

00:00

(This is CD #1 of a interview with Warren Moore on October 5th in Soda Springs, Idaho. We will just get started here, Warren.)

I'm kind of hear of hearin', so I'll get to where I can—

(OK. What is your educational background?)

Well, I got a eighth-grade education, then I got a high school in the military, and then I went four years to veterans agricultural school after the war.

(Where was that?)

That was here. The agricultural school was here.

(Oh.)

But the military was in Camp Roberts, California.

(Where did you grow up?)

Out in Bailey Creek, it's out here four miles. It's where I was born and raised, and that's where I grew up.

(So outside of Soda Springs?)

Four miles outside of Soda.

01:04

(And so when did you go into the service?)

Uh, February the 15th, '43, 1943.

(How old were you?)

19.

(Were you drafted or did—?)

Yeah, drafted.

(Drafted?)

Yea.

(So you got out of high school, pretty much, and went into the service?)

Yeah. Mm-hmm.

(Where were you stationed?)

Well, I went to Guadalcanal first. We went to New Caledonia first, and then Guadalcanal, and they'd just taken Guadalcanal, and I was with the 25th division, and they went to Vella LaVella and took that island for an air base for Pappy Boyington and his Black Sheep squadron. And I didn't know that till I got home. But we took that island.

01:54

And then I came back to Guadalcanal and went to New Zealand to get over jungle rot and malaria, and then from there we went back to New Caledonia and from there to the Philippines. I was in combat for five and a half months straight in the Philippines.

(Wow! And this was the army?)

Yeah, the 25th infantry division.

(And you were in World War II for how many years?)

Three. Three years.

(Wow. And then you came—what did you do after the service?)

I came back here. 'Course I had a wife and a daughter, so I went to work in a mine out here. That was the highest-paid job around here. I worked five and a half years. But it wasn't good for my health, so I had to get a job outdoors. So I leased a ranch out here and worked part-time for the Fish and Game Department on depredation, elk and deer and beaver. And then I went to work for the government, worked 20 years as a government trapper.

02:54

(And you worked for Idaho Fish and Game?)

Idaho Fish and Game Department.

(For how long?)

Well, I worked 13 years part-time, but ever since then I've done their depredation work for 'em. Still am, for that matter.

(And so when did you start with Wildlife Services? At that time it was Fish and Wildlife.)

Yeah, it was Department of the Interior at that time. Well, it was July the 1st, 1964.

(And did you work in—what area did you work in?)

Well, five counties in southeast Idaho.

03:40

(When you worked for the government, did you also work for Fish and Game, or did you—?)

No, no. At that time it was just the Department of Interior.

(So they were separate?)

They called it animal damage control at that time.

(When you started work in 1964 for the government, what did you do? What kind of work did you do?)

Well, our main object was to protect the sheep herds, because the sheep men was payin' about 80% of our wages and expenses. So when they had problems with coyotes or bear or whatever, why, our job was to stop 'em.

(And did you grow up hunting and trapping and fishing?)

I sure did.

(Did you?)

I started trapping when I was five years old, during the Depression. 'Cause my dad died when I was 11 months old and left Mother with eight kids. I was the youngest. So at that time, there was no work, no jobs, you know, during the Depression.

(Did someone teach you how to trap?)

Well, somewhat, yeah, there was an old trapper here that trapped coyotes, taught me how to catch coyotes at that time.

05:01

(What did you catch when you were five?)

Weasels, mostly. [laughs]

([laughs])

And muskrats.

(And then you graduated up to coyotes?)

Yeah.

(Did you sell the furs?)

Yeah.

(Is that what you did?)

Yeah.

05:17

(When you started here for the government, you worked mainly with the sheep men?)

Yes, 'cause they was payin' the biggest part of our wages and expense at that time.

(What mainly animals did you work with?)

Coyotes, mostly, was the big problem, coyotes. [pause] And the summer coyotes are a lot different to trap than they are now, you know, 'cause they're not hungry, and it took special skills to catch them ol' coyotes that was killing' lambs out in the mountains in the summertime. And the sheep men would pack way back in the mountains, and when they'd have trouble, why, they'd tell the guy that owned the sheep, and they'd tell me and I'd have to take my horse and ride back in there and trap the coyotes.

06:08

(So you had to pack in?)

