

00:00

(OK. It is July 7th, 2005, and this is an interview with Guy Connolly at his home in Lakewood, Colorado. And this is CD 1. And we will just get started, Guy.)

Well, good morning and welcome to my home.

([laughs] Thank you. I'm gonna ask some questions about, oh, about your growing up, just a little bit. Did you grow up hunting and fishing and trapping?)

I did. I did. Well, not trapping, but hunting. As soon as I was old enough to have a gun and could go hunting, I wanted to do that, even though my family was not much in that line. For whatever reason, I was inclined that way. We grew up in rural Montana, so there was opportunity to do that. It was mostly hunting, hardly ever any shooting or catching anything. It was just going and looking. I would get perhaps one duck all duck season if I hunted all I could. So it was just kid stuff. I was an amateur hunter. I don't do it at all now, however. I pretty much lost interest in that about thirty-five years ago when I started to be more serious about photography. Also I noticed a hearing loss that I thought was made worse by shooting noises, so I quit for those reasons.

01:48

(If your immediate family was not into hunting, who influenced you to do that?)

I don't have an answer to that. I was very much aware of the Lewis and Clark and the explorer and mountain man tradition in the West. We lived on a point overlooking the Yellowstone River, where the Clark part of the Lewis and Clark expedition passed on their return back to St. Louis from the West Coast in 1806, and so I think maybe I was just following in that historic tradition. But my brothers hunted, too, and it was mostly my brothers and I that would do it.

(You have older brothers?)

I have one older and two younger.

(And so you all hunted together?)

Yes, we did.

(OK)

And we had a dog that was given to my dad by his boss who lived in town. The dog was a trained hunting dog, loved to hunt pheasants, but was totally undisciplined. We couldn't keep him from going hunting with us, because he wanted to go so much, he once tore the side out of our barn after we locked him in so that he could go hunting with us. But when he came, we were assured of never getting a chance at anything, because he ran way ahead and scared off all the game before we got within sight of it, let alone shooting range. But that's growing up in Montana.

03:26

([chuckles] Tell me a little bit about your educational background and then your work history.)

OK. I of course went to the public schools. Actually, I was born in Minnesota and we lived there till I was eight years old. I was in the third grade when we moved to Billings, Montana. I continued through the Billings public school system, graduated from Billings Senior High School in 1956. By that time I had developed quite an interest in music, and in high school I took all the music courses I could, just being the path of least resistance. Music was easy for me and not much work and it was fun. So I did as much music as I could.

I then went off to the University of Montana in the fall of 1956 to become a music major. And I did major in music that year at the University of Montana. When I was in that year, at Missoula, my parents moved from Billings to Denver. They wanted me to come to Colorado and go to college closer to home. So I did come down here, and my second year at college was at CU Boulder. I started there as a music major as a sophomore. I did learn quite a lot there, but I don't think it was what the instructors had in mind. What I learned during my one semester at CU as a music major was I did not want to do this for a living. I decided by the end of that first semester that I wanted to return to Montana and major in forestry and wildlife. So to finish out the year at CU, since they didn't have wildlife, I transferred to the engineering school and took the math and chemistry that I would need to go on in forestry.

05:30

As soon as school was out that spring at CU, I hustled back to Montana as quick as I could. And I had already lined up a summer job with the Forest Service as a fire lookout on the Lewis and Clark National Forest in central Montana. And that's what I did that summer and then entered the Forestry School at the University of Montana, Missoula in the fall of 1958. I majored in range and wildlife management, and I graduated from there in June of 1961.

06:08

(What made you change your major from music to forestry?)

Well, the music business [pause] is pretty limited as far as the job opportunities. It's even more so now, but it was limited even then, and a person—if you wanted to make a living as a musician, especially a classical musician, you had to be either a teacher or a performer, and that was about it. Well, I could pretty soon see that I didn't want to be a public school music teacher. I didn't think I had the personality or the inclination for that. And as far as being a professional performer, I knew that I would have to work very hard on my own practicing and so on, and I was not very good at that. I didn't think I had the discipline to do that. So I decided I should do something else. That something else that appealed to me was wildlife management, since I liked to hunt and fish and I liked the outdoors. At that time I thought, too, that I didn't want to live in the big cities, which is kind of where the music jobs are. So those were the things that led me to switch my field of major.

07:37

I will mention, too, that I was on my own financially, making my own way, so I was more highly motivated than some of the rich kids to aim toward some sort of a job that would give me an income. I was fortunate while in college to be selected as a student trainee in the US Fish and Wildlife Service branch of refuges. So my last two summers in college I was a student trainee at the National Bison Range Wildlife Refuge about fifty miles north of Missoula. Then after I graduated from college, that agency gave me a permanent job in eastern Oregon. So right out of school I was a wildlife management biologist, as they called us in those days.

(And that was—your first job was where?)

