

Bill Howell

1/98, T1, S1

- I: This an interview with Bill Howell of Imbler, Oregon on January the 3rd, 1998. We might start, Bill, if I can get just a little bit of brief background like when you were born, where and how long you've been in this area and your background or experience just briefly relating to, you know, bein' in the Grande Ronde Valley or the watershed here.
- BH: Sure, Jerry. I was born in 1927 and my home was on the banks of the Grande Ronde about a mile southeast of Imbler and lived there as a resident until 1961 or '2 which time we moved to the present location, but we still farmed the ground down there.
- I: There'd been __ the ranching __?
- BH: Yeah, it was my father's home when he grew up there.
- I: Do you remember how long he was here, or when your family first came here, just roughly?
- BH: Uh, no, not really. Dad was, I think, born in '96, 1896, and some of the land...he was on that ranch... No, I don't know when my grandfather acquired that. Dad added to the land...the ranch.
- I: But your grandfather originally came here?
- BH: Yeah. I can't tell you when that was.
- I: It's been a few years ago.
- BH: A lot of while. It was...you know, mid-1800s I would guess or 1870s or something of that nature.
- I: 'Cause the country first got settled about 1860s the first... or '61 to ____.
- BH: So if Dad was born in '96 they could have come out here and whatever.
- I: Just right after settlement.
- BH: Yeah, '80s.
- I: And you've been farming, then, ever since that...
- BH: Yes.
- I: ...right in the Imbler area.
- BH: Mm-hmm.
- I: I'd like to go through a few things like you have just, you know, your knowledge, experience or observations and one would be like the Grande Ronde River system through the valley here, of change of like the water itself, the flows, or anything dealing with like vegetation along the creek of any, you know, changes, particularly the cottonwood communities or the willow communities along the creek.
- BH: Well, as I remember it I guess the thing I remember most that most of where I grew up was river bottom land and we had annual flooding.
- I: Would that be like during the spring melt...snow melt?
- BH: Spring melts. Spring run-off you could almost count on annual flooding and there's marks through some of that bottom land where the river just went through it. My first good recollection of really what any changes were was after the 1948 flood. They had a more or less cooperative arrangement to start a diking program

here in the...in the north end of the valley. So along in the early '50s...well, or mid-50s there was an extensive diking program to protect the flood plain. That was cost shared with the Corps of Engineers and they were supposed to leave a certain specs...certain specific type of dike that would maintain a flow of sixty-five hundred second feet to qualify for the cost share. And that, in my opinion, has been very successful. We've raised good crops. It's good productive land. It's not a hundred percent protection, it never was intended to be. But anyhow, it's done well for us. The problem we have today is that that diking system is eroded and it needs some repair.

I: How extensive was that through the valley, do you remember?

BH: The diking? Well, it uh, ... From the confluence of Catherine Creek, which is up on what we call...used to call Fay Bridge, north is nearly all diked. I'm not qualified to say how much is diked above there, but there was some.

I: It seems like most of it, oh, right around the Davis ground, the Davis ground, you know, the Davis ground...

BH: Yeah, up in Catherine Creek now that's...

I: ... Hot Lake.

BH: Yeah, that's a different program. They did it, yeah.

I: I think some of that was even earlier 'cause...

BH: Yeah.

I: ...you got Toolee Lake was drained sometime...

BH: Yeah. Yeah, that's a whole different program than...

I: That was, of course, for the...before the turn of the century. That was, you know, way, way long ago.

BH: Yeah. They... They had a different kind of a program up there. Then there was...there were still a lot of diking and dredging going on up there during the '50s, but I'm not really familiar with how that was put together.

I: Was that just on the Grande Ronde here, or were there anything...

BH: Basically, it's Grande Ronde, Willow Creek and the tributaries pretty well weren't affected by any diking.

I: What about flooding in that area back up Willow Creek? Do you remember how much extensive a problem it's been over the years?

BH: It's not major. There's some flooding the Century Farm, the McKenzie Farm, very, very wet. [phone ringing] Excuse me. And ___ have some manual farming, but he...the way he manages that it's grass and cattle and I don't know what else he'd do with it. I...

I: I've just never been up in there durin' the flood season, you know, ___.

BH: No, it's just wet. It's not a flood plain like we had down here. The last flood we had which was...was it '91...no, it's been since that. We've had one a couple years ago.

I: Yeah, '96, I was with the Corps of Engineers flew and that was during February, I think.

BH: Yeah, we had...well, the Soil Conservation District's got some numbers on what they thought. And then in '91 we was lookin' at 15,000-plus acres that...in this area that was flooded. But off the top of my head I remember 1948 was major.

We've... We've had what we thought was sort of major floods periodically through the '50s and so on and then of course we had the big ones in '64-'65.

I: '64-'65 was the big one.

BH: Yeah. Then we had the usual periodic things that... Of course we had the dike for a lot of protection until '91 and '91 was very major. '91 was not supposed to be a flood year. We didn't have the snow pack in the mountains. We was feeling pretty comfortable, but it came down in a bunch.

I: Do you remember about what months that was?

BH: I think we're gettin' up in...and I'm guessin', Jerry...around the first of May on that. The water people have dates of runoff, but they don't necessarily correspond with flood...as I remember the flood periods. It can happen anytime, really. Well, February of '95.

I: Well, even December 'cause that was before Christmas when the John Day bridge went out.

BH: Absolutely.

I: The whole valley was full of water.

BH: Yeah, I had...I had cattle over on a flood plain over there that I'd wintered on year in and year out and we went to a wheat convention at Reno and I got a phone call we were floodin' up here and the cattle were bunched up on a little high ground. I got home and I had to bring 'em all over in this twenty acres out here. Two hundred head of cows and the mud was like that. I mean that was...that was first of February in '95.

I: It looked like, maybe, you know, whatever two-thirds of the valley's under water.

BH: Yeah.

I: That started just before Christmas.

BH: Yeah.

I: I remember tryin' to go to California, had to go up to Washington to get there. [laugh]

BH: Yeah. As far as other kinds of changes the quality of water...and I made this statement in meetings a lot of time...but I'm suspicious that our quality of the river in the Grande...Grande Ronde River in the Imbler area is most likely better than it was when I was a kid ten, twelve years old. I'll sort of qualify that; in those days we did not have major irrigation down here. We really didn't get a lot of irrigation until the early '60s.

I: It was pretty much dry land farming.

