moved here...

JG: But that wasn't his official job?

JJ: Oh, it wasn't his official job it was something he did on his own time, on weekends. On weekends he would get in his boat and go putter up and down the shoreline and get out and look for artifacts.

JG: Did he turn the stuff into TARL?

JJ: He curated as much of it as he could at his office at the lake.

JG: At the Corps.

JJ: At the Corps, until probably 1985 or '86 and then we worked an arrangement where I took over curation responsibilities for most of the artifacts that he had recorded, or recovered and then we eventually put those in our collection and now they're at Texas State, I guess.

JG: San Marcos.

JJ: At San Marcos. But Carey, when he left Sam Rayburn...

JG: But some of that could have come from the Corps land?

JJ: Well it was Corps land, what we tried to focus on in terms of what we transferred to the Forest Service was shoreline property that was adjacent to Forest Service boundaries because the Forest Service did not own all the way down to the water line. There was a dedicated easement that the Corps of Engineers was responsible for. Basically from the tree line to the waters edge was Corps of Engineer responsibility, from the tree line going into the forest was Forest Service responsibility even though you might have had 30 years of erosion that ate away at the shore line, it was a floating boundary line.

JG: It fluctuating between...

JJ: Depending on where the tree line was verses where the...so, we focused on those sites and there were probably 25 or 30. But that kind of helped with building a, starting our beginnings of building a database and predictive modeling of where we could go and expect to find sites in the forest general. So, in 1983, my second extension with the I.P.A. was due to expire. You were only allowed two, two-year terms. So, Jim Paige was the staff officer then, he decided, he and the forest supervisor decided I needed to stay on permanent, so then we started the whole...

JG: And who was the supervisor then?

JJ: At that time, it was, it would have been Mike Lannon. Mr. Courtney, John Courtney was the forest supervisor when I started to work in '79. He retired in the spring of 1980 and then Mike came on sometime in late '80 and he was here until '84 or '85. So, anyway that started a hiring process and I got selected for the job.

JG: Did you write your own job description?

JJ: Basically, I got to write my own job description and quals. But I had to go through the whole thing competitively because that is the way the rules were written and still are. So, beginning in...my first date in terms of being a permanent employee of the Forest Service would have been February 1, 1984. And that date was important to me because January 31, 1983 was the cut off date for being eligible for the Civil Service Retirement system and then having to be as part of the new Federal Employees Retirement system. CSRS was a much better deal in terms of retirement, so I missed it by 31 days being part of CSRS. So I started, again it was the same job up until 1994 I was still a one man show, doing everything by myself, trying to keep up with the work load and failing miserably most of the time but still able to keep the wolves off the Forest Service's back as far as what we...our timing of surveys and all that.

JG: Were you still following timber harvest activities?

JJ: Still primarily following timber harvest, but beginning in the mid '80's, '85 or '86 about the time we started working on the forest plan in '86, we changed our way of doing business and primarily as a result of the law suit.

JG: Say a little bit about the lawsuit just so we know what you're talking about.

JJ: The lawsuit was filed by Ned Fritz and what was the pre-cursor to the Conservation Alliance...Ned had an organization. They filed...

JG: TCONR.

JJ: TCONR, yes, Texas Commission on Natural Resources. They filed a lawsuit in the mid '70's, I think '76, against the Forest Service for not abiding by our own regulations under the Natural Forest Management Act and Endangered Species Act. Their main contention was the way we were harvesting and planning harvests were destroying habitat for the Red Cockaded Woodpecker and damaging water quality. That lawsuit drug on...when was it finally resolved in the late '90s, maybe? But in response to the lawsuit like I said in the mid '80s, we started changing our way of doing business and getting away from even age management into selective cutting. C-tree cuts, those kinds of things. Complicating all that was starting in 1979 on about a four-year cycle, we would have these large outbreaks of Southern Pine Beetles and the SPB work, the salvage work aligned with SPB control...

JG: That is Southern Pine Beetle, SPB.

JJ: Southern Pine Beetle... ended up taking the vast majority of our resources for the timber program in terms of people, timber markers, surveyors, those kinds of things, harvest inspectors. We were just constantly starting from 1979 up until the last big outbreak might have been in 1991 or 1992. Like I said, on a three to four-year cycle that would just consume everything for a year or two. So, another part of that was the forestry science, the foresters, also realized that doing strictly even age management and having those large areas of similar aged timber at those ages that were conducive to the SPB infestation was not the best way to do business. So, it was the SPB, plus the effects of the lawsuit that generated the change in the way we did business. We went to more thinning sales, selective cutting, that kind of thing.

JG: So how did you'll do that on established pine plantations? Was it a gradual conversion?

JJ: You just had to make a decision, draw a line in the sand on this date and from this date forward we are going to change, change the age class from an even age to an uneven age and do it by selective cutting at different stages.

JG: This may be beyond what you were involved with, but like the last cut of a plantation, you did the pulpwood cut then you do the final harvest. So what did y'all do with that? Did y'all leave certain trees or did you plant?

JJ: No, of course we left seed trees in most of the areas.

JG: So after you did the first thinning...

JJ: We did the first thinning...

JG: The next cut...

JJ: We would do the next cut then the next cut was selective and we left seed trees.

JG: Okay.

JJ: Pretty much got away from mechanical site prep and mechanical planning.

JG: This is still all pretty much all loblolly, right?

