

Oral History Cover Sheet

Name: John Martin
Date of Interview: October 28, 2006
Location of Interview: Homer, Alaska
Interviewer: John Cornely

Approximate years worked for Fish and Wildlife Service: 33 years

Offices and Field Stations Worked, Positions Held: Student trainee at Fort Niobrara, Nebraska; Crosby Wetlands Management District, North Dakota; Assistant Manager at Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Montana; Aleutian Islands National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska; Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska

Most Important Projects: Wetlands Program at Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge; Islands & Ocean Visitor Center, Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge in Homer, Alaska; getting the Tiglax

Colleagues and Mentors: Tom Early, Bob Fields, Ned Peabody, Omer Swenson, Vernon Byrd, Larry Calvart, Kent Hall, Bev Minn, John Rogers, Don Redfearn, Forrest Lee, Glenn Elison, Joe Mazzoni, Jim Estes, Kent Hollis

Most Important Issues: cattle on part of the Aleutian Islands, rat and fox issues

Brief Summary of Interview: Mr. Martins starts out talking about early life, being born in England and coming to the United States when he was only 10 months old. He grew up in Jackson, Ohio and always like the outdoors. He took a student trainee position at for Niobrara, Nebraska before applying for and getting a permeant job with the Service. He talks about the different refuges he worked at and managed, various people he worked with, issues that arose, and what he's doing now.

National Heritage Team of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Oral History Program
Subject/USFW Retiree: John Martin
Date: Tuesday, October 28, 2006
Interviewed by: John Cornely

John Cornely:

This is John Cornely with the Fish and Wildlife Service Heritage Committee. It's the 28th of October, 2006. We are at the wonderful Education Center for the Fish and Wildlife Service Maritime National Wildlife Refuge in Homer, Alaska and I am here to do an oral history recording with John Martin today.

John Martin:

So to start at the very beginning; I was born in England, my father was in the Army Air Corps and my mother was an English nurse, and I came over to the U.S. when I was 10 months old, my mother brought me over on a hospital ship. That's what they tell me, I don't remember that!

John Cornely:

What year were you born John?

John Martin:

In 1945; and I grew up southeastern Ohio, in Jackson, Ohio, which is in the southeastern part of the state. I just always liked the outdoors, I don't know how I ever got interested in it, I think it's something that's in your blood, that's what I think, I just naturally gravitated to it. There was a private lake there that we had access, my father's cousin owned so I used to hike and tramp around and go squirrel hunting and grouse hunting out there. When I was a teenager I spent a lot of time grouse hunting and a lot of time fishing. I used to go down to West Virginia trout fishing, I started fly fishing I think when I was eight years old. I went to Ohio State, started out the first two years I was in pre-veterinary medicine, I didn't do very good in that and I said the heck with that, I was going to go into wildlife. It's amazing what happens to your grade point when you're more interested in what's going on! I graduated, actually the year before I graduated I went to work out at Fort Niobrara in Nebraska, and Bob Fields was the manager. I don't know if you know Bob or not?

John Cornely:

I do.

John Martin:

He is a kind of special guy. I worked for him that summer, and south of Fort Niobrara is Valentine National Wildlife Refuge and Ned Peabody was the manager down there at the time. I was in college and looking for girls I guess, and I was talking to Ned in a bar one night and he pulled out a picture of this girl, he said, "Well this is my sister-in-law, and she is going to come up for a visit here this summer." And I thought, "Oh okay, well I'd like to meet her." Well I met her at a retirement dinner they were having, both refuges were there and she came up for that, and so I started dating her. And I think it was either

my second or third date I wrote a good friend of mine and said, "Well I met the girl I'm going to marry." And my wife never believed that until she met this guy I had written, he said, "Yeah, John wrote me about after your second date." She said, "He paid you to say that." He said, "No, that's just the way it was." But anyway, so I guess you could say I met my wife on refuges! She was Ned Peabody's sister-in-law. And when I was at the Fort we were working with buffalo mainly, and that was really my first experience with national wildlife refuges, didn't know anything about them before that. And so I went back and finished up my last quarter of school and went to apply for a job and got on at Crosby Wetlands Management District, and Omer Swenson was the manager.

John Cornely:

Oh wow, Omer is one of the fishing crew from Ontario [annual fishing trip initiated by Harvey K. Nelson].

John Martin:

Oh yeah, he's an old Minnesotan! I remember when I first drove into Crosby, North Dakota it was in January, I got in and I went a motel room to spend the first couple of nights and the first room they gave me the toilet bowl was frozen over! I went back to the office and said, "I think I'm going to need another room!" And then I moved into the hotel for awhile and then found a basement apartment and lived there. That was in, I guess, January. And then in June of that year is when I got married. But that was quite a switch, you know, coming from southern Ohio and going up to North Dakota in January. I remember I was driving through the Black Hills and ran off the road, no one around for miles and miles, and someone came by and I asked, "Well, when you get downtown send a tow truck up." And someone else came by and actually pulled me out of the snow, but I waited until the tow truck got there and paid him for his trouble coming anyway. So that was really my first experience in the west in the winter.

And so I was in Crosby, we were busy working on the wetlands. We also had Lake Zahl National Wildlife Refuge; it was managed out of there. And I remember Omer Swenson, went on a detail, I think it was down to Devil's lake for six months or longer, and I think I had been at Crosby for one year or two years; no, only a little over a year at that time. So I was made acting manager, had no idea what was going on really, but we were doing a lot of fencing and counting ducks and so forth. And that was another thing, that was my first experience with waterfowl because we don't have a whole lot in southern Ohio. And I can remember one time we were out counting pairs and we were canoeing, and we had run the canoe ashore and Omer had gotten out, so I was still sitting in the back of the canoe and Omer said, "What's that pair going overhead?" And I remember I grabbed my binoculars like that and the whole canoe went over! I don't know if he did that on purpose or not. Anyway, after being acting for that time period then I transferred to Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge over in Montana. And it was only about a sixty mile move but I went across the state lines and, of course, everyone in Montana said, "Well, how do you like it over here? It's a lot better than living in North Dakota isn't it?"

John Cornely:

Were you the manager there?