BH: It was all dry land farming, all dry land farming, so there wasn't any withdrawals. And the river still went dry. We...there's still some neighbors that still alive down there, that uh, but, you know, we can remember playin' in the sandbars and if you jumped real good you could go by and not get your feet wet and cross the river. To put it in a nutshell, today, and there's several of us who've been irrigating for quite a while, served this over the years, it seems like the water lasts longer in the season than it used to and it recovers earlier in the fall. I have no data or scientific basis to say that we're gettin' return flows, but I think we are. Somethin's happened.

I: Some of the research I've gotten, like what's recorded at La Grande, or up above La Grande there as far as flows like that during the summer that shows a, you know, goes dry there, but then it's increasing down this lower end of the valley.

BH: Yeah. I think... I think we basically, Jerry, if you want to talk about reservoir, the only reservoir we have is in the soil. Through the irrigation I think it's creepin' back in, but I...that's supposition. The quality of water in comparison when I was a kid, it not only dried up, you had stagnate pools green with scum. See very, very little of that anymore. It's a cleaner stream from that respect. Most likely there's not as much brush along it. The diking took out some of the brush, but just natural uh, depredation, I guess, of the...of the riparian area. And I say natural because I can show you a place now that the banks just slum it off, it's never been touched, it's not grazing, it's not to me in herbicides or anything. It's the fluctuation of the moisture and a lot of times you get a high water condition in the spring and when it goes down the bank goes with it.

I: Yeah, it gets saturated.

BH: So we've lost a lot of brush and some of it's been cleared, but a lot of it's just been a natural process.

I: Along that line do you recall as far as cottonwoods, of how extensive how, through this area...

BH: I don't recall...

I: ...or is it mostly ___.

BH: Yeah. I don't recall ever seein' a lot of cottonwood in this area. We had a lot of thorn brush. And whatever happened to thorn brush, whether it winter killed or whether it was a natural aging process or I've thought at times it might've been herbicides, we've lost a lot of thorn brush from along the river bank.

I: Was there much willow, do you recall, or mostly thorn brush?

BH: Not a whole lot. No, not as I recall. Mostly thorn brush. There's a few willows along, but as far as the direct bank willow, no.

I: 'Cause up there on Catherine Creek that's, you know, real heavy to willow up there and I was tryin' to...

BH: It's pretty well mixed, pretty well mixed. Flood control has been a major item with most of us down in this reach. It's still a major consideration.

I: About how close did the floods get like to Imbler here?

BH: Oh, Imbler's in no danger to it, no. There's enough grade down there.

I: 'Cause that drops off fairly fast.

BH: Yeah, yeah. No, you don't have any...any population problem there.

I: Do you recall anything like during the flooding season or that, of course you go over to the sand ridge going back toward Island City, that's high, but when you start droppin' down from Connley from there into Island City in more recent years of any...not necessarily flooding problems, but where that goes under water ___?

BH: No, not in my lifetime. There's a little bit of Willow Creek will get over to the highway and down there.

I: Yeah, I know that, yeah.

BH: But as far as between here and La Grande...

I: 'Cause you got those sloughs of...like Pierce Slough and ___ I believe and through there.

BH: Well, water's been up a little bit right there by I guess Wright's Slough where the fertilizer plant is now...Conley.

I: Yeah, Conley.

BH: Connley. I've seen water back up in there, but that's...that's surface...not surface water, it's...

I: That's what come down... It comes down off Mt. Emily.

BH: It's Mt. Emily...yeah.

I: Streams from there. It's just another area I think probably used to be wetland, you know, before...

BH: It might've been before they...that was... I don't know whether that was a dug ditch through there or whether it was...

I: Yeah, that's what...you know, ___

BH: You know, it darn near looks natural.

I: It looks natural. Lookin' on the aerial photograph there's been some areas that are straightened out, you know, definitely, you know, when they go straight line you can see where they've ditched down through there. A lot of that's the old wiggles, you know.

BH: Yeah, the old...the old channel that the state ditch replaced made a quite a dent out in there. A big share of that's been shoved in and cleared and unless you know what to look for you don't see it anymore.

I: From the air and then through like when the Corps of Engineers just flew in 1996 it filled in a lot of those...you know, you can see where the little channels were because it flooded, you know, you can still see the remnants, you know, of 'em there, or in the photographs you can...

BH: Yeah, you can see 'em, but a lot...a lot of 'em are shoved in.

I: Oh right, yeah.

BH: There's pivots runnin' over 'em and all that.

I: That McDowell's ditch, you know, that was down through that's all been shoved in ___ you know. You just don't see it anymore except the swale of it.

BH: Yeah. Now you... I didn't see the change, but I've seen the progression of the state ditch. You've most likely got all of the numbers on that.

I: I haven't talked to Bud Jones yet, of course he lives, you know, right there at the...but I've got like the dates and some of that.

BH: Bud's a real good reference on that. That's come quite a ways. I don't like the looks of the state ditch, it's a personal thing, because it's not controlled, it's still eroding, it's still vertical banks and so on like that. But that started out with a horse and freshno with a six-by-six ditch.

I: That's it, yeah. I've got that, measure the six-by-six of what it is now, there's and it's been a lot of...

BH: Another reference you might want to talk to is Wilfred Hamann, Willie Hamann.

I: Oh yeah.

BH: In fact, I just was visiting with Willie New Year's, played cards together, and he got to talkin' about that. They formed a district to finance that thing and I think

they assessed themselves about two bits an acre on some forty-thousand acres. That's quite a project!

I: Oh yeah.

BH: To put that in. Well, that's been a major change over time. And of course it did open up a lot of productive farm land out there. Another... Another one that you might want to talk to, Jerry, is Burr Courtright, if you haven't.

I: No, I haven't and I know his dad was real heavy...

BH: Yeah, that's where...and it's second-hand.

I: Yeah.