JJ: Still loblolly, you're trying to manage it as longleaf, or we did some conversions during that period of time.

JG: What do you mean by conversions?

JJ: From loblolly to either short leaf or long leaf.

JG: Okay.

JJ: Primarily into longleaf and again it was focused on the lower end of the Angelina and the lower end of the Sabine, where longleaf was already well established. We were actually a testing ground for a number of years for different types of containerized seedlings and doing morbidity studies and all that and surviveability. They were trying small 5-10 acre plots.

JG: So how did that affect what you were doing?

JJ: Well it changed the way I had to go about doing archeological work, because we went from doing... a 25, 30 to 40-acre clear cut was pretty easy to survey because it was a well defined boundary. Either there were or there weren't going to be any land forms in there that were interesting. You could see them pretty easily. It took on average maybe two to three weeks to do the field work on a clear cut. We went from doing things in 25-40 acre increments to doing things in 2,000 to 4,000 acre increments on some of these sales, so there was no way in the world as a staff of one that I could keep up with the workload on the timber sale program as well as, because I also had to deal with the Southern Pine Beetle work. That also fell under the criteria for archeological work under Section 106.

JG: Because that would be harvesting as well.

JJ: That was harvesting as well.

JG: So you were chasing all that.

JJ: So we were chasing all that. And in those cases, those mimicked the even age management style pretty much, so we would look at transportation needs, any access roads and then the log landings, the log decks, and then skid trails because everything would be skidded to a central location.

JG: I guess in a sense you're going to get into hiring staff, so I don't want to omit that, but back up if you would and this answer may extend into having staff as well, but what were you looking for when you did these clear cut or not clear cut when you were doing them yourself what were you looking for?

JJ: I was primarily looking for stone artifacts and ceramic artifacts. At that stage of my career I still considered myself more a pre-historic archeologist rather than a historic archeologist. I really didn't care about the early 20th century homesteads or the late 19th century homesteads. I was somewhat interested in the old sawmills because we had Aldridge on the Angelina and we had the 4-C structures on the Davy Crockett and at that time getting into interpretation activities as well so I focused on those. But really, outside of that I didn't...

JG: So, if you found an old iron lock from a musket or granny's glasses or something like that?

JJ: If I could look at it and definitely say this was pre dated 1900, I would note it, I would record it, I would do other collections in the area, maybe a little bit of shovel testing to see. I would go back then after the fact and do the land records research to see if there were any old homes or... Most of our acquisition records at the time the forest was acquired, those lands were acquired in the '30's. Most of those acquisition records came with building inventories. What was on the property at the time it was acquired and where those buildings were located. So, if I found an area for instance, I did a project over...

JG: A lot of that could have even been tenants' homes not necessarily the owners.

JJ: Yes, most of them were tenants' homes because you still had tenant farming going on until the late forties, early fifties.

JG: Even after the government owned it.

JJ: Yes, because there were provisions in the acquisition to allow the tenants to stay for a period of time until they could find other places to move. They weren't immediately kicked out. They were given, I forget if it was 10 or 15 years. So, we had those records so yes, if I found a bunch of historic glass or square nails or...

JG: Again, was that a hard date 1900?

JJ: It was a hard date in my mind. At that time, I wasn't concerned with historic sites post 1900 except for the sawmills. So again...

JG: And again, that was your decision, your parameters?

JJ: That was my decision. Speaking archeologically, it was a bad decision, but it turned out not be a huge issue because once I got additional staff, we then started focusing more on some of the historical components as well as the pre-historic. And fortunately, with the change in the way we had started harvesting, the impact on the land forms was minimal or nonexistent. So, we were able to go back into those areas and look for the historical components that were there.

JG: So, now there may be guidelines from U.S. Forest Service, but if I'm hearing you right there really wasn't much of a guideline during your time except for pre-historic.

JJ: The only guidelines we had to work by were the code of Federal Regulations Section 36, which is all the regulations that were created in response to the Antiquities Act of 1906 and the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Then there was something called the Moss-Bennett Bill in 1968, which the Moss-Bennett Bill...

JG: And this is all federal land?

JJ: All federal lands. The Moss-Bennett Bill was particular to Corps of Engineers projects, lands that were going to be federal but hadn't been acquired yet. Basically the Moss-Bennett Bill just brought all those lands, say if the Corps was proposing to build the Rockland Dam and Lake for instance, if they were going to bring that back the Moss-Bennett Bill, even though they didn't own the land, the Moss-Bennett Bill would give the Corps the authority to conduct the environmental studies that were necessary including the archeology. So, we had those regulations, but they're pretty broad and within the Forest Service we had a Forest Service manual, an entire Section 2360 devoted to Cultural and Historical resources.

JG: You did have that when you started?

JJ: We did have that.

JJ: It was broad in general and left a lot of discretion to the on-field personnel as to how the manual was interpreted and how it was applied in their particular circumstances. Because when you're looking at the entirety of the United States, there were things in the southwest for instance, that didn't apply in the southeast in terms of types of sites and types of artifacts, impacts on those sites and artifacts. And so, the regulations in the manual were written vaguely enough to give you some local discretion on how you went about doing things. I tried to take full advantage of any leeway that I was given. Like I said, I was a one person staff with anywhere from, by the time we made the switch to switch the harvest method, I was probably looking at upwards of 20,000 acres a year that were being impacted or being planned. And, I had to find whatever shortcuts I could to stay on top of the necessary compliance related activities to keep us in good stead with the Historical Commission.

