

Oral History Cover Sheet

Name: Carl Melberg

Date of Interview: July 10, 2015

Location of Interview: Mashpee, MA

Interviewer: Christine O'Neill

Brief Summary of Interview: Carl Melberg was a Land Acquisition Planner for the Fish and Wildlife Service at the Regional Office in Hadley, Massachusetts at the time of the establishment of the Mashpee National Wildlife Refuge. He explains the role that he and the Fish and Wildlife Service played in helping establish the refuge. He also discusses Ed Moses, the first refuge manager at Mashpee, and how even though he was an old school manger he had the “foresight to buy into this whole idea of a partnership refuge.” He also feels getting perspectives from the different parties involved will help piece everything.

CARL: So my relationship with Mashpee, I was working at the Regional office in Hadley and a proposal came in for Mashpee National Wildlife Refuge. It came in from the town of Mashpee and at first when it came in it wasn't taken very seriously because it was considered a proposal coming in from a municipality, and typical we think when that comes in that its political motivated and not necessarily habitat driven. So it wasn't taken all that seriously and Fish and Wildlife Service was focusing elsewhere at the time. And so it was kind of shelved to be honest with you, it was just put on a shelf and nothing really happened to it for several months, maybe six months. And at the same time, we were focusing on a piece of land over in Sippewissett, on the Sippewissett Marsh in Falmouth. And that particular project was moving through our process, which was, like any government agency we have all kinds of different processes. And in order to even move a project to the point that we need to think about it as an official project, that has to go through things called Preliminary Project Proposals, they call them PPP's and that has to get approved by our Washington office in order for us to go into what they call a further study of the project. So that Sippewissett project had already got one of these Preliminary Project Proposal approvals by Washington and was moving into the planning phase, which was the environmental assessment.

CHRISTINE: Now this piece of property was destined to become part of some other national refuge or it was just—?

CARL: It was becoming its own refuge; it was going to be called Sippewissett Marshes National Wildlife Refuge.

CHRISTINE: Oh, okay. And do you remember what year this was in?

CARL: That was in 1993, '94.

CHRISTINE: Perfect, yeah.

CARL: So that was moving forward, and was actually moving down the road to get funded to basically buy the land that would establish that particular refuge. So at the same time, when this Mashpee proposal came in, it sat there for a while, and then all a sudden we starting getting calls from Congressman Studds' staff and Mark Forrest was working for Studds at the time. And so because we were starting to get congressional calls and Studds was the Chairman of the Merchant Marines and Fisheries Committee at the time; that committee no longer exists. But at that time he was the Chairman of that committee, which was a fairly powerful committee.

CHRISTINE: I'm sorry, what was it?

CARL: Merchant Marines and Fisheries Committee of the House.

CHRISTINE: Got it.

CARL: And a fairly powerful committee because they oversaw NOAA and all the new fisheries and all that stuff as well as National Park Service and Fish and Wildlife Service. So we started getting calls from Studds' office that we should take more of a look at this Mashpee proposal. Because it was all built around, the whole proposal was

built around the protection of Waquoit Bay, that was the bottom line behind it, is that it was built around protection of Waquoit Bay, which Waquoit Bay at that time was going through; had a lot of attention placed on it because they had established the Estuary Research Reserve and they were concerned about the phosphates and different things getting into the bay. So it was all built around that basically, watershed protection. So we were told we needed to take a look at it, so I was assigned to the project. And there was another co-worker of mine that was also assigned, so two of us were basically working on it. I originally started working on and then the second person came on. But basically I came down and started meeting with the town finding out more about the project. And then we had reached a point that we said, "You know this is kind of an interesting project, maybe it's worth us taking a look." So I started putting together some of the pieces that we needed and started briefing in house, in our regional office, which we needed to have their approval to move the project forward. And then I developed this preliminary project proposal, this PPP document, which is internal, goes down to Washington, but that's the document that we need to get approved to move forward. So I developed that proposal and all along it's just continually was getting questioned about why are we focusing down here, what's the value to Fish and Wildlife Service on this piece of property. And to be honest with you, we were having a hard time coming up with sufficient values.

