The Oral History of Steven Lester Funderburk

November 13, 2019

Interview conducted by Karen Mayne

Double Tree Hotel

Annapolis, Maryland

Oral History Cover Sheet

Name: Steve Funderburk

Date of Interview: November 13, 2019

Location of Interview: Annapolis, MD

Interviewer: KAREN Mayne

Approximate years worked for Fish and Wildlife Service: 30 years, from 1978 to 2008

Offices and Field Stations Worked; Positions Held: Wildlife Biologist, Office of the Management Authority, International Affairs; Supervisory Wildlife Biologist, Annapolis Field Office, Coastal Program, Division of Ecological Services; Congressional Fellow, U.S. Senate for Sen Paul Sarbanes (1992); Deputy Chief, Division of Bird Habitat Conservation (DBHC), Migratory Bird Program; Chief, Division of Refuge Planning, Region 5; Acting Refuge Supervisor, Southern Zone, Region 5.

Most Important Projects: Helping to guide permit process for recovery of the California condor; writing regulations to prohibit import of invasive Racoon dog; leading efforts within the multi-agency Chesapeake Bay Program to protect and enhance waterfowl, fish passage, and submerged aquatic vegetation via chairmanship of select committees and guiding development of *Habitat Requirements for Chesapeake Bay Living Resources* (1991); initiating a Federal and State effort to eliminate the invasive nutria from the Blackwater NWR; maintaining supervisory oversight of DBHC in its efforts to protect wetlands, migratory waterfowl, and neotropical birds; guiding the development of Comprehensive Conservation Management Plans for NWRs in Region 5.

Colleagues: Fred Bolhwan, Larry LaRochelle, Carol Carroll, Lee Robinson, Bob Batky, Glenn Kinser, Bill Ashe, John Rodgers, George Breakage, Jim Gillette, Ron Kirby, Kathi Bangert, Paul Gertler, KAREN Mayne, Bob Zepp, Doug Forsell, Bob Pennington, Ann Swanson, Peter Bergstrom, Bob Foley, David Smith, Paul Schmidt, Bill Zinni, Seth and Sarah Mott, Ellen Murphy, Lenny Corin, Lynn DeLaughter, Linda Gaumer, Charlie Stek, Joe Dowhan, Brad Knudsen, Kris LaMontagne, Nancy McGarigal, Tony Léger, Ed Pendleton, Walt Quist, Jan Taylor, and many others.

Mentors: Dr. James White, Dr. John Goertz, Dr. Gene Rhodes (Louisiana Tech); Dr. Paul Springer (Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center), Dr. Stan Harris (Humboldt State University), Colonel Clyde McBride, Dr. Glenn Kinser, Bill Ashe, Dr. John Rodgers.

Brief Summary of Interview: Steve was born in Dickenson, California in 1952, moving to Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, New Mexico, and North Dakota as his father moved for his job as an oil and gas geologist. Steve's interest in wildlife started as a child through hunting and fishing with his father, and wildlife photography with his uncle on wetland prairies in North Dakota. Steve received an undergraduate degree in wildlife management from Louisiana Tech University in 1974, and a master's degree in wildlife ecology at Humboldt University, CA in 1976. His master's thesis was on wetland bird use of the Lake Earl coastal lagoon system in northern California.

After graduate school, Steve worked for the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries for a year and a half in its fisheries department, then a short stint with the Corps of Engineers in St. Paul, MN.
Steve started his career with the Service in 1978 as a GS-5 biologist in the International Affairs program of the Washington Office, where he worked on international permits for migratory birds and the import/export of endangered species under CITES. He moved to the Annapolis, MD Ecological Services office in 1985. Steve was part of a small group of scientists hired by Glenn Kinser to start the first coastal estuary program in the U.S. – the Chesapeake Bay Estuary Program. This group was instrumental in getting the EPA-led federal/state partnership to add a living resources component to the Bay-wide restoration plan, which resulted in the guidance document, *Habitat Requirements for Chesapeake Bay Living Resources.*

In 2003, Steve moved to Region 5, Refuges program in Hadley, MA, where he was Chief of Planning and involved in the development of Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plans throughout the region at the inception of this important national management program. Steve retired in 2008 as a GS-14.

In his interview, Steve discussed his views on public and Congressional perceptions of the Service, noting that the Refuges program and other public involvement programs are key to improve understanding of the agency's work to conserve the natural resources of the country. Steve advised employees starting their careers to find mentors who have experience and can teach them how the Service works. He also said that it is important to remember that staff positions are not political, to stick with providing the best scientific information, and to let higher management make the political decisions.

THE INTERVIEW

KAREN MAYNE: This is Karen Mayne. I'm interviewing Steve Funderburk at the Double Tree Hotel in Annapolis, Maryland, at the Fish and Wildlife Service Retirees Reunion. So, Steve, my first question is when did you start at the Fish and Wildlife Service and when did you retire? Not exact dates if you don't know, but the year.

STEVE FUNDERBURK: I started in 1978 with International Affairs and stopped with Refuges in 2008.

KAREN: Where were you when you retired?

STEVE: I was in Refuges as Chief of the Planning Division and I retired after that.

KAREN: In Region 5?

STEVE: In Region 5, right.

KAREN: "Legacy" Region 5 now.

STEVE: Right. The last year had co-responsibility as Refuge Supervisor for the Southern Zone of Region 5. So, a dual responsibility.

KAREN: Okay. Where and when were you born?

STEVE: Born in Dickinson, North Dakota, 1952. My father was a geologist, poking the earth for oil and met my mom, who was the classic farmer's daughter. They hit it off and started their family.

KAREN: What are their names?

STEVE: It's Lester Knox Funderburk and Dorothy Martha Schmitz Funderburk. Good German stock.

KAREN: Where did they live?

STEVE: They met in Dickinson and then gosh, we lived in many places because my father continued to travel the Gulf Coast region in search of oil, including the Gulf of Mexico. I would say most of it was in Southern Louisiana, Cajun country, and New Orleans. There were also stints in Mississippi, Texas, New Mexico and North Dakota.

KAREN: Where did you go to high school?

STEVE: Martin Behrman High School in New Orleans and graduated in 1970.

KAREN: Were there hobbies and things you did as a kid that got you interested in wildlife and conservation?

STEVE: It was mainly hunting and fishing. I would go duck hunting with my father. Just having fun being in a duck blind, and having some one-on-one time with your old man, so to speak, was pretty moving. Then when I got into college, I asked myself what do I want to be when I grow up. I just couldn't think of anything else besides some form of conservation. That's really what got it started. And then being on the prairies with my family. My mother's side of the family in North Dakota. I would pester my uncle to go out into the sloughs so I could take pictures of waterfowl and try to find their duck nests and things like that. It was all just good fun, kid stuff.