Well, my first assignment out of school was with a little group that the Fish and Wildlife Service called a range survey crew. They were actually doing plant and forage inventory surveys of the large Western wildlife refuges, the ones that had substantial range land on them where they had livestock grazing in addition to the wildlife values. So I had quite a bit of training in range management as well as wildlife. So it was natural for them to assign me to that crew. It was a three-person crew, two beginners such as myself and then one senior biologist who of course was the supervisor. At the time I joined the crew, they were surveying the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge south of Burns, Oregon. But the crew was headquartered in Lakeview, Oregon, which is pretty close to California. It is the headquarters for the Sheldon and Hart Mountain National Wildlife Refuge, which are dedicated primarily to pronghorn antelope management.

09:52

I only did that job for about fifteen months when a research opportunity came up at the University of California. I was hand-selected, I think, for that position, between my major professor at the University of Montana and the person who became my new boss at the University of California, Dr. Bill Longhurst. So I went to work for Bill Longhurst at the University of California Hopland Field Station in 1962. This was an agricultural field station owned and run by the University. This particular one was about a 5,000-acre sheep ranch, in essence, and it was dedicated to sheep production research and related range management and wildlife management studies. It is on the north coast of California about fifty miles inland from the ocean and about a hundred miles north of the Golden Gate Bridge, a very nice place to live and work. Again, I felt fortunate to be given university housing on the field station as a place to live, for a nominal rent. It turned out to be a very good place to raise children.

11:17

So I worked there for thirteen years, by which time the university decided they would abolish my job and make teaching assistantships out of the money 'cause they could make, I think, three teaching assistantships or research assistantships out of the salary money they were paying me. And that is when I came to work for the ADC program at the Denver Wildlife Research Center.

(Before we get into that, it seemed like you had moved into research at Hopland.)

Yes.

(Explain a little bit about how you felt attracted to research work as opposed to the, like, field work kinds of things you were doing at your other job.)

I don't think at the time I saw that much of a distinction. Both of the jobs that I was concerned with at that time, the Fish and Wildlife Service job in Oregon and then the new one at the University of California, they were both dealing with technician kind of work in the outdoors, collecting data, observing things. I didn't really feel like a researcher when I went there. In fact, the job was really a technician position. But over the years I came to feel more like a researcher, and it was sort of a natural way for me to go. But I never saw a real sharp distinction between research and management, and I think I felt that way pretty much throughout my career. I worked at the Denver Wildlife Research Center, always at the interface between research and

operations. I would—when I was with the research people, I would tell ‘em about the reservoir of talent and expertise that was out there in the field operations that we could take advantage of to our benefit in research, and when I was with the operations people, as I frequently was because they helped on all of my field projects, I would tell them about all the things research had to offer and how the program having its own research unit was a much stronger and more viable program for that reason. That became actually a continual campaign of mine, to get these two parts of the ADC program and later Wildlife Services to really see themselves as part of a larger program.

14:07

(And so you came to work for the Denver Wildlife Research Center when?)

In April 1975. Sam Linhart hired me, actually, in the previous November or December, and I was still working at the University of California. But in April of '75 I left California, moved to Twin Falls, Idaho. My duty station was there at Twin Falls at the wildlife research field station of the Denver Wildlife Research Center. That field station had been established in 1964 for jackrabbit research, because at that time there was an outbreak of jackrabbits in southern Idaho, and research needed to figure out ways to deal with that. The jackrabbit research just barely got geared up to where they could start doing some studies when the ungrateful rabbits all died off and left the station high and dry without very much to work on. Consequently, most of the biologists there—well, there was only two or three, the people there were pretty much transferred away to other places where they were needed more, so that by 1972, when this huge outburst of coyote control research that was stimulated by the 1972 Nixon predicide ban and the ensuing political backlash created a great amount of new research money for predator and livestock-related research and particularly for research in coyote predation on sheep and goats.

16:07

At that time, the research budget at the Denver Wildlife Research Center, that is, the portion of the budget dedicated to predator studies, went from something like \$200,000 in fiscal year '72 to over \$1,000,000 by 1974. Back then, a million dollars was a lot more money than it is now. So that was a five-fold expansion of the funding in a two-year period, which is why there were some job openings there, and I was fortunate enough to be hired into one just at that time when I was looking for a job.

Anyway, the field station in Twin Falls became solely dedicated to predator research. Jackrabbits were forgotten, starting in 1972. That station subsequently existed until 1992, when Roger Nass, the station leader there, retired. At that time the station was closed and the other personnel transferred to either Logan or Hopland, California or to Denver, that is, to other DWRC locations. That's perhaps more than you wanted to know—

17:31

(No, that's fine.)

—about the Twin Falls field station.

(When you were there, what work did you do for them? It was predator, if you could explain that a little bit more.)