CHRISTINE: Well why did you want to pursue the project then?

CARL: Because what we started to see was that there was a partnership down here that it was more than just like one piece of land that the Fish and Wildlife Service might be interested in; the actual proposal included lands owned by the towns of Mashpee and Falmouth, and they kind of laid out these different groups. So that kind of drew our attention because now all of a sudden it turns from this one little parcel, it turned into a fairly large acreage. So that's how I drew up this proposal and started then briefing; this was totally foreign to Fish and Wildlife Service to work in a collaborative partnership; we typically work on our own [Agency]. So it took a lot of work on my part to try and get buy in on this. But I put that proposal together, sent it down, got all the approvals I needed at our Regional office, sent it down to Washington and we got their approval; the Director's sign off for us to move forward. So that was a huge hurdle to get over and then we started to develop the environmental assessment. So now we're actually on the road to putting together what we call a NEPA document, environmental assessment. And it includes all our public involvement, so we were actually going out to the public with this. So we put together this environmental assessment, and within that then you start to layout, in the environmental assessment, you lay out everything, all the objectives of the project, why we're involved, what kind of strategies we have, what are the important biological resources. And as we started to get into it a little bit, we started to see that there were some important biological resources down here.

CHRISTINE: When you say "we," do you mean you and the other person

working on the project, or do you mean Tom?

CARL: Myself; I say we, I'm taking about kind of collaborative of the Fish and Wildlife Service, when I say "we."

CHRISTINE: Did you work with Tom at all on this, because I know—

CARL: Tom?

CHRISTINE: Tom Fudala.

CARL: Yes, and Tom and George Costa.

CHRISTINE: Right.

CARL: Basically put together the initial proposal, so Tom was very involved. And he basically worked for George Costa and put all the, as the planner, put all the maps together in the proposal and identified the lands, so Tom was very involved. He actually did a lot of work for us that we typically would have to do on our own. Yes, so when they gave us this whole package, it was in pretty good shape. So we used that plan that they submitted to work on this environmental assessment. And we did start to find out that there were important resources down here that we should be concerned about, including the sea-run brook trout, because the proposal included several different streams, waterways, including the Quashnet and the Child's River.

CHRISTINE: Did you work with Trout Unlimited at all?

CARL: We didn't work a lot—

[end of first taping event]

CARL: So we had left off that we were gathering information of finding out that there were indeed resources that we'd be concerned about including the trout.

And that are fairly good size wetland areas that were in the piece of land; there was a piece of land that was identified that Fish and Wildlife Service would try to purchase, so everything was sort of built around this piece of land.

CHRISTINE: Do you remember what it was called?

CARL: I can't remember the name, but Tom would know.

CHRISTINE: Was it Bufflehead Bay?

CARL: Yeah, Bufflehead Bay, that's what it was. So it was the Bufflehead Bay parcel, so that was the focus of the refuge of the Fish and Wildlife Service, what they needed for us to purchase and that was going to be the core part of the refuge. And then all these other partner lands would be kind of identified around it. So basically that's what our involvement was as far as identifying resources with enough between the wetland and the fish, migratory birds; I could put enough together, all those are interests of the Fish and Wildlife Service, there are all different authorizations that we have to work on, so it was enough to get us involved. And then myself, and this other person started to put together the environmental assessment, and part of that is once you get to a certain stage, there's a public involvement part. And you need to go out to the public, which means you go out for minimum 45 days and that's tied into the; this is all part of NEPA. And anytime a federal agency does a federal action, or what they consider to be a

major federal action, like starting a national wildlife refuge, they have to go out, following NEPA guidelines and that includes public involvement. So we had to develop a mailing list of people that had an interest to the project, we had to keep them involved through newsletters as to where we were in the process, then we had a public meeting.

CHRISTINE: Just one?

CARL: We had one public meeting, or no we had two; we had one in Falmouth and one in Mashpee, we had two.

CHRISTINE: Well attended?

