

JOHN IPPOLITO

Interview 290b

December 16, 2019 at The History Center, Diboll, Texas

Jonathan Gerland, Interviewer

Transcriber

ABSTRACT:

In this interview with Jonathan Gerland, former United States Forest Service archaeologist John Ippolito answers questions about his career working in the forests of East Texas. They discuss environmental laws and their influence of local forestry practices and archaeological efforts within the forests, particularly the National Environmental Policy Act and the National Forest Management Act. He talks about policy shifts in 1986, 1996, and 2006 and the lawsuits that influenced these policies, as well as some of the people involved in protests. He also discusses the pine beetle, Rainbow Gatherings, the Passport in Time program, the National Record of Historic Places, and various community groups and celebrations. Of particular interest are his mentions of Civilian Conservation Camps in East Texas and reunions of former workers in the 1990's and 2000's, working to register the site of the Aldridge Mill at Boykin Springs for federal protection, and working with local historians to celebration the tricentennial of Mission Tejas.

Jonathan Gerland (hereafter JG): Today's date is December 16, 2019. My name is Jonathan Gerland, I'm with John Ippolito. We are at The History Center today. It's Monday and we are going to do a follow up interview to the one we did a couple of months ago. I had emailed John about ten, not necessarily questions, but ten items maybe that I wanted to kind of talk about. Maybe to continue from where we were last time, I too don't remember exactly where we stopped, but maybe to bring us forward... we did discuss a little bit some of the management changes that were going on in the '80's and specifically you mentioned the Texas Committee on Natural Resources lawsuit. But I don't think we really...I think the context was a little something separate from that, but if we can, let's focus on that lawsuit but the bigger understanding is just changes in management philosophy.

John Ippolito (hereafter JI): When the lawsuit was initially filed, which was 1976 NEPA [National Environmental Policy Act] was less than ten years old, the National Forest Management Act was less than five years old. And I came into all this kind of late in things, but what my memory... the main issues were that the way we were practicing forestry were not within the directions of either NEPA or the National Forest Management Act. NFMA [National Forest Management Act] actually set the regulations that came off of that law, set protocols and processes for getting to decision points and one of the big cruxes of the lawsuit was that we weren't following our own, the Forest Service, was not following its own directions. It was still too much...the decisions were being made too arbitrarily and...I can't remember what the other word is...capriciously. So, my experience when I started with the Forest Service in '79, in those first five or ten years we had a process that was called prescription review and that is where mostly the District Ranger, his silviculturist,

his Timber Forester, representatives from our supervisor's office, which initially was the landscape architect, the engineer, and the silviculture and timber staff from the forest. That group would get together, they would have a meeting, they would go over the conditions of the stands and what treatments were being proposed for it, what the benefits to wildlife would be, and in those days, everything was geared towards management of white-tailed deer. Nobody really talked much about the red-cockaded woodpecker.

The first few of those that I attended as the Forest Archeologist and it was me, they added me and the forest soil scientist and the forest biologist. Well, everything was fine as long as we kept our mouths shut basically, but if we started asking questions relative to what the regulations said and the way decisions were being arrived at, then we kind of caught a little bit of grief. And so that was the kind of the way things were when I started. All of timber management, it was all even-aged management, but no clear cuts were going to be larger than 40 acres. You could have two forty-acre tracts within the same compartment, but they had to be separated by a buffer of twenty to forty acres kind of thing. Very little consideration given to stream side management zones or best management practices, those things hadn't really been put into play yet. So from my standpoint as the Forest Archeologist with the work I had to do in relation to the National Historic Preservation Act, my life was actually pretty simple because all I had to do was go out and look at those twenty acre or forty acre tracts, do a cursory walk over, because we weren't surveying those until after the clear cut had been done. That is a whole other set of problems that we addressed later on, but it made for much easier workload management because I knew exactly where to go, the boundaries were well defined. All I had to do was look for landforms that may or may not shovel test on those landforms depending on what I was seeing on the surface. So, anyway that...the lawsuit, as that progressed there was also some...it generated changes in the way Forest Service did business. It was a very slow process though, and a lot of that had to do...

JG: Did that lead you think directly, well not directly, but what was the connection between that and the 1986 Forest Plan?

JJ: Well the 1986 Forest Plan...by about 1984, when we actually started the planning process, things had kind of progressed along to the point where they were giving cursory attention to some of the environmental issues at play and different things. We hadn't made the complete conversion to selective management yet, we were still doing even age management but our own science helped with making that move because there was a software program called Foreplan that was utilized to develop all the numerical data, the analytical data, for the '86 plan. And that was a program as I understand it, was developed by Forest Service scientists. It was intended entirely for use in the forest planning process. So when we started running those numbers, how we were doing management verses...and looking at it in terms of sustainability, it was, the numbers showed and the science showed that we couldn't sustain management the way we were doing it for more than about ten years. Anything beyond that would have been unsustainable. So that kind of got people thinking a little bit differently; okay how can we get to a point of sustainability in the way we were doing timber management, realizing we didn't want to take anything out of our toolbox. They didn't want to do away completely with even aged management because

there were some places where it had to be done just because that's the way...I mean you couldn't guarantee regeneration without doing it that particular way on certain sites. So, the science in the '86 plan helped to move us better in that direction to respond to NFMA and NEPA, but it didn't get us all the way there. It was during that '86 planning process also that the viability of the red cockaded woodpecker population became a primary issue and once there was recognition by forest management staff that that was something we needed to be focusing on, then things started progressing and changing to selective management and managing habitat for the woodpecker and other species other than white tail deer.

JG: So non-game.

JJ: Non-game species, yes. So, and the lawsuit is still going on all this time. There are still motions filed and counter motions and appeals and all this, so the '86 plan was finished actually.

JG: In '86 (laughter)

JJ: Well it actually it was Memorial Day weekend of 1985 that my wife Gay, who was the writer/editor for the planning staff, put the final period on the draft plan. And she did it on a Friday afternoon about 5:30 and then on a Monday morning at 7:30 we had our first child together. So, she pushed it right up to the very end to finish it. Of course, finishing it on the word processor and getting it out to the public that took another...it was early calendar year '86 before it actually went out to the public. But through all the court actions, there were temporary injunctions and permanent injunctions. Basically, we were told okay you've written the Forest Plan, but you can't implement anything in it until the lawsuit is settled and that carried through until we did the 1996 revision. And what we were directed by the courts and primarily Judge Justice, was that we couldn't implement the plan, we had to do management based strictly on a literal interpretation of NEPA and the Endangered Species Act. So, it really pushed us more towards management for the woodpecker. So, we would still do planning, project specific planning, we'd go through all our little routines and then it would be signed off on, but very little was implemented. Now, during the same time from '86 to '96 during that same time frame, we started getting hammered about every three years by the southern pine beetle infestations. Well, again as I mentioned earlier, you want to keep certain tools in your toolbox. The only way to control southern pine beetle is to cut everything down in the infested area and then a buffer around so you're talking even-aged management necessary to control the southern pine beetle. So, there was this constant conflict between trying to do things environmentally sound by the law, and trying to also take care of our responsibilities under all of the legislations to protect the forest. So, at some point there was a...I'll use the word compromise, but I'm not really sure if it was a compromise, but more of a recognition, particularly by the folks at TCONR that okay we can't have a pure environmentally sound process here because there's just too many variables out of man's control. Whether it be southern pine beetle, hurricanes, tornadoes, or whatever. So, there was gradually a relaxation particularly...by the early '90's, Mr. Fritz, while he was still involved and still active, most of the heavy lifting was being done by Janice Bezanson and Larry Shelton. James Jackson was involved, but I think he was

primarily with the Earth First group. You may remember in the height of the Four Notch, in the infestation at Four Notch, there was an Earth First protest. They picketed the Federal Building here in Lufkin for about three days. And then several of them went out to Four Notch, which is in Walker County outside of Huntsville, where we had an infestation grew from 3 acres to two thousand acres within a week. And so anyway, we were treating the infested acres with just laying trees down and timber wasn't salvageable. It was already blue stained before it hit the ground. We got...we needed to do some site prep so, there was no way we could burn it because it would be too big a blaze, you know, so we enlisted a, I can't remember the right terminology, we called it a tree crusher. It was a self-contained, mechanized drum roller with blades on the drum. It was a pretty impressive piece of machinery. What it could do, especially with the timber, the vegetation, that was down if it was dried and pretty well already towards de-composing, it could chop it up and basically turn it into a mulch and you leave it there and then come back and replant.

Well, one of the protests, like I said, they picketed the protest for three or four days and then we had the site prep work going on in Four Notch, well several of them, and my recollection would be Larry Shelton and James Jackson. Larry chained himself to the piece of machinery with a kryptonite lock before they could start work that particular morning and he swallowed the key so nobody could get the lock open. Jackson climbs up into a tree about 40 feet off the ground and sets up shop up there. I was involved, got drawn into that whole thing by our law enforcement folks. So I was down there on site.

The thing with Shelton on the tree crusher was kind of all going good, but it was a warm day so Larry was wearing gym shorts and a tank top, is what he was wearing that day and flip-flops. Everything was fine until the fire ants started progressing up the drum roller and getting onto him. After about twenty minutes of him getting bit by fire-ants he was ready to be off of there. Well, you locked yourself in and swallowed the key, there is not much we can do. Our bolt cutters won't cut the lock, so this went back and forth for a period of time, 30 minutes, 45 minutes, it seemed like much longer. They eventually produced another key and law enforcement guys got him unlocked and they filed criminal trespass charges on him which I think were probably eventually dropped. I don't know exactly how that turned out. Jackson meanwhile is up in a tree and the special agent at the time decided the tree needed to come down. It was kind of like a piss-elm tree, it wasn't a pine tree, it was relatively small in diameter. So he takes an ax and starts chopping on the tree at the base. Well of course it rattles the tree around. Jackson is up there and he is looking for a place to run. He jumps to another tree from one tree to the other and they start chopping that tree down, and he had really no place to go so he ended up on the ground and they hauled him off. I don't know why I digressed into that story other than it is still kind of funny to me in many ways. That whole incident with Four Notch, and this was during the consideration of what areas are going to be designated for wilderness.

Four Notch was one of the marque areas that were identified during the wilderness or during the process of picking wilderness areas. And everybody wanted it, including, I mean the Forest Service recognized that it was unique and different and valuable. But once the pine beetles got in it and destroyed all the vegetation, everybody just said nah it won't qualify and it doesn't need to be in the wilderness thing. So all that was going on behind

the scenes as well during that same time period. Again, we are talking 1983 to 1988-89, somewhere like that.