JG: So, this is mostly, especially when it was a pine plantation, I mean these are uplands right? Were y'all doing any logging in the bottoms? Were there any hardwoods?

JJ: No hardwood going at all. The only hardwood I recall being harvested in a regular basis was that, that might be needed to clean up after a southern pine beetle infestation.

JG: That would be more where you would find the Indian artifacts right?

JJ: Generally, if you had a large enough hardwood component, the southern pine beetle wasn't going to be a problem.

JG: But it's that transition between the bottoms and uplands?

JJ: Right.

JG: Did you get to do much of that? I'm just trying to envision, because my next question would be did you find, what did you find pre-historic overall? You don't have to tell me the sight or anything.

JJ: We got to do some of that in different locations.

JG: But did you get discouraged?

JJ: On a daily basis, yes! That is why starting in about 1991 I started whining about needing extra staff, especially since I was being brought in to more and more things that didn't involve field work. I was assigned to the Forest Planning team for instance in 1986 to develop the forest management plan. I was part of that. Well, that was initially about one day a month, then it became one day every two weeks, then it became one day every week and then it became multiple days every week, until the plan was finished. But as a staff of one I couldn't do what was expected of me for that and at the same time take care of the field work.

JG: I don't want to jump around but I may do it anyways. When you say the forest plan in '86 it sounds like, what is the significance of that?

JJ: Well the Forest Management Act of 1976 dictated that all National Forests in the system develop a Forest Management Plan that was environmentally sound, economically viable and sustainable.

JG: Was it state by state or forest by forest?

JJ: It was forest by forest. It started out early on as what we called unit plans. There was one done for the Sam Houston, one done for the Angelina, one done for the Davy Crockett, and one done for the Sabine. Those were all done not long after the NFMA passed, or was established, which I think was '96 or '76, I may be...NFMA may have been even earlier than the '70's. I don't remember. So anyway, those unit plans were

done then the regulations changed as NEPA [National Environmental Policy Act] regulations were integrated.

JG: And go ahead for the recorder and say what that is.

JJ: NEPA is the National Environmental Policy Act, the NEPA regulations overrode some of the regulations under the National Forest Management Act. In some cases, they overrode, and in some cases, they supplemented. The NEPA process involved a much more holistic look at things from an environmental stand point than our old unit plan did. So, then it became, you had to do a unit plan for your entire forest and in our case all four administrative units and the Grasslands, and do them on an initial plan and then revisit that plan every ten years. So, and basically write a plan revision. So, in our case it would have been '86, '96, 2006 and 2016. What happened, because keep in mind during the time we were making this transition in forest planning, we were still fighting the lawsuit with Mr. Fritz and TCONR, so all of these things were kind of integrating at the same time. And what pretty much happened is that we tried to write that first initial plan basically as a response to issues brought out in the lawsuit. I don't know that we were successful. We made some inroads, a lot of that whole contentiousness with the lawsuit boiled back down to credibility and personalities. You had the competing interests that were completely dug in on either side of the issue and weren't going to compromise and weren't going to give in and it really wasn't until those individuals were out of the picture, they had either retired or moved on, that we started getting to the point where we could communicate, discuss, compromise where needed, agree to disagree in those cases where there just wasn't any way we could... our philosophies were too far polarized. But we were able to establish some working relationships, very tenuous at first, but they kind of grew over the years, with people like Larry Shelton and George Russell and those folks. So...

JG: Now were you involved, I know in later years you became higher up in management and even filled in as interim supervisor, didn't you off and on?

JJ: Oh yes, just no more...they didn't trust me with that for more than a week at a time.

JG: Oh, okay, but how much were you involved with it at the time we are in the story I guess '86?

JJ: In '86 with the management plan? Well like I said it started out...

JG: You said you went from once a month, to twice a month, four times a month to several times a week.

JJ: And, several times a week and that transpired over the period from about, beginning in probably early '85 till the end of '86. I think we finished the plan and sent it to the printer right before Christmas of '86.

JG: I think I'm really jumping around here and if you think chronologically we need to go back to the archeology lets do it but I also want to talk about maybe that is a good point because you're suggesting....I don't want to put words in your mouth, that the plan was even a result of changes.

JJ: Yes.

JG: Whatever the plan might be, changes from within, changes from without. So, lets talk about that, either now or later, because your career covers that period.

JJ: We will go ahead and talk about it now because you're right, exactly right. What happened, and I'm wrong on my dates on when we finished the plan.

JG: We can get that later I want to hear your perspective.

JJ: Now that I remember we finished the plan...the plan was sent to the printers on May 27, 1985 and the reason I know that date so well is because it was a Saturday and our daughter Penny was born on Monday, May 29th.

JG: And that would be you and Gay?

JJ: Yes, me and Gay and Gay was the one doing all the writing. She had the only word processor in the whole agency, everybody else was still using electric typewriters. She had the only word processor. That plan was put together on the word processor, she turned in the manuscript Saturday afternoon and then we had Penny on Monday morning. So that was '85.

JG: Got it all typed up!