CARL: Yeah, we had probably 50; a well-attended meeting for us is 50 people believe it or not.

CHRISTINE: Sure, no, that's good. Both times around the same?

CARL: Yeah, about the same. So we considered that a well-attended meeting. And at that meeting, we basically laid out our proposal to the public and then we had a comment period, which extended 45 days and we accepted comments. And the majority of the comments, I can't remember how many we got in, but a majority of them were very supportive of Fish and Wildlife Service involvement. We had good support from, obviously the local congressman and local representatives, so everything was favorable to that point, which is also a good sign that keeps us moving. The town of Mashpee was very supportive as was the town of Falmouth. Mashpee at the time had the most involvement because they had the most land identified within the project. So we kept on moving down that road.

During the 45 day comment period, then we started to meet with the different partners, because we knew right away that this, the amount of land that was identified was only like 300 plus acres. And we typically, or we could start refuges with 1 acre of land but we try to get the most bang for the buck as possible. So we wanted this to be a partnership refuge, which was unusual for Fish and Wildlife, and it was a very difficult concept for people to understand or buy into. And because the way this partnership, with the way we had set-up in the environmental assessment, because part of the environmental assessment is you lay out the management of the refuge. And the way we had set it up is that it would be a partnership refuge managed by all the partners. And we had identified a management committee and that would be established in different ways, and that it just wouldn't be one identity kind of telling everybody else how this was going to be managed. It would be managed through group dynamics.

CHRISTINE: Were you on the management committee?

CARL: Well we never established a management, even though we wrote it up in the environmental assessment, it never got established.

CHRISTINE: Got it.

CARL: So it's in the original environmental assessment is to how the refuge would work. So then we started to meet with the different partners and the toughest partner that we wound up having to get by into was the Wampanoag's. And fortunately we had Chuckie Green, he was involved; I'm

not sure if he was a Selectman at the time or he had just stepped down as a Selectman with Mashpee. But George knew him, George Costa, and brought Chuckie on board. And Chuckie had us attend a meeting at the meeting house and it was a very confrontational meeting. There was just a lot of Wampanoag's, there was a lot of mistrust in federal government, and a lot actually fairly loud vocal responses from some of the tribe members. And Chuckie, really was able to, at that meeting, basically calm the tribe down, explain the process a little bit more, explain that that they could trust the Fish and Wildlife Service. And really got them, at that point, to vote to support the project that night, which was an amazing feat that he did. So I have to give Chuckie a tremendous amount of credit to do that. So it was a big step getting the tribe involved, because they're a federal partner of ours, being federally recognized and they're important for us.

CHRISTINE: Did John Peters, did he speak at all at that meeting? Do you know who I'm talking about?

CARL: Yeah. Is that Slow Turtle?

CHRISTINE: Yeah, I think so, the medicine man.

CARL: Yeah. So John wasn't at that meeting because he worked out of Boston, and he was not at that meeting. He was kind of the head guy in Boston for the, he was the head of Tribal something for the state, so he was not at that meeting. He did wind up speaking at our dedication, Slow Turtle. So the other interesting part about this, and this is all process of course because that's what we do. The manager of the refuge,

Fish and Wildlife Service, who managed Great Meadows, which this was going to be part of, he was a very old school manager. I have to give that guy a lot of credit, his name was Ed Moses.

CHRISTINE: Oh yeah, I might be able to interview him.

CARL: Can you find him?

CHRISTINE: I think he's in New Hampshire now.

CARL: He's in New Hampshire. Can you track him down?

CHRISTINE: We're working on it. I think Mark Forrest said he was going to try to get me in touch with him, so we'll see.

CARL: If you could track him down, that would be great.

CHRISTINE: Yeah, definitely.

CARL: So he's up there in years, but he's still got a good head on his shoulders. But Ed was the youngest refuge manager ever to come into Fish and Wildlife Service. He was a tough, tough, tough, manager; he was really old school. And he bought into, the interesting part about this, is that he had the foresight to buy into this whole idea of a partnership refuge, which was so new to Fish and Wildlife Service. And he dove in on all fours and totally supported it. And if he hadn't supported it at the time, it probably wouldn't have gone anywhere, so I got to give Ed a lot of credit. So if you could interview Ed that would be great.