JG: Were you there at some of the events you just described. were you there?

JJ: Yes, I was an eyewitness.

JG: Okay. Did...

JJ: I won't mention the name of the special agent, but he is a prominent member of law enforcement and justice community in Angelina County right now.

JG: Did you meet Mr. Fritz?

JJ: I met Mr. Fritz, actually on more than one occasion, usually at meetings, planning meetings, public meetings. I wasn't far enough up the food chain for him to pay me a whole lot of attention. The only hook I had was his daughter, Gayle, was an archeologist with the Arkansas Archeological Commission in Little Rock. I got to know Gayle. She did some graduate work at A&M while I was there and she was interested in environmental reconstruction using pollen and tree rings and those kinds of things so we had that in common. And Gayle and I would see each other once or twice a year at Archeology meetings, Caddo Conference, East Texas Society, Texas Archeological Society. So probably the second time I met him. I guess Gayle had already told him that I was working for the Forest Service. He was very nice and cordial to me. He was pleased that the Forest Service had finally put an archeologist on staff, but at the same time, he really didn't warm up to me because he wasn't warming up to anybody in a uniform. But like I said, I met him a handful of times, no more than 6 that we crossed paths. Gayle and I would visit regularly and we would see each other a couple times a year at meetings and every now and then there would be something going on that I knew she knew something about in terms of archaeology and I would give her a call. She worked for the University of Texas for awhile and I don't think she worked for TXDOT, she may have worked for Texas Historical Commission too. But anyway, we would always be cordial and friendly. I asked her once I said, "fill me in on your dad; what's the deal?" She kind of laughed and said, "well he can get crazy sometimes." She would do her best to try to explain to him that processes move slowly. That the kind of change he was wanting to see wasn't something that was going to happen overnight nor could it happen overnight. It would take time. I don't know that actually mellowed him or not but it made it easier for me if we had an archeology issue in a plan or something like that, it made it easier for me to communicate with him about the archeology needs and Section 106 needs.

Now having said all that, if he had made when they filed the initial lawsuit in 1976, if they had made compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act an important part of the lawsuit, they probably would have won a lot quicker. Because until I came on in 1979, the Forest really was not at all in compliance with National Historic Preservation Act. They were barely in compliance. We were barely in compliance from the time I started until 1995 and '96 when I finally started getting additional staff and we could actually do what

we were supposed to do in terms of handling or getting to the work on the ground. So, but for bad or good or whatever, that wasn't a part of the lawsuit, so it never was really addressed. That would have been a deal breaker for the Forest Service, because like I said, we were marginally compliant for that first 15 years I was on the forest. I was doing my best to try to get work done to do things the way it was supposed to be done, but one person with 660,000 acres that he was responsible for, it just wasn't practical.

JG: Are these some of the things you eluded to earlier about you, and I think you said your silviculturalists for forest opposition? You said if you asked questions in the context of the Forest Plan.

JJ: Yes, they would get...if I raised an issue, if we were...I'm trying to think if there was a specific example of a proposed project where we knew we had a conflict with a site that might have been eligible for the National Register. There were a couple of those and when I raised the National Register eligibility issue in our internal planning meetings, it didn't go over well. Fortunately, the decision maker was the Forest Supervisor was accepting enough to say okay, we have got to follow this out and see where it leads us, much to the chagrin of the timber folks. Again, just a handful probably of occasions where that came up. One of the things that also started happening in the early eighties, '83, '84, '85, kind of in that period of time and going on up closer to 1990 is that those, and I will refer to them as old-line foresters, started retiring. And now all this in deference to them, they were serious about their jobs, they knew what needed to be done, they were confident in the science that they knew because that is what they had been taught in the '40's and '50's coming up through forestry school. That is what they knew, and they did a lot of good over the years. Not everything we did was bad or detrimental, but it took a new generation of people that had been trained differently with a different perspective to really implement the change that needed to be done. The beginnings of that were with the '86 plan. It really kind of started coming to fruition when we did the revision in '96 because by then we had the whole timber staff had changed; we had a botanist on staff. We had three wildlife biologists, one dealing with woodpeckers and one dealing with fish and the other one dealing with other species. We had me as the archeologist, we had the soil scientists, we had what was called a Forestry Sociologist to deal with effects on communities and those kinds of things.

JG: Now who were these people and by that I mean, both the old guard as you say and the newer ones, where did they come from? Were they a percentage of local or from other forests?

JJ: Most of them were from other forests...

JG: Other federal forests.

JJ: Other regions, yes. Kind of what started it, bringing the influx of these other people on were, we said once some the old guard folks started retiring and we got newer folks on there was recognition, ok we need this kind of expertise and we need that kind of expertise, where do we go to find it? Do you contract with someone for it or do you hire and fill a

position? And I don't remember how flush with money the planning process was, but it was funded probably more completely than many other programs. So, there was money to create positions.

JG: Now these are new people to our area but are they right out of college?

JJ: Well a couple of them were, several came from Region 3; Arizona, New Mexico. The botanist actually came straight from college; he had just finished his masters, but had done intern work for a forest in, I forget where, maybe Kentucky, Tennessee, one of those. I don't remember. He was knowledgeable of plants in the southeast and had done intern work in graduate school for a forest, so he kind of knew how the Forest Service worked.

JG: Do you remember who that was, a name?

JJ: Yes, his name was Rob Evans and he was good, but he eventually became very, very frustrated with the Forest Service and about the time, oh right after the '96 revision, within a year or two he went to work for the Nature Conservancy.

JG: For the Nature Conservancy.

JJ: So, anyway that was, like I said, we started seeing that and the '96 revision by then the computer software had changed. We were using a much better predictor. It was much easier to plug things...the Forplan was like all early software data analysis programs was just...

JG: And that is the number 4 plan?

JJ: F-O-R-P-L-A-N, stood for Forest Planning.

JG: Okay, okay.

JJ: Not to be confused with Fortran.

JG: Yes, when you first said that I was thinking of Fortran computer language.

JJ: Yes, I don't know if you ever did Fortran language or if you ever had to code anything with that, but this Forplan stuff was equally complicated as Fortran and of course ran on a Fortran base. So, by the time we were doing the revision we had moved into use of things like Access and Excel and just beginning to dip our toes into GIS. Most of what now would be done by GIS we were still doing by hand with taking quad maps, using overlays and colored pencils to separate up into land classes or what have you. Then take that and take it down to Lufkin Printing or whatever and then they would do a printed map incorporating the overlays as you needed them. It wasn't a thing where we could just get on GIS or something and fill in the details, hit print and then have your map. That didn't come until well the late 2008, 2009 period, 2007 maybe. The learning curve for GIS was rather steep and part or one of the things we struggled with is that we would get somebody on the forest

and they were really, really, good at it and within a year another forest would gobble them up and move off. So, our expertise was exiting almost as quickly as it was entering.

JG: Typically, where would they go?

JJ: Other forests in the region or other forests in the service.

JG: Any particular ones come to mind?

JJ: One went to Mississippi, one went to North Carolina, one went to Georgia or South Carolina.

JG: The way you stated that saying other forest gobbled them up, I was thinking when you were talking earlier, when the Texas forest was adding staff and I was going to ask you how much did you recruit, or how much recruiting was done similar the way you just described if other forest were taking your GIS people, did Lufkin ever try to go after certain personnel?

JJ: Oh, we tried! I'm trying to remember; our success rate wasn't very good. Yes, and that was kind of...

JG: Like people that came from the west here, I mean, were they recruited or sent?

JJ: To a degree. We run through the whole convoluted federal hiring process in which you build a job description, personnel people give it a classification, then you go out and recruit either from the public or within the agency. Actually, most of our hiring all those years was a two-prong approach. One would be a more public announcement where anybody in the public could apply and the other would be an internal announcement where it was restricted to other government employees. Not necessarily just Forest Service, but Parks Service, Fish & Wildlife and any other agency. What we would typically do we would have the job announcement go out under both headings and then whenever period of time it was open after that was done you would get two separate lists; one would be the internal list and one would be the external list. Then as a hiring authority, you could select from either list, you were not confined to one or the other. The only pre-requisite was if you pick somebody off the public list and that person had been a veteran and qualified for veteran preference you had to pick that person.

JG: Did you know going in if they were Veteran or not?

JJ: Not until you got their application and reviewed it. There was a box they had to check and a second form they had to fill out. That personnel would cross check with DOD or whoever and make sure that was true and accurate. So, you had that and the internal thing, it wasn't uncommon if you knew somebody on another forest you would call their boss and you would say hey we are getting ready to create a position we think so and so would be perfect for it or would qualify for it, would you check and see if they have any interest in moving? Sometime, if there was a promotion involved more often than not, you could

get an affirmative answer and if there was no promotion involved generally, they would decline. And same way with folks from here that were going to other places. What we were fortunate with during that time was that we had a personnel office here on the Forest, that there were three ladies, they were very efficient, they knew their jobs, they had been doing them for years, they knew all the ins and outs of the various processes and how to time things and those kinds of things, so we were able to recruit through the federal hiring process and fill positions with some pretty highly qualified and pretty special people. We were able to do it both internally and externally. The Forestry Sociologist came straight out of the PhD program at SFA [Stephen F. Austin State University]. I don't know if you knew Katherine Albers.

JG: I've heard of the last name.

JJ: Her husband was a doctor at SFA, he taught, I don't remember what he taught, business or accounting or something like that, anyway, Katherine was very, very, smart, but she was a great addition to the team as we were working through the '96 revision. So, kind of coming back to that we had all this specialized input on the '96 revision that improved many of the things that we had proposed in the '86 plan. We had better data, we had better processes that were being proposed and whatever. But the lawsuit that had originally been filed 20 years sooner was still in play when we did the '96 revision and it wasn't until 2006, thirty years after the lawsuit was initially filed, until 2006 that everything was completely resolved. And in 2006 we were given permission by the courts to implement the 1996 revisions. So, basically those '96 revisions based on the '86 plan going back to the '76 lawsuit. It took 30 years for all that to finally come to conclusion. That is a generation and a half in terms of...and there had been so much change in our staffing and personnel. A lot of changes in thinking and philosophy by TCONR and the Nature Conservancy and the others that were partners in that and really the beginning of about 2001-2002, there was a concerted effort on both parts for more collaborative work, more collaborative decision making. The Forest Service became more accepting of some of the suggestions by the environmental groups. They became more understanding of why we wanted to do things in certain ways and there was a willingness on both sides to try to find the middle ground to where we could actually make progress and move forward with things. And, it really ever since then, the relationships, up until the time I retired and I know things that I'm still familiar with 8 years after retirement, that standard of collaboration, that level has sustained and increased and continued and much to the benefit of the forest. Things from my standpoint, viewpoint much better than they were 20 years ago for instance.