John Martin:

No, I was the assistant manager but I was kind of in charge of their wetlands program. At Medicine Lake they had a lot of equipment we could use to do the work, and also got to work on the refuge and doing a lot of building of islands. And this one thing that was something I guess that kind of set my thinking. We were on the refuge and we had a D8 that was ex-military, was military surplus, we had a 5-ton dump truck that was military surplus, we had a TD-14 trailer that was military surplus, and all of this. And so here we are all trying to get our jobs done with this military surplus. And back in those days the managers just assumed that's the way it was done, you got military surplus, and I never could figure that out. I got that turned around in my mind one time when I was working out at Adak later in my career, and we had gotten the Tiglax, actually I was stationed there, we had gotten the 120-foot research vessel for the Maritime. And the Navy was going to put a radar out on Amchitka Island, and so I got a call from the Department of the Navy wanting to know if they could get a ride on our boat to go to Amchitka. And I said, "Is the U.S. Navy with all of the ships? You want to ride on a Fish and Wildlife Service? You're more than welcome; I'll tell you how much it will cost you." So that was just something I will always remember from my career, was we started out with military surplus and then towards the end of my career I had the military riding us, quite a bit actually, out on the Aleutians because there weren't any Navy ships out there, there was a Navy base but they didn't have any ships. And so we chartered to the Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Navy and I think we maybe even chartered to the Air Force once, so that was kind of a turnaround, and one I was happy to see.

Anyway, I worked at Medicine Lake and I think we were there for seven years, and then two jobs in Alaska opened up; Izembek NWR and the Aleutian Islands NWR, and that was headquartered then at Adak. So I applied for both of them and I got the Adak job. I went out there, and I just thought it was the greatest thing in my life. I mean it was windy, but we'd come from Medicine Lake where it was 45 below and the wind would blow, out there the coldest temperature I think I ever saw was plus 10, and the wind blew but that was all right, and the weather was so much milder. And again, it seems the way my career, you know I started out with waterfowl and hadn't ever worked with waterfowl before, then went over where there were seabirds and didn't know anything about the seabirds. We were lucky that this fellow by the name Vernon Byrd, and he knew everything, I consider Vern probably one of the premier biologists in the Fish and Wildlife Service. And he had a program pretty well lined out, and we just started going from there and working on eradicating foxes and so forth out in the Aleutians. At that time I thought I might have been the only refuge manager to own a tuxedo, because we went to four formal balls every year; we had the Navy Ball, the Marine Ball, the Sea Bee Ball, and I think it was the Spring Officer's Wife Club Ball. As part of my job I guess I had to try to put in appearance at those things, so I had a tuxedo. I still got it but I can't get into it anymore!

John Cornely:

So how did you like those military balls?

John Martin:

Oh they were great! I mean with the military and the drinks. And the other thing about living on Adak, it was a military base and the military people are used to only being in a place for two years, you know, so they make friends quickly, it was just a fantastic experience. I think we had five different movies a night you could go to scattered around here and there. You didn't have to worry about shopping because there was only one place to shop and the rest of it was all mail order. Sometimes they had fresh vegetables and sometimes they didn't, depending on what they called the garbage flight got in, which brought the milk and the perishables at least once a week. I think it was a 141 that flew in.

And then I can remember that first year I flew out to Shemya to meet the boat, which was a 65 foot T-boat at that time, and flew out to Shemya and got in there and the next thing, I couldn't believe it, there's all these guys standing around with M16's you know, on this little 3x5 island, it was really tight security and I got a kick out of that. I remember another time we were out at Shemya, by that time the Air Force kind of knew who we were a little better, and we operated back and forth. I remember I was taking a Zodiac, I was with my refuge supervisor, who was Larry Calvert at the time, we took the Zodiac over to Alaid Island to count to see how many geese were returning and that kind of thing. And we were over there and then when we came back our radio wouldn't work, so we just landed on the beach there and no one knew where we were or anything. And I remember some guys come by in a pickup and we waived them down and said, "We need to get up to the officer's quarters" and so forth, and they said, "Where did you guys come from?" And I said, "We just moved over from Attu." The Coast Guard station, which was, I think, forty miles or sixty miles away. And their eyes got pretty big you know. Actually, I think the pass from Alaid is only about two miles. But I got a kick out of that. I can remember all of the security they had when we got off the airplane early in my career, and then we come in with a Zodiac and they don't even know we came on the island.

And then I remember ANILCA came along and opened up, and at that time I had built a staff up pretty well out there in the Aleutian's. And then when they decided, let me see, Jimmy Carter named all the monuments, and so we had what I called Bloody Thursday. They called me up and my assistant, Tom Early, is to come to Homer and start that office. Kent Hall, who is another assistant was going to go, I think it was to Alaska Peninsula. And then Bev Minn, who was another assistant, was going to go work on subsistence. So I lost three people in one telephone call.

And then later, when they started to man the refuges and ANILCA had passed and it wasn't just monuments anymore, I remember Don Redfearn called me up and wanted me to put in for the Arctic. Well I didn't want to put in for the Arctic, I wanted to put in for the Maritime and so I put in for the Maritime and then Don called me up when he was interviewing me and said, "Well, I sure would like to see you put in for the Arctic." So I figured, well that was that. Well he picked Larry Calvert for the job down here [Homer]. There weren't any nice houses available at the time and Larry's wife didn't go for that, so

Larry turned it down and then I got the Maritime. Which is really the same job with a lot more islands added to it and a little better weather too then we had out at Adak.

Then we came here and gradually built up the program. Really started to try to go to town killing foxes and just about, I think, I don't know what the status is now but I think they got just about all the foxes killed all of the refuge islands. In fact, I think they are starting to work on some of their partially owned with the natives, I'm not sure. We'll go find out tonight. And there will be some fox stories coming out tonight when they start drinking!

And then well we got the vessel, 120-foot vessel for operating. For quite a few years we chartered because of the 60-foot vessel was too small. We spent a lot of time hiding from weather and so we chartered crab boats and then we finally got the money and then got our own vessel going. And I think that has been one of the best things for the management of the refuge. Actually they need two of them but people won't think that way. And you know how Bob Fields was famous and what's going to be on his gravestone is what he said about the Fish and Wildlife Service, "If they think at all, they think small." But at least they got one boat that works good.

Another surprise I had while I was still working was that we had several military bases, we had Adak which is a Navy Base, Shemya which is an Air Force Base, and we had Attu which is a Coast Guard Station. And the whole time Attu was going to close down in two years, was going to close down in two years and low and behold, the one that closed first was Adak! That really caught me off guard.

And then I spent the latter part of my career working out a trade with the natives for the base part of Adak, all of the facilities and all of that stuff. And then we got a bunch of small islands. The bird islands in return and also got them to get rid of all their over-selections. I think it was a pretty good trade worked out.

John Cornely:

Over-selections; explain that a little bit.