KAREN: Where did you go to college?

STEVE: I went to Louisiana Tech University in north-central Louisiana for my undergraduate degree in wildlife. Then I went to grad school at Humboldt State University in California.

KAREN: What was your degree, undergraduate and graduate?

STEVE: Undergrad was wildlife management and grad school was wildlife ecology.

KAREN: What years was that?

STEVE: Graduated Tech in 1974 and Humboldt in 1976.

KAREN: Did you do a master's thesis?

STEVE: I did.

KAREN: What was that?

STEVE: It was the *Wetland Bird Use of Lake Earl*, which is a coastal lagoon in extreme northern California just about ten miles south of Oregon. Luckily, my major professor was an adjunct professor from Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center [Jamestown, North Dakota]. They were thinking about establishing a wildlife coop unit at Humboldt. So, he was sort of the first guy to go on board and try to get that started. He had what was called the Wildlife Research Field Station, but it was a satellite of Northern Prairie. I was one of his first grad students after he moved out there to Arcata, California.

KAREN: What is his name?

STEVE: Paul Springer.

KAREN: What kind of field work did you do for your thesis project?

STEVE: It was a classic bird abundance, distribution, and habitat use of Lake Earl, the coastal lagoon. There were actually two systems. There was Lake Talawa, which was attached to the Pacific Ocean. Lake Talawa was attached by a channel to the larger Lake Earl. But they generally called the system Lake Earl. Because of that, it had a great variety of wetland birds from shorebirds to herons and allies and lots of waterfowl, grebes etc.

KAREN: What kind of equipment did you use to do your field work?

STEVE: Oh my gosh, it was just the classic binoculars, spotting scope, hip boots, and things of that nature. We had support from USGS [U.S. Geological Survey] because there were some water-level gauges on two locations of the Refuge. We were able to incorporate water level as it changed seasonally and tried to correlate that with bird use.

KAREN: What was the outcome? Did you have any findings from your project?

STEVE: I think the outcome – there may not have been too many surprises. It was classic California coastland habitat. We had a full suite of waterfowl and shorebirds, the grebes, etc. What I found most rewarding was

probably ten years later, Lake Earl was purchased by California Department of Fish and Game as a wildlife management area. I'd like to think that the thesis helped justify the creation of that wildlife management area.

KAREN: Other than your major professor, were there any other mentors that you had, either in undergraduate or graduate school?

STEVE: Definitely, I was very fortunate. James White was a botany professor. He was probably my main mentor at Louisiana Tech. Then John Goertz was the mammalogy professor and he was great. Then also, a fellow named Gene Rhodes. He was a plant taxonomist professor. These were the types of folks you could go fishing with and hunting with. They would teach you or just simply talk about things that were not in the textbook. It was a good experience with them.

At then at Humboldt, of course it was Paul Springer. There was another professor, Stan Harris, who had been there a number of years. Stan was also a great mentor.

KAREN: Did they influence you in where you sought to work? Did you go into the military?

STEVE: I was not in the military. I was in school while Vietnam was still raging. By the time I graduated Tech, the war was winding down. Being drafted was less prominent than when I got out of high school.

KAREN: Did they then influence you in the direction of looking for jobs when you graduated?

STEVE: I think so. I think the main thing that I was aspiring to was, number one – I learned quickly that working for the Fish and Wildlife Service would, I thought, offer more diverse opportunities for a broad breath of wildlife experience. I had worked after grad school for a year and a half with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife Fisheries. It was a great experience, but once I got the bug with the Fish and Wildlife Service because Paul [Springer] was a Fish and Wildlife Service employee with Northern Prairie. That's when I knew that ultimately, that's where I wanted my career to go.

KAREN: Let's talk about your family a little bit. Do you have any siblings?

STEVE: Yes, a brother and a sister.

KAREN: Names?

STEVE: Marc, a year older and Penny a year younger.

KAREN: Did they also have an interest in conservation?

STEVE: Not like I did. I hunted and fished with my brother. He went into landscape architecture, which I think is similar. My sister stayed in New Orleans and raised her family and is sort of a homebody but doing very well.

KAREN: What about marriage and children? What's your background there?

STEVE: I met my first wife at Humboldt. We were married for about 15 years.

KAREN: Her name?

STEVE: Patricia Anne McBride. The marriage dissolved and then I met my current wife, Kathi Bangert, at the Chesapeake Bay Field Office. I knew her in Washington with just the regular work types of things we would talk about. Mainly it was phone work. I didn't actually meet her until she came out to the Chesapeake Bay Field Office.

KAREN: What did Kathi do in the Washington Office that caused you to meet?

STEVE: She was first, ten years prior, she was on Senate committees. She worked on the Hill. Then through, I think it was the election of Ronald Reagan, she worked for a Democratic committee and was politely asked to find another job. The Fish and Wildlife Service picked her up with Legislative Affairs.

KAREN: Did you interact with her on migratory bird issues?

STEVE: I did. When I was with International Affairs, part of my responsibility was International Migratory Bird permits and the Endangered Species Act, import/export aspects of that. Kathi was working with her committee, I think it was [Senate] Environment and Public Works, as they were considering amendments to the Act. Occasionally we would talk over the phone. She would ask how's it really going with the Act and how's it being implemented. I would just answer her questions and gave her some of my advice. She would write it up. Then when she came over from the Hill to Legislative Services, we still had interactions on just various pieces of legislation. It was a good constructive relationship.

KAREN: What about children?

STEVE: I had three with my first wife.

KAREN: Their names?

STEVE: Benjamin, Julia, and Kendel. They all have families. Kathi's children are Nicholas and Daniel. Likewise, they have their respective families. Kathi and I are very fortunate because they all live on the western shore of the Chesapeake, all around the Baltimore area. Kathi and I live in Easton, Maryland. So, we can see them fairly often without getting a knock on the door every day. (*Laughter).*

KAREN: I recall either you or Kathi said you have 11 grandchildren between you?

STEVE: We do, we do. Actually, my son is engaged, so his fiancée has three children. You could say that it's a total of 14 because she has 3 of her own children. So, my son Ben has the "Brady Bunch."

KAREN: Any of the children or grandchildren involved in conservation work?

STEVE: Not yet because they're still fairly young.

KAREN: But even your children?

