

Oral History Cover Sheet

Name: Howard Mead

Date of Interview: October 30, 2009

Location of Interview: Aldo Leopold Center

Interviewer: Mark Madison and Steve Laubach

Most Important Projects: Aldo Leopold Center and Sand County Foundation

Colleagues and Mentors: Reed Coleman, Nina and Charlie Bradley

Most Important Issues: The feud between Reed Coleman and the Bradley's

Brief Summary of Interview: Howard talks about the start up of the Foundation but not really being able to do as much as he would have liked because of family obligations. He talks about Leopold's influence on him and even meeting Leopold when he was a young child. He talks about using the Morningside TB Sanatorium for the start up and how tours got started. He also mentions that he feels the Leopold family Foundation and Sand County Foundation "should be very, very good friends." Howard talks about how he would do things differently, things he thought turned out good, and his vision of what it would look like in the future.

Mark: All right, today is October 30, 2009 and we're at the Aldo Leopold Center doing a oral history with Howard Mead; we have Steve Laubach and Mark Madison doing the narration. That's for the transcriptionist so she can transcribe it and Howard I'll tell you right now when we're done with the tape, we'll transcribe it back at my facility and then, you'll be the first one to get the transcript back so if there's any mistakes or errors or recommendations you can make those and then we'll, we'll send the final copy to you and (unclear).

Howard: All I can think of with this thing is I tried to get the history of our family with my father and we didn't have a camera and flashy like this we just had a tape recorder on the table. And he would be mesmerized looking at this thing and finally he said "Howard I can't do this, can't you just take notes?" I said "Well it's oral history, that means I don't have to take notes." And he said "I can't do it" so he lived in Madison forever and he just knew everything and so all of that family stuff and all the city stuff that I could have gotten just, didn't get got.

Mark: Well I'll tell you right now, this has nothing do and we'll pause the oral history...

[Break in tape]

Mark: And Howard you all ready mentioned, [Mark saying check that] you already mentioned that you were there at the inception of the Leopold Memorial Reserve, why don't you take us back.

Howard: As far as I know I was, you know we, my wife Nancy and I and Reed and Jane Coleman were having dinner at the Colemans' house, which was pheasants roasted in a Dutch oven, that's something that Reed liked to do and somehow in the evening as time went on we talked about what a shame it was that there were so few opportunities for people to be involved in the environment without the government. Reed is, had always been a big republican and would like to have less government; I use to be a big republican, I like to have less government, I guess I like to have less government but I've

become so liberal that it's scary. Anyway, we, we talked about this and we Reed had the property right adjoining the Leopold's and was, knew all about the Leopold's and I was a rather recent introduction to Leopold's as people, I had gone to Carl Schmitz who is a radio personality in Wisconsin "Chapter a Day" and worked with Public radio; lived right next to the Leopold's and he had taken me over to meet Mrs. Leopold and Nina was there, so this was my first introduction. I thought "My gosh" this is like, I can't describe it, here these people are and here's the man who wrote the, wrote what had become our bible; and then, so I, I was very taken in with everything Leopold. And we talked about what could, what had one man done, Aldo Leopold and the Sand County Foundation did, had great influence on a lot of people at that time, 50 almost 50 years ago. And, so we, we talked about what could we do that would, would carry forward what Leopold's philosophy was, where it could really go. This is, this is out of this pheasant dinner and the feeling that the government was involved in too much stuff and private individuals who owned a lot of land were not involved in enough and this is, I think was where the Reserve was conceived and I think though that... I may have been there when the conception happened but, but Reed Coleman was the one that carried the idea forward. I got to watch it grow, I met many of the land owners—Russ Van-Hoosen I came up here and of course Frank, who I'd not known before then. And I was up here often eventually to bow hunt for deer to walk and I just, I was a spectator watching this thing happen. A good friend of mine, Tom Regatz was the attorney who wrote the first Reserve agreement so I was told what was going on, what was happening and the idea was to have a place where people would try and farm and use their property in a way that Leopold would of, would of would of enjoyed.