John Martin:

Okay, yes it actually goes back, yes to the Native Lands Claim Act. And they could select all of these lands, and what some people did, or most of them did, is they over-selected so they could come back and... Like they were allowed, lets say they were allowed a million acres of land; they would select maybe 5 million acres. And then they would come back and try to cherry pick it later in the future when they found out which is valuable and which they could make money off of and that kind of thing.

John Cornely:

Oh, okay.

John Martin:

So actually the entire Aleutian Chain was in these over-selections. That could put a crimp on your management style because you are supposed to get their okay to do things and that sort of thing. They had a program in the trade that every year they had to read so many acres of over-selection until they were all gone and just the lands they had selected and really want are the only thing they have left.

John Cornely:

And then once they release them or even trade in for facilities... Adak, then you've got control.

John Martin:

Yeah, we got control of those plus we also got lands that they had selected and we got those back, plus get rid of over-selections. So we did all right I think on that trade. But it broke my heart to see Adak disappear. I kind of look at Adak as kind of high point in my career; I really enjoyed that out there. And then I retired I think it was in 2000, and so that was it in the nutshell. For a story, I really don't know, I don't know what to tell you. Well, I started working to get this facility started before I retired, and I think we had just finally gotten the money and that's when I retired. And as usual, when you are in refuges, you know, when you start something someone else finishes it for you.

John Cornely:

Yes. I just in fact interviewed Al Trout and Larry Shanks. They just opened the new Bear River facility which like this is just a very fine facility. And, you know, having been around for quite awhile myself I know how unusual itself to have a place like this. So I would like you to talk a little about how this, when I was here, I was at your old office. I don't remember exactly where it was but we had part of our meeting there and we actually got a tour of the boat, which was wonderful, but there is so much opposition it seems like to places like this. Tell me a little bit of what you know about how this came about.

John Martin:

Well, I'll tell you a lot about it I guess. It's interesting you mentioned Al Trout because I was just out at Bear River and was in their facility.

John Cornely:

I haven't been there yet but I understand it's pretty nice.

John Martin:

It is, and it was kind of done outside of the Fish and Wildlife Service, you know. And this one was too in a way. Well when we were doing our CCP, we put in every one to have a world class visitor's center and office, all I really wanted was a really good office but I used a visitor's center to get the office. And so we had to be in our CCP, and Ted Stevens came down to do the Tiglax christening, his wife christened it, threw the champagne against the boat and so forth when that was going on.

And so I had to talk to Mazzoni, I said, "Mazzoni, you know we've got a CCP, we want to get a world class visitor's center down here, I think I'm going to try to make a move on that if there's no problem." "Oh no, do what you have to." So, I got a hold of the Chamber of Commerce and the mayor, and then I mentioned it in a newspaper article. They interviewed me for a newspaper article for the christening that was coming up, and I said, "Oh yes, we are going to put in a world class visitor's center here, etcetera." And so everyone hit Stevens up about that when he came down to christen. And I still remember when I drove him back to the airport, he was sitting in the back talking to one of his aids and he said, "Well Kodiak wants some kind of center over there, a tourist attraction." And he said, "Well I think we'll put it here." And so that started it.

And then we had some controversies; one of the biologists had suggested we ought to have live birds. I thought, Well hell, we ought to put that in there and see how far it goes through the engineering. But before it could even get through the engineering study, there was a lot of oppositions lead by the staff actually, some of the people in the staff were really opposed to that idea, and that slowed it up. And then we had the Republican revolution in Congress, and so that stopped everything you know. But then a few years later we kept working on it and said, "Yeah we still want to get this visitor's center." And the town's people were really working with Steven's and so forth.

And then they had this Kachemak Bay Research Reserve established, which was a joint thing with NOAA and State Fish and Game. And so I figured well, if we're going to get it we were going to have to do something I don't want to do, so we partnered with them, so we had two agencies coming together on the thing. And then that flew through Stevens. Now it was never in the budgeting process for the Service, and Stevens asked me if it was and I said no. And he said, "Try to get it in there; I need something coming to me asking for that money." The Service wouldn't do it but, you know, hell, I remember meeting with Stevens and also town leaders, doing things with John Rogers, who was the deputy director, telling him we support this but we can't put anything in writing right now, just all down outside, so. Then Stevens just came up with the money. A great, what the hell is that term I'm trying to think of? I'm having a senior moment now! People bringing a lot of money to the state, what the hell, it's not a very nice term either, I'm trying to remember, boy am I having a senior moment! But anyway, he learned his lesson from Robert Byrd!

John Cornely:
Pork barrel.

John Martin:
Yeah, that's it! All I could think of was pig! Yeah, Steven's was a great pork barreler! And I remember after I retired they had the opening here, the ground breaking, and Stevens said, "Well..." Oh no, it was when he got his us the boat, the first one, that was a 5 million dollar boat, that was kind of unheard of for the Service. And at that time he said, "Well, I just told the Service they need to build this." He said, "This money came from within the Service budget." And I don't know if it did or not. But he said, "Well if the Service is going to spend money, they just need to spend it in Alaska as anywhere

else." That's what he told his public. And then during the groundbreaking here he was giving a speech. Before that that someone spoke and told about how 75% of the refuge lands are located here in Alaska. He said, "Well I just learned that 75% of the refuge lands are here in Alaska." He said, "We'll have to look into getting about 75% of the budget up here." But that's how we did it pretty much, just getting the local people together to really go on to Stevens and so forth.

John Cornely:

So it kind of started about the time of the christening of the Tiglax ship?

John Martin:

Yes, that's when it started publicly.

John Cornely:

How long from that to the time say that you actually started, you broke ground?

John Martin:

Oh quite a few years, it was quite a few years. I think the boat was christened in what in '89? Or was that the oil spill? Maybe it was '88 or '87, I don't remember. And then we started, we had 100,000 dollars for a feasibility study. And then the congressional Republican thing, that really did more than anything to stop it. And then we got another batch, later we got another batch of study money and we got the money to --- or planning money, and then we got the money for construction about when I retired. And in fact, I had this vision for the refuge; you know we had Vernon Byrd. And my feeling was we've got probably the finest seabird biologist working for the government right now, and this refuge has most of the seabird habitat in the state. This should be, scientifically people should be coming to us and we should be doing outstanding seabird work, we need a vessel to do that. And I had an idea who I wanted where. I remember I was talking to Vern, I was out at Agattu Island one time and I said, "Vern, here is the vision, you're going to be the supervisor biologist, we are going to have biologists in charge of every different region in the refuge." Blah, blah, blah... and all these plans. "We've already got the boat now." This is I think the first or second year we had the vessel. "And we're going to have a first-class visitor's center and that's going to be able to have people to visit the Maritime Refuge because they can't get out to it, and Homer's a place to do that." If you look at it on a regional scale with people hitting the highway, Tetlin, Kenai, and then us, and we'll handle the marine side of the Service's work. And then Tetlin and Kenai should have major visitor's centers to catch people on the road and talk about other waterfowl, moose, and this kind of stuff. Anyway, that was my vision. And then we were also going to get rid of all the foxes. And we're pretty lucky, we kind of got there.