JJ: So, yes, going back into that. One of the things that took place and again I was the first Archeologist hired on a National Forest in Texas. I was only the fourth one in the Southern Region. The other three archeologists in the southern region at the time were Kent Snider, was our regional archeologist in Atlanta, a gentleman named Jack Keller that was designated as a zone archeologist. He was responsible for Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi and half of Tennessee, no I don't guess he had Tennessee. He may have had part of Alabama; he may have had the western part of Alabama. Then the other archeologist in the region was a gentleman named Wayne Procopetz and Wayne was stationed in Florida but he basically had all of the eastern forest, Florida, the two Carolinas, Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia. Not long after I got hired. they hired an archeologist in Virginia, a guy named by the name of Mike Barber and then gradually over the next few years we started getting archeologists on other forests in kind of the same jobs I had. But, so at the time they hired me, the only other resource specialist, someone that was very focused, you had one wildlife biologist on the forest, and one soil scientist on the forest, that was it. Everybody else was foresters or engineers. So, at the same time that I was starting...

JG: So, was the wildlife person and the soil person involved with the plan, the '76 plan?

JJ: Yes, they were, but again part of what was transpiring during that time is we were moving forward into the planning, the full forge planning, we realized we didn't have the expertise on staff on some of these things we needed to be discussing and deciding. We knew nothing about botany, or the understory component of the forest, the understory and mid-story. We knew what was there and we didn't like it in most cases but we didn't know anything about.

JG: You didn't know what the bugs were or the poison ivy?

JJ: Yes, we knew where the bugs and the snakes were. We knew which snakes were important and which ones weren't, but we didn't know anything about it.

JG: The ecology of it, yes.

JJ: Yes, we didn't know any knowledge on quail management or turkey management. So, one of the things that was happening during this period of time, was that the biology group was expanding. The soil scientist was getting more directly involved with some geo physical specialists in terms of something on a broader scale than just soils, like mapping soils. So, we had a...in 1983, we hired I think four more biologists, one for each forest and one additional one in the SO's where we had five biologists. One of them was a fisheries person. The others were...

JG: Were you burning yet?

JJ: We were burning, but not on the scale...

JG: Talking about prescribed burning.

JJ: Prescribed burning, but not on the scale we are doing now.

JG: So, were you burning before you started, do you know?

JJ: They were burning but it was more...

JG: I'm not talking about slash burn or anything I'm talking about prescribed.

JJ: Yes, but it wasn't to the extent. They were prescribed burning, but it was small parcels, small tracts, and it was really intended for mid-story control.

JG: Do you know what percentage of the forest was still natural forest when you began?

JJ: Less than one percent.

JG: Are you serious?

JJ: Yes, less than one percent.

JG: That is not counting the bottoms though? Right? Is that taking the bottoms out?

JJ: No, that is counting the bottoms and that is counting the land on the lower end of Rayburn that is in the horseshoe below the dam. That has been virtually untouched?

JG: Am I asking the right question? Are you answering the question I'm asking?

JJ: I don't know. When you say natural forest do you mean unmanaged?

JG: Not been converted to plantation?

JJ: Not been converted to plantation, probably between seven to ten percent that has not been converted to plantation.

JG: Wow, that much!

JJ: And those areas that hadn't, the only reason was because they hadn't figured out how the hell to get into them yet. They were either in locations where you couldn't build a road and have it hold up, or they were locations that were in some cases land locked and we were such bad neighbors and the neighbors wouldn't give us permission to cross, and there was no other way in. So, like I said, there was a lot of the bottoms...

JG: Of course, again, to be fair or to be accurate, much of the land the Forest Service got was the most cutover lands. It was the rejects by private companies.

JJ: Yes, and it had all been replanted in the 30's and 40's, and even some cases early '50's.

JG: Yes, okay.

JJ: So, there was this push to bring on additional specialists in different areas, fisheries, biologist, several wildlife biologists that were more attuned to woodpecker management, quail management those kinds of things. We had an entomologist we brought on, in fact he is still here. He is still working.

JG: Who is that?

JJ: Steven Clarke. I asked him I said, "we haven't had a SPB outbreak in 20 year." He said, "I'm doing a good job, ain't I?" But anyways so we started bringing in different specialists, resource specialists that were all...

JG: All in the '80s.

JJ: All of this is in the early 80's and early 90's and we had all been educated during the '70's. We had all been brought up under Earth Day and NEPA and all that, so we had a little bit different philosophy.

JG: Where is the money coming from?

JJ: The money is still coming from timber sales and I was reminded of that constantly, for the entirety of my career, that any money I got from cultural resources came from things that were being generated from trees being cut down or oil wells being built. So, that is just a fact of life. That is the way the budget structure is. We don't have near enough time today or this month for me to get into a rant about the budgeting stuff with the Forest Service but ...

JG: Okay.

JJ: Again...

JG: So, was this going on all across the south?

JJ: At different levels.

JG: Were other southern forest units doing the same thing?

JJ: They were kind of doing the same thing. We were pretty much in the forefront.

JG: Because of the lawsuit?

JJ: Because of the lawsuit. We were the first forest in the region to start a forest-wide management plan. Now others followed quickly within a year or two, but if not the first at least one of the first. And again, it was because of the visibility of the lawsuit, kind of the upper level consciousness of it those kinds of things that got us with our foot in the door to start that process. But other forests in the region were doing the same thing by 1995, fiscal year of '95 or October of 1994, every forest in the region at that point had at least one archeologist on staff. Then by 1999 or early 2000, most of us had anywhere from 2 to 5 archeologists on staff. We had a forest archeologist and then a sub staff from two to five people.

JG: So, the ones you had, did you hire?

JJ: I hired, yes.