Mark: What were those early meetings with the landowners like? Were most of them receptive?

Howard: I didn't, I very easy I, I couldn't of, I couldn't of attended more than one or two; I really didn't know the people; it was strictly Frank and Reed who did this.

Steve: What about, you mentioned the lawyer was a friend of yours, Tom Regatz.

Howard: Tom Regatz, R E G A T Z.

Steve: Oh okay.

Howard: He was in on, in a dinner club with Reed and me in Madison and Reed got him to put together the first Reserve agreement. And I think you got, you got a copy of the agreement.

Steve: Yeah.

Howard: I saw it once in the very beginning but you know, who remembers.

Mark: Howard what was your vision for what, you've said you know it was too much government and so on but how did you hope the Reserve would develop?

Howard: Well I didn't have the foggiest notion. I thought that clean farming and everything getting bigger and bigger, which of course nothing has stopped getting bigger and bigger, but uh looked upon this as, as a potential for a little island of sanity in the mist of everything else and of course...with, with Frank Terbilcox having a large chunk of property, Reed and the Leopold family both having fairly large chunks property, you had the nucleus right there. And I think the only landowner I knew at all well was Russ Van Hoosen and so that's humble beginnings.

Mark: Can you tell us a little about Russ because we don't know.

Howard: Frank would be the...

Mark: Okay.

Howard: ...we had a couple of, in the early days we had a couple of potluck type things and so how much can you know about somebody from a potluck.

Mark: Yeah, not very much. What about, you mentioned you obviously read Leopold and is the bible of the conservation community. What parts of Leopold influenced your vision for the Reserve?

Howard: Well I'm a writer, not a philosopher.

Mark: Right.

Howard: And his writing is incredible. And I have I have read his journals with his tiny perfect handwriting and the, you know the, when you're in Madison with the University and his department is right there and people like Bob McCabe and Bob Ellarson and other suits, Stan of course was one. The people issue, you saw various things and, once you're into the environmental community you're, well, I was on the Nature Conservancy Board, I was on the State Historical Society Board, I was on all of these conservation; I was part of the little cluster of people who got the city ordinance passed, passed in Madison to stop using DDT. These are things that you, that once you're in the mix and you know the people you just get kind of pulled into it so that's, I'm not an original thinker.

Mark: I'm not sure that's true. But did you see this place as somehow embodying the land ethic or Leopold's interests in forest restoration or in...

Howard: Well yea I thought that this, this was a chance to make an example of the land ethic. It doesn't seem to me that said well we're going to do something that does all of these philosophical things, it was a chance to, to surround the shack with some other property and give it more protection. I'm amazed how, how well it has done. It, it was so simple in so many ways; we didn't have to go out and raise great amounts of money, the

Colemans, we didn't, I think the, that the Sand County Foundation or the Reserve had a great pot of money; we just went along and did it.

Mark: That raised a question too, one I've heard different answers from.

Howard: Is that right?

Mark: No, no the next question I have. Did you guys have a vision of the public coming out to the Reserve early on?

Howard: No.

Mark: Is that something that Frank just did on his own? He was telling us about the school groups and that (unclear).

Howard: Oh well yeah, if I can digress just a minute.

Mark: Sure.

Howard: Reed's grandfather was a famous um...doctor who treated tuberculosis and Morningside TB Sanitarium in Madison was, was where he worked. And when he died and there was a time when tuberculosis was considered practically wiped out and we wondered what to do with it, we began to work that into the Sand County's program and we had the Louis Rollins Head, the L.R. Head Nature Center out there, which was a garage and greenhouse because we thought at that time that maybe we would do display gardens for Madison gardeners, we were working with the Bruce Company. We hired a horticulture graduate to run this thing and he reported after, his name was Gar Dawson, he reported at some point that teachers were coming and saying "Could we, could we bring our classes to run tours here?" And then so we I remember having a meeting where we discussed this and decided well yeah this would make the whole thing more worth while, so they, they kind of built a garage and they stuck a greenhouse on it and this was

the nature center and Gar Dawson ran these school classes through the nature center. Right now we have a huge building, we're about to double the size, we have maybe thirty-five thousand kids coming through there, we have adult programs and this is nothing that was planned step by step it just happened; which is wonderful.