BH: You talked about the Toolee Lake and some of the composition of what's out there of the soil type and everything. I've heard Burr talk a little bit about that. I guess the other major change that I've seen is through the irrigation and what productivity of the valley, not only from dollars and cents, but the environmental status of the valley I think's better today than it's ever been. This... This place right here when I was a kid I remember that fence out there and the road bein' covered up with dust, sand, just from blowing. Now we still get some blowing in the valley, but water's made it possible to keep perennial crops in, grass seed, for instance, and mint more or less. But those things don't blow. And then the other thing the water's made it so even if you recrop wheat or something that you're pretty well on an annual cropping, you've got very little bare ground settin' out there. You use any judgment at all there shouldn't be hardly any. So I think the irrigation has really been a plus for the economy of the whole area here. Something you might want a look at, Jerry, when I was...I was active in when we tried to build the Grande Ronde Project, the two dams, and I...I set on that committee from it's inception until it disbanded. In fact, I was chairman of it when it finally disbanded. But in Dave Baum's era, and I think it was the...I want to say Industrial Development Corporation...the Economic Development Corporation of La Grande, Johnny Lemmon, Dave Baum and merchants in La Grande put together some money, and they initiated a study that was called the Tri-County study...Tri-County Economic Study...something to that effect. And it's been a long time since I read that and I don't even know where it's at. It's gotta be someplace. But what that said, that the future economic viability of the three counties, Wallowa, Union and Baker County, hinged on the development of the two dams of the Grande Ronde and Catherine Creek. Whether or not that would have anything to do with your report... It would be interesting to go back and fish that out. I don't know whether'd be in the county court or the Chamber of Commerce. It was in the extension office at one time. But it might be interesting to see how they looked at it then.

I: What about the beaver work along the Grande Ronde?

BH: Used to be a lot of beaver, quite a few.

I: Do you remember as far as what...roughly what dates or period that would be?

BH: Yeah. When I... When I say that that's when I was growin' up down along the river and that would've been '40s. Yeah. And I...you know, I used to go down and fish on the river bank, be down there in the evening and you'd hear the old beaver tails slap and watch 'em and there was quite a lot of beaver.

I: They were pretty well widespread through there?

BH: Well, I can't really say that. It was in that area along our property which was a mile or two. I don't see that anymore. I don't see any...any beaver sign at all. Used to be a lot...well, there's still muskrats along the river.

I: That area there where the beaver were do you recall were they like workin' on the thorn brush or were there enough willows in there, do you remember?

BH: I think there was enough... No, I never did see 'em use the thorn brush. There's enough soft wood, willows and red brush.

I: _____

BH: No name, you know. We didn't have any cottonwoods in that reach down there at all. It was all willow or some other soft kind of brush. There is a little patch of cottonwoods in the area I'm speakin' of. There was an island that was never...used to be never grazed or anything and it had some big cottonwoods, still has a few. A former owner went in and cleared that up try to...thought he was gonna get a lot of pasture out of it. Well, there wasn't any pasture, if he had...if he had just thought about it there wasn't any acres involved in it, but he did clear out a real habitat. God, it was full of deer and birds and nobody went into it, you couldn't get around to it.

I: That was right in the bottomland, was it?

BH: Yeah, that's flood plain. It's right... It's just about a mile out of Imbler there at the big ranch where the white fence is.

I: Back upriver?

BH: Yeah, you just look back past the house you can see the cottonwood. There's a little stretch it might be three acres and that's all he got out of it. But they knocked over some...some pretty good-sized cottonwood in it.

I: Do you remember what they did with the cottonwoods? Did they...

BH: Oh, just piled up and burned.

I: Just piled and burned it.

BH: Mm-hmm.

I: 'Cause I know I talked to one guy who said a lot of times back up towards La Grande I guess they shoved them over like the old channel, you know, and just covered up with dirt to...

BH: Oh really? Just buried 'em.

I: Yeah, on some of that. Of course I know there's other ways where you see remnants, or tried burnin' and like that. 'Cause that was one question that came up, anybody use cottonwoods to cut 'em, you know, what were they used for ... but...

BH: This was done just, what, eight years ago, somethin' like that and it was just a...get rid of 'em. And there wasn't too many cottonwoods went down, but there's a lot of brush, thorn brush and willows and all of that was cleared out. They did leave a few cottonwood there, but they're isolated now.

I: Yeah, compared to...

BH: Yeah.

I: I know some of those old thickets were, you know, were...

BH: Oh, you couldn't... I've been in that thing, you crawl around on your hands and knees. [laugh]

I: What about as far as fish runs, Bill? Do you remember down through that as you're growing up?

BH: Well, you see, this is all dirt bottom down here so the fish biologists tell me there's no spawning in a dirt bottom. Quite frankly, I've never seen a salmon. And all the salmon that used to go up, still what...whatever goes up has to go right through this and I've never seen one. The nearest thing to any kind of anagamous [CHECK THIS WORD] fish, one spring when we used to fish it a lot and I haven't fished it for forty years...one spring a bank full of water, or less, it was going down, we were catchin' some pretty nice...we called 'em trout and I think what they were was the smolt goin' out. I didn't know that until years later 'cause I didn't know what they were, but they were...they were trout-like fish. That... That's the nearest thing to ever observing any kind of anagamous fish at all.

I: Do you remember seein' any eels in there?

BH: Eels?

I: Yeah.

BH: Yeah, by virtue of suckin' 'em into a screen on an irrigation pump. Not too much. I see a lot more eel...eels over in Willow Creek in smaller waters. It's full of 'em.

I: Is that still now, or...?

BH: Well, it's been...I haven't...I haven't seen that for quite a while either because I haven't been pumpin' on it, but I did have an irrigation down there several years ago and I...that was one of the problems, suckin' those dang eels up in. But in the Grande Ronde on occasion I haven't...I haven't done that in several years. Of course we've changed our system. But I have on occasion picked a few up that got stuck on things. And they'd...somehow they'd get in the screen and then you got a mess.

I: Do you remember about when that...as far as when you're doin' that...

BH: Oh, I would...

I: ...On Willow Creek?

BH: I would think... Oh, in Willow Creek?

I: Yeah.

BH: '70s.

I: In the '70s.

BH: Mm-hmm. And I haven't pumped in there hardly since then. '70s to the early '80s.

I: Did you ever get up into the upper Grande Ronde area much as far as fishing or see anything, know about...?

BH: Years ago I did some fishing up there. I'm not an avid fisherman. I like to, I just never had time to do it. I've never caught a steelhead, I've never fished for salmon. I've fished for trout up above Tony's and in through Tony's...well, clear up, we used to hunt up in Liver Camp, elk hunt and I fished the meadows up there, but we just got a little eastern brook out of the pond, there's little band down at the bottom of it. I'm not...no, I'm not any authority up there at all. I wouldn't know any comparison. To me to drive by it looks just like it did forty

years ago. Now they tell me it's entirely different, but it's...[laughs] Now you've taken photos, I suppose you could make a comparison.