JG: And what were you looking for, degree wise and experience?

JJ: Well, degree wise I had to look for at least a bachelor's degree, preferably a master's degree. I looked for people with prior experience because I didn't have time to babysit was my thinking. I needed people that could come in hit the ground running knew what

they needed to do, understood the nuances of surveying in a wooded area. Understood the philosophical as well as the legal requirements for doing work and why we did the work and those kinds of things, so I cast a wide net, initially.

JG: So, you don't need to necessarily mention personal names but where would someone get that experience for what you were looking for?

JJ: Most of them came from, well all of them came from either academia, fresh out of grad school and had done field schools, or they came from the contract world where they were working doing the work that I had done initially. Working for a firm or working for a university doing as much field work as they could get their hands on. And that is primarily people that were skilled and had done a lot of field work already, like I said I didn't want to take the time nor did I have the time to babysit and teach. They needed to already know what to do once they arrived on the forest. My first hire was an assistant in the S.O., a gentleman named Bob Skiles who stayed around two, two and half years I guess and then went to the General Land Office in Austin and finished his career there. Then Bob helped me actually hire the first four district archeologists for each forest.

JG: Were you able to pay what you thought was pretty competitive?

JJ: We were able to pay, we initially hired at that point...

JG: Were these full-time, full benefit positions?

JJ: They were full-time and full benefits. The professional...they were GS-9's. I forget what that pay rate was at the time, maybe 35-36,000 a year. A decent salary, better than what you could get in the contract world for similar experience. (I've been fighting this respiratory thing for a month.)

JG: I think it's this change in weather.

JJ: I just can't shake this cough. I started out, when you talk about pay scales, when I started under the I.P.A. [Intergovernmental Personnel Act] I was the equivalent of a GS-5 in federal service. GS-5's made maybe 15-16,000 a year. I was in hog heaven, that was all the money I needed. I could pay my rent, pay my car note, had money to spend, I was happy as could be. I started out when I became permanent, and first hired permanent in '84, I moved up to GS-9, and my original hiring was a nine/eleven and under the federal rules when you get hired under that kind of a multi-grade position, you serve basically two years in a probationary status as the 9 then you're promoted automatically to an 11 after two years, unless you screw up and then they extend your probationary period until you fix whatever problems you had. So, I started out permanently as a 9 and two years later became a GS-11. So, when I hired anybody that I hired after that had to be a grade level below mine as GS-9.

JG: There wasn't a ten?

JJ: There wasn't a ten. There were GS-10's but not in the archeology job descriptions.

JG: Okay.

JJ: Your GS-10's actually were like heavy equipment operators, firefighters, some of those kind of jobs were GS-10's. Everything else was on a 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14 kinda was the progression.

JG: Except for 14 all of those are odd numbers. So they just put y'all with the odds?

JJ: Well, 13s and 14s are forest supervisors and regional foresters.

JG: Okay.

JJ: I think now the regional foresters may actually be 15's. I'm not sure. There was kind of a creep over the years. I forget...but the current forest supervisor here I believe is a...he must be a 13, because when I promoted into the staff position, I became...no he is a 14 because I...

JG: Is it still Eddie?

JJ: Still Eddie, yes.

JG: What is his last name?

JJ: Eddie Taylor.

JG: Eddie Taylor, yes.

JJ: I think he is a 14, because my job as a staff officer, I was a 13 those three years I did that job. It wasn't worth it, but that is another story for another day maybe. So anyway.

JG: You hired staff.

JJ: I hired staff and I hired Bob in I guess it was '93 and the before he left for GLO we hired our first group of district archeologists. Several of them stuck around, several stayed a year or two and then moved on to other jobs, other places.

JG: So are you still having to go or not...maybe that is not the right verb, but so you're still chasing timber or when did you get to the point where you could say here is what we would like to do and I'm getting to Aldridge. So, if you were going to do a dig at Aldridge or around Ratcliff Lake.

JJ: One of the things...now going back to the forest plan and how it was driving things. Like I said we had the 1986 plan. It was to be revised in 1996, okay? Well, because of the lawsuit we hadn't actually implemented any of the things we said we were going to do in

the '86 plan because they added...problems with the plan they added to the lawsuit. So, until we got the lawsuit resolved, we really couldn't implement anything. Well we went forward with a plan revision in '96. Now, one of the components of that, was a Heritage Management Plan that we did for the forest, where we laid out priority areas for survey where we think site densities are high. We laid out our priorities for site interpretation, site evaluation and in a process where we could finally get to the point where we were making eligibilities of determination for sites. For many, many, years and it is still a factor today, but particularly all those early years, our philosophy was what was called "flag and avoid."

JG: Flag and avoid.

JJ: Flag and avoid.

JG: Flag and avoid.

JJ: I would find a site. I would flag a barrier around it, just using flagging tape of a buffer, the site area plus a buffer and we would say take that half acre or three-quarters of an acre out of your timber sale and then we would walk off and leave it.

JG: Did you get opposition?

JJ: We really didn't, because nobody wanted to spend the money it was going to take to do an evaluation.

JG: But I mean there were no timber people saying no we have got to get that?

JJ: The timber people much preferred us doing that, because they would have to pay for the evaluation, the excavation part.

JG: Oh!

JJ: That would just be more money coming out of their pockets and they didn't really want to do that. That was the case all over the Southeast, all across the region and gosh for 25-30 years "flag and avoid" was our mantra. And, then like I said in '95...