Well, there were two kinds of predator studies done by the people at the Twin Falls field station. Roger Nass, the station leader, was also the project leader for the DWRC effort on damage, predator damage assessment studies. So his group spent several years just tracking selected flocks of sheep around the country and documenting all of the losses, to whatever cause. My project, though, had to do with predator damage control methods, the development and testing of new ways of dealing with predation on livestock. The project was headed by Sam Linhart at the Depredations Control Methods Project, as it was called then. And we researched the full gamut of depredation control methods, both lethal and non-lethal. However, I was assigned to the lethal methods part of that project. And actually, my first assignment, and I think the reason I was hired, my first assignment was to take over the ongoing work on the livestock protection collar, which the Center had started shortly before. So my first assignment was actually to carry out a field test that had already been planned in general to take place in North Dakota and elsewhere on the livestock protection collar.

19:25

As it turned out, I did work on the livestock protection collar for quite a few years. I also worked on another control method called the M-44 sodium cyanide ejector. This was more my choice than it was a research assignment. It was just something the program needed done and that I thought I was in a good position to do and should do because the potential payoff to the program in terms of increased performance of the tool was pretty immediate compared to the livestock protection collar, which we knew all along would take years and years of effort and negotiating with the Environmental Protection Agency to ever get it registered. In contrast to that, the M-44 already was registered beginning in the fall of 1975. All we had to do was make it perform up to its potential, and any improvements could be immediately applied in the field without going through any lengthy EPA-type negotiations. So that is the main reason I worked as much as I could on the M-44, trying to get it to work as well as it could for the program. And I think those results were successful, those efforts did pay off.

21:02

(So how long were you at Twin Falls?)

Well, um, I had a time-out, you might say, for about a year, 1985-86, when I was transferred to the headquarters, Fish and Wildlife Service research headquarters in Washington, DC. It turned out that I had no more than got there when Congress transferred the entire program, including the DWRC, away from the Fish and Wildlife Service into the US Department of Agriculture and of course it went into APHIS. So I was in Washington at the time that transfer occurred, a most interesting time to be there. But the new leadership was lobbied by the Western state directors to send me back to research, so they did, so I was enabled to return to Idaho within a few months of USDA taking over the ADC program.

Anyway, I transferred from Twin Falls to Washington, DC in the late summer of 1985, and by the next summer, 1986, I was back in Twin Falls. With, except for that year out, I was in Twin Falls from 1975 until 1989, when I moved to the Denver Wildlife Research Center headquarters here at the Denver Federal Center in Lakewood. At that time I was also made part of the director's office rather than predator research. I was called something like the liaison officer, which is kind of an odd position. The Center has not usually had such a position, and usually when they did have one, it was a transitory thing they'd put somebody in while they were waiting for them to go away. But in my case, there was a concerted effort to work on this

interface between research and operations, to carry the message both directions, so to speak. And so my actual assigned duties were to facilitate that communication between research and operations however I could.

23:46

It turned out that the main way we did that was for me to be assigned to various projects to work on with operations people. The largest single project of that type was the programmatic animal damage control and environmental impact statement, which I was assigned to work on from 1987 through 1994, when it finally was completed. That was sort of like a seven-year-long troubleshooting assignment. I also was deputized to represent research on the program's management information system, MIS, working group, and I did serve on that for seven or eight years. I was once assigned, just as an extra duty, to supervise the Pocatello Supply Depot, and so I was kind of an extra hand there to take on whatever special projects might come along that nobody else wanted to do, I guess is the way it worked out. I worked wherever I could be of use to the program, either to the research center or the operations program. And I continued in that capacity until I retired in 1997, which I did because the center was then moving from Lakewood to Fort Collins, and all of us then working at Lakewood for the Wildlife Research Center had the option to move or not. You could move, quit, or, if you were eligible, retire. And since I was eligible to retire, I did that rather than move to Fort Collins.

25:42

(I want to back up just a moment to your Washington, DC job. What were you supposed to do there, even though it may not have turned out that way?)

Well, I was sent there as part of the Division of Wildlife Research in the Fish and Wildlife Service. And my actual job was to do those things needed by animal damage control research at the headquarters. Much of that was doing the routine negotiations with EPA on pesticide registrations, experimental use permits, and that type of thing. And I did do that job. That was the main thing I went for. And I did continue that assignment after we transferred to APHIS. [pause] So I was what you call a staff officer at the headquarters. I was one of the initial four staff officers in the APHIS ADC new operational support staff. Actually, at that time it was called the National Technical Support Staff. The name was later changed to Operation Support Staff, as it is now. But my job there continued to be to do those negotiations as needed with EPA on pesticide registrations and other things like that.

27:23

(OK. And you retired in 1997.)

Yes.

(What other work did you do for the program after you retired?)