Mark: That's very interesting.

Steve: Can you tell me when the LR Head Foundation became and why they changed their name to the Sand County Foundation?

Howard: Um.

Steve: Was it part of the reserve idea that influenced that or was it something separate?

Howard: I don't remember, I don't remember the, if this is ever called the L.R. Head up here I thought the L.R. Head was only involved in Madison with...

Steve: Right.

Howard: and...we had a board of directors of Reed, of Reed's mother, of other social friend of theirs from Maple Bluff, a woman, their accountant, who worked for the Maddox Company who's name I can't...George, George Burrell, I think is, you know, his name. You don't remember all these things and, and it was, it was, we did not have the kind of high powered board of directors that the Sand County Foundation has now or even the family foundation has now. You, you, we didn't, we didn't think, we just didn't think we had to find other environmentalists to come in, we thought we could kind of do this ourselves. And when we did, when Reed did begin to invite and find other people to come and be board members it changed the direction of the Foundation at least, rather drastically. I don't think any thing has changed up here; I think the biggest changes have happened where when, Charlie and Nina arrived and he became the, the scientific director and we had, we had...fellows who came up here and worked; we had bird

studies, we had an entomologist friend of mine (unclear name) did some pond studies, we had all of this stuff going on and then we had the fun things like the Monday night seminars where people came (unclear) a potato farmer from Clover came by, a friend of mine. I came up to introduce him. And I don't, I bow hunted up here for a number of years but I never, I go way up north to gun hunt so I don't know anything about how the earn-a-buck and all that business got started; I heard reports of it but I didn't take part in any of the discussions.

Mark: What, this is my ignorance, but what is the relationship or was, in the early years, between the Foundation and the Reserve? Was the Foundation the one who helped manage the Reserve or, I just don't know, that's my ignorance.

Howard: Uh yeah, the Foundation was, was I think the Foundation was who paid Frank...

Mark: Okay.

Howard: ... to manage the Reserve. I don't know, I don't know why this was Reed is a very astute businessman and this was just the way things worked.

Mark: So the foundation was basically running this place and then the garden nursery center in Madison.

Howard: Well the garden nursery center never occurred.

Mark: Oh okay.

Howard: We built the green house, we had the garage and then it became a nature center and you know at first we had two or three thousand people and then we had four or five thousand people and then we got a new director, a new director of the nature center who was more tuned into Leopold and teaching environmental things, natural history things;

and her name was Jo Bush. And then we had another Treva Breuch who was the director after Jo Bush and at that point the, the part of the Sand County Foundation that was envisioning things on a global scope, a global landscape and a national landscape, you know Wyoming and Montana were never part of my visions for the Sand County Foundation.

Steve: But the, you took that name I'm assuming in honor of Leopold and what was emerging at the Reserve here, in terms of calling it the Sand County Foundation.

Howard: Yeah.

Steve: Was that around that time when the Reserve was being formed and you said "Well let's call ourselves the Sand County Foundation."

Howard: That's what I remember, yes.

Steve: Okay.

Mark: Did the Foundation give direction on how this area should be managed? You mentioned one, you know, about accommodating perhaps school groups and so on, did they give other directions about managing the Reserve to Frank?