John Cornely:

Let's go back a little bit and talk some more about the boat and how again as you've already said. Remarkable, even though you could use another one, we could use another, it's unheard of that, and I know that Senator Stevens was instrumental in that but who approached him or how did that idea come about?

John Martin:

Well, I think it was under **BLHP [Bicentennial Land Heritage Program]**. Originally I put in for a new boat, replacing the Aleutian Tern. And my idea was one of a 110-foot boat that was like, there was a crab boat I think it was call the Bering Sea that I'd seen, it looked a good thing so that was kind of my vision.

John Cornely:

In a sense this would be one of those big crab boats that go out...

John Martin:

Yes, a 110-foot crab boat. And that was my vision anyway, or that's what I was thinking around. And under **BLHP**, "Well, we got some money and..." First of all, they were going to get us a surplus boat and I said, "No" because I already told them my idea, surplus equipment, you know. And I said, "We don't want that." And then they were looking at boats had been confiscated from drug smugglers. I said, "That's all warm water stuff, we're in a different environment up here, we need a boat kind of like a crab boat but built differently to hold more people and be more comfortable" and this kind of thing. And so there was a big push to try do it. And then things kind of fell apart some place in there. And so what we did is the regional director at the time said, "Okay, here's what we're going to do, we're going to force the issue with Stevens." So they decided they were going to shut down the Maritime Refuge. And so they were telling us all where we had to go, and of course we didn't know we were the pawns, they never told us that.

John Cornely:

So you thought this was a serious proposal?

John Martin:

Yeah. And I was supposed to go to Fairbanks and become the super manager for the three, in charge of all three refuges up there under this proposal. And so there was a lot of environmental groups and everything, they were --- different people were fighting about not having it manned and so forth, the refuge manned. And they were going to Stevens saying, "Well, if you get us a boat we can have the refuge operational. Without the boat there's no sense of having, you know, the refuge manned." Well in the meantime, one of the biologist's here said, "Oh, we don't need that boat." He said, "We can get by with skiffs and, you know, do this and so forth." He was used to doing things on the cheap. And he almost scuttled the thing; writing Stevens and getting people to write Stevens about, "We can operate without the boat." But luckily Stevens took the bait and said, "I'll get you the boat, don't you close down the place." So that's how it really came into being. But it was five million dollars for the boat. It had a million dollar pilot house with all the, at that time, with all the latest electronics onboard and so forth. Of course you had a tour of it back then so you kind of know what it was like. And, you know, that thing put enough miles in a year to circumnavigate the earth. We also worked out a good program, where we really didn't have enough money to run it as well as we wanted to but we could charter. And first of all, the Sea Lion research going on, they

were going out on a lot of the same areas we were going. So we could extend our season and do a lot of other stuff they do, winter work. So we could therefore support our winter fox program because other people were helping us pay for the boat in the winter. And it was a really, a really neat operation. In fact, you know how different managers have different things they work on, and the next manager comes in and looks at differently. The one thing I always felt applied to me, to myself was the boat schedule. Because I knew everything that was going on the refuge pretty much, knew who was working where, other agencies and what they were doing and so forth. And I enjoyed talking the other agencies and lining up the charters and, "What do we to get here?" "We've got to go here." "We don't have enough money." "With this guy chartering it from here to here, that'll get us halfway there so then we can do it." And it's helped a lot. And the other thing about the boat as well is it increased the visibility to the refuge and everyone knew who the refuge --- realized who the refuge is. If anyone wanted to find out about a seabird they'd come to us. It's just, you know, it's just doing something first class, and there's no reason the Service can't do everything first class if they just have it.

John Cornely:

And you mentioned this, when you first started, and I hear this and I'm the same way, I grew up 30 miles from Kirwin National Wildlife Refuge, and ended up in Aberdeen, South Dakota in the middle of pothole country. I spent time on Kirwin Reservoir and you'd see signs but you still, you didn't have any idea what the refuge was. And especially as the demographics have changed nationally, this kind of thing is probably more important today than it ever has been so that people learn about.

John Martin:

But my big disappointment, and I'll be honest and I don't like telling anyone about this, is that I had to partner, but you had to do it. And actually at that time the Service, it seemed, was pushing partnering as an objective instead of as a way of doing business, I don't know if they're still that way. But, you know, it's almost like if you have three partnerships, you're going to get the grade, it doesn't matter what you're doing.

John Cornely:

Well you've hit upon one of my hot buttons and that's, you're exactly right. And it depends on who it is because I, when I, we talked about partnerships in the Migratory Bird Treaty course that we teach, and that's one of my things is always remember that partnerships are a tool, not an objective.

John Martin:

Right, it's a process to get to where you want to go. But to me, my thinking when that came in it became an objective, it was, I thought it was silly the way they kept pushing it.

John Cornely:

Well, have there been positive advantages to the partnership that was formed?

John Martin:

Well, we've had a lot of really good partnerships on the refuge, I mean with military and everyone else.

John Cornely:

But you've had... you've kept the real objectives in mind in each of those partnerships that meet your objective?

John Martin:

Right, yeah. And then on this one with the office I knew as soon as you get a partner with the office and visitor's centers, you lose visibility. "So what's the name of this place?" Islands and Oceans. "It should be called Maritime Refuge Visitor's Center." And that name was chosen after I was gone and I'm glad it was. It was time for someone else you know, really, you know how that goes. But, you know, that's how I looked on everything, was just trying to get a little more recognition for the refuge. And when you look at the work we're doing and the quality of the people we have, they need recognition and they need to feel good about what they're working for, you know so. And everyone says you can't afford it but I don't know. When I was out on Adak I'd see them flying their airplanes 24 hours a day at the end of the fiscal year to burn up fuel so they could, you know, burn up their money and I thought, you know, our budget, even if we got what we wanted to be is so small, we've got to quit thinking stupid and small and we've got to think big. And I'm sure that they're, you know, that this costing them. But the point is that if you've got the right manager, you can find a way to make the damned thing work, even in times of budget cuts. And the other thing is, when you've got a big first class operation going on, you're a little more immune to some of the budget cuts, too many people know about you. And this is where partnership does come in handy is that you're not --- they're not only affecting you but there affecting other agencies too, you know, so. That's one good thing about partnerships. But I saw if we had partnerships with the Service we had certain things we do and then we say, "Well gee, you know, we've got this fourth priority down here, we can partner and get that done and start working on that." And so you do that, and then because of the partnership all the sudden the regional priority becomes number one, but because it really is not the number one priority for the refuge to get, but it's a partnership. That used to bug the hell out of me.