I: Well, yeah. It's, you know, that really where you can see a day view_, you know, of changes like workin' with aerial photography then the old light photography like that. Of course it here's some where, you know, unless uh, I think you're like so many of us that you go by it day after day and don't pay any attention to it a lot of times and, you know, it just looks the same. If you get down and really look at it sometimes, you know, species difference as far as the timber types, you know, on that.

BH: Mm-hmm. Do you see a difference in the riparian?

I: Not so much there as much as it is up...

BH: Up on the uplands.

I: Yeah, the uplands there, particularly the lodge pole, of course, you know...

BH: Oh yeah. Yeah, you'd see that.

I: It' all...that's a massive change of...

BH: Of what you see from the road.

I: But from the road there...

BH: You won't see a hole...

I: The only thing...and I don't recall it's been so many years...was some of the beaver dams back up the Grande Ronde.

BH: Mm-hmm.

I: That 'cause I remember fallin' in one time when we were out there workin'. To this day I can't remember exactly where it was, but I think, you know, a lot of those meadow areas probably are changed some in, you know, along those bottomlands.

BH: I think the...I think the use, like Tony's meadow, I think they use it different than they did when...when Tony was alive and that goes back a long time, but when we first started elk hunting up there he'd bring in his...what I remember that I saw was steers, most likely three-year-old steers up there in the fall of the year and it was belly-deep grass. I don't think he pastured that much in the summertime. It was sort of a prior to wintering grounds they'd bring 'em in and they'd be in there. Big cattle, fat cattle.

I: [laugh] Well, it's pretty lush up back up there. But I was thinking, you know, down farther down towards where Meadow Creek runs into the Grande down river there.

BH: Yeah. That's always looked pretty used to me. I never did see a lot of tall grass anywhere down there. But as far as visibly seein' a change up there, no. I want to go back up and sort of see how this log placement... Have you seen that?

I: Yeah, I was in there photographing this last fall, or summer, late summer, where they put some of the...

BH: That's pretty controversial and it's got a high risk, but the people that... You know, this fish thing as bein' a board member of the watershed group, you have to...you take a responsibility that you're there because of fish. Now how best can you serve that cause? And quite frankly I was...the first go-around I was opposed to doin' it because of the ice flows. My wife grew up at Camp Elkanah or whatever they call it...headquarters camp.

I: Yeah.

BH: We... I've got pictures in here of the old ice jams. They used to jam up against the bridge trellises and her dad and all the Greek crew up there, you know, that's how they spent their winters, diggin' the ice off of the railroad trellises. I've got a few old black and white snapshots of that. So we know there's a tremendous ice flow up there and the first year they did that, they had some movement. And I don't know really what harm it caused, there might have been a little damage downstream, but the fact that it moved made a lot of people upset. Well, then it come back and says, well, that...we didn't do it right. And so I was asked to go up and...and really look at it, which I did with Paul Baney. And the stretch that they wanted to do this year...I guess I was convinced it was worth the risk because certainly it wasn't a fish stream the way it is. There's no habitat there. And if it will create some pooling or some slack water or maybe a little water depth in the summer months, most likely one of the better fish products that we have spent money on...if it don't wash out. [laughs] And I'm holdin' my breath, Jerry.

I: That's the thing where they've got the trees in there what happens, you know, under high water whether that stuff will hold or not. Up...way up the Grande Ronde towards...oh, goin' up towards Camp Carson in there where they put those in, that was lookin' real good.

BH: Yeah.

I: Where it seemed like it stabilized.

BH: You don't get near the...

I: You don't have the heavy flow.

BH: I don't think you get the ice.

I: You don't have the heavy flow 'cause you __ end of that __.

BH: And where will you put this last one? It's still not on the main stem exactly, it's still the Grande Ronde so you call it main stem, but it don't have...

I: All the feeders.

BH: ...all the feeders, Sheep Creek and all that stuff comin' into it..

I: Start to bring all of those into it...

BH: Yeah. So I may have to eat crow on that thing. It's one that I felt it's good for the fish, it just may not work for...for the other end and I guess it's worth a try.

I: Yeah.

BH: A lot of the things that concern me in the way of projects is, are we gettin' our money's worth? And we won't know that for many years through the monitoring process and evaluation and so on. And I'm...I'm sure that we have spent money where we should've saved it.

I: Oh yeah.

BH: But you know, you're never a hundred percent, are you, Jerry?

I: Oh no. But that...hopefully you learn that, you know, to learn to monitor and of course you could get that to...oh, having conditions that everything looks real good for a good number of years and then all of a sudden you get a real nasty year and you can...

BH: Wipe it out.

I: Yeah, just like...

BH: Look at the Imnaha.

I: Oh sure.

BH: Of course what's happened down there this year is most likely they say a hundred-year frequency...that might've been a two-hundred year frequency, I don't know, but that's natural.

I: It is, though. It's like over in east Eagle, you know, they're workin' over there. You talk about a hundred year frequency, well, about every two years or every year we have a hundred year storm go down through there, so, you know, that is to me something that is good to talk about, but it isn't actually, you know...

BH: There's no predictability. None at all.

I: 'Cause you can get storms come through there, of course, we...

BH: Just like this '91 flood was... The highest water I've ever seen down here was in '91. Now you can talk about '64 and '65 or the rest of 'em...that was...

I: Yeah, 'cause I didn't realize that 'cause I know, you know, '64-'65 ___.

BH: Yeah, it was higher...

I: I'll be darned.

BH: ...on the bridge parts down here. [laughs] A lot of people don't realize that. Another concern we have, and I don't know the answer 'cause nothing's ever been done about it, but ever since 1948 I'm aware of a concern about the Rinehart gap is a plug, we can't get rid of the water. There's been a lot of studies after 1948, the Corps of Engineers had a drainage study and they made certain recommendations which had to do with the gap, partial diking, some storage to go along with it and they could alleviate our flooding. That didn't happen, of course, and they chose to pursue...that was the birth of the Grande Ronde Project, the two dams. They chose to go that way and conserve our water rather than flush it and I think that was most likely good thinking. Now the hydrology gets into it now that say, no, we don't want a...we mustn't lower that because you'll create a long-term head cut and maybe take the moisture out of here. There's... There is a recent evaluation, or study if you will, of the lower reaches down here that's in the... in our CS office. In fact, I've got a copy; I can't lay my hands on it right now. But it was recently done with funding from the Bureau of Reclamation and NRCS and sort of brought everything into focus what we need to do about the...if we rebuild dikes what's needed to do and so on like that. And it also addressed the gap, the Rinehart gap, and the...the thinking there is that you move it back and make it wider. And you can go down in high water and there's hardly any current down there even high water compared to what we normally have up here and still starts backin' up. Well, the Corps did a preliminary cost study for us and ___, but I personally am not agreement with the concept they had of haulin' out all the removal. They got plenty of bank on the outside to gain twenty, thirty percent of the channel capacity. If they'd just take a big heavy track hoe equipment, pull it back, that's a theory that I personally have and I think some other people share it, so you could kick the heck out of the cost factor. But we have some other problems. Elgin got a little wet here a couple years ago.