Howard: Well I don't, it, it...I think this also has kind of gone like topsie. The, up behind the nature study center or whatever they, that's what they use to call it, was that's where Nina and Charlie, you know, live. They had decided, somebody here decided to make an oak savanna and so they cut a lot of oaks and made a great big trashy mess. They were going to burn it except the prevailing winds were going to put smoke on top of the interstate and so it stayed there as trash for quite a while; Frank can tell you much more about this, I've only seen it twice and it's been five years since I was up there. And so I, I don't there must have been some pushing and pulling over who was in charge, Frank, Charlie, Nina and then the people at the, the people in Madison. As in all things

and I don't know anyway to talk much about this but there had been conflicts and personalities rubbing against each other in strange ways. I always thought that the, that the perfect way to work things would be for the Family Foundation, the Sand County Foundation and our nature center, which is the Aldo Leopold Nature Center, we should all be cooperating; we should be very, very good friends. I think somehow the Sand County Foundation has um gone in a, kind of gone in two directions; doing things on a world basis in Africa and nation, national basis in the far west and us locals and um I have never been asked to sell this, I've tried hard to be a peace maker but I haven't succeeded particularly well.

Mark: You mentioned earlier, cuz we're going to come back to some of the things you brought up and maybe ask you to elaborate a little, you said things really changed when Nina and Charlie came back to the property. Can you describe a little about how that research program began or what changed, I mean that's, that's what we're interested in.

Howard: Well it, it changed in that Frank was the manger and he pretty much managed. I don't know what kind of communications went on between Frank and Reed, with Reed telling Frank what to do or Frank, Frank came down to the nature center, to the TB sanatorium and cut the grass and cut trees and so forth.

Steve: Yeah he (unclear).

Howard: Which, which had to gall him a little bit. I got some good fire wood out of the deal.

Mark: We've heard a lot of stories from Frank, I mean he was, he was pretty much sent out...

Steve: Everywhere.

Mark: ... to do bidding wherever. A high school wanted a talk, Frank went there, his jobs were very loosely defined.

Howard: I don't think there's ever been a job description written. Yeah, he was kind of everywhere; he was a, he's a very energetic man. He has a, a very excitable personality; it's, he's a very easy person to love, but he can get excited even if you're a good friend. We had, we had a wonderful experience together way up north where I deer hunt, going out doing an article for our magazine on uh winter camping that I will never quite get over. Anyway that's a long way from what we're talking about.

Mark: Well and so we were saying, sorry, he had pretty much been managing either in consultation with Reed although Reed didn't give us much impression that he directed it. Reed's directives seem to be keep it looking natural and don't build any buildings and even was skeptical about some of the trails (laughing) actually but then Nina and Charlie obviously had some different management regiments or the Bradley's Nature, Science Center.

Howard: Yeah I mean Charlie's a professional scientist and he had, he had ideas on how things should be done, which were good. And Nina is very philosophical and so she had ideas that meshed well with Charlie's, I don't know about conflicts between Frank and the Bradleys. We have a group like a civil war round table called The Voyagers and we have speakers we have people like Sig Olson came to talk to us, we're interested in nature history, we're interested in the Boundary Waters we're interested in the Indians and uh Charlie and Frank both belonged to this group and drove down together. So as far as I know then, they got along for the most part, very well. Knowing that Frank is, is excitable I mentioned there were rough moments but never anything that I saw much.

Mark: I was thinking less about conflict but more did the Foundation suddenly see this more as of a outdoor laboratory as opposed to just like a field trip location, I mean did they, they start to play up the ecological research that was being done here?

Howard: I never, I had the feeling that Charlie and Nina felt it was more important than Reed did. The thing that occurs to me is that if I could do this over again I would've, you know looking back I wish I had not been so busy running a small business and raising a family because you, you tend to take the most important thing in your life, which is the kid who the school just called up and said "Your son is not here today, is he sick?" and said "No he went to school today" and you get side tracked by these things and you can't, you have deal with that before you deal with the Sand County Foundation.

Mark: Well let's break that done, if you could tell us things that you'd do differently and then things that you thought turned out pretty well, that'll be helpful.