John Cornely:

Bonus points... and it still does.

John Martin:

What it does it changes your priority, so I was really careful about what I partnered with and didn't partner with. But that was, you know... And I was really glad to see the operation down there at Bear River. Al has just done an outstanding job there.

John Cornely:

And it's a very good location to reach a lot of people I think.

John Martin:

Yeah, when I was down there, there were state people there for meetings and everyone. All the sudden they were gravitating there as the waterfowl place, you know, and that's what it should be. We were down there duck hunting, we were sitting in the middle of 300,000 ducks at the time, but you know... While we were down there it was bluebird weather so we didn't do any good hunting. But the point is that it's an important place and it needs the recognition, and the people working there need the recognition, and they have their compatriots and the other agencies coming to them for information. And, you know, that was my vision at the, you know, if people want to know something they'll come to us to get it. I think some of the biologists may not agree with that now, I think they spend a lot of time giving out information, you know, they've got the data so then they've got to make it available to people. That's one thing you want to ask Vern about. But clearly, you know, I think this refuge is looked on as the seabird resource. Of course Vern sits on the Sea Lion Committee Endangered Species team, I don't know what the status on that is now, I think that team is still in existence, so. Anyway, the refuge and the Bering Sea have become pretty well known now.

We also used this ecosystem approach the Service went through for awhile. You know, I really thought was stupid what they did, trying to turn an ecosystem management into an administrative thing. I don't argue with that ecosystem management, and they've done out on this refuge for years. But if you look at the purpose of the refuge it's right in there, especially almost all of the Alaskan refuges. But they turned it into an administrative thing, and we made hay. I ended up being the first chair for the **Bering Sea** Ecosystem Team in the Service, we made hay. We had people doing work on the boat and I remember one time I had them all come in and brief our regional director, we were following the company line by God! But we were lucky it fit.

John Cornely:

Yeah, it does fit and it's one of those things that, like you say, the concept was sound but we didn't implement very well.

John Martin:

No.

John Cornely:

And that gave it a bad name.

John Martin:

Well, they tried to implement as an administrative function instead of a biological function. That was the whole problem. And we were lucky, I guess, because we were doing and then the regional director, you know, he could talk about at his meetings about what the difference refuges were doing, we always had to get approval for talking about it. But it gave me, at the same time, the ability to talk to the regional director and tell him, and tell him, "Hey, this is a bunch of bullshit administratively," you know. He knew exactly where I stood on it. That was thing I enjoyed, was the fact that we had a good first class program, I could pretty speak my piece and, you know, didn't ever fear

anything. I don't know if the guys are that way anymore. A lot of them under this, I think they've been beat down under this, a lot of them have been beat down under this administration.

John Cornely:

Well the weight of bureaucracy?

John Martin:

I never saw it that heavy.

John Cornely:

And the Migratory Bird Program doesn't get quite as messed up in it but coming from a refuge background, and when I go back out in the field and visit with the managers and biologists and see what they have to do compared to what I had to do. And now at Western Oregon Refuges I can't imagine what people are thinking, and they're keeping really good people out of the field doing what they really should be doing, in my opinion.

Well, I'd like you talk a little bit more about your time in Adak and, you know, some of the things that were going on, some of the fox, and the Aleutian Canada goose study that was going on.

John Martin:

We had a recovery team going on, recovery team work. I remember one of the first things I did was have the recovery team come out. No, the first thing I did I think I had a group of bureaucrats from D.C. come out and look at the program. They'd get on the boat, and I was kind of criticized by the staff about that because I'm taking the boat away from the important work and showing these guys. All the sudden we started getting a little bit more money after I did that. And I brought the team out and let them see what the hell was actually going on on the ground, because then when you talk to them they know what you're talking about. And some of the people that had been out there working really weren't into trying to keep the bureaucrats happy didn't quite understand that, but it's a common thing now for us to have all kinds of people in that boat, you know.

But anyway with the goose, Vernon's got that program pretty well going at the time; he was the leader for the recovery team. And at that time we were really doing more of the study on **Buldir Island**. And I think it was just starting to try to transplant some birds --- I think the person was, I came up in '76, but I think the first was in '74 where they moved some birds over to Agattu Island. And they thought they killed all of the foxes off, well the story was so and I think it was Vern who mentioned it, he said, "We started to unload these geese on Agattu and here's a fox sitting there licking his chops on the beach!" They hadn't killed them all off yet, they thought Bob Jones had gotten them all. And so they went back and started doing that. And I remember they finished up Agattu in '76 or '77, I'd been here and they'd cleaned off Alaid-Nitzki and so forth. And they were just starting to put a propagation center on Amchitka Island, which we had all of these facilities left over from the Atomic Energy Commission from when they were doing the bomb blasting out there, and they thought they had all this free fuel in the fuel tanks,

thought it was going to be a real cheap operation. Well, in the end it doesn't turn out to being that way. But anyway, so we started raising geese out there, and I remember I picked up eggs from **Buldir** to take them to Amchitka and Forrest Lee, I don't know if you've interviewed him yet?

John Cornely:

I haven't, but he's on the list.

John Martin:

Oh he'd better be, yeah! You'd better be quick too I think.

John Cornely:

Yeah, I know, yeah.

John Martin:

He's up there now.

John Cornely:

It's a little hard getting around, but he's up there and we need to get up there and talk to him.