CHRISTINE: Do you know exactly what his title was again?

CARL: He was the Complex Refuge Manager.

CHRISTINE: So does that mean he managed refuges in the area?

CARL: Eastern Massachusetts National Wildlife Refuge Complex manager, so he managed eight refuges including the Great Meadows, ones up in Sudbury, to Nantucket, Monomoy, down here, Massasoit in Plymouth; there's eight different refuges. So when this project came about it automatically fell into his hands because he was already managing refuges down the Cape.

CHRISTINE: Got it, okay, thank you.

CARL: So he, for an old school manager, had like all this foresight and was in support of the project, which was tremendous. So he was at that meeting with the Native Americans and he was at every other meeting that we had. So we met with all these different partners to make sure everybody was on board and supported. So we made it through, so basically we made it through this environmental assessment process fairly positively with a lot of support from folks. And now we're at the point we had this document that had gone through the whole, what we considered our NEPA process, and now we needed to get it signed off by our Director, who basically if you can get, after you've gone through this process, then you do, part of the environmental assessment is what they call a FONSI, it's a Finding of No Significant Impact. And you're finding of no significant impact means that there were no issues with the

project, with the proposal, there was good support. And now because you had that, then the Director could sign that document and when he signs that, that basically gives Fish and Wildlife Service approval to establish the refuge and to look at now buying the first piece of land. So a refuge is not established until we actually own a piece of land.

CHRISTINE: Got it.

CARL: So we had this document approved, we had the land identified, which was this Bufflehead Bay; the problem we had now was we didn't have any money. So we, I'm going to flip back to that Sippewissett project.

CHRISTINE: Sure.

CARL: So, the Sippewissett project was moving along at the same time this project was, so we had these two projects kind of moving side by side. Our Chief of Realty in the regional office, for some reason, I don't know if it was political or he started getting uncomfortable with the Sippewissett project, but he took, there was money; the Sippewissett project had earmarked money associated with it, like \$400,000. So the Chief of Realty, like weeks before this Sippewissett parcel is supposed to close, pulled the plug on all that money for Sippewissett and he moved it over to Mashpee.

CHRISTINE: Wow. Did he need to be convinced of that or he was kind of following the project?

CARL: I think he was following the project, because he saw that this project had momentum, but I also think he was getting a little bit, he didn't like the way

the Sippewissett project was moving and there was some issue with the land owner; the land owner on that side, name was Bockman. And there was some kind of, something going on with the negotiations they weren't comfortable with.

CHRISTINE: Do you remember the name of the Chief of Realty?

CARL: Yeah, Tony Léger, LEGER and there's an accent over the first "e".

CHRISTINE: Awesome, thank you.

CARL: So he basically pulled the plug on that money, moved over to Mashpee, so now Mashpee had the money, had the parcel, had the document approved, so we brought in the Trust for Public Land. Typical we use third parties sometimes to negotiate for us, because Fish and Wildlife Service has to pay whatever the appraised value is of a piece of land. We cannot pay any more, we cannot pay less, we have to pay what the appraised value is. So sometimes we'll bring a third partner in because a third partner can, they have the ability to negotiate with the land owner, and then they transfer the land to us after the deal's been done.

CHRISTINE: I got it, okay.

CARL: So we brought in the Trust for Public Land because we felt that they could do the deal quicker. And they started dealing, the land owner was; who's the big developer down here? Mashpee Commons and all—

CHRISTINE: New Seabury.

CARL: Yeah, New Seabury, the owner was New Seabury because New Seabury had plans to develop that whole piece.

CHRISTINE: Right.