I took on a series of I guess I would say short-term assignments that in the aggregate didn't amount to anything close to full-time work. I did some training courses, livestock protection collar and M-44 training, for various state programs, like Idaho and Oregon, Nebraska. And then still later, I took on some writing assignments that various individuals in the program wanted done. I worked on two substantial projects on the history of those very control methods I had researched in previous years: compound 1080 and the sodium cyanide ejector, the M-44, and its

ancestor, the coyote-getter. Those assignments resulted in publications, and since I finished the 1080 history—it was published in 2004—that was actually my last project for the program.

(Do you have any other ones in the works?)

I have nothing on the horizon right now. The only work-type thing at the moment that's pending is, I need to get with the American Sheep Industry editors and help them select some of my coyote and sheep photos that they want to use in a new publication of theirs.

29:24

(And you did a lot of photography while you worked for NWRC.)

I did, and it was never an assignment. It was just something I did because I could see it was important to documenting not only the progress of research but the results and to prepare for presenting it to interested parties. Curiously, to me, photography was never a job requirement for any of our Center's wildlife biologists, and yet those who did it really made substantial contributions over and above the regular research they carried out. It's always been kind of a curiosity to me that the individuals who did photography in addition to their regular work never got any particular extra pay or recognition for that. But those were very significant contributions.

(Yes, very much so. In your work with NWRC, what type of trapping did you do?)

Well, none. I never worked on traps. My project did a little work on the tranquilizer trap tab, which is an attachment for the steel foothold trap such that if you catch a coyote in one or other predator, rather than laying there in misery till the trapper comes back to check his trap, the predator will chew that trap tab and swallow some of the tranquilizer in it and thereby be calm. The object is of course to reduce the pain and suffering. We did a little work on traps from that angle, but I wouldn't say I ever did any kind of a significant project that involved traps or trapping. Some of my fellow scientists did, like Bob Philips, for instance, did quite a bit of work on the redesigned foothold trap, again, aimed at getting a more humane trap than what the standard in use was.

31:53

(However, you had quite a few interactions with operations trappers.)

I did have, because all of the field testing I did with the livestock protection collar or the M-44 was always done some place in the West where there was an ongoing problem with coyotes in somebody's sheep or goats. The field people in operations were, I would say, the key to getting lined up with those ranchers to conduct studies on their place. So every field test that we did was on some private ranch where one of the program's operational trappers was working. The project was always done with the advice and assistance of that person. And I worked that way a lot in Idaho, Montana, and Texas, and to a lesser extent in a couple other states.

(Did you enjoy those interactions?)

Very much so. Very much so. I never met a government trapper that I couldn't learn something from. I was very impressed at the range of abilities and interests that you would find these people to have.

33:22

(Can you give me an example?)

Well, [pause] there's a good story that goes with one of the trappers who I never personally worked with, but I understand you're going to interview, Odon Corr. I think this story is tied with Odon Corr. My memory is to the point where I don't trust it any more. But anyway, the story is that Odon was working on a place where coyotes were killing sheep, and there was a coyote den nearby. Rather than kill those coyotes, as perhaps would have been the normal and logical first thing for most of us to think of, this gentleman, whether it was Odon or somebody else, left those coyotes alone. He knew they were not the ones doing the damage. And so he was tracking the problem individuals in a different direction to some other location farther away where he did catch and kill them, by whatever method, I'm not sure. But this is an example of what I'm talking about. Our field individuals were not motivated just to kill coyotes. They were interested in stopping damage and were interested in doing so actually by killing the fewest number of coyotes that they had to. They mostly realized, as I did with my research experience, that if you have coyotes in the sheep, they're not necessarily killing them. And if you can exercise enough self-control—if you have coyotes and sheep together and there's no damage going on, it's better to let that situation alone rather than kill those coyotes. Because whenever you take those coyotes out, they're replaced by other coyotes who might be more inclined to kill livestock than the original ones were. So in general I was very impressed by the tendency among many of the field people I worked with to focus on stopping that damage rather than just killing the predators.

35:43

(Well, it sounds like you had such really good experiences most of the time with operations trappers. Was there anything that you found difficult in working with the trappers?)

Um, not with the individual trappers. But I did find amongst the operational leadership real resistance in some states to having any research people in there working in their state or with their people. Generally this was the result of some bad prior experience they'd had with some other biologist, maybe somebody from the DWRC or maybe someone else. But I did encounter resistance in certain states, especially early on in my career. I did encounter resistance to them working with us. I also encountered some of my fellows at the Denver Wildlife Research Center who really didn't like to work with operations either. So there was resistance on both sides to research and operations working together when I started. It has gotten better over the years. I think now the climate for cooperative efforts is much better than it was thirty years ago when I came to the DWRC.

37:21

(And it sounds like the resistance was at a higher level than on the ground level.)