JG: Was John Courtney the Forester when you were hired?

JJ: John was the Forest Supervisor when I was hired in '79. He is one of the primary reasons I came to Lufkin. John retired in 1980, Spring of 1980; following him was a gentleman named Mike Lannon and Mike was here from '81 until '89 or '90, I guess. Then following him, I'm going to forget somebody.

JG: That is okay, we can get that kind of information.

JJ: There is actually a plaque at the office that has all the Forest Supervisors, but it was John, then Mike, then Al Newman.

JG: Any particular ones that you worked with on any archeological things or was that...how was that? Just anything that you personally...

JJ: Mike Lannon was still kind of old school. He really didn't have a whole lot of use for biologists and anybody with an -ologist at the end of their name, end of their title. He tolerated us, he listened, sometimes he would take our advice, more often than not he would go ahead and do what he wanted to do anyway. Al Newman followed him. Al was a little more receptive, but it wasn't until a gentleman named Ronnie Rhom came in, Ronnie came in late '90's I guess, mid-'90's. Ronnie had actually studied some archeology in college and thought that was the career he wanted and then decided no he couldn't make any money at it, so he moved into forestry. He actually was very interested in what we were doing and one of the first, he hadn't been on the forest two weeks when he came by and sat down in my office and we just visited for a couple of hours. He wanted to know where the program was and what we were doing and how we were progressing and what would we like to see happen in the future. All this was right at the beginning and tying in with about the time we were increasing staff. He was very supportive of that.

JG: Increasing archeologists?

JJ: Archeologist staff. When Ronnie came on there was me and one person in the SO.

JG: What is the S.O.?

JJ: Supervisors' office.

JG: Okay.

JJ: Which was better than just me alone. We doubled our work force, but through and again all this is tied into the planning process.

JG: I want to get to Passport in Time too.

JJ: We were doing long term program planning and trying...what staffing levels did we need in order to be more affective with what we were tasked to do. And, when Ronnie came on I had been working on this and he wanted to see where it was headed; so my assistant at the time was a young lady name Valecia – her last name was Hubbard then, we had initially hired her in '93 I think it was as a temporary employee to work on Southern Pine Beetle response. We had hired her and two or three others, but they were just temporary employees which meant they were hired for 180 days or one day less than a year and you could extend temp employee one time for a successive year. Then you had to let them go or create a full-time permanent position and go through the whole process and hire them. So, anyway I had Valecia was...Bob Skiles, I think we had talked about him last time, had come and gone. Bob actually helped me hire Valecia when we were gearing up

for pine beetle work and Valecia was one of the better ones that we hired in that sequence and we brought her into my office as my assistant in '93 or '94. So, we were slowly building, and as I mentioned we were kind of planning, staff planning, program planning, for the future and had determined that really to be effective and respond to the forest needs, we needed one professional archeologist per district and two archeological technicians supporting each of those professionals. We wrote those needs into the economic data for the '96 revision. We achieved that staffing level one time for a period of about 18 months, but again the technician levels and the district archeologist levels those folks if they...I tried my best to hire the best people I could find and generally if they were really good, that knowledge got out across the region pretty quickly and as other forests, we were the first forest in the region to expand staff to that degree. But again as other forests looked at how we were doing things and they wanted to do the same thing they would start looking for people to fill positions and we had folks that were really shining out, off they went then we would come back and refill. So, we really only had about an 18-month window when we were fully staffed the way that we wanted. We covered a lot of ground. That also coincided with our beginnings of our Passport in Time projects.

Passport in Time started in 1988 on the Superior National Forest in Minnesota. A gentleman, and I can't remember his name off the top of my head right now, but he is kind of a legend in the Forest Service for starting Passport in Time. And it started out for him as a means for getting some technical help to do site evaluations and site assessments on his forest. He came up with this idea of recruiting volunteers, giving them some incentives to want to come work and then to come back, that kind of thing. I was aware of it from the get go, but up until 1995 we really didn't have the staff to support a project like that. There were minimum requirements in terms of number of professionals, relative to the number of volunteers. I think it was a one to five ratio that you had to guarantee, so until we started staffing up...

JG: Is this some federal program for all federal lands?

JJ: At that time, it was strictly the Forest Service.

JG: Okay.

JJ: It got expanded in the...I can't remember when...2005, 2006 to the Park Service. They saw how much success the Forest Service was having with it and the regulatory components of the program had to be re-written to apply to the Parks Service, but they started a similar kind of thing in early 2000's. I don't remember exactly when that was. But we finally got to the point where we had enough staff, we could look seriously at hosting a project. The first one we went into in 1995 at Boykin Springs, Valecia and I had a broad concept of what we wanted to accomplish, but had really no clue of how to get there.

JG: Now why did you choose Boykin Springs?

JJ: We chose Aldridge because at that time we were starting to develop the historical context, the data necessary to nominate Aldridge to the National Register of Historical Places. We had some ongoing issues down there with unauthorized collecting of tokens and other artifacts and that kind of thing and every time we would catch somebody and try to prosecute them we would run a head long argument, “well you say it’s important but you haven’t done what you say it is to designate it.” So, we were needing to develop some additional data on Aldridge in order to proceed forward with National Register nomination. So, we said okay we’ve got this site, we know where the buildings are, we have got the map, the 1911 map that you found, so we had some context, we had kind of where we could prioritize where we wanted to excavate and what we wanted to look for. And we designed that project specifically to test certain areas of the mill site, residential and industrial...

JG: Let me back up just a second. What would the National Register designation do?

JJ: The National Register, by having a site designated or listed on the National Register of Historic Places, puts a whole much more robust set of rules in place concerning what you can do on the site in terms of modifications and those things. It also initiates a clause under the Archeological Resource Protection Act to allow you to prosecute at a high-level misdemeanor or low-level felony level. Anybody that is disturbing the site, desecrating the site, whatever.

JG: And how much of that did you know was going on? I’m thinking of like the graffiti.

JJ: Well the graffiti, that was a whole other ball of wax. I mean we had ways if we caught somebody out there spray painting we didn’t have to necessarily file under the Antiquities Act or the Archeological Resource Protection Act, we could file under destruction of government property, which they would pay a \$250 fine, get put on probation and that would be the end of it; like paying a parking ticket or whatever.

JG: Now would that be at the county level?

JJ: It was at both, some depending...our law guys depending on who was...they could file either in J.P. Court at the state level or the Federal Magistrate in Beaumont. And it all boiled down to who was going to hear the case; how far am I going to have to travel to testify; that kind of thing. More often than not, probably 90 plus percent of the cases, people were issued a citation; they would pay the fine; just like you would a speeding ticket or whatever without any kind of trial. A couple of times we went to trial and both of those times were in Federal Magistrate Court in Beaumont.

JG: Did you ever have to go testify?

JJ: I testified on both of those. We didn’t win either case.

JG: Now you were testifying basically for the historical...

JJ: Testifying the archeological nature of the sites involved and the analysis of the materials that had been recovered, you know. Basically I was testifying as an expert witness, but again, you had, we kept running into this headache, or this problem, where the judge okay, I understand that the site is significant, it's important, but why haven't you done...you've known this site is important for many years why haven't you taken the next steps to protect it. And because it wasn't already listed under the statute that the criminal complaint had been filed under it didn't meet the criteria.

JG: So, the Federal Judge was telling you, you needed to have...

JJ: So, the Federal Judge would then dismiss the charges.

JG: So that led to...

JJ: We had that happen a couple of times so that led to okay, we've got to pick up and start doing a better job in doing more complete work and putting sites on the National Register. Getting to those levels of determination, etc.

JG: Now, did you ever have to get with the enforcement...I guess what I'm getting at is did you ever sense any complacency? Did it ever get to where law enforcement just said, "well we are not going to do anything?" Did the federal lawsuits have...

JJ: The lawsuit didn't have any...didn't play into this at all. What it boiled down to was this: we had, I'll use the Angelina National Forest as an example almost with 180,000 something acres we have one law enforcement guy down there.

JG: And that is all laws even game laws?

JJ: That is all laws. He did game laws; he did drug enforcement; he did fee compliance in rec areas. If somebody reported...

JG: Littering, camping?

JJ: Yes, all of it that was his job and archeological site protection was part of that as well. So, it came down to, and that was the case we had one guy on the Angelina, we had one guy on the Sabine, and then at some point the guy on the Sabine retired and the guy on the Angelina was handling both Forests. So now you've doubled the amount of ground he's got to cover and to pull him off his other duties just to concentrate on archeological work was unfair to him. It was almost impossible to do. So, it wasn't necessarily a thing of complacency, but it ended up being "what were his priorities?" and if, I mean, if it was hunting season there was no way I was going to get help because he was out doing game enforcement. If it was early spring, February to April, which was peak time for marijuana eradication, I wasn't going to be able to pull him off to work on an archeological project. I understood it; they understood it, so we tried to work within those parameters. So, there really wasn't complacency but it was more of the situation of where did the Archeological Resource protection component fall within their priorities for a given period of time. And,

I mean there was a young man that was the law enforcement guy on the Angelina for 15 years that was very diligent about patrolling Aldridge. He would catch people with spray paint.

JG: Can you share that person's name, or do you want to?

JJ: The law enforcement guy? His name was Jimmy Freeman and he was really diligent about it. I'll tell you a quick story that just happened in June. Bill Martin and some other folks from the Texas Historical Commission were here to do, this is a whole other thing, but we set up years ago where Bill and staff would come to the forest, they spend a week; show them projects; talk about concerns...

JG: And who is Bill Martin?

JJ: Bill was our contact, our review person at the Texas Historical Commission. Bill was responsible for all federal agencies, for archaeology for all federal agencies in the state of Texas, operating in the state of Texas. We were the largest land holder that he had to deal with because Park Service people dealt with somebody else on staff and their mission being completely different from ours, there weren't the issues we had to address in terms of projects and impacts and those kinds of things. So, anyway Bill and his staff were here in June. Juanita told me this story.