CARL: So they were able to strike a deal with New Seabury and buy the property. And then they transferred it, well they sold it to Fish and Wildlife Service, we gave them the money we had because evidently the property was valued a lot higher than we had money for, so that's why they brought that third party in. So they were able, because they can do tax credits and different things when you're working with a non-profit like that. So they were able to get the price down and do the deal. So now the Fish and Wildlife Service was totally into this thing; we had everything that we needed to do, we had the property, we had the map identifying the partnership, we had met with the partners.

CHRISTINE: Do you know around time this is?

CARL: '95, late '94 or '95.

CHRISTINE: So the inception hasn't happened yet, like the ceremony and everything?

CARL: No.

CHRISTINE: That's April of '96 right?

CARL: Yeah, no, that was '95, wasn't it? Wasn't it April of '95?

CHRISTINE: Let's see.

CARL: I think that was April of '95.

CHRISTINE: Yeah, let's [looking for date], April, yeah, you're right, April of '95. So then if this is late '95, this is after inception.

CARL: So this was, no this was all before so let's say '94, this is going on, the latter part of '94.

CHRISTINE: So this whole process basically took maybe a year and a half.

CARL: Year and a half, yeah. But I know when we acquired this piece of land, it was probably early 1995, when we acquired the property. Because it was, they wanted, they were shooting for this April 19th day to have the dedication ceremony.

CHRISTINE: Right, perfect.

CARL: And I think we had just, like we were racing the clock to get this piece of land tied up, so I think that all happened in very early 1995. Yes, so now we have, everything's all set up and then we needed to have this memorandum of—

CHRISTINE: Understanding?

CARL: MOU. So we developed, as part of the environmental assessment, we developed the MOU. And then the MOU laid out how the refuge, how we saw the refuge being managed and that's where that management committee thing I was telling you about, that was laid out in that MOU, that there be a Management Committee Established. And what the parties could do and what they couldn't do, and how we're all going to work together, and that everybody could pull out of this with 30 days' notice.

CHRISTINE: Right.

CARL: And so basically the only thing holding this whole group together was this MOU. And that was the document that everybody was set up to sign at that ceremony, and that's basically what happened. At that ceremony, everybody signed; all the dignitaries, all the executives from all the different departments signed the MOU. The interesting part about that MOU is that, like I said, it's the only thing holding this whole thing together, any party could pull out within 30 days' notice. And twenty years later, no one has even thought about pulling out, which is amazing to me. And I think that's the story of this whole refuge; this refuge is built, people ask me all the time, even Fish and Wildlife Service to this day has trouble understanding how this works, but it's built on trust. And I think that's how, without getting any deeper into how it all works; I think the trust factor between all the different people have kept it together because there were times during these twenty years where Fish and Wildlife Service was not that involved, we haven't acquired all that much more land. And since those original days, when we put this document together, now this refuge has gained even more importance because we have New England cottontail, which is a—

CHRISTINE: Endangered.

CARL: —it's still a candidate species.

CHRISTINE: Oh, okay.

CARL: It has not been listed yet, as far as I know; it's still a candidate species for listing. But a candidate species

carries a lot of weight with us because when they're a candidate the idea is to try –

CHRISTINE: Yeah, you have the opportunity to save them.

CARL: Before it goes threatened right, that's the idea behind it. So we put a lot of emphasizes on candidate species, and Mashpee has become the hot bed for New England cottontail. To the point that Fish and Wildlife Service, we're trying to develop another refuge region wide just for New England cottontail, which may also identify some additional pieces down here. So that's a big part of this refuge, and we've also found that this refuge has long-eared bats.

CHRISTINE: Oh that's right.

CARL: And they are an endangered species.

CHRISTINE: Yeah, I remember they're talking about having to do prescribed burns and how they had to check the habitat.