Well, I didn't pack in, I'd ride in and out. Take all day, but—and most of that was on both sides of Tin Cup, in those high mountains, and then Caribou Mountain, you saw it over there. I had all of Caribou Mountain.

(So would you go into the mountains for a few days and come home?)

No, I'd just ride in and back, 'cause most of the pack calves was within three miles, two miles.

(And so did you have to take supplies in with you?)

Take the what?

(Supplies?)

No, no, all the stuff—I had to take traps and all the stuff it took to set the traps, and a rifle.

(And then you'd stay at the sheep camp?)

Well, I'd meet the herder there at the sheep camp, and he'd show me where the kills was, and then I'd set traps for the coyotes or bear. I took—the 20 years I worked out there, I took nine bear that had killed sheep.

(Is that a lot?)

Yeah, for that country, it's quite a bit, 'cause the trapper that's out there now, that took my place, he hasn't got a bear yet. [laughs] 'Cause nobody's taught him how to really set for 'em, you know.

07:21

(So there's not many bear in this part of Idaho?)

There's quite a few, in those Tin Cup mountains and over on Caribou.

(But they weren't doing much damage to the sheep?)

Well, they'd kill three or four and then they'd fill up, and then when they got hungry, why, they'd come back and kill again. And then mountain lions, I took one mountain lion in the 20 years I worked out there. At that time there weren't many mountain lions. Now there's lots of 'em, a lot of mountain lions.

(What do you think is the difference?)

Fish and Game wouldn't let the people kill 'em, and then they just multiplied. They've just increased all over this country.

08:06

(How would you trap bear?)

Well, they'd kill some sheep, see. You'd find a pine tree about this big, close, put the sheep in there, and then you had to build a pen out of sticks and poles and stuff, about, oh, I'd say, three feet high, and then put a roof on it. Then we'd set the snare—I caught one bear in a bear trap, and then they took them away from us and gave us the foot snares, which was a lot better. Then you'd put poles like this and like this and set the snare right here where when the bear stepped over the pole, he stepped into the snare.

(You'd put the snare in the middle of that enclosure?)

So there wasn't any place for him to step but where the snare was, and it'd catch him around the wrist like this and didn't hurt him, really. They'd just pull back and look at me. [chuckles]

(And then you'd shoot 'em? [laughs]?)

Had to, you know, 'cause they was killin' livestock.

09:02

(Sure. Now, describe to me the bear trap that you used before the snares.)

Yeah, when I first started, we had number 15 bear traps, and I used that for one bear, and then a sheep herder got caught in one back in Colorado and got gangrene and died, and this Alridge up in Canada invented this Alridge bear snare, which was a whole lot better than the bear trap, 'cause they didn't hardly weigh nothin', where the old bear trap was 35, 40 pounds, you know?

(And you had to carry that in with you?)

Yeah, in the saddlebags. And I always had to carry a little saw and a bunch of nails and a little hatchet and a lot of wire to set for a bear. And then what we'd do after we put the dead sheep

there, I'd use bacon rind and nail it to the tree and pour honey over it. When the bear got close, why, he'd come to that. This fellow now is not doin' that, and that's why he's not getting' the bear. He's gonna have to learn how, you know, to—'cause they had a lot of bear trouble on that side of Tin Cup this summer, and he didn't catch the bear.

(And he's maybe not usin' the right lure?)

10:08

Well, he sets for 'em all right, but they don't come back, 'cause it's so hot in the summertime, you know, that sheep spoil in a hurry, and you need somethin' else there to bring the bear into your snare. But the coyotes, along in July, you know, they kill just for the fun of it, and then in August, they start teachin' the pups how to kill, and that's when you really got to have a good scent.

(So what did you use to get coyotes?)

What kind of scent?

(What kind of trap?)

Well, the number 3Ns that the government furnished us. They don't make 'em any more. But that was their main trap, was the 3N. I'd boil 'em in sagebrush leaves before I'd go out there, you know, so there wasn't no rust on 'em, no smell. And you had to be pretty careful to set 'em. And then we cut glands out of the coyotes and ground 'em up and put coyote urine with 'em, and that was the main scent for summertime. It's a curiosity scent, you know, made the coyote think there was another coyote there.

(How is it different in the winter?)

In the what?

(In the winter how was it different?)