JG: And this is June of 2019.

JJ: June 2019, just this past summer.

JG: But it's the same person who you had worked with?

JJ: Yes, Bill has been there for over 30 years, but they had a late baby that is just now starting college so Bill is working for another four years, at least. You can relate to that! So, he could have retired a number of years ago, but he enjoys his job and continuing to work. So, anyway one of the sites, one of the site visits they were going to do while Bill and the staff were here was go check on Aldridge, and as Juanita and Bill and the entourage are walking up into the site, the current law enforcement guy is there and he has got three young men kind of over to the side and there was a duffle bag full of cans of spray paint and...

JG: This is broad daylight?

JJ: Broad daylight yes, middle of the day. He's writing them tickets because the rules are written such that it is against, it's a crime to even be possessing spray paint on this particular site. There is a Forest Supervisors' order that we instituted years ago just as a way of making it easier to prosecute. And, so the graffiti thing is still ongoing, that will never change down there.

JG: Was this an adult or were the three people, were they adults?

JJ: They were out of high school, recent graduates, probably 18 – 19 years old. Just kids down there to have fun, you know. My take on a lot of that is that probably for the better part of 15 years or more, probably going back to the 40's, every teenage boy in Jasper and southern Angelina County went to Aldridge as a right of passage to drink their first beer, you know, leave their mark whether with spray paint or whatever. You can't see them as much anymore but there were etchings in the concrete as well as graffiti painted on and goodness knows what else... smoke their first weed I don't know what was happening. My contention was going back to the late '40's there was not a young man in Jasper or Southern Angelina County that didn't go to Aldridge and do something they probably shouldn't have been doing. Really, up until...what year was that, 1998 maybe, we did Pittman in '95 and '96 so I guess '97, you could still drive a pickup, you could still drive a truck or a car all the way up to the buildings. We had a...in '97 we had a heavy rain that blew out the culvert on the road that goes on in and we didn't replace the culvert so that helped truck traffic and car traffic. You could still go in there on a motorcycle or a four-wheeler or motorcycle and it wasn't until the late '90s that we were able to get a closure order for any kind of motorized vehicles down there. So, anyway we digressed a little bit.

JG: Yes, so the Passport in Time you chose Aldridge.

JJ: Yes, we chose Aldridge because we had a very specific research question, we wanted to answer in terms of what kind of...

JG: Federal Registry designation?

JJ: What might be there archeologically that is intact?

JG: Does it have one now?

JJ: Is it listed?

JG: Yes.

JJ: Yes, we got it...that was the first site I listed on the National Register. I completed that in 1999, I think.

JG: Okay, so we are talking about '96 was when you started?

JJ: Yes, '95 and '96 and it was only through the great help of Jim Steely that I got it listed. That and Lake Fannin, up in Fannin County. But...so like I said Valecia and I started putting this thing together and we had both done summer field schools with Texas Archeology Society, so we had a sense of how to work volunteers, how to handle volunteers.

JG: Recruit and coordinate?

JJ: Recruit and coordinate. We weren't so skilled on logistics and we learned that quickly that first year. Our very first one we scheduled it for... we checked at A&M and we checked at SFA, we checked at University of Texas and I think North Texas when were their spring breaks. Our thought was we want to recruit college students on spring break who want to get some field experience and so we scheduled that first project for the first week of March. Which wasn't totally bad, we only had rain two days out of the eight that we were down there; the temperature never got above 40, people were mostly miserable and wet the whole week.

JG: Did you stay in tents?

JJ: We stayed in tents...well what happened was our thought of getting college students involved turned out to be totally bogus. I think we had one college student apply. The rest of our volunteers were retirees, RV'ers that go around. There were two couples that had gone to their very first project in Minnesota and loved it. They spent their entire lives, they had a Forttravel style RV going from forest to forest doing PIT projects a week at a time. One couple, the Sitlers' from Arizona, they would actually go and spend several months as a campground host at different Forest Service and Parks Service sites. What we ended up with was, we didn't have any college students. We had 14,16 retirees from all around the country. There were folks from Wisconsin, folks from Michigan, folks from Oklahoma, about half were from Texas.

JG: Did they end up staying at Boykin Springs?

JJ: We all camped at Boykin Springs. We all camped at Boykin Springs except one gentleman that didn't like to camp, and he stayed at a Best Western that is over off 255 going towards Pineland, not Pineland, towards Brookland. It was like a Motel 8 or something like that had been built and he stayed there and commuted to Boykin. It wasn't a big deal. He didn't mind it. So, we had those two years, we did '95 and '96 at Aldridge, '97 and '98 we did on the Davy Crockett. We stayed the first year, we took over Mission Tejas State Park through the good graces of Parks and Wildlife folks, they cut us a deal and then in '98 we got a really good deal at Mission Tejas but it pissed off my District Ranger on the Davy Crockett that we weren't using Ratcliff and I explained to him that his rec person had told me we couldn't use Ratcliff exclusively for this period of time for these folks and that we would have to pay full price for campground rental as well as full price for using the shelter. I explained, I said, you know, we're getting anywhere from \$50 to \$100,000 of work out of these people and your rec person is going to quibble with me for about \$5,000. I said it isn't worth it, the math doesn't add up. The Parks and Wildlife is giving us free run at Mission Tejas for as long as we need it for two weeks and not charging people to camp and making their staff also available to help us if we needed it. So, the next year we were at Ratcliff, free of charge. We ended up doing a number of projects in the Davy Crockett. We tried, and again as we got into that, into PIT, we spread the wealth, we had needs on all four districts as well as the Grasslands. So, we started out on the Angelina, we went from there to Davy Crockett for two years, then we went to the Sabine for one year then the Sam Houston for two years. Then we were back to the Davy Crockett for a year, back to the Sabine for a year, we just kind of floated. The last two years I was directly

involved with Passport in Time we were up at Lake Fannin in Fannin County doing historic structure restoration up there because we had a complex of buildings.

JG: On the Grasslands?

JJ: The Caddo Grasslands, right on the Red River north of Bonham by about 15 miles. This was a facility that was built during the, by a New Deal Program, the Rural Resettlement Administration that built it but it looked like a CCC [Civilian Conservation Corp] facility. It was native stone and logs, heavy timber, construction, that kind of thing. We had a lodge, a bath house and at that time there were I think still 8 cabins that were in various stages of disrepair. Three that had already collapsed or been damaged by other means. We had a lot of vandalism issues up there and we were trying to address all of those, but our main goal the first year was to re-roof the lodge, refinish the hardwood floor in the lodge, clean up the kitchen area, remove some additions that had been made in the early '70's, from 1970 to 1974 the facility was used as a summer camp. Actually, it was used as a summer camp back in the early '50's. From the early 50's to the early 70's it was a church camp run by the Baptist Church. I'm not sure exactly who, and then by the early '70's it became a Youth Conservation Corp resident camp. We had one there and the one at Caney Creek, on the Angelina and there was one at Double Lake on the Sam Houston. Those were summer long residential type things. So, to accommodate the summer camp the YCC camps up there; there had been some modifications made to the lodge. There had been an add on that was just, you know, two by four add on with a lean-to roof and T-111 siding. They had fenced in the outdoor patio. They didn't do a real good job of matching roof lines, so we had a lot of water damage on the lodge. So, part of our goal on that was to remove those additions and reroof the lodge, redo the floor, repair some doors and screens and things like that so we could turn the lodge from being a vacant building to being utilized by people for Christmas parties or family reunions, or weddings, that kind of thing. That was our focus the first year, primarily on the lodge and the bath house. We were trying to get them stabilized and get new roofs put on both of them. The second year we went back and redid three cabins, two stone cabins and one log cabin with new roofs, we repaired windows, repaired doors, and got them to the point where they were safe for people to go in. They weren't to a point where we could rent them out, but they were safe enough that if we had public visiting, they could actually go in and see. Because each cabin was unique; each cabin had a unique fireplace; no two were alike. They all had different mantles and things, the individual-ness of the craftsmanship by the workers was very evident throughout that whole complex. So again, we did those projects in 2004 and 2005 and I guess 2006 we worked there. The program still in 2007 and 2008 we were back on the Davy Crockett. I wasn't directly involved with the projects then. I had already moved into my staff, my team leader position and Barbara Williams, who took over my job as Archaeologist, she and Juanita, who is the Archeologist now, Program Manager, took over the PIT and they did a couple of years at Ratcliff.

JG: So, when you say PIT you're talking about Passport in Time?

JJ: Passport in Time, yes. The acronym is PIT, P-I-T. They did two years at Ratcliff. The first year was in response to clean up work that was needed after a tornado hit the

campground. Then the second year we were in the preliminary stages of planning to redo the spillway and to stabilize the dam. So, they focused projects in those areas so we would know if there was anything there that we needed to protect. We would be disturbing dating back to the Four-C Mill period as well as the CCC.

JG: How much work was done in the '30's that you knew of? Was any stabilization done on the dam then?

JJ: Well the dam was built in '36.

JG: Oh okay.

JJ: The original mill pond, when they moved out in 1918...

JG: Early 1920's.

JJ: They breached the dam and drained the mill pond.

JG: Drained it, okay.

JJ: And there were anecdotes of people actually trying to raise crops in that creek bottom and there was so much, so many sunken pines still in the soil that everything tasted like rosin and turpentine. So, when the CCC rebuilt they moved the dam downstream about, I want to say, 600 yards or something like that. So, the lake that is there now is a little bit larger than what the mill pond was.

JG: Because I know on the east, southeast side, there is still some brick and railroads...

JJ: They moved it, but they also angled it differently.

JG: ...the log haul was there.

JJ: The log haul that was where the main blower and flywheel were there on that east side, southeast side of the dam.

JG: Yes, okay.

JJ: The chip burner, I mean that foundation is still real visible. So, in fact there was even more of the complex south of Hwy 7. There is probably, what did we map out, about 46 acres over there and that was where the kiln and all the drying racks were. The tram came right up and crosses right in there. So, that is an area...we never did any work over there other than mapping. It was in an area that was not conducive to doing any kind of regular management so it was pretty much left alone. They would go in and do hazard tree removal and those kinds of things, but it wasn't going to be clear cut and it wasn't going to be selectively cut and it was bounded, you had basically highway right-of-way on the north

side and you had a power line right-of-way on the south side of where everything was. It was just a little strip, 25,30, 40-acre strip where those other ruins were located.