CARL: Right, so now we actually can't do anymore prescribed burns down here, until we find out more about the long-eared bats, so that's how important they've become. So our prescribed burning has stopped right now. But that's a big deal, we've found out they're around and we're trying to find out more about them right now; they're a very difficult critter to track and to find out where they are and that kind of thing. So now we've got two additional species and then, this is all part of the huge pitch pine community, which we identify a little bit in the early document but we didn't put as much emphasis's on it now

but the pitch pine community is a very special ecosystem. It's the largest pitch pine scrub oak community north of Jersey that's intact. And pitch pine scrub oak is a lot of the reason that the cottontail is here. So the refuge has actually gained in strength over these twenty years, because there were a lot times within this twenty years that there were thoughts that well maybe we don't need Mashpee, it's small, people are having trouble understanding the partnership, so it's kind of had it's up and downs. But now it seems like it's on very firm ground, and especially with the prescribed burns we've been doing, what they call the urban interface, wild land urban interface.

CHRISTINE: What does that mean?

CARL: That's where you do prescribed burns to remove a lot of the dense vegetation that is close to subdivisions and people's homes, so you're basically taking that fuel away so if there's a fire it doesn't burn over.

CHRISTINE: Isn't there like a name for like what it's called? Like when they do a break in the trees.

CARL: Oh, yeah.

CHRISTINE: Barrier?

CARL: A fire break.

CHRISTINE: Fire break.

CARL: Fire break, where they build like a ten foot swath is that what you mean?

CHRISTINE: Yeah, yeah.

CARL: Yeah. So then we had that ceremony and Congressman Studds was here, all our folks were here, our Director came down, all the state directors were here, it was a big deal.

CHRISTINE: And it was at WBNERR right?

CARL: No, it was at; where was it? Maybe it was at WBNERR.

CHRISTINE: I'm sure I could look that up.

CARL: Look that up. I can't remember if it was at WBNERR or not, thought we had it someplace else. But that was a big deal and a big day for everybody, and since then that Sippewissett has not gone anyway, nothing ever happened to it, still hanging out there as an approved refuge that at some point could become part of Mashpee National Wildlife Refuge because we do have an approved plan for land protection there. So that's kind of in the back of my mind at some point, we're go back and look at that area again. So we've had a lot of interest from other people, because they've seen how well this partnership has worked, that other conservation agencies have come to us that wanted to be part of the refuge. The Trustees of the Reservations, TTOR, has a fairly large piece of land in Mashpee that they would like to be part of the refuge. But again in order for us to do so, what we identify as an environmental assessment was all the land that Tom had put down and that was considered the refuge boundary. So part of the environmental assessment is that you establish, you lay out a boundary and that's what the Director's approving, he's approving lands within that boundary.

CHRISTINE: So you can't get an additional parcel of land?

CARL: So we can't get additional parcels approved unless it goes through another approval process.

CHRISTINE: Okay, got it.

CARL: So we can't add like land that The Trustees own and then add that to the refuge without going through this thing. So what we're hoping is that; I was telling you about his cottontail project. What we're hoping is that, and we've been trying to steer it that direction a little bit, is that cottontail project will identify pieces of land, like The Trustees of Reservations property and other properties adjacent to Mashpee. And if they identify those, they're going through that same environmental assessment process, so that means they'll be able to put those within the boundary of a refuge, and that way those will be approved. Do you follow that?

CHRISTINE: Yeah.

CARL: And that would give us the opportunity to have them come in as a partner, as an additional partner. Because this is all built around a refuge, without Fish and Wildlife Service, without this thing being a national wildlife refuge, it wouldn't be anything. So that was, even though we're just a very small, we just have just 300 plus acres in this thing, because it's a national wildlife refuge that gives a lot of power to it. And that was the whole reason; our higher ups still having an issue in trying to understand how we can only own 300 acres but yet we have 5,000 acres identified as national wildlife refuge.

Like how can you have 5,000 acres, you only own 300.

CHRISTINE: Right.

CARL: So that's a key piece of this, and that's why I said it's all built around the whole trust factor. And it's unusual to have, you know like we have a different part in this having a Native American Tribe involved and the town they were at odds with back many years ago involved and set at the same table and Falmouth. And we have a humane society group basically involved.

CHRISTINE: Orenda.

CARL: Orenda, it's basically a humane society. Although, they're expanded because now they're full-fledged land conservation group.

CHRISTINE: And land trust right?