Howard: Well sure, I would've, I would've... a lot of stuff frankly got done with Reed and a few people that did not really in an ideal sense get involving, you know, I would involve more people more deeply. It did just occur to me one thing that did happen to me that was the greatest day in my life outdoors was spent here on the Reserve. There was a day in May that if you could picture in your mind the perfect May day with a soft sense of sunlight, warblers were coming through, spring ephemerals are there, it is such a day that you, that the day itself would be in your memory forever. But this day was Reed and I spending it with Starker Leopold, Jim Zimmerman an ecologist from the University, a student of Leopold's and Bob Ellarson. And Reed and I, and I've asked Reed about this and he doesn't really remember it, but to me it was the absolute epitome of a day outdoors with three expert minds who could give you a that's a this kind of warbler and look at here and wondering about the relationship between things, it was like walking with encyclopedias that had come alive; and I'd never spent like that, I said "Why did you major in English, why didn't get into something like this so you could do this?" And you know you're, you've got three kids and a small business and all kinds of things going on and you're thinking that you wanted to change the course of your life but that's what this place can do for people. And that's why it should be a spot that I think that the balance between a population of visitors and keeping the place from being trampled. We can see at the nature center where we have thirty-five thousand, as I said, a year coming through classes that uh, and we don't have nearly the space we have here, it gets beat up

and so I guess you got the judgment do we want this, do we keep this place the way it is developing just naturally or do we want to impose a lot of traffic on it, so I don't know the answer to that but I don't even, I'm not part of the discussions of how much of that should go on.

Mark: Are there other things you would have done differently with 20/20 hindsight cuz everybody's mentioned things they would have done differently.

Howard: Is that right?

Mark: Nina, yeah and you know all sorts of things I mean any project that's been going on this many years I mean, you know...but it is helpful to consider the history.

Howard: Well at the nature center we have, we have built a three quarters size shack, an exact replica, and I spent a lot of time, a lot of years as a curator of the historical society and I was part of the building of Old World Wisconsin so I know how gently you have to treat things like the shack; the shack just can't take a lot of people tromping through it and yet the shack is so much part of the Leopold mystique that I don't know I think that I think that it's good that we have deer and I think that the earn a buck is something that I wish we had done many years before we started it up here because deer are eating us out of house and home all over the state. And... no I think that the way things evolved I think, I think I would have a tighter management unit. I think that the, I described that this oak cutting that uh that Frank seemed to think was very badly done that the stumps were not ground level they were up like this and this big mess of slashing was left and there was no way to burn it and he wasn't consulted and I think you, I think it's much stronger management team of some real experts uh people who, foresters and prairie people and so forth would have been, would have been helpful. I've been on the, my wife had been very involved in the University Arboretum and we, we have just such a management team of University experts who spend endless amounts of time trying to decide who's right and so this expert management team might leave you nowhere because should we do it this way, should we do it that, should we do it the other way; in

the beginning all we tried to do was, was read Leopold and say “Well how would’ve Aldo Leopold dealt with this?”

Mark: That’s very interesting. What about your vision for the future of this place, in the ideal world what would it look like 20 years from now?

Howard: Well I’m awful glad that we have Buddy to run this place because he’s a very solid, sensible person. I...I don’t know what’s going to happen, this place is, Nina is the soul and so I kind of dread the day that she’s no longer around to give us this feeling of inspiration. But they’ve done the unheard of things they’ve thinned the Leopold Pines, which for years the family just couldn’t bear to have us do. Our nature center is, is many (unclear) of lumber are from the Leopold Pines, we came up here and did a sensitive horse logging when we were building the nature center. So I know, I think that uh I think it’s beyond me what, what we should do next except keep buddy.

Mark: I agree. Buddy’s a good friend, I was gonna say buddy. I think he’s been an inspiration, he’s a huge help but that does lead me to another question let me, you are an English major, you’re a writer, you ran Wisconsin Trails and you’re probably the first one that might have read Leopold very deeply that we got a chance to interview and what, well Nina, obviously, but what did you take out of Leopold personally that, you know, what moved you the most out of Leopold’s writing?