JG: Of course, Boykin Springs Recreation Area and Ratcliff Recreation Area is where Civilian Conservation Corp projects. I want to move into that a little bit, unless you've got something else to share about Passport in Time. But, didn't you keep up and do reunions of CCC workers?

JJ: Well CCC guys.

JG: Yes, talk about that.

JJ: What happened was...and that was one of the most rewarding things I ever got involved in. And I don't know exactly what year it was, but I get a call one day from a gentleman named Moorehead.

JG: M-o-r-e-h-e-a-d.

JJ: M-o-o-r-e-h-e-a-d.

JG: Okay.

JJ: Lived out in Huntington, and his brother was Boots Moorehead that owned Boots store. He called me to invite me to a CCC reunion. They had been meeting kind of informally, a group of 10, 12 guys that had all been in CCC. They were meeting informally.

JG: He didn't know you and you didn't know him?

JJ: I did know him! I found out his daughter and Gay went to school together. His name was Harold [Henry] Moorehead.

JG: He had been doing reunions for a little while.

JJ: Just getting together informally a couple of times a year they would meet at Dean's and have lunch or whatever. Well, they wanted to do something a little more formal and they wanted to use the shelter at Boykin Springs because that initial group there were probably 5 or 6 guys that had actually worked at Boykin Springs.

JG: This was the original shelter they had built in the '30's?

JJ: Yes, the CCC shelter that is down there. So, it sounded intriguing to me and a Saturday afternoon, they were going to give me a free lunch and they just wanted me to go and say a few things, so I go down there; I take Valecia with me and ...

JG: Gay didn't go?

JJ: Gay didn't go to that one.

JG: It wasn't a PR opportunity?

JJ: Well it was, but she had something else going on, one of the kids had something going on, because it was in September, I guess. So anyway, we go down there, and I do my little spiel and there were about 30 people total, husbands and wives, about 15 CCCer's in that first year.

JG: Now were these just any CCC'ers?

JJ: They opened it up to anybody that had worked in the CCC and regardless of where they had worked. There was one guy that had worked in CCC, he joined when he was 16, which 18 was the cut-off, but he lied about his age. He worked four years instead of two, but he spent his whole career in Arizona and Colorado, Southwestern Colorado. And then there were guys from other camps at Jasper. One gentleman that had been in Weches, so I went down and did that first one and they were wonderful group of men and all of them were World War II vets as well. They talked constantly about how their CCC experience prepared them for duty in World War II. But anyway, it was a real uplifting experience to go down there that one day. Well, they subsequently invited us back year after year and several years later, and I forget what the occasion was, but there was a large reunion at Weches and there were close to 250 CCCer's there. I don't think...it wasn't the First State Reunion, but it was ...

JG: Did they meet at Mission Tejas State Park?

JJ: They met at Mission Tejas, yes. It was just a one-day affair; tours of the state park, of course, there were a couple of gentlemen there that had worked at that camp or worked over at Pine Springs. They were currently living in Crockett or Grapeland or wherever. But anyway, I just went there to observe and meet people. There was a lady then with Texas Parks and Wildlife that was just starting to be interested in this whole CCC reunion concept because nearly all the State Parks were CCC.

JG: Cynthia Brandimarte?

JJ: She was involved but it was Janell Tolbert was who I worked with closely for a number of years.

JG: Now Jim Steely, this is after he left?

JJ: This is after Steely had left, yes.

JG: And just for the record Jim was with the Historical Commission.

JJ: He was with the Historical Commission and he was a Historic Sites Specialist.

JG: Was he with Parks and Wildlife too or just Historical?

JJ: Just the Historical Commission, but his area of responsibility involved state parks and he had of course written the journal or the publication based on the History of the CCC in Texas and all that. Jim, I still think the world of him, except that he had the misfortune of being friends with Dan Utley. (laughter) Make sure Utley sees that part.

JG: Yes!

JJ: So, anyway we did that one and then we just kept up with...it was a wonderful, wonderful experience. Like I said, one of the more rewarding things I got involved with. I guess that would have been 2008, would have been the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the CCC and we worked with, I guess Ginger Trotter was Director of the Forestry Museum then, and she had contacted me wanting to do a display on the CCC. There were some panels and things that Dale Bounds had developed 15 years before that had been removed from the gallery and were back in the thing and she wanted to update those and all that. So, we came up with the idea of the Forestry Museum hosting the CCC reunion that year. I cleared it with Mr. Moorehead and Mr. Spears and some of the others and they said, "that will be a great idea." I said "here's the deal; I'm going to provide the food. You don't bring anything except yourself and your appetite. We're going to take care of everything." And God, you would think I had given them all a check for a million dollars; it was a tremendous... again that day is etched in my memory. It was a tremendous day. We had close to 45 CCCer's there. People just kind of came out of the woodwork. Some had not been to any of the reunions before and of course...

JG: And they would have all been in their late '80's.

JJ: Yes, they were all in the late 80's at that time, yes. Really up until, Mr. Moorehead passed away last year in 2017, I think he passed away and Mr. Spears passed away in 2018, but their wives are still alive. We run into them every now and then, and they still talk about how that day, how much it meant to their husbands, to them, and all. Anyway, that was probably...I think we had one or two more reunions after that and then the numbers...the last reunion there were only 4 men there and all four of them have passed on now. So it kind of ran it's course. That was one of the more rewarding aspects of my career that I still cherish that opportunity to meet those men because they were special people, you know. Several of them, well Mr. Spears, when he got out of the Army he went to work at the Papermill. He spent his whole career at the Papermill. Several others did too. One worked for Carter Lumber Company; several worked for Angelina Lumber Company and several for Temple, so it just, you know, they went off, some of them went off long distances to do their CCC work and they went to either Europe or Pacific to fight and then they all came back to Angelina County and put down roots and stayed here. So, that was a neat thing and I learned more about the CCC just from listening to those gentlemen tell stories. It filled in a lot of gaps in terms of what daily life was like, what was expected of them.

JG: Did anybody do any interviews with them? Did anybody record them?

JJ: Actually, they did. Janelle...I took Mr. Moorehead and two others to the last Statewide reunion that Janelle put on was at Garner State Park.

JG: And who is Janelle?

JJ: Janelle Tolbert with Parks and Wildlife and she did video oral histories, like a three-day event.

JG: Okay at Garner?

JJ: At Garner and she was going to send me transcripts, but she never did. I know she sent transcripts to the Mooreheads because Mrs. Moorehead showed it to me. I think she actually sent them copies of the tapes. If it was before CD's and DVD's it was VHS, so yes, there were histories done. She did them that year and she did them at other...she had other statewide reunions that we didn't participate in, where they were doing oral histories. I think Dan actually helped one year or two maybe.

JG: Yes, I was thinking that. I will ask him.

JJ: He wasn't at Garner...he was at Garner, but he wasn't doing the video. We ran into each other there, but I think he just actually came there to socialize a little bit. But, yes, we didn't do any...did we do any locally?

JG: I was kind of on the periphery of all that. Like I said I heard about it or knew about it but I never...I wished now we would have tried to do some interviews with some of the locals.

JJ: I will have to go back and look, because we had a young lady that started out as a timber marker. We sent her to a paraprofessional course to learn how to do archeology. She went off on a fire detail and came back with a bad back so she couldn't do archeology anymore, but she was interested in oral history and we sent her to two training classes on how to conduct interviews. Then, she spent the better part of 4 years interviewing mostly employees. There were several employees I think in that group that had been in the CCC, but I didn't think she interviewed them specifically about the CCC. It probably came up in conversation. I would have to go back and look at those transcripts.

JG: Okay.

JJ: Gosh, she in those 3 or 4 years she probably did 80 to 85 interviews. She went out and interviewed retirees. She interviewed active employees.

JG: And y'all have those in the Lufkin office?

JJ: They may be in the stuff Juanita brought y'all over here. I don't know where they are.

JG: I don't think we've got them.

JJ: They may be there or they may still be on the Davy Crockett. That is where she worked at.

JG: They wouldn't be in Fort Worth or anything? They would be retained?

JJ: Boy I couldn't begin to tell you. I'll ask Juanita, I'll talk to her in a week or two.

JG: This is really jumping away or changing subject, but we've only done three out of my ten so let's change speeds a little bit and let's talk about the Rainbow people.

JJ: Oh Rainbow Gathering.

JG: This was all 1980's.

JJ: That was 1988 that they were here.

JG: What was your first memory of the Rainbow people? How did you hear what was going to happen?

JJ: Well I...our special agent at the time, who shall still remain nameless.

JG: Special Agent, what was that?

JJ: He was the head law enforcement guy, the Special Agent.

JG: Oh okay.

JJ: Like I said, he is now a prominent member of the Judiciary of Angelina County Precinct One, but I won't mention him by name. In 1987 he went to North Carolina for a three-week detail as the Incident Commander for the Rainbow Gathering on the National Forest in North Carolina. Now I use the word, Incident Commander, beginning in '82 or '83 the Forest Service and all other federal agencies and state agencies started going to a unified command system primarily for fire incidents is how it started. It was a way to improve communication and improve coordination when you had multiple agencies working on or responding to an incident whether it be a fire, hurricane or whatever. So, when...it's a very effective tool, the Incident Command System is, so when in '87 the Rainbow Family decided to come to the Southeastern Region for the first time. So first thing they did was set up an Incident Command Team. Billy was the Incident Commander. I wasn't going to mention his name, but anyway he was Incident Commander so there were other teams, other special agents in different roles doing different things. So, he goes to North Carolina and that gathering really was kind of the beginning of the head butting between the Rainbow Family and the Forest Service. Prior to that year all their gatherings had been out west, California, Nevada, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Utah, all been in places that were extremely remote. Nobody knew about, very few people even

knew the gatherings were happening. Well they come to the Southeast, and of course it's, you know, there is 5 million people living within an hour drive of where they wanted to have their gatherings, so it became a big deal.

JG: What forests was it?

JJ: It was on the Pisgah; it was outside of Asheville. So, anyway as a result of some of the things that happened in North Carolina in '87, the Rainbow Family decided okay we are going to go to Texas in '88 and pay our good friend Special Agent a visit. So, beginning about February of that year, I get a call from the Special Agent and he says, "hey what can you tell me about such and such compartment on such and such creek over in Trinity County? I said, "well I can tell you that there's at least three Caddo related sites right on that landforms." I said, "why?" He said, "well the Rainbow Family wants to come and that is where they want to put their campground." I said, "well we can't, there is no way they should camp on those landforms where those sites are there is too much opportunity for disturbance, whether digging latrines or trash pits or whatever." So, we went out and put up a barbed wire fence around the sites. They still came to the area. The first group showed up in probably mid to late March, the advanced group. They were here to scout out areas for the gathering.