STEVE: Oh no, they did not go that route, any of the five. As much as we tried, with the birding and things, it just didn't click. I mean they enjoy being outdoors, but it didn't click from a career standpoint.
That was okay.

KAREN: Yeah.

STEVE: But now we're working on grandkids.

KAREN: You might have more success there. (*Laughter*).

STEVE: That's right.

KAREN: Anybody else close to you who you want get their name on the record?

STEVE: As far as the mentors, my supervisor Glenn Kinser at the Chesapeake Bay Field Office was clearly one of my best friends and best mentors. Glenn, I think, had a wonderful sense of priorities and understanding the types of measures that can really work in conservation.

KAREN: Actually, Steve, I want to stop you for a minute because you and Kathi were both two of the first people to come into the Chesapeake Bay Estuary Program, which Glenn Kinser and Bill Ashe were instrumental in getting funding for. Since that was such an important part of the Service's shift into landscape level conservation and you were there, I wanted you to talk a bit to the extent you know is how did the funding come and how did you and Kathi get recruited into the Chesapeake Field Office?

STEVE: Good question. Alright, let me dust off my brain a little bit here. Glenn was able to capture some supplemental funding, which arose out of the development of the formal Chesapeake Bay Program, which was headed by EPA [Environmental Protection Agency]. Through that federal effort, a number of federal agencies were also able to get supplemental funding. Glenn got his share and Forest Service got theirs, USDA [U.S. Department of Agriculture], etc.

KAREN: Was this money that Congress appropriated or did EPA distribute it out to the other agencies?

STEVE: It was direct funding from Congress through the different subcommittees of the Budget Committee. Ours of course went through Interior; it did not come from EPA. At that time, it was 1985, and Glenn had the opportunity to hire new staff for the Estuary Program. He hired me and a couple of other folks. I had pestered Glenn, because I was working in Washington and every year, I would pester Glenn with a luncheon and begging him to get me into the field. One day, I got a cold call and he said, "You ready?" (*Laughter).*

KAREN: How did you know Glenn?

STEVE: Oh, because I pestered him. I knew he was there. I heard good things about him and so when I was in Washington, I'd call him and say, "Let's go to lunch," and he was obliging.

KAREN: Do you know how much money those first years that the Bay Program got?

STEVE: I believe it was in the neighborhood of $400,000.

KAREN: I thought it was quite a bit and that was a lot of money! It still is a lot of money for a Service office.

STEVE: It was. It was something that rarely happens. I liked Glenn's approach to it because I think Glenn, as much as he appreciated the 404 [wetlands] program and the nascent toxics program - contaminants program – 'cause that was sort of getting unrolled also. I think Glenn recognized the power of partnerships and that there

has to be new and creative ways to solve resource problems. So, he jumped on it. I think he approached it with a fair amount of gusto.

KAREN: So, he got the funding. Let's talk a little bit about the hiring process he went through. Because at that point, the Annapolis Field office as it was called originally, was solely an Ecological Services (ES) office like you said, with traditional roles. When Glenn got the funding for the Chesapeake Bay Estuary Program, it went in different directions. You were part of that group. Let's talk a little bit about how he hired people, who he hired and what you all did in the Bay Program that was different from what the traditional ES work was.

STEVE: That is where Glenn essentially established a new branch in the Field Office. I forget exactly what he called it. It was the coastal branch. You have the regulatory branch, that did the 404 [of the Clean Water Act], the Sykes Act, and things of that nature, NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act), highways etc. Then you have this small coastal unit. I think when it first started, it might have been four people.

KAREN: You remember who else?

STEVE: It was Linda Hurley who ultimately became an ARD (Assistant Regional Director) for ES in Atlanta. She had Washington Office experience. A young fellow whose name is Fred Seavey. He went to the Portland Regional Office. I lost touch with Fred. Then Tim Hall who had worked in the Regulatory Program; [he] was transferred into the new branch. He did a lot of watershed/water quality work in the Chester River as one of his first assignments.

KAREN: What were the priorities and activities of that small group when it first started?

STEVE: Oh boy, that takes me back. I think Glenn and I and the new team got together and tried to establish our own framework. All the agencies that were participating with EPA were trying to figure out how are we going to approach this new large state/federal Chesapeake Bay Program.

We came up with our own framework. We used that for a couple of years. It embraced education for children. It embraced a small component of research working with Patuxent [Wildlife Research Center] and other outfits where we could potentially help fund some activities. It included, like Tim Hall was doing some watershed assessments. We were trying to gear up and think about monitoring and inventory. If we were going to help the wildlife in the Chesapeake Bay, we needed to know what were the numbers, where they were occurring, and what were the trends over time. Not ignoring the Mid-Winter Waterfowl Survey and the Breeding Bird Surveys and things of that nature, but we were trying to see how can we bring this down to a smaller scale so that we can keep tabs on wildlife for the larger multi-agency effort.

KAREN: My recollection is that you were pretty instrumental in getting EPA and the other agencies to incorporate wildlife into the Bay Program because it was pretty focused just on water quality. You want to talk about how that worked?

STEVE: Thank you. That was one of the more shining moments. Glenn and I were members of what was called the Federal Agencies Committee. I might not have that exactly right. We would go to the meetings and of course, water quality was the big deal. We just decided we need to tweak this so that we can have more sensitivity to wildlife. If we can meet the habitat requirements for wildlife, then almost assuredly we're going to

meet the needs of human beings in the Chesapeake Bay watershed in terms of water quality, forest landscape, wetland landscape, etc.

We pulled together a team of scientists across the watershed from VIMS [Virginia Institute of Marine Science], Penn State, and Virginia Tech, University of Maryland at Horn Point and at Solomons Island, etc. [Also, Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory, National Marine Fisheries Service, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, etc. Our own Linda Hurley did the chapter on Submerged Aquatic Vegetation.] We assigned each expert a particular species including the obvious such as canvasbacks, submerged aquatic vegetation, osprey, oysters and clams, and white perch, yellow perch. Each scientist wrote a chapter for this volume. Then once they did their job in distilling the most critical ambient water quality and habitat conditions for each species, we consolidated that into a chapter that summarized the whole thing, so that there could be sort of a guidepost for EPA and other agencies to try to aim the water quality for. Water quality was influenced by the forest landscape and riparian landscape and how much agriculture was on the land, how much nutrients was going into the system because of the chicken farms. Just the whole gamut. We were hoping that would help guide things.

KAREN: Was it difficult to get EPA to agree to incorporate wildlife into the Bay Plan?