John Martin:

He was out Amchitka. And this was the, I think this might have been the first batch of eggs that were taken to Amchitka. And the damned things were star-pipped; they were a little further along than we thought. And I was sweating bullets, you know, on that damned Aleutian Tern, and we were keeping them, I'd keep checking the temperature to make sure they didn't get too hot or too cold, moved them close to the engine or farther away from the engine. And the communications weren't very good, we were in 9-foot seas and I was sicker than a dog. And someone said, they came down and looked at me, I was lying in bed and my eyes were this big around, you know, just like I couldn't sleep! Well, we got them there before they hatched, that was good. And then we started that program, trying to raise the geese out there. Then the cost started escalating, we didn't have as much fuel as we thought we were going to have to have and we had to pump, take fuel out there. And then the island syndrome came along: you got people, really good friends and then there's only four of them on the entire island, and it doesn't take them long before they're at each other, you know, and there was all kinds of personnel problems going on. But we kept it going and started transplanting those young birds, and we'd capture adults to release with them with the idea they'd be guide birds. And it, I don't know how many years we did that to be honest, Vern can tell you that tonight, but we finally started looking at the results and it appeared at that time that we got a lot better results with all wild birds than we were with just with the ones we hand-reared and we let them go. And I'm not sure if that's true now, if we can go back and look that we've had some more time to look at it. But that coupled with the cost, we decided we'd shut down Amchitka and then we'd just capture family groups with adults and release those, that's what we started doing. So that was a major program was getting the geese to nest on the other islands. And then we continued with the fox eradication. And we branched away

from looking just at the goose islands, we started branching away and circumnavigating all of our islands to see what birds we had where, just doing some basic, actually basic reconnaissance. That was really done by Palmer Sekora during the Wilderness Study years. So then we came back later to redo it. And so those were the main projects we had going on at that time.

John Cornely:

I haven't really thought this before, but on islands where there were other birds, seabirds or whatever, nesting besides geese or before putting this out there, the fox control had a lot of benefits to a variety of nesting birds out there.

John Martin:

Oh all of them, yeah. It's unbelievable what's happened. Vern's got some stuff he can show you data on that but, you know, a lot of gulls increased of course. But the nesting eider's on the beaches, puffins and all the seabirds increased.

And so we just kept killing foxes, and when I got here that was one of our major problems, was continue killing foxes. And we were also looking, trying to get 1080. And we kept looking at that and playing with it, and I think we had a study where we, I think we killed them all off on Kiska, which is a large island, or most of them anyway. And I finally decided that, you know, for the millions of dollars we had to spend to get authorized use 1080, we could just go out and just send trappers out there and just kill them, shoot every damned one of them, just roll them over. So our program kind of changed and we started doing that, and we started attacking the larger islands and got another biologist onboard who had a lot of experience in predator control and using chemicals, and so we started making that move.

And then the other thing that started happening, this was after we're back in Homer, this is when I was stationed in Homer was the move on rats. And I think what really brought that about was the fear of rats getting established in the Pribilof's. And I remember the first thing we did was we got a \$15,000.00 challenge grant, and we used a native corporation or the natives out on the Pribilof's as part of the challenge and had them check the traps and so forth. We started keeping traps out there and it got to where actually when later when I was negotiating with the Aleuts about taking over Adak, they wanted us to stay and keep the rats off. They said, "Well, you guys got to stay and keep the rats off of them." And I said, "Well, now that's going to be your job now," you know.

John Cornely:

Well, did the rats, had the rats ever made it to the Pribilof's?

John Martin:

I don't think so, I think they trapped one or two maybe but I haven't kept on it, I don't know. That's one thing, when I retired I didn't want to hang around the flagpole and, you know, I live here in town but the last thing the new manager needs is me coming around, you know. I do too much already just talking fishing with some of the guys and plan fishing trips or something like that or... I do have some business occasionally, coming

and talking to them. When I retired the first thing I did was become the Alaskan Representative for the Refuge Association, so that kind of kept me in the refuge business a little bit. I needed out, I mean worked 33 years in refuge, how you just couldn't turn it off. I knew I had to keep away from this office as much as I could.

John Cornely:

Are you still doing the Refuge Association?

John Martin:

Yep, yeah, I'm on the board of directors and the Regional Rep. For four years I was the Vice President for Blue Goose Alliance. Blue Goose Alliance is trying to get refuges pulled away from Fish and Wildlife Service and made its own agency so it would be equivalent to Park Service or any other of the National Land Managing Agencies. And so I kind of kept my hand in through those two agencies, or NGO's I should say. Or certainly one NGO and one bunch of radical refuge managers! I was just talking to, oh, who's the new chief of refuges?

John Cornely:

Oh, oh I know who you are talking about, Geoff Haskett.

John Martin:

Haskett; I just talked to him and he stopped in at the meeting, their last Blue Goose meeting, and he characterized, "Some of those guys are a bunch of mean old refuge managers."

John Cornely:

Well they were meeting at the Retiree Association met in Albuquerque, and we had a Heritage Committee one face-to-face meeting in conjunction with that. And the Alliance was meeting in a room and some of those are mean old refuge managers but we need 'em.

John Martin:

Yeah. But anyway, I was glad to see Geoff go the meeting. My feeling was a lot of the guys were trying to be secretive and all this stuff and I didn't like that, I thought hell, I said, "They know what we want and what we want to do." And so they know as much as probably a better idea of what we should than we do. And so, you know, there's no sense in being secretive but they kept it pretty secret and stuff. I dropped --- my father died, so I ended up with some other responsibilities after my vice presidency, I was vice president for two years of that, then I kind of dropped that for a year, and want to get back into it here pretty quick. But that's another thing I believe is the refuges need the recognition of being their own agency.

Well you asked people like I was lucky on this refuge I had a lot of good people around me. And, you know, after ANILCA got started and all the refuges were up and running, it seemed like all these refuges had people from the Maritime Refuge, or the old Aleutian

Islands Refuge at that time, you know. Tom Early was the manager at Kenai Refuge; Kent Hall was the manager of Selawik and Alaska Peninsula; Glenn Elison was the manager of **Arctic and Alaska Peninsula** So we just had lots of people that went on and became refuge managers. Mike Spindler is a biologist working for us and he's managing refuges now, too. It was kind of like the old Aleutian Island's unit, it became a breeding ground for all the future refuge managers. And that was kind of neat I thought, I really like enjoyed that. And it was just like a big family almost at times. And I imagine you've got the same thing down in the lower 48, where certain refuges kind of are a breeding ground for the managers and so forth. Probably just because we had a large staff and so they to get to come around.

John Cornely:

And some of it, but it also speaks to the, I think, the managers that are there for awhile that are trying to mentor people. I mean that's got to be why these people end up in these other jobs because somebody said, "Hey, we know that people from this field station are turning the way and they're prepared to take on new responsibilities and such."