JG: Which was going to happen in the summer?

JJ: Which was going to happen over the Fourth of July weekend. So, my first contact with them was in March and they...we heard these folks were out there so the Special Agent and I go out and they were real upset because that barbed wire was messing up their mojo, you know. It just destroyed the spirit of the area and all that. I said, "well here's the reason why it's up and here's what's going to happen if you guys cut the fence or get in and disturb the site." You've got thousands of other acres you can do your thing on, but you don't need this 5-acre little piece. Now this was over on the lower end of Davy Crockett in Trinity County. It's an area where Caney Creek and Piney Creek kind of form, Caney Creek forms the western boundary and Piney Creek the eastern boundary and then just off the forest about 3/4 of a mile south of the forest boundary the two creeks come together and it becomes Piney Creek. It goes on down into Corrigan and what have you.

JG: How and why did they select that?

JJ: I have no clue other than it, again was kind of remote. It was close enough to Groveton; they could get supplies. They could go to Groveton and beg. Their way of getting supplies was to go dumpster diving. Hell, they were dumpster diving in Lufkin in May and June, getting discarded groceries or whatever to carry out. So, anyway, in the area they wanted to use it's a place called Ridder Lake. It is just outside the Lacy Community.

JG: But it's not really a recreation area?

JJ: It is not a designated recreation area. It had been...it was a selective management cut but almost like a clear cut in that compartment. It was just laid to waste. There wasn't much

there. We had built this elaborate road system in there to support the timber sale and not within 6 months after completing the road we had one of these 14 inch rain events and the two creeks backed up and blew out all the culverts on the road, so we had just done temporary repairs I guess by the time they showed up. But, anyway, the thing is Ridder Lake is an old cut off ox bow of Piney Creek and it is stagnant water; it's covered in crud; it's full of moccasins and whatever else and then the mosquitos in the area are enough to carry you away. So, I'm thinking oh yes, this is a great place to have 5,000 people in the middle of the summer, you know. Their thinking their going to use Ridder Lake as a swimming area and all that. Of course, all that didn't happen. So, you asked when I first contacted...

JG: Yes, you didn't take them to your friend at Ratcliff?

JJ: No, that was the thing about the Rainbow family and even to this day because they still have gatherings. They don't want to use developed recreation areas because if they go to that point there's a permitting process they have to go through. By just going to the forest and being out in the general forest there's no permitting process because that is one of the things, people can camp pretty much anywhere they want to on the forest unless it's designated otherwise. The first few years I worked I went out on some ride arounds with the Special Agent on opening weekend of hunting season and back then there were no designated hunters' camps. You could pretty well camp where you wanted. Gosh, there would be ten, twelve guys, not a one of them sober, enough firearms to outfit a complete army and it was wild, wild, west. So, that went on for a number of years, and then we made some changes in policy and supervisors' orders or whatever and went to designated hunters' camps only. It was a way of controlling the population to some degree as well as the hunting pressure. Also, a way to concentrate use in certain areas and every year they would tweak where the designated camps were. So anyway, there out there. They stayed there, this initial group, and it grew a little bit around the first of May another gaggle of folks came in so, there were probably 35 to 40 people.

JG: Didn't they target around the Angelina Forest?

JJ: Well they eventually moved to the Angelina because it was obvious, they finally figured out, there was no way they could have a gathering there. For one thing there was only one road in and one road out, so we had complete control over the access and all we had to do was put up a gate and nobody could get in. Well they didn't like that at all, so again, these other groups were scouting so they homed in on this tract where they ended up over near Caney Creek. It was still primarily...

JG: Just south of the lake.

JJ: Yes, on the south bank of the lake.

JG: Lake Rayburn.

JJ: Just...there were really two roads in but the farm road that goes on to Caney Creek you can go down and come back through the forest on another forest road or where the road curves there is a forest service road that goes off from there it would be going north, northwest maybe, and then it branches off into two spur roads that go down to the lake. So, they kind of homed in on that area. It gave them a little bit fresher water. It gave them, there was a little bit better access and couldn't be quite as heavily controlled by law enforcement, so that fit their needs. So, anyway all that leading up and then I guess beginning in mid-June of that year the Incident Command Structure was implemented. I got brought into it as a timekeeper and logistics person. I had two main jobs; one was, the first one was to go down, we had a trailer we used as a command post, I would go down there every afternoon and pick up time sheets from the previous day's shifts and bring them back to Lufkin and turn them over to the timekeeper who would then enter them into the computer and process people to get paid. My other job was the Incident Commander was a guy named Bobby Dean, he was a special agent in Mississippi. He discovered Blue Bell ice cream so my other job was whenever I came down every afternoon, I had to bring him a pint of Blue Bell vanilla bean. So, I would stop at the little store there in Zavalla right there at 147 and 63 and after about a week they asked me, "you come in here every day and buy a pint of ice cream, what's the deal?" I said, "well there is a guy in charge down here wants his pint of blue bell vanilla bean every day that I come down here and there is only two pints left in your freezer, can you be sure you're going to get some more?" And, everyday after that it was fully stocked. So, those were my two primary jobs, but I was...I was working solely from mid-June until July 10th maybe, something like that. I was working solely to support the Rainbow Gathering and as July 4th got closer, I was spending less time driving back and forth and more time down there providing escort service to visiting folks or whatever and helping out in the command post. That kind of thing.

JG: Some time ago I went through a bunch of newspapers, you know, a lot of them have been digitized, but it got press coverage all over the country.

JJ: Oh yes it was a big deal.

JG: California had some and I think the journalist all had fun with it.

JJ: They did! And, the funny thing was I remember...

JG: I remember there were some lawsuits filed in Lufkin at various...

JJ: We filed a lawsuit against them on the permitting issue. It went nowhere, the judge dismissed it. There were a couple of other lawsuits filed but I don't think they actually gained any traction. The woman that got run over on the beach by a local, she filed a lawsuit against Forest Service for not protecting her and that got thrown out as frivolous pretty quick. That made the Lufkin paper. I don't know if it got out, but I don't remember what her name was. It was unusual. The former Special Agent got a Christmas card from her a couple of years ago. She was walking down the beach there on the lake and there was a local in a Jeep CJ5 that she kind of fell underneath. She didn't necessarily get run over, because it cleared her, but he bumped her just hard enough to knock her down then drove

over. He didn't hit her with the wheels or anything. But, you know, as people are ought to do, she claimed it broke her back and caused all this permanent damage and what have you which was believable until you saw her walking down the beach two days later.

JG: Now did you personally encounter any of them?

JJ: Oh yes, I was...I would go down...well the first thing, there was one point where they needed to put in some new latrines and in fact both instances where they put in latrines me and the archeologist, I think I had a temporary on staff at the time, we went down and actually dug the latrines for them so we claimed it was shovel testing for a site, but we knew how big they needed to be and what dimensions and you know, we were both used to using shovels. We could get one dug much faster than anybody else could, so we dug several latrines for them initially and then went back and those were filled up so we had to dig some new ones. I was down from probably the last week of June through about the 10th of July I spent more time down on the site than I did in the command post or in Lufkin. And I saw all kinds of stuff, but you know in the bigger scheme of things, the crowd picked up. It never reached 5,000 people. It probably maxed out at maybe 900 or 1000. The vast majority of those folks came in July 3rd and they left July 5th. They were doctors, they were lawyers, as many Mercedes Benz's as there were F150 pickups that came in and Volkswagen Beetles.

JG: I remember there was something afterwards where there was some law enforcement group actually retained a number of them to try to force them to clean up. Was that Forest Service?

JJ: It was a combination of Forest Service and County Sheriff. What I remember on that is when things ended everybody left and went home, they left a group of ten or fifteen essentially to clean up, and several of those folks ended up residing in Huntington out of that group. They just set down roots in Huntington and stayed there. They did an initial clean up, but there was still like a big water tank down there. There was tents that had gotten dilapidated, those kinds of things, that they just left. We had to coerce them to go finish the clean up or there were going to be charges filed on them. So, it was the thing just trying to give them a kick in the butt to get the work done they had promised to do.

JG: So, the law enforcement agent for Angelina at the time, did they do a lot of overtime during that time?

JJ: Yes, everybody did. I did enough overtime even in the small role that I played. I did enough overtime even in the small role that I played, I did enough overtime that after that I went and bought a brand-new truck and paid cash. That was good money by comparison. I'm not sure that needs to be in the transcript but anyway. The amount of overtime, I forget. They did a calculation of what the total cost was in terms of personnel and overtime, supplies and all that. It was six or seven figures easy for that period. Then a smaller group came back...

JG: Now was that just Forest Service or is that Forest Service and County?

JJ: Well the County didn't...I'm trying to remember since it was all on federal land the county said they didn't have jurisdiction.

JG: All Angelina County?

JJ: Yes. They didn't feel like they had jurisdiction, but they were providing like patrol support on Hwy 63 and the Farm Road to Caney. They had some...trying to remember if it was the County or Parks and Wildlife, if must have been Parks & Wildlife Game Wardens that monitored the beach from boats out on the lake. Then of course, you had the DEA involved; you had U.S. Attorney's office involved that had investigators out. You had DPS narcotics investigators, there were I remember one day I'm down doing something with the Special Agent and we're walking down the road towards the lake and we hear this horn honk behind us and we turn around and look and it's like a late '60's vintage Lincoln convertible, kind of like what LBJ drove. It was sort of purplish in color and this character driving it had long hair in a ponytail and a goatee and was wearing a Hawaiian shirt. I thought well that is odd. He doesn't fit the profile for a gathering member, yet he is driving down here. He pulls over and gets out and in addition to having on a Hawaiian shirt he had on plaid Bermuda shorts and black socks and a pair of sandals. And as he walked up and opened his mouth, I realized who it was. He was a DPS narcotics undercover investigator that had been through here a number of times and we had met. He knew my dad. My dad was a constable down in Jefferson County and he had started his law enforcement career down there and he knew my dad, so we were kind of friends. He drove up and he starts walking over to us and I'm like "what the hell are you supposed to be?" He said, "they think I'm a plumber." (laughter)

JG: In a purple...