STEVE: Surprisingly not. I think the reason is because we had established very good relationships with EPA.

KAREN: Their office was fairly close to yours, wasn't it?

STEVE: Yeah, it was downtown Annapolis. We were sort of on the outskirts. It would only take ten minutes to have a meeting. We had tons and tons of meetings. That's one thing Bay Program was famous for. They were very open to it. People like Rich Batiuk and Carin Bisland**,** who were in charge of their living resource component at the Bay Program, were very open to it. Things may have changed after Glenn and I departed, as things do. Priorities change with administrations. But at that time, and this would have been the early '90s, they were very open to it.

KAREN: I recollect that eventually a lot of different models were developed. Were you involved in any of that work?

STEVE: Only the raw data that the modelers from the Corps of Engineers and other places. The Waterways Experiment Station in Vicksburg was a big part of the program. They would take some of our data and data from wherever and lots of water quality data and try to run their analyses and correlations to see what the dynamics were. Where were the hot spots that needed the most attention? Which tributaries were most polluted and what was the cause of the pollution?

KAREN: You said you started with about four people in the Chesapeake Bay Field Office. Eventually, the name was changed from the Annapolis Field Office to the Chesapeake Bay Field Office to incorporate all these additional responsibilities. How did it grow over time and how many people ended up in the Estuary Program part of the Annapolis office?

STEVE: Well, that takes me back to a dynamic where the funding for the Estuary portion continued to increase. I think it approached a million [dollars.] At the same time, the administration I believe of, maybe Frank Dunkle - there was an issue with something in Region 5, I forget the details. The Deputy Regional Director, a fellow

named Bill Ashe, was directed to start the coastal program for Region 5. He no longer had responsibilities for Deputy RD [Regional Director]. Bill was given the new charge and had oversight of Glenn and the fuller team. At this point, we probably had a dozen people. That actually ended up helping to catalyze the coastal program of the Fish and Wildlife Service. John Turner, I recall, was the Director. John was a fabulous gentleman. John had the unique talent of really listening to people. You could tell that he cared. He got wind of the Chesapeake Bay Program and that they were now two entities in Annapolis. There was the new Chesapeake Bay Field Office with the new supervisor. Then there was Glenn Kinser with the Chesapeake Bay Estuary Program of the Fish and Wildlife Service. So, there were two units in Annapolis. One with Bill Ashe and then the Field Office of course was still attached to ES. We sort of did our separate things for a couple of years.

KAREN: You were in different buildings, too.

STEVE: Right. Different buildings. Things were going fairly well. It's not like we stopped interacting with our colleagues in the Field Office. As time progressed around 1994'ish, maybe before that, there was a reorganization consideration in ES. I believe it was headed by Mike Spear**,** the Associate Director. Mike went all around the country looking for ways to find efficiencies in ES. One of his stopovers was Annapolis. The long and short of it is [that] Mike thought it was inefficient for there to be an Estuary Program and a Field Office in the same city. So, the two offices were combined. Then there was only one Project Leader for both initiatives, which is essentially how it started. It was the Field Office with the coastal component split apart and then brought back together.

KAREN: At that point, Glenn was no longer the Project Leader.

STEVE: That's right. I forget exactly why Glenn stopped with the Estuary Program. He essentially was selected to be the first Wildlife Chief of Training at the new NCTC (National Conservation Training Center).

KAREN: Well, he actually spent a year on a detail with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation [NFWF].

STEVE: That's what it was.

KAREN: My recollection is that because someone else was selected to become the Chesapeake Bay Field Office, John Wolflin. That decision, I think again, was made by Frank Dunkle, maybe, at the time. Glenn had been demoted in effect. So, from being the project leader over these big projects, two parts of Ecological Services, to now not having a position, I guess, he would've been John Wolflin's Deputy. That wasn't going to work. So, Glenn got a detail with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation at that point. Bill Ashe who had been, as you said, the Deputy Regional Director and then became the Estuary Program Coordinator for Region 5. He also sort of got pushed out and went to NFWF and he brought Glenn over there for a year.

STEVE: Yeah, that's right. Thank you.

KAREN: After that year was over, Glenn went back to the Washington Office as you said. We didn't have a physical training center yet at that point. He was in the Washington Office. He was the Chief of, as you said, Training. So, in the Washington Office, they were developing all these training plans with the intent of building a training center out at what is now NCTC.

STEVE: Yeah, Glenn worked closely with Rick Lemon.

KAREN: Rick was also in the Washington Office.

We were very sorry that Glenn Kinser passed away before anybody could do his oral history. Maybe some of the other people at NCTC have had their history done. My understanding is that it was quite a process to find the land, build the training center. It was extremely expensive. The Service had never done anything at this level before. Glenn was pretty instrumental. He had a lot to do with the look of NCTC, the design of the buildings, [and] the furniture there. He wanted things to look very traditional, comfortable, and a place where biologists would like to go.

STEVE: Yeah, exactly. I appreciate that reminder. I think Glenn had multiple talents. He had an appreciation for the turn of the century 1900s to the 20th century with the Arts and Crafts movement and Aldo Leopold and the whole thing that's going on in the early part of the 1900s. Yes, he definitely knew that this station at NCTC should last for a long time. Then the Arts and Craft type furniture and décor etc., I'm sure he had a lot to do with that, maybe not everything, but a lot to do with that.

KAREN: Right. At this point, he was out at NCTC, you and Kathi had met and married by then. You were still in Annapolis. What happened after Glenn left?

STEVE: Things got interesting after Glenn left. The way that we were managing the Estuary Program now became reincorporated into the Ecological Services Field Office.

KAREN: You all had to move. Actually, didn't both offices move into a new building at that point when they were combined?

STEVE: Correct. It's where they are located now on Arrow Lee Drive, I think.

KAREN: Admiral Cochrane Drive?

STEVE: Admiral Cochrane Drive, yeah. The offices were re-combined, and John Wolflin was the new supervisor. He of course was the boss, so he directed where the money was going. It was sort of not directed in the way Glenn and I were directing it. There were discussions about what was the right way to do it and so forth. I understood that's just the nature of management. But then things just continued to not go well, so Kathi and I both found reassignments in Washington, DC.

KAREN: What were you doing when you went back into DC?

STEVE: I was Deputy Chief of the Division of Bird Habitat Conservation, which had oversite of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan at its joint ventures; NAWCA - the North American Wetland Conservation Act - and its grants program and then a new Act, which was passed while I was there. I think it was called the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act. On one hand, with the joint ventures, it was this strong partnership element with, oh gosh, 12-13-14 joint ventures across the country. With NAWCA and the Neotrop Act, we had the funding muscle to make the joint ventures programs effective.