I: Well, Clark Creek this last year.

BH: And Clark Creek went on a rampage and now you've got two or three houses down at the lower end of it. So, all in all, it'd be very difficult to get any program

going there. That's most likely would do more along with the diking...repair our diking. That's what's necessary for the flood control and we're...we're really concerned about it. We...some of our prime lands are prone to bein' flooded.

I: On the Grande Ronde Project whereabouts was the location for both...for the dam up the Grande Ronde. Do you remember, Bill, roughly?

BH: Well, I think it ended up right below Spring Creek. The original site was just above it somewhere in that gun range, the old rifle range area, but they were losin' too much water capability and I think...as I recall they had a site to...right below Spring Creek so they'd put that in the reservoir. And then Catherine Creek was up there...

I: That was right at the Hall ranch was...

BH: Well, it'd got the lower end of the meadow, Jerry, in that gap in there.

I: Yeah. Right where it narrows down.

BH: Yeah. I still remember most of the numbers involved, I didn't have the site located.

I: I have the report on, you know, the Corps of Engineers did on the final impact study on Catherine Creek, but the one on the Grande Ronde I had some you know, some__ proposal, but I never saw anything...

BH: I think I've got all of the authorization reports and everything boxed up. I'm not gonna throw those away like some of the other stuff. [laughs] I still go back to 'em. Interesting enough I mentioned early about the expertise the way they write memos and the literature today. I have one that's almost handwritten and it goes...it's 1941. I don't recall the name of the professor, but I think he was a professor out of OSU. And, he make an evaluation, "in the Grande Ronde," he says, "I talked to an older Indian today that saw a salmon last week." Now this I think was in August of 1941. He saw a salmon. Isn't that spawning time in August?

I: Yeah, you'll get, ...of course the Chinook are coming up in, oh, May, June is what...

BH: Yeah, but the actual spawning.

I: ...but spawning goes into August, and maybe early September.

BH: Yeah. It was sort of...I thought I wonder what's the matter with the numbers, you know, but he didn't elaborate, he says he saw one salmon. Then he got over into Catherine Creek and he made about the same kind of a comment that they'd seen two or three or something. And I believe it was in...on the north fork that he made a quite...quite a few comments about the stream bein' plugged with brush and that it was restricting the passage of the fish. I wonder if that was the forerunner of the loggin' practices that cleaned all the streams out.

I: Well, you have that, see, Bill, in '41 that already'd been logging up in there on south fork and they're pushin' that road up the north fork and they just side cast all that stuff right into the creek.

BH: Is that what happened there?

I: Yeah. See, your road was right along the stream edge.

BH: So they just plugged the stream?

I: Yeah. They just pushed all that brush and rock and...

BH: I didn't know that. I thought maybe it was just a natural thing.

I: No, that was all...all manmade. [laugh]
BH: Manmade.
I: 'Cause that was the first...get up in there.
BH: No wonder he said that.
I: Well, you see, in the 19--...the fishery's survey they did on that that might be the same thing or if it wasn't it was...
BH: When did the logging practices end? They didn't have a logging practices act, but the policy was to clean all the streams. You couldn't cross 'em, you couldn't leave anything in 'em.
I: Well, that's right, however, that was way into, you know, when they got serious about it is in the '60s 'cause I can remember, oh, in the '50s and early '60s it was still common practice just to skid down the drawbottoms, you know, with a cast 'cause that was the easiest way to go. You drop...pulled everything down off the hills and that was way all that south Catherine they horse logged that, pulled it down off the hills into the bottom and then just float down bottoms, you know, with the Cats. Same way up the Grande Ronde, that was, I talked to some of the people who worked for Mt. Emily there. That was still goin' into the '50s where they actually used __.
BH: When we talk about the current woody debris in the creeks and so on... I don't know, I'm gettin' tired of hearin' that somebody in the crowd, "Just a few years ago we had to clean the thing, you know. Why don't they make up their minds!" [laughs] It's gettin'...gettin' to be real old, but they'll never live that down.
I: Oh no.
BH: I say they, I don't even know who incorporated...
I: Yeah, who started that.
BH: Whether it was AD...ODFandW or the Forest Service.
I: Yeah, I really don't know where...you know, where it came from, but it was, you know, common practice that you take everything out.
BH: Yeah. And the loggers I can still remember them bein' upset, "Oh gosh, you just tied our hands, you know." [laugh]
I: Oh yeah. Yeah. Go through the cycles without, you know, really thinking of, you know, what you're doin. It just... It gets to one extreme or the other like the tide, it goes, you know, one direction or the other without sitting down and seein', you know, the practicability, or why are we doing this.
BH: Yeah.
I: Do you remember as far as Indians coming and fishing over this way? Have you seen any?
BH: I don't...[end tape]

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I: ...yeah, I went into that period when everything was horseback and then going through wagon travel. You know, it was real tough to get around 'cause, oh, one person talked to their folks used to go from Cricket Flats with a wagon over in a full days trip to Catherine Creek and then just camp there and catch salmon, you know, and pitchfork 'em and then go back.

BH: Did that...that period name the Fish Trap Hill, they call it, out of Elgin?
I: Might be where... I understand, Bill, in...right in there around the mouth of Indian Creek, you know, right in that area they used to put traps in there and I guess probably gig 'em you know and __.