JJ: In a purple Lincoln wearing a Hawaiian shirt and plaid shorts and black socks with flip flops or sandals. I said, "if they buy that, more power to you." Anyway, humorous things like that. Like I say it was the kind of thing there was a hardcore group of 50 or so that were not the most nicest of human beings. Some of the things were again, one day we were walking and there was a Forest Service law enforcement truck coming down the road and walking over on one side there's a young man with two children on the other side of the road and as the Forest Service truck got close he pushed those kids out in front of the Forest Service truck, you know, seeing if he could start something, you know. The kids didn't have a choice about being there and there were other things that were done involving kids that just should never have happened. There was...like I said there may have been 900 to 1000 people out there at the peak, but there were really only 50 or so that really should have been locked up, you know. There were several people pushing LSD and things like that, and they tried to bust them, and it all got screwed up. What was suppose to be a real top secret thing got blown up when a prominent politician decided he needed to stick his nose into it, and he showed up in advance of the bust claiming, you know, claiming with drug dogs and all this claiming all this and it completely by the time the actual undercover thing was going to happen they got spooked and got rid of what ever it was.

JG: Do you want to say who it was?

JJ: Who?

JG: The politician.

JJ: The prominent politician. It was Phil Graham, you know, again there were certain things that went on and it only happened when you have got multiple, DEA, Forest Service, DPS, these groups all kind of got together to do something, you never knew if it was going to be Keystone Cops or successful and there were more Keystone Cops moments down there that I observed than there were successful moments. There were some, but that that whole deal with Senator Graham they tried to tell him to stay away, this is in the works but god he had TV cameras in tow and needed to make a scene and it kind of blew the whole deal. That was quite a unique experience. I never got the chance to go work another gathering. We thought they were going to come back a few years after that. They came back for like a small, I say they came back, there were maybe a 100 that came back for a small spring solstice event. They were here in March, whatever the first day of spring that year and they decided to use Aldridge as their gathering site and so we delivered porta-potties rather than dig a latrine. We worked with them on areas where we felt like they could camp and weren't going to disturb anything. We told them to stay out of the buildings, you know, stay off the ruins those kinds of things and they were pretty good about it.

JG: Were they pretty good about staying on federal lands? I know there is a lot of private lands and hunting clubs all around the National Forest.

JJ: Yes, they were pretty...the '88 gathering was all federal land. They didn't want anything to do with private land.

JG: I knew they wouldn't, but if they accidentally ventured...

JJ: They were aware of private property rights and the kind of trouble they could get in if they trespassed.

JG: Yes, I imagine some of those hunting clubs wouldn't have welcomed them.

JJ: Yes, if they had tried to go the other side of Highway 63 where those hunting clubs were, there would have been some shootings for sure. But, like I said, there was a group that came back a couple of years later and did a Spring thing, but we really didn't have any problems with them. They were just...by today's standards you'd say they are homeless people who are camping in the woods basically. So, you know, it was quite an experience. I feel fortunate to have taken a part in it but not really something I'm wanting to do again.

JG: What about...one of my questions I have on here was working relationships with local communities? I wrote all that over two months ago and I'm not quite sure what I had in mind at the time. I don't remember exactly, but you mentioned some of these programs,

Passport in Time and others, but is there any other experiences that you had as being a federal employee and doing your job? The relationships to communities.

JJ: There were a handful of things that I got drawn into primarily from being an archeologist rather than...

JG: Aren't there like citizen, not watch groups but citizen participation groups? What is that called that kind of helps decide where the monies are going to go and that kind of thing?

JJ: Well the Resource Advisory Committees.

JG: Yes, yes, did you work with any of that?

JJ: I didn't then; I'm on one now. When I retired, I got asked to be on the Davy Crockett Resource Advisory Committee and those are citizen driven groups that look at projects, prioritize projects using what is referred to as Title II money.

JG: Are they mandated?

JJ: It used to be.

JG: Does the Forest Service have to have those?

JJ: They don't have to. There are other ways the counties can get the funds; this is the most efficient way. From the beginning of the Forest Service until the late 1990's, it was counties, in lieu of taxes...

JG: You're saying Forest Service in Texas, from that beginning?

JJ: The Forest Service itself, beginning with Pinchot in 1908 or whatever.

JG: Okay.

JJ: And this applied nationwide, in lieu of taxes for the public lands within each county they were enabling legislation for the creation of the Forest Service dictated that 25% of the revenues generated by...

JG: Timber sales...

JJ: Timber sales and oil and gas, whatever commodities were produced off the forest, 25% of those sales would go back to the counties of origin. And that was the case like I said from the beginnings of the Forest Service up until the late '90s or early 2000's. And it was really good up until the mid '80's, when you started getting lawsuits in the Pacific Northwest about the Spotted Owl; lawsuits in California about the Spotted Owl, and a lot of that started timber revenues when the timber revenues started drying up because of the

change in management because of Endangered Species or whatever, counties couldn't depend on that 25%. They never knew how much they were going to get. It was real inconsistent. One year they might get \$100,000 and the next year they might get \$500, just as examples. So, there was...when Jim Turner was Congressman, he was one of the co-authors of the bill to...called Secure Rural Schools Act and what it was designed to do was stabilize the payments to counties, to where they knew it was going to be at least a minimum and at most a maximum, it was a range every year. I don't remember what the formulas were based on but one of the things, there were two ways the counties could get the money, I mean the counties would get the money, there were two ways they could manage it.

JG: Would they get some kind of fee annually?

JJ: Annually yes. And, there were several counties like Shelby and San Augustine County, their county budgets were dependent on those returns to make up differences and to make up shortfalls. And, up until when we changed management practices and went to selective harvesting and what have you, away from clear cuts and high dollar sales, their money started drying up and it really wasn't until the oil and gas boom in mid-2005 and 2006 that they started getting large sums of money back into their coffers from it. So, the Rural Schools Act sets up a mechanism for the development of these Resource Advisory Committees which there is a whole set of requirements and regulations on who has to be on the committee, and it's a whole range of expertises. Of course, the District Ranger on the forest and the County Judge are automatically members, and then I think there has to be one other County Commissioner elected county official. There has to be somebody in Real Estate Developments, somebody in the timber industry.

JG: I was asked a number of years ago to turn in resumes and all that kind of stuff. I forget I was representing some aspect, maybe history I don't know.

JJ: Historical Commission, County Historical Commission.

JG: I was hesitant to even do it and so I finally wrote everything up and sent it in and I never heard from them.

JJ: Well I had been retired about a year when I got a call from Davy Crockett asking me if I would be interested. I said yes, I'll throw my hat in the ring, and he said well we need a resume. I thought geez I haven't done a resume in at least 6 years. I said let me see I think I may still have one on the computer I can kind of update and luckily, I did. It was actually on a flash drive from when I downloaded personal files from my government computer, one of the things on it was my resume, so I was able to update it and send it to them. That first go around I sent it all in and I waited and waited, six months went by, seven months went by, never heard anything. So, I was over...we went to a...forget what event Gay and I went to, it may have been a retirement or a promotion, transfer party for somebody, but it was over at Ratcliff and we were there and the District Ranger at the time I said, "hey y'all asked me to submit a resume for the Resource Advisory Committee and I never heard back." He said, "well we had to put all that on hold because of funding issues." He said,

“we still got your resume we’ll let you know if anything breaks on it.” So, it was another two years I guess, two to three years before they called me back and said we got permission to go ahead. So, I’m on that now and I’ve been on it for a year and a half and we’ve had two meetings to go over proposals.

JG: So, that is for the counties where the Davy Crockett is?

JJ: Yes, Houston and Trinity Counties and in the case of that Advisory Committee both County Judges were on it and there is at least one Commissioner from each County. There is a, the Houston County Historical Commission has a rep on it.

JG: It’s like nine people isn’t it?

JJ: There is more than that. It’s pushing twenty, yes.

JG: Okay.

JJ: But so, I’ve done that but back to the question about community involvement. I got drawn into working on trash clean-ups here in Angelina County as well as over on Lake Conroe, the Sam Houston. Those kinds of things. Anything to do with Environmental Education, I usually got drawn into. For a number of years TFS [Texas Forest Service] would put on, each District Forester with TFS would put on what they called Forest Awareness Week.

JG: Texas Forest Service.

JJ: Yes, and we would...some years there would be four weeks that we would have to block out one basically for each forest and we would go and do an archeology presentation because it was school kids. Like the Angelina County one they had out at the TFS office in Hudson. But they would bring in third and fourth graders from every elementary school in Angelina County. The one, we would do one on the Davy Crockett at Ratcliff and that was all kids from Houston County Schools, all of Houston County Schools. The biggest one we did was in Shelby County. We would set up at Ragtown Rec area on Toledo Bend and that would be all students from Shelby and San Augustine and Sabine Counties. So, that week we would do presentations to five to six thousand kids in a week. Those were fun in a lot of ways. The last year we did one in Shelby County though some little guy ran off with two of my projectile points I was using for display. They were there and then they disappeared, and we never found them. I’m pretty sure I remember which kid took them because he was really, really interested and real touchy but when our backs were turned I guess they disappeared. We would do all kinds of things with them. We would of course do artifact identification and talk cultural history, try to do it in plain terms.

JG: Now when Carol Riggs, at the Forestry Museum, got the grant for the East Texas Sawmill Database project that was Forest Service grant?

JJ: It was Forest Service money. She got the grant actually from the Forest Service.

JG: And you were...I know you were on the advisory board at some point but did you help coordinate that?

JJ: Not until after the fact.

JG: Oh okay.

JJ: Carol applied for the grant; she got the grant, then I get called into the Forest Supervisors office and the conversation kind of goes, it wasn't really a conversation it was, "Hey John the Forestry Museum's working on this project; they're using Forest Service funds, you need to be the point of contact and the liaison." Okay, what is the project? "Oh, something about sawmills." (laughter) Okay I go back to my desk, so I called Carol and, "what the hell? What have I just gotten drawn into?" And she explained to me. I said, "okay that sounds like a fun thing to work on." So, I got drawn into that. The most unique thing I got drawn into on a community scale was the Tri-Centennial of the Founding of Mission Tejas. I forget what year that was.

JG: In '16? Well the first one would be 1689.