CARL: Land Trust, but they initially were a humane society.

CHRISTINE: Okay, cool.

CARL: So to have a humane society with Fish and Wildlife Service where we, at refuges we sometimes eliminate other wildlife for other wildlife benefits; we do that. So having a humane society support the Fish and Wildlife Service knowing that we do that at other refuges is huge, I think is huge. And that goes back to that same trust factor.

CHRISTINE: Sure.

CARL: I'll give you an example. Terns nesting on Monomoy, in order to support a solid tern nesting colony, you can't have gulls coming in there being

predators on the eggs, or coyotes, or different things like that. So if you're trying to look at a tern colony that you want to be fully reproductive, and this is certain things you have to do in order to do that; unfortunate to have to do.

CHRISTINE: Yeah. Okay. I think you pretty much hit all my questions. See you didn't need prompted, one question and you got all that. Is there anything else that you want me to look into or mention?

CARL: Well I came from the prospective of how our process worked, right?

CHRISTINE: Uh-huh.

CARL: Because that's probably the most important part of how it got to this point. What else would I like to mention about this?

CHRISTINE: I mean you can feel free to send me email if you have extra thoughts; I'll probably email you asking more question so don't feel like on the spot you have to think of something brilliant to say.

CARL: [Laughing] Yeah, brilliant me, probably not. But yeah, I consider myself lucky that I'm actually still involved in this process after all these years. It's amazing that it's, like I said, that it's all hung on this MOU with 30 days-notice that no one's decided to leave the partnership or not be involved. People come and go as far as attending meetings, but everybody's still on board. We could call anyone of our partners at any time, and people would be fully supportive. And Falmouth has played a much larger role, they've really, they

weren't as much involved early on but since they really have come on as a full fledged partner and want to include a lot of their lands into the partnership and want to be involved, so that's huge for us. So I think we see this refuge, we're at a turning point, it's a good time to celebrate it again. We're at a turning point with the cottontail and the bat, and we're going to be doing the, what we call our Comprehensive Conservation Plan; might as well bring that up too. All refuges within our National Wildlife Refuge System have to do what we call a Comprehensive Conservation Plan. And this was as a result of the Refuge Improvement Act of 1997, which President Clinton signed. And Mashpee still, that's the next plan that we're going to be writing, and we've kind of waited on it a little bit just because of what was going on down here. And that we had Monomoy, one of our other big refuges, Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge, we're doing their plan right and it's taken quite a long time. So timely wise, it's really good because when you do a Comprehensive Conservation Plan, you basically look at the entire, the way the refuge is being managed and you take a hard look at it and say, are we going down the right road, are we doing the right thing, what needs to be changed what should be our new objectives?

CHRISTINE: So it's like an inspection?

CARL: Yeah, it's kind of like you're taking a very holistic view at the refuge and you think public use, you think about maybe what trails need to be developed, how the administration of the refuge is being handled, take a second look at the partnership. Just all in all you take a big broad look at the refuge and you write this document up, which

winds up being an environmental assessment, another one, that will go out to the public, so we'll have public meetings with that. And that will probably be starting within the next year. So timely wise, it's a good thing. So everything seems to be lining up to get that process out of the way.

CHRISTINE: Okay. A couple quick questions. So what exactly was your title when you first got involved?

CARL: I was a Land Acquisition Planner.

CHRISTINE: For the Fish and Wildlife Service?

CARL: Yeah.

CHRISTINE: And that's a federal thing right?

CARL: Yeah.

CHRISTINE: But you said you were in the Hadley Regional Office or something?

CARL: Hadley Regional Office.

CHRISTINE: And the region was eastern Massachusetts?

CARL: The region goes from Maine to Virginia.

CHRISTINE: Oh, wow, okay.

CARL: It's called Region 5.

CHRISTINE: Okay, cool. And then you keep mentioning NEPA; I understand what it is but what does it actually stand for?

CARL: National Environmental Policy Act, in 1972 I think. And that was as a result of federal agencies doing all these things without the public knowing.

CHRISTINE: Right, okay.