Howard: Well... I have, I probably have given out 250 or 300 copies of the book in my life. I probably read it every year and I still have the feeling that I don’t, I don’t know everything or understand everything that’s there; I, I just think, I think the things that are going on now to get him better known the what is it April I think we have a Leopold Weekend where all over the place we find people who are reading Sand County Almanac. I think that, I think that you...if we treat the land as a community to which we belong, I think that’s the secret to the whole thing and we’re a long way from being able to do that and nobody’s ever crystallized this notion better. It’s a part of the way I think and my wife thinks, it’s very important to us but uh we don’t count anymore, it’s the

people who think “Well, what the hell we’ll, we really can’t kill all the weeds with only that kind of an application of atrazine so let’s, let’s ramp her up a little bit, pour a little more on”, people who don’t think that we have a water problem, you fly into Phoenix and you see those golf courses, you running out?

Mark: I’m just checking the tape; no I think we’re good. Know what, let’s pause just one second.

{Pause in tape}

Howard: And they haven’t read it before.

Mark: Not on a map, unless they’re from Wisconsin um sadly Leopold’s become somewhat localized or if they come out of the Forest Service they do a better job of memorializing Leopold. Okay I interrupted you, you were talking about...

Howard: Talking about, where were we?

Mark: Sand County, Phoenix, the lack of respect for water.

Howard: Well you fly into Phoenix and see all those golf courses and all that green stuff and who are we trying to kid, that water table has gotta be down so far that, that what can be left. What are they going to do when they run out of water, they gonna tap the Great Lakes there’s a plan, as I understand it to pipe water to the parched west. You ever read the book Cadillac Desert?

Mark: Yeah.

Howard: What a story.

Mark: Reisner’s quiet a writer. Steve may have some questions; I’ve been kind of dominating.

Steve: Actually the last one you asked was the one I was gonna pose.

[Mark laughing]

Steve: And you mentioned the ideas that were influential to you, as an English background in English as a major, what about the writing to was inspirational to you in terms of just the style?

Howard: Oh it's, it's just glorious. If um, and he, one thing that I do that Bob McCabe told me that he did was when he would finish something, he had this big drawer that used to have an old wooden desk and he'd call it the cooler. And he would toss his manuscript into the cooler to let her, let her rest there for a bit until he had chance, in your mind, you know, when once you put things down but his, his writing is just glorious, just, you know; what I feel bad but matched equally with envy, but he worked, as a kid, as a kid naturalist just observing things he wrote diaries every day. So did ...so did John Muir and John Muir's writing is pretty elegant and this is something that never occurred to be until I was a graduate student that it would be a good idea to keep a journal. Do you have any idea how hard it is to really keep a journal and not, and not just a journal in which the sun came up at such and such a time and, but to keep a journal that ends up in poetry so I think his writing is amazing. I, I, I think that the one thing I read over and over again is Marshland Elegy which is my so short, so succinct and so much power. We were, we were just up to see the whooping cranes getting ready to fly and gosh, we've come, in some areas we've come along way and some areas we've just fallen back; sand hill cranes are one of those areas that we've done quite well.

Mark: Yeah I love them too from Necedah to Chassohowitzka is quite a refuge success story I think.

Howard: Well we need a whole lot more.

Mark: Yeah.

Steve: And you've touched on some of the things you'd do differently, what are some things you look back on and you feel like you're pretty happy with how it turned out in terms of the Reserve?

Howard: Well if you look at this as being an evolutionary thing, something that is just keeps spinning, I think that the spin is, is on an upward better and better way of doing things. I think that the Reserve is, you know, the Family Foundation used to only be the family and I think they have strengthen them so, themselves so much by adding people like...George Archibald and other professional people. I think that they're, that the family is very, very aware of how the siblings are becoming aged and that they have got people in place who are going to carry on the tradition and probably even strengthen it. You know the family is so exceptional, Nina's the only who's not a PhD and Nina makes up for it because she's kind of got the soul that speaks to all of us. But I think that somehow a little, if there was a feeling of joyousness between the Sand County Foundation and the Leopold Foundation, if they, if they felt that they were in this thing together and unfortunately I think in Reed's time and in Nina's time that this is never going to happen but I think that eventually, eventually it will that we're all feel like we're one entity.