The beautiful thing about NAWCA was that it was a grant program requiring a one-to-one match, federal to non-federal dollars. Because of the popularity, without question, we'd always get at least two dollars of non-federal to every one dollar of federal grant money. It was a very effective program, very dynamic and strong in science because it also had joint ventures like the Black Duck Joint Venture. They recognized the power of landscape ecology and landscape strategic planning.

KAREN: Are there certain projects of the joint venture period that you are most proud of?

STEVE: That's a good question. I had no direct involvement in the projects. They were the grant proposals that came in with support from the joint venture. My job was to facilitate the activities of what was called the NAWCA Council staff. There was a Council which made the ultimate decisions for approving the grants.

KAREN: Who was on that Council?

STEVE: The Director was the head and then there were, oh something like three directors at Fish and Game that were a member. Three members from NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) Audubon, Ducks Unlimited, Land Trust Conservancy, and then sometimes they floated a little bit. They would change. For the most part it was Audubon and Ducks Unlimited. I think there might have been some ex-officio members. It was sort of this dynamic state, federal, NGO type of senior level council. Each council member had a staff person who would actually review the grants.
Part of my job was to facilitate all of the Council staff meetings where sort of the nuts-and-bolts discussions about which ones would be approved were ultimately floated back to the full Council for approval.

KAREN: Do you remember what kind of funding was available during that period?

STEVE: Yeah, it was about $50 million dollars.

KAREN: Do you happen to know what it is today?

STEVE: I don't, but I think it's probably similar. Fortunately, with NAWCA in particular, it's usually well received regardless of the administration because you've got Ducks Unlimited. You've got the hunters and the recognition of the people who buy Duck Stamps. It's usually favorably received with Democrats and Republicans.

KAREN: Well, $50 million doesn't go real far when you're doing land acquisitions and projects like that. How did the Council and the staff that you worked with rank these projects and make decisions on what got funded?

STEVE: There was sort of an unwritten rule at the time that they did not want to consider projects that were less than $1 million. That would typically calculate into a $3 million dollar project with the average two to one match that they historically got. With $50 million, you could have anywhere from, not necessarily 50 projects, but sometimes you'd have 35. Because some projects were $1 million plus. We tried to remain sensitive to all of the flyways in all of the states as far as getting the money out. One thing that was clear to me is that there was absolutely no effort to just try to give a state a project just because they don't have a project yet.

The best example was West Virginia. The whole time that I was there, West Virginia had never had a project. There were years where they tried to justify a project. With the Highlands, it's not that they didn't have wetlands, but West Virginia is not known to be a big waterfowl state. It hadn't happened by the time I left the joint venture NAWCA program. People were sensitive to it and trying to spread the wealth so to speak.

KAREN: Do you know whether West Virginia ever got NAWCA funding?

STEVE: No, because I can remember I did contract work after that. I put forward a West Virginia project and I

would call the Atlantic Coast Joint Venture Coordinator and other colleagues, and say "Hey, make sure you take a real hard look at this one." (*Laughter).*

KAREN: Are you saying you went into the private sector as a contractor?

STEVE: I did.

KAREN: When did you leave the Washington office?

STEVE: I retired in '08.

KAREN: You were in the Regional Office, so we've got to get to that at some point.

STEVE: Correct.

KAREN: You left Annapolis, you went to Washington.

STEVE: Correct.

KAREN: Did you become a contractor before you went to the Regional Office?

STEVE: I'm sorry. I'll clarify. From Washington with the Joint Venture Program, then I went up to Region 5 with Refuges.

KAREN: What year was that?

STEVE: That was 2003 and then retired in 2008. That was about a five-year appointment. That's when I was Chief of Planning for Refuges, which was largely a lot of policy. The big deal was the Comprehensive Conservation Plans (CCP) for each refuge. I was heavily involved in NEPA [National Environmental Policy Act], public involvement.

KAREN: You want to talk a little bit about what those plans are? I know they still exist, but for future generations, let's talk about what they are.

STEVE: Yeah. Well, the CCP, as they are better known, arose out of a legislative requirement from the Refuge Improvement Act that was passed in 1997. Each refuge was required to develop a CCP, which is essentially a master plan. It was a plan that was supposed to embrace all of the founding purposes and principles and their establishing statute, in addition to the new purposes and requirements of the Improvement Act of '97. The Refuge Division nationally was given 15 years for each refuge in the country to establish a CCP. Because it was a large federal action, all of the CCPs had to go through the NEPA process, which included public involvement, scoping, and drafts and sometimes redrafts. Then ultimately a final Environmental Assessment or Final Environmental Impact Statement.

KAREN: Fifteen years is a really long time. I know many of the plans did take multiple years. Why did it take so long to get them completed?

STEVE: I think because CCPs were a new concept in Refuges. I think a lot of the newer Refuge Managers were very excited about doing something like that. Some of the more veteran Refuge Managers didn't necessarily see

the need for the need for it. So, some had to be sort of dragged into it and others were anxious to do it. Also, depending on the size of the refuge and the complexity of the refuge would sometimes dictate how long it would take largely because of the public involvement. When you had issues that included setting priorities for wildlife and fish, and then priorities for public use through the Visitors Services Program, sometimes there would be great conflicts. Some of the more prominent examples included walking dogs on refuges off-leash. Some refuges had no restrictions at all. With the CCP process, Refuge Managers had to consider either no dogs or dogs on-leash. Depending on where you were located, if it was an urban environment, there would be a lot of public flack if you were going to restrict dog use. That was one example. Like at Canaan Valley, there was a desire to have a bike path put through the refuge because mountain biking in that mountainous area was very popular. The Refuge Manager really had a tough time negotiating that one.

The CCP process actually helps. It's a fairly transparent process because of NEPA. Everything is sort of out in the open. Of course, there was going be letters and phone calls with disagreements. But once you have good strong policy, which the Improvement Act gave birth to, such as the Appropriate Use Policy and the Compatibility Policy, then it gave any Refuge manager an ability to say this is why we're doing what we're doing. Bottom line is we always have to be oriented toward wildlife first and not a broad multi-use recreational program.

KAREN: I know there have been changes over the years in the Service's acceptance and approach to hunting and fishing on Refuges. When you were involved in the CCP process, at that point, what was the Service's policy on hunting and fishing on Refuges?