BH: Yeah.
I: And so I don't know if that's where...
BH: Indian Creek is listed as the salmon bearing stream as well as bull trout.
I: Yeah.
BH: But I...as far as...I'm sure there's still some people around. Vernal Hug's still alive, he'd know.
I: No, oh no. I talked to...
BH: What about his book? Did he...
I: I refer to the book a lot, you know. There's a lot of good information, you know, in there, parts of it. And his son I talked with him and he tried to find some old pictures and he didn't know, you know, where...there's a lot of Elgin itself, but to get some of this outskirts, that's a tough one to try and...
BH: Laurose Hibberd, possibly could...might dig into something. That's a good name and that kind of thing. And of course she and Dick have had a river ranch down here all of her married life. [pause]
I: Oh, do you recall by any chance of over on the Minam the splash dam that was up there when that logging was done down through there?
BH: No. I...
I: The mill was down there at Minam, you know, a little bit off Minam.
BH: Heard a few brief stories. I've never known anybody that was really involved in that. There again, Laurose and Dick Hibberd might have some inside... Dick had an interest in Red's Horse Ranch years ago. And of course now the splash dam when they logged that I don't know. I heard stories they had a logging camp down at the land ranch or thereabouts and Louie Hale ran a pack train up...serviced that out of Minam. Those things are tough to come by. No, I'm not much help on that, but that might be a lead.
I: Yeah. I'll try find__
BH: I was gonna ask you a question. There's a law on the books, apparently a legislative law, that's been pretty dormant for years, but twice it's focused...came into focus and that's the Navigitability Determination. Have you run into any conversation ever?
I: No, I haven't. I've seen a little bit in the paper, you know, that talked about, but I've never anything in depth or extent on that.
BH: First time it showed up I did a little work on some people are still alive that were involved in Mt. Emily Lumber Company and how they brought the logs down and the log...log floats and splash dams up tail end of Tony's Meadow and that kind of thing. I just wondered if you'd had any conversation about it.
I: No, the only thing, the...of course that quit about 1906 when they put the railroad in.
BH: Yeah.
I: They ran the logs up to that time.

BH: Yeah, well, that's reason the railroad went in 'cause the rest of it was a mess.
[laughs] Yeah.

I: But they had...you know, the river runs there and that was before Mt. Emily, that was the Grande Ronde Lumber Company, of course, that was doing that. And then 1906 was when the railroad started. Then Mt. Emily, oh, 19--, I think '24 when they actually started cuttin' their first log. So they bought out the land of the Grande Ronde and, you know, and kind of like they extended the railroads a lot farther up the creeks.

BH: What about the Perry mill?

I: Well, that was the Grande Ronde Lumber Company. See, originally...

BH: Oh, the Perry mill was?

I: Yeah.

BH: I just run across a note on that and they moved that mill to Pondosa.

I: Right. Yeah, 1926 they shut it down and moved to Pondosa.

BH: Yeah, right.

I: But that's, you know, people who had owned that took that over to Pondosa, but then Mt. Emily bought out their land holdings, the railroad and the land up above, you know, up the Grande Ronde and then they kind of supplied them, you might say.

BH: See, what was the other...the name of the other big mill that was...

I: Palmer.

BH: Pal...Bowman-Hicks.

I: It is Palmer before Bowman-Hicks.

BH: Oh, it was?

I: Yeah. Palmer started in 1907 is when they went over to Palmer Junction and logged all that off for about seven years and hauled that to La Grande. And then Bowman Hicks... Then they went to Smith Mountain... When they logged that out they took Smith Mountain. So I think it was about 1921, somewhere in there, Bowman Hicks bought that out and does the mill at the old fairgrounds...or where the fairgrounds is now.

BH: Yeah. I barely remember that. Yeah.

I: But that was one thing I never got much on, Bowman Hicks and what that progression was, but evidently they bought the Palmer holdings and then, of course, they logged out of Wallowa, but they had the mill here and a lot__.

BH: Yeah. Yeah. Well, they've been cuttin' trees for a long time.

I: Oh, as soon as the first settler was here I think they even started sawmills...'cause Fox Hill...or George Fox right there at Orodell right there on the west side of La Grande that was one of the first mills in '80...or '63. And then at Union there's a mill there and then six miles up Catherine Creek is another one in '63. It went from there to Summerville and over Indian Valley, so there's...they're takin' a lot of volume out. I got some pictures the other day with...with really, you know, kind of a...there were new up on Mt. Harris where they had a heck of a deck up there. There steam cars are haulin'...one picture shows horses pullin' this wagon that was on, you know, had the logs skid what's called a spool cart sort of like a little railroad car with eight thousand feet on it with a horse draw.

BH: Where's that setup at?

I: Right up on top of Mt. Emily. It was...

BH: Or Harris?

I: Or Harris, I'm sorry, Mt. Harris in 1900.

BH: Is that right?

I: Yeah.

BH: Oh! I know...I know...I'll bet that was back in what...when I was a kid and we fished up there the only site that I ever saw...a former site, there was two, one down in the old Indian Creek campground right on Indian Creek and one down the road north was called Patty Meadows and I'll bet that's the one you're talkin' about.

I: It might be. It's...you know, from the pictures you really couldn't tell location, it just says Mt. Harris, so it's a tough...

BH: But as far up in the timber proper I...I don't recall ever seeing or hearing anything about... But Patty Meadows did have an old mill at one time. And then there was...there was a mill down on, well, the old traversal ground right down on Indian Creek.

I: You start to look at the old records, you know, I mean there were so many mills around here.

BH: Oh yeah. Everybody had 'em.

I: They would, you know, cut out and then they'd move and...

BH: Yeah, pick 'em up and go.

I: ...or go broke and somebody else could pick up the equipment.

BH: There was a mill on the north end right around...right straight through. You take the old road and go around. Well, I was of high school age, I guess, when that was operating. I don't even know who operated it. But there was a name around, still owns property here, L. C. Smith. Does that ring a bell?

I: I've heard the name.

BH: They owned a lot of timber property. They were a family that apparently had a few dollars in the Depression and they were buyin'...bought a lot of land. There was a lot of timber land for a buck an acre or whatever, you know, they're sellin'.

I: [laughs] It's profitable if you hang on to it long enough.

BH: Of course they were sellin', but they couldn't help it, you know.

I: Oh yeah.

BH: We missed our fortune that we weren't buyin' timber when we could've.

I: Crystal ball, if you had that.

BH: Oh yeah, hindsight.

I: No, there's a...looked like an old wagon road off Mt. Harris. I don't know if...like right up on top if they cut that and then hauled lumber down there or just what it was, but it would a had a been around the turn of the century.

BH: Goes back...back east off the top of Mt. Harris?

I: Well, I thought it came off this end here, an old wagon road, you know...

BH: Oh! I think the road...the only road I've ever known we called it Rattlesnake Gap. If you look out the window here, Jerry, you know where it's at. It goes right up as a slaunch ways right...

I: Yeah.