That's the way it seemed to me. Of course, everyone perceives it in relation to their own experience. There's also a lot of individual variation amongst the individuals at the ground level, and some are of course more interested in new ideas and new research than others. So I tended to gravitate to those individuals who did want to work with research, and I would say that we got along pretty well. But yes, there were the other kind, too. We also have the same type of individual in the Research Center that would never try to cooperate with such a practical person

as an ADC trapper. So it's not somethin' that you would pin on the operations field force and nobody else. It's just that regardless where you're working and who you're working with, some individuals are more open than others to cooperation.

38:39

Also, I found quite a difference in attitude. When I came from the University of California to the ADC program, I noticed a major difference in attitude and outlook on the world between the two organizations. The University of California, you looked outward, and when you had a research problem, you looked to whoever you might find some help and some common energy that could be directed toward workin' on the problem. In particular with coyotes and sheep, the University of California, and universities generally, have pretty strong agricultural extension departments. The extension people are in touch with the farmers of all types, including livestock producers. And those are the natural places you go to to get some contacts if you—say you need a ranch where coyotes are killing sheep where you want to do some studies. In contrast to that, I found that when I came to the Denver Wildlife Research Center, you would look outward only as a last resort. You would do whatever you could to avoid any contact with anybody outside the organization. I didn't really accept that as a constraint, but that seemed to be the prevailing attitude when I joined the Research Center.

40:16

(What other changes did you see in general at NWRC in your time there?)

Uh [pause] I saw what to me is an alarming decline in the number of field research biologists that were good at working with the general public and with the operations side of the program. We have—it seems to me we have many fewer scientists now who are good at that and who are recognized outside the Center with the public that matters, the taxpayers, as being good at that. One of the best, just by way of example, I would say, is Richard Dolbeer. But twenty years ago, we had a dozen or twenty people that were pretty good at working with the general public, with other agencies, with ranchers, farmers, airport managers, whoever it was that we needed to get with on a joint problem. We had I think many more people that were good at that than we have now.

41:40

On the other hand, I realize this is all a perception thing, and maybe I just don't know the current young crop of researchers at the NWRC. I've been retired for eight years now, and I don't have too much contact with anybody up there any more, other than yourself. So maybe that new young blood is really out there and I just don't know it. I have been really impressed when I've gone to operational field meetings at the caliber of young people that keep coming into the program at the starting levels and working up. I think based on those kind of observations that the future of the program is in pretty good hands.

(And you're talking more about operations?)

Just because I've seen more of them. I'm assuming and hoping maybe the same thing is true in research. But I have seen or perceived—again, maybe it's only my perception, but since the group moved to Fort Collins, I've seen a certain cadre of staff at the NWRC that wants to operate like, more like an ivory tower institution at the university and kind of shut themselves away from

the larger world and the general public, where the wildlife damage problems are. And of course, I don't think that's in the long-term interest of the program, or even of those individuals.

43:19

(Because you have had so much interaction with operations trappers over the years, what attitudes, public attitudes, did you see change regarding trapping in that time?)

The biggest change that I've perceived during my I would say forty years that I've been involved with wildlife damage management-type research and operations is within the wildlife profession itself. It used to be that animal damage control, wildlife damage management, was something that no "real" wildlife biologist would stoop to doing. We were more up in the clouds with rare and endangered species preservation, producing fish and deer and quail for people to hunt, more than real wildlife management. But over the years, there's come to be I think general acceptance within the wildlife management profession that wildlife damage management is a necessary and integral part of the field of wildlife management, as it certainly is. I perceive the situation now to be one where wildlife damage management is just the opposite side of the coin from endangered species protection. Whenever a species gets alarmingly rare or scarce or endangered, there's a whole battery of work needed to restore those populations and keep 'em from going extinct. The opposite side of the coin is the species that get too abundant or too troublesome in certain locales, whatever it may be. Wherever you have too many of a kind of animal and they're doing things that people don't like, then you have animal damage management or wildlife damage management. These are just really two facets of the same profession, and I think the larger wildlife management profession sees it more in that light now than they did thirty or forty years ago.

45:54

I also noticed when I started workin' for the ADC program and when I was going to college, majoring in wildlife management, and I was interested primarily in big game, like deer and antelope and elk, I noticed that at that time the university professors in wildlife by and large did not think much of predator control or animal damage control. They didn't think that we needed any. But I came to realize the reason we didn't need any was because we already had it all over the place and these guys didn't know it. But we did have effective coyote control going on across the West forty years ago, and so these people in the universities that were actually divorced from that field activity, I'm sure they realized that it was going on, but they did not realize that the predator and rodent control people were actually doing some good out there for the deer and antelope populations, and that was the reason we didn't need more of it.

Of course, many of them have changed their views over the years, as animal damage control activities became more and more limited after the toxicants went away and the control activities of our program consequently were tied ever more closely to actual livestock damage situations. Well, the deer and antelope and grouse and everything else that was living any place there was not livestock, they were no longer bein' protected by the program, and sometimes that showed up in population reductions. But it's kind of hard to generalize on this subject, because almost nowhere do you have firm wildlife population estimates over time that you can really rely on to give you a statistical measure of the trend and so on. Most of what we have is subjective impressions of various field people, wildlife biologists or game wardens or whatever, ranchers and so on, and of course those have some limits on the utility.