STEVE: I don't know that it changed drastically. I think that many of the Refuges continued to have hunt management plans and in rare cases, fisheries management plans as long as they were incorporated under the NEPA process through the larger CCP. Sometimes it would be done separately following the CCP. So that it could get more into the weeds with what are the dynamics, pros and cons of the hunt plan. Usually, it was received with favor in the more rural Refuges. I think when you get into deer hunting in more urban areas, it got a little bit more sensitive. Because of rifles and shotguns, typically wouldn't be rifles in urban areas. Even with shotguns and archery, it still caused concern mainly because people love deer. You're familiar with that. It's an old story that's still going on.

KAREN: How many staff and what were their names did you have during this process?

STEVE: I think my staff over that five-year period was average ten. It would go from eight to twelve depending on the budget year and people's career moves. Their names were Nancy McGarigal, Tom Bonetti, Bill Perry, Carl Melberg, Gib Chase, Beth Goldstein, Bill Zinni, who was in Realty for a long time. Lelania – I forget her last name – but she's actually up there right now. [Her last name is now Muth.] She is an Assistant Refuge Supervisor, and I think she is in the North Region with Graham Taylor.

KAREN: Who was the Refuge's Chief in the Region at that point?

STEVE: Tony Léger.

KAREN: Who was the Regional Director?

STEVE: That would have been Marvin Moriarty and before that, Rick Bennett as Acting. Wendi Weber came in right as I departed. When I first came on board, it was Mamie Parker.

KAREN: At some point you said you also took on the responsibility of supervisor for some of the Refuges in the region?

STEVE: Correct.

KAREN: What year was that?

STEVE: That was 2007.

KAREN: Why did you get dual responsibilities?

STEVE: Oh, it was a classic. Somebody left and they didn't have the money to hire immediately. I was given dual responsibility for CCPs, Planning, and the South Zone of Region 5 as Acting Refuge Supervisor. Refuge Supervisor is sort of like a Deputy ARD (Assistant Regional Director).

KAREN: How many Refuges did you supervise?

STEVE: It would have been Virginia, Delaware, Maryland and West Virginia.

KAREN: That's a lot of responsibility to manage two programs. How did you do that?

STEVE: Delicately. (*Laughter)* As you can imagine, having a new responsibility with the Refuges in the field, there is a lot of people stuff going on - personnel. Of course, multiple issues, real world issues. I have to confess that I relied on Nancy McGarigal, who was the senior biologist in Planning to help take some of the load of Planning. I spent most of my time on being the Acting Assistant Refuge Supervisor.

KAREN: How long was that?

STEVE: I t was only a year. It wasn't too bad. A fellow named John Stasko had had the position permanently. John retired and so it took a while for R5 to regather the funding for that position and hire somebody out of Alaska, a fellow named Daryle Lons.

KAREN: Where was this in terms of before you retired?

STEVE: This was the year before I retired.

KAREN: You said you retired in what year?

STEVE: It was early '08, so all of '07 was the dual responsibility.

KAREN: What made you think and decide to retire?

STEVE: I wanted to be my own boss, wanted to have the freedom to do some new things. Kathi had retired the year earlier. We were thinking about moving. We liked western Massachusetts quite a bit and stayed there for quite a while before we moved back to Maryland where all the kids and grandkids are. That was the main reason.

KAREN: At that point, when you retired, that you did consulting work?

STEVE: That is right.

KAREN: Talk about that. Who did you work for? Did you have a company and what did you do?

STEVE: I was able to take advantage of something Kris LaMontagne set up. Kris was a former Region 5 employee, one of the Assistant Regional Directors, I think, for Administration. Kris established a link with the Fish and Wildlife Service and a contractor known as GAPSI, Gap Solutions and Company out of Reston, Virginia. GAP was looking to have a natural resource arm for contract work.
They essentially put on retainer a whole bunch of former Fish and Wildlife Service biologists. They could cobble together teams to do this or that. The teams that I would be involved in would be working on CCPs, hunt management plans, habitat management plans, etc. It was essentially taking people who had the intellectual experience and knowledge of the Service to do the contract work for GAPSI.

KAREN: Did those projects focus on the northeast, or did you have projects all over the country?

STEVE: The company did projects all over the country but my projects were focused on the northeast.

KAREN: What were some of those projects?

STEVE: One of the first ones was the writing of the NEPA document for the creation of the Cherry Valley National Wildlife Refuge.

KAREN: In New Jersey?

STEVE: I think it was Pennsylvania. Right on the border. That was a good experience because you sort of see things from the outside because you are no longer an employee. You're doing the work that benefits the Service and then you run the meetings, you write the documents, and all that while you're wearing your pajamas at home. (*Laughter).*

KAREN: How long did you do that contract work?

STEVE: For about ten years. When Kathi and I decided to move back to Maryland, I think the move just caused me to say, "I don't need to do the contracting anymore and I'll just become a volunteer."

KAREN: Was the contract work full-time, or did you get to pick and choose which projects you worked on?

STEVE: It was pick and choose. I was not hired by GAPSI as an employee, nine to five. It was just project by project, which I liked because I could define my own hours, my own travel and didn't have to necessarily do the nine to five.

KAREN: I wanted to ask you what GS level were you when you started the Service and what level were you when you ended the Service and if you remember your salary range?

STEVE: I think when I started with Fish and Wildlife it was in DC with International Affairs CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) and that was as a GS-5.

KAREN: That was right after graduate school?

STEVE: Correct.

KAREN: That is why your salary was so low?

STEVE: That was the grade scale at the time. Between grad school and my first appointment with the Service, I had worked a year and a half with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries in their fisheries department. Then I had 4-month appointment with the Corps of Engineers in St. Paul, Minnesota. That was my entry into the federal government. There I did short-time work with 404 [Clean Water Act] and what was called the Great Rivers Environmental Action Team, which is sort of a Chesapeake Bay program action approach to the Upper Mississippi. The Corps had the lead responsibility on that one. Then came into Washington because I had always aspired to work for the agency because of my exposure with Dr. Springer who was with Northern Prairie and other contacts that I had. I had this offer to go into Washington with International Affairs. Of course, as a young buck, I didn't want to go into Washington. Many people will remember, at that same time, there were a lot of Vietnam veterans who were being hired left and right. Deservedly so, because they had a couple extra points on the way they used to hire back in the old days. I certainly didn't begrudge them. What it meant was that none of the Vietnam vet biologists wanted to go into Washington. So that's why I started in Washington.

KAREN: Who hired you?