JG: And the intent was to maybe come back later.

JJ: Come back later, but there was never a later.

JG: But in the meantime, don't touch it.

JJ: There was never a later. You never got the opportunity to go back. So, again we were trying to get out in front of things so when we wrote this plan in '95 we...

JG: Sorry to keep going back to that, but would this be something...what drove the decision to say okay this particular spot? What did you think might be there?

JJ: Well again I would shovel test and try to find boundaries.

JG: You had to find something.

JJ: I had to find something. It might be a projectile point. It might be all I find on an area. Or I might dig ten shovel tests and there be lithic artifacts in all ten of them or ceramic artifacts.

JG: So then would you consult topo maps or what?

JJ: Oh yes, everything was based on topography. The whole premise of the predictive modeling that we used was based on topography and land forms, aspects and that type of stuff.

JG: Soil types?

JJ: Soil types were never really...I kept trying to get the soil scientists to work with me on develop, try to further refine the relationship with soil types, but again, he was looking at things in a much broader, macro scale and didn't really have time because he was plenty busy as well. He didn't have time to mess with me. (laughter)

JG: Were most Caddo sites on the similar, same soil types? I mean how predictive could you be?

JJ: We got pretty good. It wasn't until late 90's early 2000's we got really comfortable with our predictive model for Caddo sites, but we were probably 75-80 percent accurate on that.

JG: How much ratio between topography and soil type? Is it geared more toward topography? I know they are connected.

JJ: Geared more toward topography. The only soil type thing I can put my finger on, was that we generally...when we had a Caddo site that involved a residence, a house, because we had sites with Caddo artifacts but no structures, but on occasions where we had Caddo site with structures, the soil is more a loamy sand rather than a sandy loam. It is a fine distinction I know, but it was a denser, more compact and probably because of the continuousness of the occupation where the soil was compacted by the constant traffic and use and what have you.

JG: Now how much did the clear-cutting practices disturb some of that that would have...

JJ: In those cases, the Caddo sites with structures there was no disturbance at all from that because they were in the bottoms. They were down in primarily hardwoods. There might be...well the example on the Davy Crockett where we found the most site structures...

JG: How much shovel testing or how much digging would you have to do to determine if it was a house or not a house?

JJ: Well that was hit and miss. That was pure luck to pick up a feature in a shovel test. It was hard to pick up features in shovel test.

JG: Because define it as a house isn't that like a hearth or the post?

JJ: Yes, a hearth or the post pattern.

JG: How deep would those posts typically go?

JJ: Actually the...the actual export, the hole that is dug to support the post are generally less than a foot deep.

JG: Yes, that is what I was thinking. They wouldn't be very deep.

JJ: So, generally you would find the post hole patterns very close to the surface. Again, the areas where we recorded structures, several on the Davy Crockett and they were really just sandy ridges right off the river. They were sandy enough though and high enough elevation that they had pine on them. So, you're going down through the bottom and you start seeing these small stands of pine, well you knew you had a sandy land form there, so we would go test there and sure enough we would find Caddo ceramics or we would find projectile points or whatever. So, once we kind of nailed that down, again, those were in bottoms areas. They hadn't been harvested. The only time they might there was one on the Davy Crockett and the only reason we were down there is because there had been a tornado and we had tornado damage in the area. Didn't damage the site, but it was near enough by it we looked over and 'oh let's go look over there.'

JG: So, timber guys are going to want to come in and salvage right, a bottom?

JJ: Yes, let me take a break!

JG: Let me pause this. We are back and John may remember but I had forgotten what we last were talking about. We actually took about a 20-minute break, so I think we've agreed that he is going to come back another time and we will try to pick up where we left off and finish up. But, in the meantime in the next few minutes that we have, he is going to talk to me about grazing and kind of the overall perspective of the changes.

JJ: When I started with the Forest Service in the winter of '79 we had an active grazing program, grazing in range management were actually key components to the Forest

Service mission for many, many, years and even today in some places. We had an active...I don't remember how many allotments we had on the National Forests themselves, probably on average of 10 to 15 per forest, what were referred to as grazing allotments. Basically, what those were, were areas that were dedicated to individuals. They paid a permit price and a cost per acre to graze their cattle. They had to abide by certain regulations and rules of course, but it was a pretty sweet deal.

JG: Did you require that their cattle be branded?

JJ: Cattle had to be branded and tagged.

JG: And tagged.

JJ: So, we had like I said, probably 10 to 15 allotments per forest as far as the Sabine, the Angelina, and the Davy Crockett. I'm not sure, I don't remember there being a lot of grazing on the Sam Houston.

JG: Now were the allotments fenced?

JJ: They were fenced yes, fenced and cross fenced.

JG: Whose responsibility was the fence?

JJ: The initial fence construction was done by the Forest Service, but the maintenance and repairs were the responsibility of the permittee.

JG: And the whole allotment was fenced in?

JJ: Right and any other facilities that were needed, whether that be corals or pens or whatever, were the responsibility of the permittee and the allotment. And grazing goes back, like I said, it was the key component in the Forest Service mission. One of the historical, I'll say artifacts, but one of the historical components that I recorded over the years were large dipping vats from the screw worm control in the 1930's, where they basically filled them up with arsenic, had the cows jump in and the arsenic would kill all the bugs and the cows would walk or swim out and climbed out and they would rinse them off with water. We learned really quickly that you don't do soil samples around those from about 30 feet around them because there is still arsenic in the soil. Basically, when I talked earlier about 'flag and avoid' we would flag those and avoid those. They weren't a problem for anybody.