48:27

(With all your interactions with trappers, operations trappers, what was the funniest thing that ever happened to you in a cooperative situation?)

Well, [pause 7 sec.] I don't really have a big repertoire of funny incidents at my fingertips. But one of the funniest things that I remember happened when we were embarking on studies in Texas on the livestock protection collar. This didn't involve a trapper. I know you wanted to know about a trapper. This particular case was a rancher who wanted some government trappers working on his place, on his ranch. And he wanted 'em so bad he would come over where we were workin' and lie to us about how bad the coyotes were. He was callin' 'em "superdogs." He used to tell us about the superdogs killin' his sheep, and "They killed six last night." So we asked him, "Well, could we come over and look at the bodies?" "Well, no, because they ate 'em completely up." Anyway, this gentleman went on his way soon enough, and who knows what became of him. I can't think right offhand of any really funny episode involving a government trapper.

50:11

(Although that one was interesting because the man really wanted some assistance.)

Well, he convinced himself he had a problem. The primary recipients of his plea for help were me and Dale Wade, who was an extension wildlife specialist at Texas A&M University. And Dale Wade was a very experienced ADC field person. In fact, he was a government trapper himself in South Dakota until he was thirty-five and started going to college. Anyway, we weren't givin' him the time of day. We did have, in this Texas research in particular—the Texas program at that time had a group of, they called them troubleshooters, although on paper they referred to 'em as "mobile forces." These were exceptional individuals who were really good at scopin' out situations and figuring out where the trouble was coming from and then doing whatever it took to shut that off. And it was not necessarily just coyote trouble. It could be beavers or most any kind of wildlife species causing damage.

51:32

Well, we had three of these troubleshooters detailed to help us on the livestock protection collar research down there on the east side of the Texas hill country, workin' in Bosque County and Hamilton County, primarily Bosque County, like, maybe seventy, eighty miles southwest of Forth Worth, Texas is where this was. There's no humor in it, but these gentlemen would go to extraordinary lengths to do whatever it was that we needed 'em to do. I remember it so clearly now because it was such a departure from the reception that I had gotten from ADC operations in places like Wyoming and Idaho. The first time I went to Texas to see about where we might do some of these studies, I first met with the district supervisor and his assistant from Fort Worth, Bud Moon and Jan Lovin were those two individuals.

We were out talkin' to ranchers and lookin' around the country and they said, "Well, we understand you might need some help, so if there's anything you need us to do, just let us know and we'll do it." That was quite a radical departure from what I'd experienced elsewhere. Then a couple days later I was talkin' to some of the individual trappers, and again, "Well, whatever you need us to do, we'll do it." Well, in about a week, I was in the state office, in San Antonio. I was talking with the then-new state director, Don Hawthorne, and his equally new assistant director, Gary Nunley. Both of those gentlemen said, "Well, just let us know what you need, and we'll do

it.” Well, then I could see where these people at the field were gettin’ their ideas from. But the Texas program, this was 1979, at that time they were on the top of the heap as far as giving aid and assistance to any kind of research that they thought might result in some improved damage control technology some day, even if that day was in the future a ways. They were among the best to work with that I encountered anywhere in my travels. I know that’s off your topic, and I apologize for that.

54:21

(No, it’s just fine.)

We had—well, another amazing situation that kind of falls in the category of anecdotes, we have one individual workin’ in ADC operations now, he worked in research most of his career, but this individual walked away from nine helicopter crashes. Five of those were in Vietnam, but four of ‘em were in ADC operations. Actually, three of ‘em were in research, helicopter crashes when he was flyin’ around trying to catch coyotes or doin’ something related to research. The gentleman’s name is A.J. Kriwox. This is him. [shows a photo] And he’s now a specialist in the Idaho ADC program, a very good person, good colleague. A.J. and I worked together for a long time. But yeah, he walked away from nine helicopter crashes. And I don’t know of anybody else in research or operations that can say that. Most of the folks probably wouldn’t be so keen to fly again. Actually, though, if you’re gonna have an aircraft accident, your odds of escaping serious injury are much better in a helicopter than in a fixed-wing plane. ‘Cause most of the helicopter things, something fails so you just set down, maybe hard, but it isn’t like you crash at 200 miles an hour into a rock wall or something.

55:58

(What was the most difficult social or political situation that you found yourself in, and how did it get resolved?)