CARL: So basically it forced federal agencies to go out and let the public know what we were doing; be kind of open. So a lot happened right around those '70's, late '60's is when the Wilderness Act came in; NEPA came in, Clean Water Act came in, the 70's, or all around the late '60's, early '70's all these environmental acts all came in, so there was a huge change, which wasn't that long ago, I mean if you think about it.

CHRISTINE: Yeah. Okay, cool, this is awesome. So I have plenty of stuff to work with, but as I go on and as I interview other people I'm sure I'll have more questions for you.

CARL: Yeah, yeah, and you're going to get different perspectives from different people, like we're coming in with the federal perspective and Tom came in from the town perspective.

CHRISTINE: Yeah.

CARL: And Mark Forrest is going to come in from his, Studds and how they kind of orchestrated the feds and the town; so he'll come in from that angle. So you are getting a different, a bunch of different; you should have nothing duplicating but you should see a lot of things merging.

CHRISTINE: Oh sure, yeah, definitely.

CARL: And that's kind of where you should be is where that merge is. All the circles combine.

CHRISTINE: Exactly, like a Venn diagram. No, it's awesome. So far I guess I've interviewed three people and I still have three to go.

CARL: Is that what you're seeing, you're seeing different perspectives?

CHRISTINE: Yeah, definitely. Well it's really cool because Christine Gault, she was the Director of WBNERR for many years. So from, like you were saying, the fact that WBNERR was behind it is such a huge deal is her perspective about how WBNERR could help it. And she was kind of saying, "I was also really harried because the last director didn't really do much so I had to do all this programming, and it was just me and a part-time secretary."

CARL: Yeah.

CHRISTINE: "Meanwhile I'll trying to help," so it was very—

CARL: Right, they had just established; she was the first Director of WBNERR.

CHRISTINE: I think there was one right before—

CARL: One before her.

CHRISTINE: —I don't think they did anything, which is why she was so burdened.

CARL: Yeah, Christine was very active and like I said all that focus was on Waquoit Bay; all focused on Waquoit Bay. So that's what the refuge was

originally focused on too and it obviously expanded. So yeah I'm glad we're helpful, sorry it took so long.

CHRISTINE: No, no, no, don't worry about.

CARL: But I wanted to make this trip down today because I could tell that time was moving on. I got to get this done because you're up against the clock.

CHRISTINE: Yeah. I mean I even haven't heard back from Chuckie Green at all so.

CARL: Chuckie, I can try and call him.

CHRISTINE: That'd be awesome. I was going to see if I could get MaryKay Fox to harass him a little bit for me.

CARL: I'll try and call Chuckie, see if he can get back in touch with you.

CHRISTINE: Right, yeah.

CARL: Sometimes he can be hard to get in touch with but I'll see if I can harass him a little bit.

CHRISTINE: I just need an hour of his time, just one hour.

CARL: It won't be long.

CHRISTINE: Exactly.

CARL: Yeah, I'll give him a call for you.

CHRISTINE: Thank you, I appreciate that.

CARL: Tell him he really needs to talk to you because he met with, he met

down here with us a couple of times with Mark Forrest before they hired you.

CHRISTINE: Right. Yeah, so I think everyone really wants to do it but I think it's sort of just like, "it would be nice but I have things on my schedule." Know what I mean.

CARL: You should be able to get Mark pretty soon.

CHRISTINE: Yeah, I spoke with him, he said he's busy but next week, so I'll get there.

CARL: Mark will make the time.

CHRISTINE: Oh yeah.

CARL: He's an interesting guy to talk to.

CHRISTINE: Oh yeah.

CARL: His whole experience with Studds, and I think Mark will also bring into play is our current Director; his name is Dan Ashe in Washington. And at the time that this whole thing was being established, Dan Ashe worked for Studds and he was like Washington person for Studds and Mark was the local guy. So you might see that connection come around.

CHRISTINE: Right. Yeah, very, very incestuous this whole thing, everyone's connected. Yeah so, okay good.

CARL: Cool.