JJ: So, 1989 I get a call from the District Ranger of the Davy Crockett. He had been contacted by Eliza Bishop. She was putting together a celebration for the 300th anniversary for the founding of Mission Tejas and was extending an invitation to the Forest Service to participate. So, the ranger...

JG: Now, had you met her before?

JJ: I had.

JG: Okay.

JJ: We had...I had met her a couple of times.

JG: Okay.

JJ: I didn't know a lot about her but I had met her a couple of times. I knew she was real important in Houston County and carried a lot of weight. That much I knew even going into this. So, the District Ranger he said I don't have any clue so he calls me and says "we've been asked to participate in this celebration for Mission Tejas would you mind coming to Crockett and representing the Forest Service at a meeting?" I said, "okay, for one meeting I can do that." Well, one meeting turned into okay, I'm on the committee and this is like two years ahead of the fact. So, you'll love this story. So, about three meetings in we are having Mrs. Bishop leading this discussion and she comes to the point she says, "we need to have some Indian dancers." I said okay, where can we find Indian dancers and it was kind of round table discussion; nobody really knew. Mrs. Bishop chimes up and she

says, “well I know the Alabama Coushatta have the dance group that will go around and do things like this.”

JG: I can’t believe she would say that because the history is all...

JJ: I am sitting there kind of taking all this in and listening and I pipe up and I say “okay, the Caddo Indians have a dance group as well, a culture club, that would love to come down and dance I’m sure.”

JG: That is who it was!

JJ: We would have to pay, but provide room and board for thirty people for two nights, kind of thing. Well, Mrs. Bishop kind of got up on her high horse and she says, “I want Texas Indians and the Alabama Coushatta live in Texas and the Caddo live in Oklahoma.”

JG: Oh my gosh...I can’t believe she said that!

JJ: I said, “but the Caddo were here when the Mission was founded doesn’t that count for anything?” “I want Texas Indians.” So, long story short the Alabama Coushatta came and did dances at the Celebration.

JG: I’m surprised at that!

JJ: I even tried to get her...

JG: Did you tell her the Alabama’s are only in Texas because they got run out of the Southeast and the Caddo are only in Oklahoma because Texas run them out.

JJ: Yes, I told her that but dealing with Mrs. Bishop, you had to be careful because you didn’t want to get on her bad side. If you got on her bad side then all bets were off. And, I had at that point like I said, I had known her before hand, and we had already kind of established some things with her because there’s a little Historical Museum there in Crockett that she had asked us to help with some things and we did some presentations over a couple of years. So, I didn’t want to torpedo all that and the goodwill we had built so I shut up. I didn’t say anything more about it and didn’t bring it up. But, as far as I know the Alabama Coushatta ended up dancing at the celebration. So, that was...

JG: And they didn’t have to get put up for the night.

JJ: No, and I guess that was the bigger deal they didn’t cost them anything. They showed up and did their dance and went back.

JG: Oh man! (laughter)

JJ: But again, I still, you know, that experience was kind of hard to swallow, but I still cherish the fact that I got to know her and work with her and learned a lot about Houston

County from her. She was a force of nature and they lost, Houston County lost a lot when she passed. Even after that she was always cordial and gracious to us when we would go over and do presentations at the Museum, she would take us to lunch and buy our lunch, you know. Even though that wasn't supposed to happen I wasn't going to tell her no, because that is the way she was. It was going to happen.

JG: What about the Friends of the National Forest and Grasslands in Texas? And, just for the record...

JJ: Just for the record that was a short-lived...

JG: I remember! I have still told people...I have mentioned this to several people over the years. I remember when we...that came out of the Pinewoods Experience Program around 2006, 2007 and I remember I was in the group that came to you at one of these meetings and said, "hey guess what we did we formed a Friends of the National Forest and Grasslands in Texas." I remember you stood there and thought of something to say for a moment or two and then said, "well great, but I think you're going to find we are hard to be friends with." (laughter)

JJ: Was I predicting the future or what because as it turned out we were hard for people to be friends with. That was frustrating because you guys, you and Rufus and that whole bunch...

JG: Richard Donovan.

JJ: Richard Donovan were sincere and energetic and had great ideas.

JG: And from Rufus had a little bit of money too.

JJ: Yes, but the bureaucracy was so screwed up.

JG: Oh my gosh!

JJ: There was just no way we could make it happen and that frustrated. I was extremely frustrated how that went down.

JG: I remember we used to have some of our meetings at y'all offices on the top floor.

JJ: Yes, we would meet there on the fourth floor of the bank building there in our conference room, and there were some great ideas, you know, upgrading the bridges.

JG: The thing I remember the most was Rufus saying, "I've got five figures of money here and basically we were just saying y'all turn your backs and let us do it."

JJ: Yes, but we couldn't do that.

JG: I know.

JJ: And, again like I said that was frustrating.

JG: We were told we had to go to Atlanta, get claims done...

JJ: I was already in trouble because I had cut some corners on an agreement up on the Grasslands to get some people helping with Lake Fannin and I was already in a little bit of deep water over that. I was treading water trying to smooth all that over, so I knew, and again, that is the frustrating part because you get things like that, there are other forests in the country that have friends of groups that are very active. They do a lot of good work. They've managed to set up mechanisms though to facilitate it. For whatever reason we couldn't get over that hump here.

JG: The only thing that I saw...

JJ: Some of it had to do with Forest leadership; some of it had to do with leadership in Atlanta and our Regional Office and kind of what we were proposing they really weren't keen on it.

JG: One of the things I remember is, you know, the recreation areas...

JJ: You didn't have to bring that up.

JG: ...Ratcliff and Boykin Springs had after Rita...

JJ: Yes, after Rita.

JG: The response, and I remember I wrote an editorial in the newspaper about it but the response was pretty much we'll just put black plastic trash bags over the highway signs. I remember it was there for along time where you would turn to go to Bouton Lake or Boykin Springs.

JJ: Yes, because they were closed.

JG: Everything was closed, and we just weren't getting answers, you know, what's the hold up, what's the hold up. And it was in that time, I remember talking to you about this, again the Pineywoods Experience movement where I took my son and he was like 8 years old. I had been telling him about Aldridge for several years. History is my background and I wanted to take him. Well for two or three years now it had been closed and there was one little narrow window of time; I checked the website and I later found out it was a glitch on the website. For a three-day period, it said it was open, so I told my son, "Joseph we're going to Aldridge Saturday." So, we're driving in and the black bags are everywhere. It says closed and there's flagging and he's an 8-year-old boy and he said, "dad I don't think we should be here." I said "oh we're fine, we're good, it's open. And, we went on in and went to Aldridge and spent an hour and a half or so visited.

JJ: Did he learn some new words reading walls?

JG: Yes, maybe but you know, just showed him what little bit I knew about it and talked about the history and the railroads and etc., etc. and as we were leaving, seven or eight guys came in on horseback and I had a tripod and a camera and I remember them saying something like almost derogatory “did y’all make some good pictures.” I said, “yes sir we took a few” but, my son, because they all had big six shooters and he saw the guns and he was a little scared. We’re on the ground and they’re on big tall horses; we’re leaving Aldridge and it is kind of remote and scary with all the graffiti. I think it was one of those foggy days, mornings, so we’re leaving they talked to us and we leave and he is like “Dad, dad.” I said, “just keep walking.” He was just so scared thinking we shouldn’t be there to start with, now here is horse riders with pistols coming and anyway as we left and they got closer they just started shooting the place up and he kind of really freaked out then. I said, “just keep going.” We went back to the truck and I remember I forgot who the Forest Supervisor was at the time but it was the next meeting of the Pineywoods meeting and I told him I said, “well here is my 8 year old sons Pineywoods Experience going out there.”

JJ: That would have been Salinas.

JG: Salinas, exactly; he listened and everything, but I remember you saying unless they were shooting at the buildings, they had every right to do that.

JJ: Yes, there are no rules against plinking.

JG: I remember as a citizen thinking, I guess what I was wanting is for it to be open and accessible and I don’t know if patrolled is a right word, but be occupied enough to where it wouldn’t be that kind of thing.

JJ: That was a frustrating period. We had an opportunity after Hurricane Rita to...the opportunity was there to completely rebuild Boykin; yes Boykin. Redesign it, make it more suitable for modern camping and we put together a proposal package to send to the Regional Office for their Capital Improvement Program, because it was going to take more than just Hurricane Recovery Funds to do something. We were talking about a whole new water system, whole new electrical system, hook ups for trailers, redo the public beach and those kind of things as well as rebuild the trail. All that was in the proposal.

JG: That is what the Friends group was trying to do was rebuild the hiking trail.

JJ: And we prepared the proposal and sent it to the Regional office well, God you thought we had proposed selling off the crown jewels. There was total opposition in the Reginal Office to us doing anything there other than stabilizing it, cleaning up and moving on. Somebody in the Regional Office had decided that Boykin wasn’t generating enough money toward keeping open. They wanted us to close down the developed camping part of it and just be day use and we fought that tooth and nail. What we ended up with was some type of bizarre hybrid to where it’s primitive camping. There are still the two

bathrooms and the shelter but there really aren't any other amenities out there. Then the money for the trail came from a totally different source; a different pool of funds and that ended up on the forest predicated with us utilizing this Trails Unlimited Group.

JG: And about that same time Temple Inland sold a lot of their forest lands and the new owners of a piece of land that connected Bouton Lake kind of went, they no longer granted the access.

JJ: That was frustrating.

JG: Temple had always granted access.

JJ: The fortuitous part of that was we had been working with the Trails Unlimited group, which was an enterprise team within the Forest Service, that all they did they would basically go out as consultants and contractors to forests around the country and they would help do trail design and construction and then teach you how to maintain. So, they had been around for five years or so I guess when they started showing an interest in Texas. We worked closely with them. So, they were able, when Temple sold off that piece we were able to...we were in the mist of doing designs and those kind of things we were able to fine tune the trail from Boykin to Aldridge then go over to Bouton and create some new trail and make that into a loop.

JG: A loop yes.

JJ: You didn't have the connect across.

JG: I'm sorry to interrupt. That alarm was I needed to go to Judge Goodwin's memorial.

JJ: Oh yes, that is right.

JG: It's at 4:30 and I can't believe it's already after 4 o'clock. Well we may have to do a third interview if that is okay.

JJ: Call me after the first of the year.

JG: Well I'm sorry to interrupt.

JJ: Not a problem. I understand. I thought about going to that as well.

JG: Well I'll just turn this off. Thank you!

END OF INTERVIEW