[pause] Well, [pause] I had a case where I was trying to get started in Oregon with a field test of the livestock protection collar. The political forces there were and are pretty extreme against any kind of animal killing, especially with toxicants. But there also are a lot of sheep ranchers there that felt, and I think still feel, rightfully, that some predators have to be killed in order for them to sustain their operations. Well, we—I made inquiries about doing field studies in Oregon. This was around 1980, ’79 perhaps. And I did this partly because this gentleman right here, A.J. Kriwox, had come from the Oregon program. He had left the field operations program in Oregon to come work for us at Twin Falls as a technician in research. But he had a lot of contacts over there and knew a lot of ranchers and knew the ADC field forces. In my mind, that was a natural connection to take advantage of those contacts if we could to do some viable research. So I started inquiring about it. “Well, yes, you should come over here and do this.” So we started negotiatin’ with EPA to get the state of Oregon added to our experimental permit. We could only work in areas previously authorized by EPA.

58:01

Well, first thing you know, the opposition got wind of the situation, and I think the way it was, the Oregon State Department of Agriculture gave us a permit to do some studies. We had to negotiate these permits both at the state level and at the federal level with EPA. Oregon Department of Agriculture was the state level counterpart of the national EPA, I guess. So they gave us a permit. Then they started getting lobbied by the people who didn’t like ADC. The first

thing you know, they didn't want us to come to Oregon after all. They didn't want to rescind the permit, because they didn't want to give the livestock industry grounds for, you know, criticism based on their caving in to the environmentalists, although that's what they were doing.

Well, so to take them off the spot, I just voluntarily withdrew my application to work there. We were just a small project, basically A.J. and I and Dick Burns part of the time, and so we couldn't work too many states at once, and we were exploring not only Oregon but Texas and did ultimately go to Texas. So we forgot Oregon because of the politics over there and we went to work in other states.

59:51

Well, then, it wasn't too many months where the political winds shifted again and all of a sudden they really wanted us to come back to Oregon. So by then, we were committed in Texas and Montana, and I didn't feel like we had any more time that we could spend any place else, because all these places are many miles apart, you know. So we never did go do that research in Oregon. But that's an example of a difficult situation. It kind of comes with the territory when you do our kind of research. Anything that involves controversy, you have to deal with it however you can. And sometimes dealin' with that controversy is harder than actually performing the research. But in realizing that, I'm just saying it's just like all the rest of wildlife management. The people part of it is the hard part. The technical wildlife part, that's the easy part, even though that's where most of your planning and your training is dedicated. Really the hardest part of it is the people part. So I'm not sure if that's what you wanted to know.

61:23

(Oh, no, that's good.)

[chuckles]

(That's good. What will trapping and wildlife management be like in the future, do you think?)

[pause] Well, trapping is already almost gone, as far as any kind of a viable economic activity. The whole continent of North America was settled by white folks in the beginning based on the fur industry that was here an' that was trapped or shot or harvested for fur. And it's really hard to conceive of such a thing happening, looking back at it now. You have an immense territory with very few people living here, terrific fur resources, and those fur resources became the basis for all the initial exploration by European people, who were the forerunners of European settlers. You perhaps didn't intend for me to go back that far, but I think goin' from where we are now, we're gonna see less trapping for fur and recreation but more for damage control or damage abatement. Wildlife management we'll continue to see, but I think it'll be supported at a lower level than it has been in the past. I think in the operations program, we're gonna see fewer professionals on the ground, and the fewer who are there are gonna be more highly trained. I think it'll become the norm for most of the professional ADC people to be college graduates. And I don't think it's the norm now.

63:26

So there's gonna be some tradeoffs there. We've already seen—in the last twenty years, we've seen a big tradeoff in the operations between the actual doing of damage control work versus the recording of that activity in that system they call the MIS, the management information system.

We have found that the records of the activity are more and more important all the time, because they do document what the program does. And the field individuals have been forced to spend more and more of their time doing recordkeeping and less and less on actual damage control work. Not a good tradeoff, and yet we probably have no choice in the matter. What concerns me more is the corresponding shift in emphasis on qualifications and performance evaluation and everything. We don't value as much as we did a person whose real expertise is with the animals and dealing with the damage problem. We value more the person whose records look the best and who are conversant in recordkeeping and related computer skills. And so the actual animal management skills that was our basis to exist in the first place, I think those are being deemphasized in favor of the more mundane but of course necessary recordkeeping and office-type skills. I don't particularly like that tradeoff, but I don't see what we could do to avoid it.

65:35

(Speaking of recordkeeping, you have collected many records of the program over the years, and I know this because we talk and exchange records.)

Sure, sure.

(What is your interest in those kinds of records, in keeping that material?)

Well, of course it depends on exactly what the record is. But I have always had a sense of the history of the program being important. So any record or document I've seen passing by that I thought conveyed or captured part of that history I thought was worthy of preservation. So I have just been a sticky-finger type of individual who has held onto those things over the years, even though most people were maybe glancing at those and then throwing them away. I think the history of the program is really important to document and preserve, because, you know, that's where we came from. In research in particular, there's another reason to be aware of your history, and that is to help you avoid reinventing the wheel or repeating studies that somebody else did thirty years ago and maybe you don't even know about 'em.