John Martin:

And the other thing is if you've got, if it's a refuge and you get the powers to be to come out in the field and see these people at work too, that really helps a lot I think, especially in Alaska where everything was so far apart. And then you talk about other people and you talk about mentoring, I guess I'd look at Bob Fields was my mentor for a long time, you know, I only worked for him as a summer student, that's all I've ever, my only association with him but I always looked on him and think, well, what Bob would do... And so that was really great. And then, you know, I got to work with Mazzoni, didn't ever work for him directly but got to know him quite a bit, so. He was one of the old time managers and so forth, so he was...

John Cornely:

What I found, because he was my first boss, and a lot of people don't say real bad things about him but they don't say real good things about him, and I don't know of anybody else necessarily that would have hired me. I was just coming out of school. But he had a different view, he wanted somebody with a little bit of research background that could deal with the research people that came out there. And I had a fire ecology background too and he looked at that. But looking back on it, I would have never gotten that job if almost anybody else had been the refuge manager. And through the years I've watched some of the people would say, "Ah, he didn't know what he was doing." But you look at the people, **Malheur** was another one of those places, and he was there and even when **John Scharf** was there. We went all over the place and everywhere **Malheur** alums went they did well. He always supported a strong biological problem and trying to make decisions based on that instead of like when I got to Region 6, why we had almost no refuge biologists and I said, "How can you, how can you manage this way?" I mean we had a lot of good people but we, we needed some more help.

John Martin:

That's one thing; we had a lot of biologists on this refuge. We ended up, I think we had four or five biologist and a supervisory biologist, you know, and the staff here and stuff. So I spent a lot of time working on the I & R stuff and that upset, you know, I didn't realize it but when Vern came on he said, you know, "The guys don't think you give a damn about biology." I said, "Why don't you look at the staff?" I said, "You know, we've got one ORP on this whole refuge and six biologists or seven biologists ." So I started to sit down in some more of the meetings and stuff, you know. It's just how you look at things differently, you know. I spent my time where where we were weak I thought!

John Cornely:

Well you know there are other kinds of problems but most of the problems are communications problems...

John Martin:

Yes, exactly. And about Mazzoni, I know that there's a lot of people that didn't like him. I liked him, I never had to work for him. But then again, I saw him at work and he was an aggressive manager and I kind of liked that. I mean he'd be in the regional office there and they wanted some things to be done and he was ARD or something. He'd say, "Yeah, we can do that, we'll do that and we'll do that." And the later he comes back and he'd say, "Well here's how much money I'm going to need, and we'll get that done for you." But I liked Joe. And I don't how many more, you know, Mazzoni and Fields and... Al Trout was another one that seemed to be really a pretty aggressive manager. I just met him; I was really impressed with him. I was impressed with his staff too. You know, Al had the same kind of attitude I did on management in that, you know, when there's a lot of turmoil and chaos going on in the organization, you can really make hay. They can't catch up to you.

John Cornely:

No, and you're kind of staying under the radar screen and take advantage of what's going on.

John Martin:

That's right, that's right, yeah. And let me see, you were also talking about some other issues. There's one that came up towards the end of my career and I don't know if it's real or not, but that was contaminants, and we ran into some issues with contaminants.

SIDE ONE TAPE ENDS

SIDE TWO:

John Martin:

...Jim Estes, you know Jim?

John Cornely:
I know who he is.

John Martin:

Okay, well he was doing some Sea Otter research, and he was checking contaminants on sea otters in California. So he got some dead otters from up here as a control sample, I think from Adak. They had higher contaminants than the California ones did. And so that started a whole new thing with this contaminants issue and with the military and the Corp of Engineers doing the clean up of the old military sites and so forth. And I remember when I was working with the Navy and I said, "You guys, you know, you can do this work right here on your base here and do your contaminant studies and so forth, see what effect it's had." But I said, "It doesn't mean anything. You want to know what's happening here compared to the other parts on the refuge." And we started, and so we were able to get research money from the Navy that stretched out beyond, and proved the point it wasn't, you know, it wasn't just Adak that had the problem so it wasn't necessarily a Navy problem. But they bought off on the funding of it, and that was good I thought. And so that was kind of a partnership that worked pretty good.

And then, you know, there were more contaminants issues; we had atomic bombs that went out on Amchitka, so there's been a lot of work on looking for radioactivity and so forth. Nothing's happened there but we were able to use that money to get some things accomplished. And also there was a lot of contaminants, non-radioactive contaminants, just from the operation to the drilling and that kind of thing out there, some of it got cleaned up.

One thing we had to watch was that the cure wasn't worse than the original problem. We had one where we had some oil leaks at the Kiriloff docks, and they said, "Well, it could be anywhere, we'll have to dig all this up?" And I said, "Well that's going to be a bigger problem than the occasional sheen being out in the harbor, let's not do that." But the contaminants issue was something that kind of caught me off guard, and I still don't think contaminants cause any problems population-wise. But we do have problems in the eagles and so forth out there, higher levels of PCP I think the farther west you went, I think that's probably from Asia. And I don't know if that's still true or not.

John Cornely:

Just before you got here I was talking to Jack Lentfer and he was talking about PCP's and other contaminant levels in polar bears, which was a big surprise and that he wasn't sure to this day, I don't think anybody is just like you say, well you don't really know where it's coming from but it doesn't seem to be a point source or not just one anyway, but I mean somebody that's spent some time up here but mostly on the Copper River Delta working with the dusky Canada geese like, I never imagined the PCP's in polar bears..

John Martin:

Yeah, well you know it's probably general fallout, if that's the term to use, it does get concentrated to higher latitudes, be it north or south, and I think that's what we're seeing. And trying to figure out, you know, whether some of this might be coming from out, you

know, what the transport is and so forth. I know Jim's got some good ideas or interesting ideas with the sea otter decline. And a lot of interesting stuff going on out in the Bering Sea right now. And I think we've got enough data on a lot of the seabird species and the other thing we did when I said we --- when I was out at Adak, we started repeating the general reconnaissance. Well, when we got to Homer and we got staffed up good we started looking permanent monitoring points, which is the most important thing we could probably do. And I don't if they ever got the complete funding to do all of them but with the oil spill and so forth we were able to write down money for awhile on certain areas for annual monitoring, or population monitoring and so forth.