- BH: Okay, it goes up through a gap on the north and there's a rock cut up there. And uh, boy, I don't know if they ever hauled lumber off of there.
- I: It's a steep grade, you know, that's what I...
- BH: It's the big boulders. My dad... Every fall my dad when we lived down here east of Imbler, he'd take the hayrack off the old steel wheel hayrack and he had brake chocks in it and he'd cut out the brake blocks out of apple wood. And the way they worked they were a cast block and then you just shaped your wood in a V and slipped 'em in there. And he built those out of apple wood. They'd make one or two trips up there, see. And then they had a...oh, I forget how it was...a lever that had a quite a lot of leverage and you'd cut a good green stout pole, about three-inch pole, and taper that and stick in that. And then you tie a double block pulley that would take a half-inch rope or so and you had a double block on it and that was your brake, see. Well, this friend, that was the old Magoldie ground, and they were neighbors of Dad's. And every fall we'd go up there and we had...he'd cut wood and we'd cross-haul it with a team onto the bunks of the wagon and/or we'd haul down bridge timber 'cause we had a private wood bridge across the Grande Ronde down at the place. So we hauled two things. I tell you, my dad...I don't know how he lived through it. We had an old team and we'd come down through those rock slides. He's standin' up on top of the load. He's hangin' onto the team this way and hangin' on the brake that way and if something 'd broke, I mean, he would've been gone. But the wagon just literally just sort of wallowed its way down through the rocks and the britchin' on the team was tight all the time. They kept their feet, I don't know how. Yeah, I remember that road and as far as I know that's the only road down through that. Now a little later on, right at the top end of the meadow they cut down through land that used to belong to Harvey Ruckman. Well, it still belongs to his daughter, Mary Bennett. And it come down at the Noyce property down here over the hill. But that got... When they got trucks to log with, they logged some stuff out of there and, gosh, the ruts were belly-deep, you know, so it didn't hold up very well, but there was a lot of logs later on came out that way. But where that mill would've been in those days I don't have a clue.
- I: Yeah, they just have scattered all over, so there's nothing there in the picture that you could discern...you, except that it was heavily timbered for a while there or just a matter of knowing...or if...I'm just assuming they cut 'em up in the forest and then brought the lumber out 'cause that was the way a lot of them did, but it's hard to tell. It just had in there 1900 so, you know, it would've been the early days.
- BH: There's some things that went on up there. I was huntin' with my dad, mostly like eighteen, twenty years old, and we went up here deer hunting and I circled up back sort of on the northeast and it was really timber, there was no logging currently at that time up there at all, brushy. And I came up on a rocky ridge...just sort of opened up on a little rocky point and low and behold there was an old shack up there under a fruit tree. Now somebody lived there...had lived there and I...for several years I asked around people that maybe knew what...what that was. Never did find out.

I: Well, when I went through that survey of 1863, Bill, they actually...they show a road access around Mt. Harris that way in 1863! Do you believe that one?

BH: Holy cats!

I: Which I can't...it's hard to imagine, you know, why they would've been up in there at that period of time.

BH: They were still pioneerin'.

I: Oh yeah. But I mean, you know, there's all this other area that was easier going...

BH: I think... What were they... They were lookin' for something, a place to live, place...

I: Yeah, it could be, 'cause you had...

BH: Look over the hill, maybe there's a valley there.

I: ...the old __ place up there.

BH: Yeah.

I: But that's, you know, a tough way to go.

BH: Did it show? Did it come on down Indian Creek then?

I: Yeah, it showed an access road around that, you know, just a wagon road.

BH: They most likely hit Indian Creek and went on down into Indian Valley.

I: Yeah. But that's a tough one. [laughs] With all the routes and places you could go that's a kind of a rugged one to get to 'cause that's pretty good elevation up and around there.

BH: Jerry, a question of you, as you put this together and...I don't know how far you've been...but have you drawn any conclusions what we in the uplands...how we've affected the fish migration or have we?

I: Well, I think, you know, this whole life cycle, you know, of the fish, the salmon or steelhead like there, goes from the ocean clear up to the headwaters.

BH: Sure. Sure.

I: You know, there's no question about that.

BH: It's a tie-in. First they got to get up here to live here.

I: First of all, yeah, you gotta have the ocean. What's happening out there as far as, you know, fishing and food because that's their life-cycle, you know, what happened to the habitat in the ocean. And then of course up the river itself you've got the...

BH: The corridor in the Columbia.

I: You've got the dams, but way back when you start lookin' at numbers that were caught before the turn of the century, they had the cannery down there, they had the fish wheel, they had, you know, fish nets I mean, so there was a tremendous volume of num...just shear numbers that were taken out before they ever got to the headwaters. And talking to some of the people, you know, up here that can remember it didn't seem like there was a crash for numbers, but it just gradual from like in the Catherine Creek there particularly. I haven't found too much in the Grande Ronde, as much as I have with Catherine Creek, where they had the large numbers, you know, in the '20s and '30s it started decreasing, but I can remember clear up into the '60s, right around the early '60s, you still had a lot of fish in there.

BH: Oh yes. Sure.

I: Once the dams came in then it seemed like, you know, that really crashed, but like you said, that 1941 survey report they're talking there about what was happening to the habitat where all this was side-cast...in other words, the spawning beds where you either had barriers there where they couldn't get up in there or destroying, you know, the beds up there, the damage, you know, to the creeks. So all that is inherent in being a detriment, you know, to the runs, but probably not where that was...it seemed like, you know, the major factor because you still had the runs come out. Even though you had all this logging going on for decades and decades and decades you had the heavy, you know, overgrazing back up through that Tony...not Tony Vay's, but Starkey country where they're bringin' herds of sheep through there, the cattle through there, horses, you know, like there, so there's a lot of soil. Plus, up the Grande Ronde they're takin' and hydraulic mining and so I think...

BH: Up Carson Mine?

I: Yeah, Carson Mine a million and a half yards of soil went down the creek. Well, you know, you're talkin' about siltation. And then that was...the dredgin' I always thought was the turn of the century, but it was '39 when they were dredging that thing. And then in the '50s they did it again and in the '80s they did it again.

BH: At Carson?

I: Yeah, Carson.

BH: I didn't know that.

I: Yeah. And so there...and then they went back in I guess '96, I think, to rehabilitate that, but it didn't really work. 'Cause what they're doin' they're side-casting that into the edge and then, of course, when, you know, dumping it into the creek.

BH: I know we approved some funding...I forgot who the people were that was gonna rehabilitate that project.

I: That was probably the project of rehabilitation.

BH: That was '96.

I: Yeah, '96.