Well, in the winter, you can use a food scent, or food lure. In the summertime they're not hungry, they're not interested in it. 'Course in the wintertime we use the helicopter mostly. At that time we had plenty of money, 'cause this one year, we had an accelerated area, and they had a government guy come out from Washington DC and rode with us, and he wanted to see if the helicopter would work. I had an accelerated area that we flew and flew and cleaned the coyotes out of to see if the helicopter would work.

11:54

(When was that?)

Well, that would have been in January and February, when there was lots of snow.

(When did the helicopters start being used in this area?)

Well, 1973, right after Nixon outlawed our poisons, you know. 1080 was our main tool for coyotes, which was perfectly safe, didn't hurt nothin' but the canine family, but environmentalists made it sound like it killed everything within 12 miles. It didn't. You could cut a steak off of that meat and eat it, and it wouldn't hurt you.

(So you used 1080?)

Used a lot of 1080, yeah.

(For coyote control?)

For coyotes.

(And what would you do with the 1080?)

Put it in sheep. The sheep men'd give us old ewes, pretty good ewes, and we'd split 'em and clean 'em out, you know, and put the 1080 in with a big old needle, just bump it into the meat. It was real deadly to the canine family.

(And you did that in the winter?)

Well, we done it in the fall. We started about this time of year and packed in with a horse and put a whole lot of 'em way back in the mountains and then we had to put up a sign that they was there, and a recording. Then in the spring, when we picked it up, we'd record how much of it had been eaten. The coyotes—it would shut the oxygen off in their bodies, is what it would do. They'd go off a mile or so before they'd die.

(So you found it pretty effective?)

13:22

Oh, yeah, it was the best weapon we had for coyotes. When we lost that, I figured we lost the battle, 'cause it was safe. It wouldn't kill birds. The government made experiments with it on birds, and the birds'd eat a little of it and it'd make 'em sick and they'd quit eatin' it. But it didn't kill 'em. It wouldn't kill a bird of any kind. It was just real deadly to the canine family, especially coyotes.

(So when that tool got taken away, then they started to use helicopters?)

Yeah, and we could still use M44s. You know what they were. Now they've eliminated them on account of the wolves. So all they got now is a gun and a howl, these guys that trap. [laughs]

([laughs])

They're workin' with their hands tied behind their backs, you know, now.

(The M44, when you started, was called the "Coyote Getter," probably?)

Yeah. And a .38 shell in it. It was pretty dangerous. Now they just flip the cyanide into the coyote's mouth, don't use a .38 shell any more. They call them M44s now, but they can't use 'em any more, on account of the wolves.

14:26

(I think in some places they can use them, maybe not here.)

On private ground, private land. If a, I don't know, they still use 'em somewhat on private land.

(And the Coyote Getter was a little dangerous?)

Yeah, if it went off in your face, it only took 3 seconds for that cyanide to kill you if you got it in your mouth, you know, or in your eyes. So when you triggered it, you'd be way over here and trigger it.

(Stand a ways away![chuckles])

Yeah. Downwind from it. [chuckles] But the M44 was safe. You could pull that right in your hand and it wouldn't hurt you.

15:05

(When they started to use the helicopter, had there been much fixed-wing plane use in this area?)

On the desert. They used it in the flat country and the desert. But they can't use it out here on account of the air pockets. It's just too dangerous.

(So in your area, they didn't really use the fixed wing?)

No, we couldn't use it.

(Because you had all these mountains?)

All these mountains.

(And so then you got helicopters in '73?)

Mm-hmm.

(Explain to me how the helicopter worked for coyote control.)

Well, they had a shootin' window over here. The pilot sat over here, and they had a shootin' window over here made of plastic. When you see a coyote, you pull the two things and let it down, poke a shotgun out there, and then he'd get right down on him and you'd shoot him and he'd roll and that was it. One winter they were worth \$100 apiece, and we picked up all we could, you know. The trapper from Montpelier, he didn't want to fly, so he's out here and skinned all them coyotes for \$100 apiece. And we used that money for more flyin'.

16:07

(Did you have certain pilots you worked with?)

I had several different pilots. Two of 'em I turned off, back because they was dangerous. But I had one pilot from—he'd flew two missions in Vietnam and he was from Provo, flew for Skychoppers. He was real good. And then the five years we had the accelerated money out here, I flew with a pilot that had a Hughes 500 from Gooding. Of course it had lots of power, you know, it was a jet. It'd get right down on the coyotes and come right up out of the canyons where the air was bad. But it got so expensive, they can't use it now.