STEVE: A fellow named Fred Bolwahn with the Wildlife Permit Office, Just a swell gentleman. I think he's no longer with us, but it was a good experience. When you get into Washington, you learn very quickly that wildlife conservation is not just about the birds and the bees and the canvasback etc., and binoculars and spotting scopes. It's about politics and policy and budgets and all sorts of things. It was a real education for me to start the career in Washington.

KAREN: When you retired, what GS level were you?

STEVE: GS-14. That was the [Region 5] Chief of Planning, and then Acting Chief for Refuge Supervision.

KAREN: You've been through a long period with the Service in a variety of jobs. How did you see the public's perception of the Service at the beginning and in the end? Did you see any changes in public perception?

STEVE: I think it generally improved. I think the Service became more sensitive to the public's view of Fish and Wildlife Service. I think in large part the general person on the street didn't know hardly anything about the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, as they might have known about the National Park Service and similar agencies.

I think the Chesapeake Bay Program was just one example of where sensitivity to the public started to be more appreciated. We were sensitive to kids. We recognized that sometimes you can't change an old dog. You really do have to expose kids and young adults to wildlife and the broader environment. That's one reason we did that.

I think in my experience with the public, it didn't come as much with the Ecological Services program as much as it did with Refuges. With Refuges, that's the front door for the agency. There are Visitor Centers, there are tours, bird walks, and you name it. There is so much going on with refuges and the public. That's where I more fully appreciated the value of the Fish and Wildlife Service to the U.S. public.

KAREN: What do you consider some of the highlights of your career – things that you're most proud you were

involved with?

STEVE: Probably the biggest one was in the early '90s. We were having ecosystem teams get together. It was a delight to have all the project leaders together and talking about this and that. All the issues of a particular watershed. The eco-teams that I was on, just had a chronic problem with funding, because very few project leaders could just dish over $10, 15, 20,000 to support a joint effort.
It was frustrating because of the finances. Prior to that time period, I had served as a congressional fellow with U.S. Senator Paul Sarbanes from Maryland on the Hill and had more appreciation of the Federal budget and how things worked. Thought we just really need to find a project that will be successful from an ecosystem standpoint.

I went back to my desk and started calling people that I knew. Like Mike Haramis at Patuxent and Glenn Carowan at Blackwater [NWR] and others, folks in the Maryland DNR (Department of Natural Resources.) I thought of all the things that we've talked about in the ecosystem team, what's one thing that we could be successful with, or potentially be successful with? I thought getting rid of those dam nutria at Blackwater. I helped to coordinate the first meeting of the people who got together to form that Nutria Eradication Team. Within six months, I was gone and that's when I went back into D.C. with the Joint Venture Program. It did stimulate the team that, from what I understand, because I volunteer at Blackwater now, that they can't find a nutria anywhere. They've got the dogs, and people looking for them, posters all over the place looking for nutria. I think it's been three to four years since they've even found one.

KAREN: In fact, I wanted to interject here, since you did not go on the field trip yesterday at the Retirees Reunion at Blackwater. I was also on the ecoteams with Steve. I was also one of the project leaders that had to decide if I was going to submit funding for these joint projects. I'm well aware of that.

The Nutria Eradication was one of the early ones and I seem to recall that we all said, "Oh, we'll never get rid of nutria, why should we put any money?" Well, the project leader at Blackwater yesterday explained all the things that had been done over the last decade. The support and funding they have got to do research projects on sea-level rise, the loss of marshes, phragmites invasion. The most amazing thing to me was this partnership between the Service and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal Damage Control, to bring trained detector dogs onto the Refuge to look for nutria scat. When the dogs would find the scat, then hunters could come out to set traps.

So, Steve is correct that the Refuge Manager said they can now no longer find nutria on the Refuge. These dogs now go to other federal and state properties around the Chesapeake Bay looking for nutria. They've also expanded the program to train these dogs to sniff out feral swine scat. They're also using them up and down the northeast in parts of the region to help with the feral hog control because that's another bad invasive species. So, Steve, you were integral on something that none of us would have thought could be possible ten to twelve years ago. It worked.

STEVE: It did work. I think the fact that Blackwater worked, in contrast to places like Louisiana, because the team brought up early on people from Louisiana, which also had a nutria problem. They just said, "Our landscape is so huge we will try to reduce them, but we know we'll never be able to control them." They said, "With your area, because the salt marsh is somewhat definable in the Blackwater area, I think you guys should take a stab at it." We got a lot of support from not only local and regional people, but folks like the biologists down in Louisiana. I lost touch with it because I went off to other greener pastures. I would hear about it occasionally and just heard

the good news. It was a wonderful thing that happened.

KAREN: Are there any other projects or issues you were involved in that you're proud of?

STEVE: What I mentioned earlier when we published *Habitat Requirements for Chesapeake Bay Living Resources* with the multiple scientific authors. I felt pretty good about that because I felt that's something that the Service should try to achieve because we didn't have the authority to just say, "do this or do that." It was more of a consultation role. I think once you use science to help guide a program, a science that hopefully is measurable, then you're taking the appropriate steps to change a local environment for the better. I felt really good about that one.

KAREN: Are there other folks that you worked with, supervisors or colleagues over the decades that you'd like to get their names on the record?

STEVE: Well, sure. Glenn of course is right at the top. Bill Ashe is way up there. I didn't have a lot of exposure with Bill, because he'd come down every once in a while, and see how things were going. When you'd get into a room with Bill or share a beer with him at a conference like a northeast conference, you knew there was a level of gravitas and knowledge that you really needed to pay attention to. I got that from Bill.

One fellow that I had about a six-month exposure with was Dr. John Rodgers with Migratory Bird Program. In 1982, I was on a detail with that office. John was also one of the fellows who you just knew his roots were deep. He just conveyed a real strong ethic and conservation ethic that just filled the room. Every time he spoke, you knew that his commitment was there and such a gentleman that it set a good example for me to follow.

Let's see. The professors I mentioned earlier were instrumental.

My first father-in-law, Colonel Clyde McBride, who fought in World War II, a West Point graduate. He and I became best of buddies and would go sailing with him. You really saw a part of America that perhaps few folks really get to see about what it takes to maintain a strong country and a strong ethic for society at large. He was that kind of guy, so it was a pleasure being around Colonel McBride.

KAREN: What's your perspective on changes that you've seen in the Service over your career?