BH: Actually '95 and they did the work in '96. But I didn't know they had done work up there in the '80s. Yeah, it was around '82 when they had the shovels in there.

I: When we had four hundred dollar gold?

BH: Probably, yeah.

I: Or more.

BH: 'Cause Rainbow Mine and there's some others up...did they...Rainbow ever open up again?

I: Not that I know of, or nothing significant.

BH: Then there was one up...

I: You had the Indiana Mine and Auror...

BH: Oh yeah. Indiana Mine's down on the river.

I: Yeah.

BH: I think the Rainbow was up on the hill to the east.

I: Yeah. And then the Arella or something like that...

BH: Yeah, they were active...pretty active along that period, but I didn't know Carson Mine ever did.

I: But the...you know, the Carson's...that Tanner Gulch, I mean, that's the one that was dumpin' everything into the creek.

BH: Oh sure.

I: Like there where Indiana mine, I think, was all hard rock so it wasn't near, except for major leeching out of there, you know, into the creek.

BH: Oh they washed...washed away the mountain side up there. That's quite a project. When I visited that...we were huntin' elk up there...early '70s maybe, maybe earlier than that, I don't know, but the buildings were still up. They were still in pretty good shape. And the doors on the old saloon still worked.

I: I'll be darned! [laughs]

BH: You walked up the stairs...you could still walk up the steps into a...the porch on the old saloon. And the wood, as I recall, was weathered, but it wasn't rotten. Then we walked out to where the...the pipe came in from the upper Grande...how they was gettin' the water down there to hydro...

I: That's over at Camp Carson you're talkin' about?

BH: Yeah, Camp Carson up on top of the hill.

I: Right.

BH: What was that? An eighteen, twenty-inch plyke...plyke pipe wrapped...steel wrapped.

I: I think so.

BH: But they brought that in clear from the...whatever the level was up there and tapped the water source of the Grande Ronde. It was quite a project. But I didn't know they'd ever opened that up again.

I: Yeah. They... 'Cause see they dredged the creek bottom, that was in 1939, or Oro Plata outfit that came in and brought a...it wasn't like the old-time dredge there at Sumpter, it was shovel-type. But dredged all that, it was about two-mile stretch down through there. And that was the bottomland and then, you know, that went out of business. And then there's, I think '57 or someplace in there in the '50s they did a little bit of work. And again they hit it again in '82 I think it was. And then, of course, you had to try to rehabilitate it there in '96.

BH: Yeah. Well, that's the watershed health money that went into that.

I: I went up there at the Geology Department there in Baker they said they'd had some problems with how effective that was.

BH: Yeah. Well, I've never heard whether it was effective or not, you know. Certainly some of these things maybe...maybe aren't affective. We spent a lot of money on wire fencing, some of it was put too close to some creeks and wadded up in a ball. But I guess you gotta...gotta do somethin'.

I: That's part of the history, I think, is to look and monitor to learn from, you know, if it was not done right or senselessly, is to, you know, recognize that and say, hey, don't repeat it. Just don't go back and just keep doin' it just for the sake of doin' somethin'.

BH: There's a tremendous amount of, to me, erratic concepts, erratic pressures, for quick fixes. This didn't get this way overnight and it won't be healed overnight. And in the meantime we have to take an overall view and maintain some

economies. I can't... I can't fix things on my ranch if I don't make some money, you know.

I: Oh, that's right. It's gotta be...

BH: And if we dry up our economies. But I've sort of taken a lot of look and listen. And what I've...what I have concluded in my own opinion is that yes, we need to do the very best job we can. We need to be aware of this TMDL study that's just starting. In fact, I go to my first meeting as an ag committee Monday. I have no idea where that's gonna go. I sort of understand it, but just sort a. But that's gonna tell us some things, what's goin' in the river. So we take a look at that. In the meantime we gotta devise some plans that we still stay on the land, we still produce. And how we get there is gonna be the difficult part. The longer I listen to these things and listen to different people... I told some watershed health people one time, I says, you know, I see no justification that would dictate to our area, timber, cattle, ranching, major changes over what we do in a conservative, good-managed practice. And we have those on the books. Some...we haven't been doin' it in all the cases. But, we're gainin'. We're...Measure 38, for example, is most likely one of the most get-aware...awareness things that could happen to the cattle industry. They got their attention. Bad bill, but...[laughs]...but it got people's attention, you see.

I: Unfortunately, this is what it takes. You know, the ___ of the thing is what it takes, which is very unfortunate because then it goes to extreme. And just like here talkin' about shuttin' the whole forest down, for instance. You know, hey, we don't want to do anything. That's not the answer either because sitting back and not doing anything...

BH: I don't believe so.

I: It's not gonna stay that way. When you look at the insect problems and, you know, the fire problems and like that, hopefully man with intelligence and technology can aide Mother Nature in doing a better job, but that hasn't been the case, unfortunately.

BH: No.

I: But the...it is possible there, but you gotta be able to weigh all the factors to do it.

BH: I really think that the pendulum will turn around that we do have to have management. See, we've gone through this, we've failed, we haven't done anything, give it back. Let nature...

I: ...take it's course. Nature does take its course. [laugh]

BH: Let me ask you something.

I: Yeah.

BH: Have you followed the eastside ecosystem plan very closely?

I: Not really closely. I think so many of these plans...now I maybe talkin' out of line on that one, Bill, you know, when you started doin' these plans there's this of do everything in the worst way, do nothing on the other extreme and so it always goes right down the middle without, you know, payin' any common sense to actually what our conditions out on the ground and realizing that...like this whole Grande Ronde watershed is so complex you can't say...and this is what you see in the papers and I think it's gone clear to Washington, D.C., that when the pioneers first came here all this was open ponderosa pine you could drive your wagons

through that was all grass covered. Well, that's the biggest fallacy of anything that you could imagine. You could even go back to the old journals where when the first pioneers came here they had to shut down and stop because they had to cut their way through that forest to get the wagons through. And that's right there in documentation time after time after time, but for the political agenda they don't want to see that or recognize it or pay any attention to it, see? That was not the way the forest was. And the other thing is when you go on the Oregon Trail it's just a small route that you're going through and I defy anybody, the best scientists in the world, to stand there on that Oregon Trail and tell me what's back in Indian Creek, what's back up Sheep Creek in there. There's no way in the world you can do that.

BH: No, can't do it. We were just up chucker huntin' after Christmas on Saturday and went up toward Lookout Mountain. Why didn't we ever have...[recording stopped]