JG: Now these were concrete?

JJ: Most of them were concrete there were a couple as I recall in Davy Crockett, that were brick, brick lined rather than concrete.

JG: Are they still protected?

JJ: They are still as far as I know still protected yes. We got into GPS and all that in later years where we could go out and get accurate plots of where they were. We went ahead and recorded those and put them into the land base classification as areas to be avoided. We were able to do that.

JG: There is two at Boggy Slough, one is still intact.

JJ: Is it?

JG: Yes, a concrete yes and they date to the 10's.

JJ: You don't want to get into the bottom of one of those.

JG: The one that is intact still holds liquid, and a family of water moccasins.

JJ: There were two that we discovered on the Sabine up near East Hamilton that were different from all the others we had seen. At the exit end of the pit was about a 30 to 40-foot half-moon shaped concrete pad, basically I guess that was their drip pan where they had them come out and wash them off and drip them on that concrete. I guess they thought...I don't know what they thought was happening to the run-off but those were unique. I hadn't seen that particular style anywhere else.

JG: They were probably right next to a railroad, right?

JJ: They were close to a railroad, yes in that area around East Hamilton.

JG: Because generally going all the way back to the late 19 and early 20th centuries it was Texas Fever and to ship a cow out of the county, it was county by county, you had to certify that it had been dipped before you could transfer them. So, most of them were on railroads.

JJ: Yes, kind of between Ragtown and Huxley, kind of in that area. And we found those during the blow down surveys that we were doing in there in the late 90's.

JG: Did you find any foundations for like silo's or anything? Any kind of circular concrete foundations?

JJ: Not associated with the grazing program.

JG: Okay.

JJ: There were up on the Grasslands, there were some features up there that had been there for along time, corals and pens and feeding troughs that had been there since the 30's that were well built. There is no timber management up there, but so anyway, we had a range management specialist that was over the grazing program when I started. He

left in probably, about the time we were working on the midway through the original forest plan, the '85 plan, the '86 plan. And one of the conclusions we had reached in the planning process was that our grazing allotments were too dense. They were causing soil erosion, loss of seedlings, boy there were some knock down drag outs between our timber staff and our grazing specialist about the impacts of cows on plantations. Again, they got to the point where they just had to agree to disagree. They were never going to agree on anything, so it wasn't a big deal, but basically that '86 plan called for a general reduction in our grazing allotments with the eventual getting to zero within that first ten-year period. And, we basically achieved that.

JG: So, getting like number of cows per acre?

JJ: Going from having allotments to having no grazing program on the forest at all, so that by the time we started the revision in '96, there were no grazing allotments anywhere on the forest or the grasslands.

JG: So, how long were these allotments, a year or two years?

JJ: Permits I think were two years, maybe three.

JG: So, it took what maybe no more than three years to phase it out.

JJ: It took two or three cycles of renewals to phase it out. It met with some opposition but really...

JG: Could you recall any of who the biggest...I mean could a person get more than one allotment?

JJ: Yes, as far as I know there were no limits on that.

JG: Were you having to turn people away?

JJ: We did a pretty good job of...

JG: I mean when you were doing it, when it was an ongoing thing were there more people applying than you can handle?

JJ: I don't think so, no and from what I recall. I wasn't that deeply involved in that aspect of it, but most of the allotments that we had still in the late '70's had been families going back to the 30's and it just kept the allotments in the family continual.

JG: Do you remember any names?

JJ: I really don't. I remember the range specialist name was a guy named Clem Curely. He ended up, left here and went to Colorado and actually ended up being a forest

supervisor up in Colorado for many years but no I don't remember any names of the allotments.

JG: Were they mostly Brahman cross?

JJ: Yes, Brahman cross, just standard scrub cows, you know, which you would find anywhere out here. But again, I don't remember there being a whole lot of complaints when we started phasing it out because I think the cattle industry was starting to suffer from, I don't remember the particular socioeconomic market, things that were happening but it really became less and less a deal. We probably got more push back up on the grasslands. Again, the Grasslands, our mission up there was different than it was on the National Forests.

JG: What counties are those in?

JJ: Wise County and Fannin County.

JG: Wise and Fannin.

JJ: And, of course that is cowboy country, cattle country. The Chisolm Trail goes through the LBJ Grasslands, so the Grasslands, it's for grazing. Well, what we were doing, what was happening, we were converting all the tall bunch grass prairies, tall grass and short grass, bunch grasses and other components converting that to coastal for grazing and hay.

JG: Coastal Bermuda.

JJ: Which doesn't hold the soil together nearly as well as what the bunch grasses do so we were rather than fixing the erosion problems up there, we were exasperating them. So, when we started looking at it from more of a soils impact perspective, we probably had...I forget what the number was, it was exorbitant, huge percentage, 70-80% more cows per acre than it could sustain. So, again it took several cycles, but we were able to eventually phase out grazing completely on the Grasslands. Then as we were phasing out the grazing, we were doing conversions using deep plows and ripping implements and getting rid of the coastal and coming back and planting bunch grasses, tall grass, prairie grasses to try to restore the natural vegetation. Probably a 70-80% success rate when I left the agency as far as my recollection of what was happening. I think it has gotten better. They've also realized that fire is a component of that so they're doing more burning up there now than they used to.