An example is, in our own Center, in recent years, some folks have been doing studies in relation to deer browsing of trees and vines. They've been doing studies on the turpene content, say, of commercial forest trees. Well, similar studies were done at the University of California in the mid-'60s. Those did not lead to development of viable repellants, which kind of was the ultimate goal, I think, at the time, nor have the current ones. But there was some repeating of the effort.

I really love finding reference in our old Center's reports to ongoing activities that our current generation thinks maybe we thought of them. An example I'll give is in relation to beaver damage control, which is more of a problem in the US right now than most people realize. The public mindset in relation to beavers is still back there with, "Well, the fur trappers wiped them out back in the early 1800s." But the truth is, the beavers have come back rather well and are rather numerous a lot of places. They do a lot of damage in various places. Rather than just kill the beavers, which we often do and need to do and it is the right thing to do, but there are occasions when rather than killing the beavers you might trap them and relocate them to some place where we want beavers to work and help us restore stream habitat.

Well, so some of our colleagues not too many years ago were getting credit for doing this very thing in Oregon. Rather than killin' these beavers that were doin' damage, we were catching

them and takin' them up to these ranchers that want 'em reintroduced into the high country to restore those mountain meadows, you know, with building dams to back up that water table and rejuvenate those meadows. And so we were even havin'—those ranchers were havin' to pay us \$150 a pair or something for the beavers we brought 'em.

69:47

Well, I found one of the old reports from the Denver—as it was known then, the Wildlife Research Laboratory, from I think 1937. We were doin' that very thing. We were catchin' beavers places where we didn't want them, or didn't want as many, and removing them to other places where we wanted some more. So that's an example of a new concept that maybe wasn't so new after all.

(How many of your records do you think—or are there a lot that deal with trapping that you've collected over the years?)

Well, there are some. But I think most of 'em do not relate to that. And that's largely because I personally never worked much on trapping. Most of the records I've retained have to do with pesticide studies, livestock protection collar, and that sort of thing. But I do have a lot of records of animals taken by traps in various places in various years. I don't think there's anything unique about these records. They have 'em all at the headquarters. But I would say most of mine do not deal with traps. I do have some folders, though, on traps and tranquilizer trap tabs and that sort of thing.

71:21

(Well, I have come to the end of my questions. Do you have anything you'd like to add?)

Well, I can't think what it would be, other than just a note of thanks to you for embarking on this project. It's maybe at least thirty years overdue. But anything you can do, or the Center in general, or the program in general can do to capture and preserve its history I think is well worth doing. Because I think it's an area that's been rather neglected over the years. An example of it is my own records that you're speaking of. As you mentioned, I have collected all these records over the years, and documents. Well, when I retired, I could have thrown 'em away. I could've given them to the archives, as I did, a lot of them, as you know. I could've passed them on to some other scientist or done anything I wanted with 'em. The NWRC leadership had no interest whatever in what happened to my stuff, as it were. Of course I've retained these things because I believe they have value. And I still have quite a few records here in the house that I intend will go to you in due time. But I think the Center needs to do a better job than it has at dealin' with this institutional history. And I know that you're interested in that and this project is part of it, so I commend you for doing that.

73:15

(Thank you. I actually did think of one other question while you were talking and that had to do a little bit with records, but brought me back to your experiences with operations, well, and history. Last fall, when I asked you to speak on a panel about your work at NWRC, one of the things that you said at the end was, I think it was at the end, was that you wondered if you would have been a little bit happier in your work in the operations area, that perhaps in some ways that's where your inclination lay, a little bit more than research. Could you explain that a little bit more?)

Well, it's a little hard to talk about, because I really never thought about this over the years. I was just doing what I was ever doing. But I did notice in my last years, before I retired and since then, that I seemed to be more appreciated amongst the operations part of the program than amongst research. Also in my late years, I had some personal successes at managing problems that were given to me to manage that involved people management rather than resource issues. And there was some satisfaction in dealing with that. So I came to feel about the time I retired that maybe I really would have been more of a people person than I ever perceived, you know, all those years when I was actually doing the work. I don't know if that gets at your question. But that was kind of my perception of it.

75:07

I also, though, have observed the careers of quite a few individuals who have worked both in research and in operations. Generally, these folks started in research and then later transferred to operations. I could tell you some names if you want and give you more particulars. But what I've noticed is that in all the cases known to me, those individuals did better for themselves paywise and gradewise and did more service for the program once they got into operations than they were accomplishing in research. So that's part of what I had in mind when I said that.

(OK. I was just curious about that. Well, as I said, I think that's it for my questions.)

OK.

(So we will conclude this interview with Guy Connolly. This is Nancy Freeman as the interviewer. And thank you very much, Guy.)

You're welcome. Thank you for coming today.

76:10 End of interview.