Mark: I've got two more quick questions one because you ran Wisconsin Trails; it's worthwhile asking, what's uniquely Wisconsin-ish about Leopold? And you've probably thought more about, you know cuz you actually, you mentioned before you were interested in the local as regards to the Foundation, you're interested in you know what they can do here and you've been very thoughtful about Leopold you know, what is that connection?

Howard: Um well I met Leopold once.

Mark: REALLY!

Howard: Um.

Mark: Well tell us that.

Howard: I lived along side the, I live very close to the University Arboretum; you've been to the Arboretum?

Mark: Oh yeah, yeah, know it well.

Howard: Okay, well you go in the gate off Seminole Highway and off to the right there is, is largely oak woods that used to be pasture because you can find all kinds of, of barb wire, little rolls of rusted barb wire. And in the forties when Japanese balloons were floating into Washington and Northern California and the Nazi's were winning, it seemed, and we were all worried about little submarines on the east coast and so forth; well some how my friends and I translated that to we better have some defensive positions here in the Midwest. So we went to the Arboretum and we were, you know, kids playing guns and so forth and you didn't play cowboys and Indians then you played Germans and Japanese and Americans and so we dug an elaborate bunker system, foxholes. We put up beams, we put sod on top of the beams we had this command post, we had a big thing up in a tree with a way to climb up, nails pounded into the oak and so forth. And one day as one day we were playing there this slight bespeckled man came and told us that he didn't approve of what we were doing, that this was not what the Arboretum was meant to be used for and he would like us to take it all down and restore it to the way it was and he would come back in a couple of weeks and or a week and he would check on it. And something about the way he did it we understood that we were in real trouble if we didn't, he didn't ask our parents names and so forth but just somehow knew that we just should do this and so we and we had to confess everything because we couldn't pull the nails out of the tree so our fathers had to come out with crowbars and pull. And then we had to, we had barb wire because we, because it had been cow pastures, we had barb wire that we had coiled all up rest of the stuff and we had to get rid

of that and we had to get rid of all the cardboard and used to have wood boxes and we had wood boxes, it was just a mess; we had to clean it all up, we cleaned it all up and I never saw him again. But (unclear) look like and I didn't, I didn't know it was Leopold and I figured out sometime maybe when I was working up here I just never had thought that I had just began to understand his connection with the Arboretum, so.

Mark: That's a great story! You have been doing penance ever since (laughing) working on restoration (unclear).

Howard: Well you know that's, that's of course what happens is that we do so many things thoughtlessly and we do so many things because at the moment it seems like something we can do and we don't ever really think of the repercussions and what's going to happen. And, and our, the way that our government is working right now they seem to step on each others toes they don't seem to be able to get going in one direction. That's way I think it's really critical for the Sand County Foundation to really blend with the Leopold Foundation and work together up here because you need all of the good minds to figure out what should be done with this place.

Mark: Well that was my follow up question too because you've been here since the Leopold Foundation and you were on the early board of the Sand County Foundation and you know everybody outside wonders about that too. How would see them, the two foundations divvying up management of this place in an ideal world?

Howard: Let's see for somebody who's organization person which I'm not.

Mark: No I'm asking somebody who's a mission person or that thinks about what they could do because I mean it, everybody wants them to work together but of course they have different missions so I'm wondering if you have a place like this, what could each do?