JG: Did you ever do any archeological studies there connected with the Chisolm Trail?

JJ: Not connected with the Chisolm Trail. We were...our management activities up there were few and far between. The way we approached things up there, is that they would select an area and again there is...between the two units there is 37,000 acres. So, they would pick areas based upon current conditions in terms of sheet erosion, eroded ravines

and things like that that needed to be repaired and stabilized. So, they would take a couple of segments and it may be two hundred to four hundred acres total, and they would develop restoration plans and it would take a two to five-year framework, because of the way the funding was coming in, to get the work done once it was approved. So, I would get copies of those plans, schedule a period of time to go up and survey and then we would survey the entirety of the project and come back and write a report. Then as they implemented it over the next few years, they were able to do what they needed to do. The only way we were able to handle that workload up there was the fact that there is nothing there other than a few historic homesteads. All the soil strata where you would have had pre-historic occupations was blown away or eroded away during the dust bowl. When you look at pictures of the Grasslands in the 30's and it's barren dessert basically.

JG: When did the government get that land?

JJ: It was originally acquired under the auspices of a little-known agency called the Bureau of Reclamation and again that was a New Deal project. The lands were acquired in the late '30's, '38-'39. I think we had some records maybe in the early forties, 1940. 1941. But most of them were '38 and '39.

JG: Okay.

JJ: Immediately after the war, that land was transferred over to what became NRCS. The Soil Conservation Service managed it and they were doing soil erosion stabilization and those kinds of things, building lakes and what have you to try and stop the erosion. I have got to go back because some of those...that authorizing legislation for acquisition up there had to have happened in '35 or '36, because some of the first units acquired were in 1937 and then you had CCC [Civilian Conservation Corps] and WPA [Works Progress Association] projects in '38 and '39 that were built, particularly on the Fannin County side.

JG: Isn't NRCS under the USDA?

JJ: They are under the USDA too. It used to be called Soil Conservation Service.

JG: But the Bureau of Land...

JJ: The Bureau of Reclamation was under the Department of the Interior.

JG: Okay.

JJ: And I don't know exactly when, it was somewhere during the war years or right after the war.

JG: When it was transferred.

JJ: It was transferred to SCS [Soil Conservation Service] and then within USDA they were transferred to Forest Service in the early 1970's, '71-'72 somewhere around there. And what made part of our work easier up there was that the acquisition records were the most thorough things I've ever seen. There would be folders that would be upwards of an inch to two inches thick with inventories of all the livestock, any other domestic animals, the number of people living on the property.

JG: Who were the typical owners? Was it multiple owners?

JJ: It was a lot of tenant farmers.

JG: I mean who owned the land?

JJ: The land was owned by a handful of...well at the time of resolution most of it had been foreclosed and was owned by banks. There were a handful of family ownerships but even they still had, were absentee owners, tenant farmers.

JG: Then you had a lot of tenants residing on the land.

JJ: Yes, but again in there you had detailed maps of the property, all the improvements on it, where they were located, where the houses were located, where the cattle pens were located.

JG: Now is all that stuff in Fort Worth? The documentation of that or is that in Lufkin?

JJ: We had it in Lufkin and when I left in 2011, we had at least at that point won the war. Those land records were still in Lufkin.

JG: Now would there be any kind of acknowledgement of tenancy records included in that?

JJ: Some, there were warranty deeds, there were titles.

JG: There would have to be something for the government to say okay we are the new owners now and acknowledge...

JJ: Again, the tenants were given a shorter period of time to vacate than they were on the forest. I have not asked Juanita about that.

JG: I'm not regressing but that would be an interesting historical inquiry.

JJ: They were still on the forest I know. I remember exactly where those files were located when we moved into the new building. I would assume they are still there. I don't think they've been sent off, again, we considered those to be working historical documents because we were still doing projects up there. That is our first research was to go back to those land records and see okay, who lived here, when, when did they vacate,

what buildings did they have here, where were those located, what other facilities might have been out there in terms of windmills and transportation and that kind of thing. Very helpful in doing a lot of work. Again, up there we could do everything by surface survey so we could progress pretty quickly on a project because we weren't having to shovel test because there was nothing to shovel test.

JG: It was blown away huh?

JJ: Yes, we were walking across B and C horizon soils and in that country, there is just no archeology in those horizons it's all above it. Now, you do get and particularly on the Fannin County side around the Sulphur River, you've got an Paleontological component there that we would pay a little bit of attention to, but again it was generally 30-40 foot deep and you only find it in exposed banks of the Sulphur River or one of its main tributaries. There were marine fossils on the Wise County side, but they were surface and everybody knew where they were, nobody collected them, it wasn't a big deal. So anyway, all that to say really by the mid 90's we were out of the grazing business on the National Forest and the National Grasslands both.

JG: Well okay.

JJ: As far as I know there has been no impetus, no inquiries about reinstating any kind of grazing law.

JG: Okay, well I think for today that will conclude our interview.

JJ: It's been fun!

JG: Yes, thank you!

JJ: And, chronologically we are only up to the mid 90's. (laughter)

JG: Yes, there is still quite a bit to talk about.

JJ: I don't think I told too many horror stories.

JG: No not yet.

JJ: I will tell you one Historical Commission story.

JG: You want this on the recorder?

JJ: No turn the recorder off.

JG: Okay.

END OF INTERVIEW