STEVE: In my time, I think it became a lot more for lack of a better word, bureaucratic. I found myself just doing things that I didn't feel really added to the mission, not that they were ill intended. Just like the road to hell is paved with good intentions. I didn't see the payoff, especially when we got into a system where we had to account for every hour of our two-week pay period. All these different categories, ABCs, I forget what it was called. It was mind numbing. Like I said, I saw the good intent. It, in my opinion, didn't work. It was a bit of a pain. I was also convinced with my one-year experience on the Hill, that congressmen and senators were not going to pay attention to it. Because they had a different driver. I just thought it was a waste of time. That is just one example. It was the larger bureaucracy and administrative burden that I thought was unfortunate. I'm not sure what it's like now. It probably hasn't changed too much.

KAREN: What led you to decide to retire?

STEVE: I think it was just I'd had my fun. I never took for granted the privilege of having worked for an agency

that I thought did honorable work. Certainly, had some bumps along the way. I don't think you can do anything in a job over a 30-year plus time period without having a few bumps. But it was mostly good stuff. I felt that in all the capacities that I served in, it was very honorable work. I met some tremendous people along the way. Forged some deep friendships and don't take that career for granted one day.

KAREN: Do you have any perspectives on the future of the Service?

STEVE: I don't but I hope that they're able to continue to strengthen their science arm with USGS and all their partners. Continue to implement the landscape scale type of management. I would just hope that what they find in the landscape approach to setting priorities, that they and the fellow agencies, whether its state or federal, can find the financial resources to make those things happen. I know that will always be the challenge. Kudos to them for trying to make it more science based. It started in the '90s when you and I were working together.

KAREN: Since you did work on Capitol Hill with the congressional staff, what do you think the Congress' current perception of the Service may be?

STEVE: I think the current assessment is that it is sort of a back-water agency that doesn't need to be paid attention to. I don't think it's all that respected or appreciated. I say that mainly because of what a little more than a year ago or so when the Interior Solicitor wrote the opinion that the Migratory Bird Treaty Act was only good for direct take. It had no intent to protect birds on the landscape through forestry activity, etc. I was just dumbfounded. Especially in 2018 when it happened, and we were coincidentally celebrating the Migratory Bird 100th anniversary. It sent chills down my spine about what this administration feels about wildlife conservation. I don't like it.

KAREN: What do you think the Service can or should do to change congressional perspectives and funding?

STEVE: I think it sort of goes back to the public. I think, which President was it, maybe it was FDR [Franklin Delano Roosevelt] who said, "If you want something (at the time of the New Deal) you gotta make me do it." Because he knew that he didn't have a magic wand. He finally got the support of the public for the New Deal.

I think the same thing is going on with this administration and any future administration. If the public isn't involved in writing their congressman and their local government, etc., and really letting them know that they care, the politicians will just do what they think is best. But you have to beat on the doors. There are a million ways to do that. Refuges, Visitor Services program, the Estuary Programs, educational efforts, Partners for Fish and Wildlife and what they do on the ground with the farmers, etc., those are the ways to remind people that the environment is our lung. It is what keeps us alive. Good clean water and air and along with that, if you take care of that, you'll have wildlife to enjoy with hunting and fishing with your grandkids and your kids. That defines life for me. I think the public just needs to continue to remember that. The public controls, sort of controls, Congress. (*Laughter*). I say that with some reservation, as we all know. It's just a job that we continue to need to do.

KAREN: Are there any other things you want to get on the record while you've got the microphone?

STEVE: Yes, just one other thing and that is for the young biologists and technicians and administrators that come into the agency. Find a mentor. No matter where you are. Find a mentor who's been around the block

once or twice and listen to them. Because I think that's one of the most important things you can do, is listen. Then you can sort of figure out how the game is played. As a freshman, you're not going to be able to know how to play because it's a big game out there, but listen to the people who have the experience. They can teach you a tremendous amount, well beyond a college course, about how the Fish and Wildlife Service really works.

I think the mentoring program, I know there have been many mentoring programs at the agency. Do it that way. Also, you don't have to get into a program to find a mentor. You can just find that senior biologist or even an administrative person who's been there. Just listen and it might change your perspective on wildlife conservation.

KAREN: Are there any other folks you would recommend the oral history project interview?

STEVE: I saw Bill Haglan downstairs. I don't know if Bill has been interviewed, but he'd be a real good one. You guys know Doug Forsell, who worked in the Chesapeake Bay Field Office. I don't know if Doug has been interviewed.

KAREN: Yes, Libby [Herland] was doing his today.

STEVE: That's great. And then Nancy McGarigal. She has retired this past December. She lives in Colorado now and if you don't have contact with Nancy, she would be a real good one. Bill Zinni, retired. Barry Brady, who is now retired.

KAREN: Do you know where Barry Brady is?

STEVE: He's still in Athol, Massachusetts. I'll give you my phone number and email. You may already have it.

KAREN: I already have that. So, we can get some of these contacts.

STEVE: We can stay connected with that.

KAREN: Well, anything else you want to say?

STEVE: No, I think I'm good. This has been very enjoyable. I think it's awesome that the oral histories are being written for the Fish and Wildlife Service. It gives me hope that we love and appreciate our family.

KAREN: Thank you for taking the time to sit down with me and talk.

STEVE: Thank you, Karen.

KAREN: What else did you want to talk about?

STEVE: There is just one other thing, I'll try to keep it short. I can remember when I was growing in my career with the Service, that sometimes I felt that I wasn't on good footing in my own mind about what needed to be done with a particular decision or priority. I would watch the mentors and other senior people and people like Glenn Kinser and George Breakage with Migratory Birds and John Rodgers, etc., and soon came to fully appreciate the importance of integrity. That when you feel unsure of where you should go, just sit still, take a deep breath. Keep your sights on the wildlife, and the fish, and the biodiversity etc. Make no apologies for making a decision that promotes their conservation. I found that my job was not the political job. I didn't have to

worry about the congressman or the local mayor or people who have different roles in society. My job was to give my bosses the best biological and scientific information I could whether it was in a briefing or a white paper or something of that nature. It was very comforting to me to know that that was my job. I just needed to stick to the biology and the wildlife and the fish. Then I would be okay, and I could sleep at night. The higher-ups - if didn't agree with me or they had to play the political game - I knew that I didn't have to do that. It wasn't my role. So, it was good for me to have learned that lesson.

KAREN: Thanks for adding that. It is important for every employee to think about. Alright, so are we done?

STEVE: We're done.

KAREN: Thanks, Steve.

End of Interview

Key words: coastal environments, estuarine environments, fishing, grants, hunting, international affairs, landscape conservation, legislation, migratory birds, partnerships, planning, water, wildlife refuges