Howard: Well...how do we come up with a benevolent dictator? I really don't know that answer because some of the, maybe, maybe the problems are between the real, the real heart of the problem is between Reed and Nina. And I have, I've tried to do something in both cases and Nina is more approachable than Reed is and I just know that I'm at the end of the rope with either one of them, there's nothing I can do. So I guess I would, I would take the next generation. I don't know what's going to happen with the Sand County Foundation when Reed is gone, I don't know what his plans are for its carrying on. He's got one daughter in town but everybody else is pretty far fetched and is this something that you, that you, I mean there's a lot of money involved now. There's the Coleman land, there's the land of the...I think we outta get together and solve what we're going to do, that we outta have some kind of a plan for the future. And so as far as I know that this is something that has not been talked about at all, nobody, I can see Reed try to talk about when he's gone; nobody likes to talk about when you're gone.

Mark: Right.

Howard: And I can see Nina being somewhat more realistic about that but you gotta have both parties willing to get together to do it.

Mark: Good answer. Steve do you have any?

Steve: Going back a little bit, you mentioned you were on the Sand County Board, can you remember roughly, then I'll have a final question, just roughly what years you were on that board? Doesn't have to be exact but just a...

Howard: The Sand County Board?

Steve: Yeah.

Howard: Sure from the very beginning to about 2004.

Steve: Okay so forty some years, it was '65 when it started.

Howard: Yeah, right. And one year Reed was asked to be chairman of the State Republican Party and he wanted to know if I would, if I would I was called vice president but that was just kind of an award for somebody who'd been around for a long time. Reed wanted to know if I'd be the president, well he asked as I had just finished having a hernia operation, he called me at the hospital asked me this so I said "Sure, just hang up" just, yeah I'd be glad to. Um but you have to understand that as long as, and this is not going to be for public consumption, Reed is a very strong person, he likes to be in control, he wants to do things, he's also an extremely intelligent person so it's very hard to get past someone like this when they don't want you get to passed them. I don't know it's, it's just hard to see what's going to happen but it's getting, obviously getting very important that we decide that something be done to plan the future.

Steve: Right. I just want to hear a little bit more, you mentioned you saw yourself as a peace maker at times on the board or between different foundations. What were some of the other things you did as a board member, experiences you had over those years?

Howard: Well...mostly being a supporter and being available when something needed to be done, so I needed to some place where we...I wish we could tell, I could tell you that there was a grand plan to get from here to there but we had a thing called, did I tell you this, I meant to, about ecological consultants? We kept trying to do things that would make everything worthwhile, we had ecological consultants and we were asked by Jim (unclear) at Wisconsin Power Light if we would help them find this site for the Columbia generating plant. And so we got Bob McCabe and ...who else, Bob Ellarson, both students of Leopold's, both in wildlife ecology and they got a helicopter, which we paid for, and they went up and the site they were talking about was the ferry on Lake Wisconsin at Merrimac. And Wisconsin probably had a big bunch of property up there, which they still have they've got walking trails and board walks and so forth. And they wanted to put it right there but Ellarson and McCabe came up with the, rejected this as it was going to be destructive for Devil's Lake State Park, which is just over the hill up

there was going to be a inversion, as I remember, a collection of soot and clouds and so forth from the stack of the generating plant; and so it ended up being sited where it is now. But this was such a horrendous experience once we, once we got into this and discovered that you know this was rather serious business discovering where this multi-million dollar plant was going to go. It affected bottom lines for Wisconsin Power Light, it would be destructive and we provided ecological consultants, it was not something we really wanted to do, that was really getting a long way out on a limb and we really were not set up to do that but we, we tried to do different things, we tried to do more things that would be good for the environment. There's a lot of things that we could have done and we could have really done an ecological consultant just by getting the people we knew the Stan Temples and so forth and getting available talent and providing people with problems, like Wisconsin Power Light a list of talent and providing coordination for them charging a fee for it, this could have been something we did but I think, what, what's going on now what Sand County Foundation is doing nation wide and world wide is just, just fine. I think that this is the blue ribbon project here; this is the one thing that really makes a lot of sense to everybody.

Mark: Alright, Steve do you have any?

Steve: No.

Mark: I don't either, thank you Howard and that was actually...

End of Tape