And another interesting thing was the oil spill; you know when it first happened and it was in the Prince William Sound, somebody said, "Well you have contaminants on the refuge?" "No" I said, "We don't have any in Prince William Sound." And I remember I was in the regional office on a Friday, my wife and I were going skiing at Alyeska that weekend. And they were talking about, you know, "Well, we're probably going to send someone in D.C. on this." And I said, "Well, I know Fish and Wildlife Service will send someone who's never even been to Prince William Sound, you better pick the right person for that job, you know." And we were skiing, there's a big sign at the bottom of the ski lift, "John Martin call Paul Schmidt." I thought, "What the hell is about?" I called, "Well, we want you to go in D.C. and be an assistant to the director for a little bit on this oil spill." And I said, "Hell" I said, "I've never even been to Prince William Sound." Well they flew me over! Oh, I had no idea what I was doing, but then oil started going out of the Sound and broke loose and went out on some of the refuge islands and stuff. And then I can get ---- I knew who to call and knew where to get information and so forth. But they told me I'd be there 6 of weeks, and boy I made sure I didn't stay one day longer. And so that was an interesting experience. It got a little heavy too; I'll be honest with you. I thought well maybe being in D.C. may not be so bad because, you know, I was in there and I was at those hearings where you saw all the NBC and CBS correspondents standing outside the room. And I actually got to Senator Stevens ask the head of Exxon why he didn't commit hari kari over this! Because Stevens was madder than hell because of what it did to the opportunity to have drilling up on the Artic, you know, he knew that just set it back so many years.

But I was luck I got to spend all my time in the field and go as high as I could go in the field, you know, so. I really enjoyed it.

John Cornely:
Great.

John Martin:

We were running fox eradication program and, you know, we were always worried about environmentalist or the animal right's people jumping all over our case and so we tried to keep it low key. And I was just in here the other day and the biologist that works on their eradication program said he came across some old correspondence of mine and that reminded me what happened. We had a group from California, I think it was from California that called me up and said, "Well, why are you killing these animals? Why

don't you sterilize them instead?" And I tried to explain well it really wasn't very practical and I was getting nowhere with them, I could see that. And I thought, "Well, I've got to turn this around." And I said, "Well" I said, "You know, if you guys really feel that's the way to go, I'll give you a special use permit and I'll give you an --- and you can go to an island and you can do the work on it. And, you know, let me know how you, how you're going to get out there and so forth, and what dates you need to be out there and I'll give you a special use permit. And what methods and chemicals are you going to use, etcetera. We'll give you a special use permit and you can test it and you might, you know, you may find out something that's really useful for us." I gave him the permit and we never heard a word back from them! Or maybe they never even got the permit, I can't remember, but I remember that, anyway that cured the problem for me. And I forgot all about that until the other day when...

John Cornely,
The head on approach!

John Martin:

Yeah, yeah. So, but we were really lucky, we never had a lot of flack on any of our eradication programs. And most of them like the Sierra Club and so forth, I'd go in and brief them and they'd say, "Well, we know they're introduced animals and we can't publicly support you, but we're not going to do anything, and that was much of their attitude. Although we did get an award from the local Audubon for removing cattle from some of the islands, I remember that night. I couldn't believe, you know, I thought, "Boy, here we're getting an award for moving cattle." You know, for all the hassle we had with it and the problems we had, I couldn't believe someone would actually give us an award (unclear), and that was nice.

John Cornely:

Well how did the cattle get on these islands in the first place?

John Martin:

Oh, he was going to become a millionaire and be a rancher, and see all this tall grass and he put cattle on there. This was before the islands were refuge islands and they were managed by BLM, of course BLM thought that would be a good deal. And the only way anyone really made any money off them is they'd sell the whole ranch to someone, get the down payment and then the guy would go out and find out what he's got! There was no way to get the cattle to market and that they're not in very good shape, etcetera. So he'd back out but the guy had the down payment and that was it! I think that was the only way they really made money off it. I mean more stories about those cattle islands out there; Simeonof Island, there was a guy and his wife were out there taking care of the cattle, and the guy went and took a boat to another island, I guess Sand Point or something, to get supplies and never came back. And when someone else came by, the woman was down to eating; the wife was down just to, had peanut butter left and was all she was eating, so crazy.

The first office we had out there when I was out at Adak was one Vern got established out there, and that's old trailers they had brought in from Amchitka. Well we had one Echo building behind the office that they kept goose food in to ship out to Amchitka. So I remember that brought the rats, a lot rats on Adak. And I remember one time Kent Hollis at his desk, he always kept cookies in one drawer, he pulled his drawer open one time that had the cookies in it and a rat jumped out and went running around! Another time we heard our clerk scream from the restroom, she screamed, "Come, help, help, help!" She was standing on top of the toilet; a rat had run over her feet while she was sitting on the damned stool! And another time I decided I'm going to take care of these rats, and I knew they were in the goose food over there. So I remember I went and I got my 357 and loaded up with shot, loaded up some shot cartridges and put earmuffs and goggles on and went in there and started shooting rats! And so under BLHP I decided we needed a new office out there!

John Cornely:
Because the old office was ratted!

END

Key Words: biography, history, employee, refuges, manager, waterfowl, seabirds, counts, geese predation control, public relationships, Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge, Bob Fields, Valentine National Wildlife Refuge, Ned Peabody, Crosby Wetland Management District, Omer Swenson, Lake Zahl National Wildlife Refuge, Devil's Lake, Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Montana, Wetlands Program, Tiglax research vessel, Adak, AK, Vernon Byrd, biologist, Izembek National Wildlife Refuge, Adak Naval Base, Shemya Air Force Base, Larry Calvert refuge supervisor, Alaid Island, Kent Hall, Attu Coast Guard Station, Don Redfearn, Alaska Native Lands Claim Act, Alaska National Interests Land Conservation Act (ANILCA), Al Trout, Larry Shanks, Kachemak Bay Research Reserve, NOAA, Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge Center, CCP (Comprehensive Conservation Plan), Senator Ted Stevens, Aleutian Tern, Sea Lion Committee Endangered Species team, Bering Sea, Alaid-Nitzki Island, Pribilof Islands, Rat Eradication Program, John Rogers, Geoff Haskett, Chief of Refuges, Agattu Island, Tetlin, AK, Kenai, AK, Kirwin National Wildlife Refuge, pothole country, Migratory Bird Treaty, Amchitka Island, Atomic Energy Commission, Forrest Lee, Palmer Sekora, Wilderness Study, Kiska, 1080 authorization, Refuge Association, Blue Goose Alliance, Chief of Refuges Geoffrey Haskett, Tom Early, Kent Hall, Glenn Elison, Mike Spindler, Joe Mazzone, Al Trout, Jim Estes, contaminant research, Jack Lentfer, sea otter CR research, PCP contaminant, Copper River Delta, dusky Canada geese, Prince William Sound, oil spill,