(But there was some money there for a while, the accelerated, you said?)

Yeah, this accelerated money was government money that came from the government because they wanted to check and see if the helicopters really worked. That only happened one winter. Now the sheep men have to kick in if they—they can't do much flyin', 'cause it's really expensive and they have to spend most of—they get a little bit of federal money, but our federal money lately has all been goin' for wolf control, since the wolves got here, killin' livestock.

(Were there any wolves here when you were trapping?)

No. No. I had enough problems without wolves. [laughs]

17:29

([laughs] So back to the helicopter. You said you had a couple pilots that didn't work out.)

Yeah. The state supervisor told me, "If you're not satisfied with 'em ..." One of 'em flew so high, you know, he flew in Los Angeles for traffic control, and he was so high, the coyotes looked like they was an inch long, and you couldn't kill them, you know. And another one just didn't have enough experience. And he hit the ground a couple of times and I sent him home.

(Did he hit the ground with you in the—?)

Yeah. Not hard, you know, but lost control when we was low. He wasn't used to low-altitude flyin'. But the others really knew what they was doin'. This fellow I flew with for five years from Gooding, that had the 500 Hughes, I told him he didn't fly that helicopter, he just wore it.

(He what?)

Wore it. He was real good. He could put you right on the—we never lost a coyote with him.

(Did you have any close calls in the helicopter?)

No.

(Really!)

No, I was lucky, I guess.

(Yeah, that's very good.)

A thousand hours

(A thousand hours?)

Yes, I flew a thousand hours in a helicopter.

(Did you like it?)

I enjoyed every minute of it. [laughs] Yeah, I really enjoyed it.

(You liked the helicopter, huh? And you had told me that you got how many coyotes in the helicopter?)

Three thousand. I shot 3,000 coyotes from '72 to '84, when I retired.

19:01

(So you were flying for that long?)

Yeah, all the winters. We flew in the winter. We didn't fly in the summer, 'cause you couldn't find the coyotes. Just through the winter when it was snow and we could track 'em and find 'em.

(I talked to a lot of people about fixed-wing flying. When they first started out in the fixed wing, they didn't have a lot of safety equipment. How was it in the helicopter when you started in the '70s?)

Oh, I think it was perfectly safe as far as I was concerned.

(Did you have a radio?)

Yeah, we had a radio, we could talk back and forth to the pilot. We wore earphones and a big—well, the same helmet that the Air Force pilots wear, you know, that same—with the earphones. I could talk to the pilot. And then he had a radio to anywhere, everywhere.

(Did some of the safety precautions change, the times that you were flying, from '70 to '80?)

No, not that I know of. They had several killed out of state, they killed some in Colorado and one in Utah, but Idaho seemed to be safe, anyway. I was lucky, anyway. But I wasn't scared. I enjoyed it. They had a million-dollar insurance on me, if I'd'a got killed. [laughs]

([laughs] You had a million-dollar insurance, huh?)

Insurance, the helicopter company had that on you.

20:30

(Well good! [laughs])

My first wife died of cancer 20 years ago, and I told ‘em not to tell her, she’d shoot us down.
[laughs]

([laughs])

What we’d do, the sheep men’d bring us some old sheep and stuff, and we’d hook ‘em on a hook under the bottom of the helicopter and fly ‘em out on a ridge and drop ‘em. And then in a week we’d go back and the coyotes’d all be in there eatin’ on this sheep, and then we could just fly around and shoot the coyotes. And then if there was elk kills, dead elk or dead moose or somethin’, there’d be a lot of coyotes around that.

(So that’s how you tracked them?)

Yeah, you’d track ‘em in the snow. This range job here is Rollin’ Hills, is where the sheep come off of the desert. They come there first. They’re around the 1st of May. Then 1st of July they go to the forest till the middle of September, and then back here, and then back to the desert to winter, the biggest part of ‘em.

21:34

(So you kind of followed the sheep?)

Yeah. Wherever there was havin’—in the wintertime, it was just control, you know.

(But in the summer it was more protection?)

In summertime, it was just, it kept us busy takin’ care of our trouble calls, you know.

(Were you gone a lot from home? How did that work?)

Well, I stayed out in Grays Lake. You came through Wayan. I had five acres there that I stayed—the first five or six years, I stayed over on Lane’s Creek. It’s above Tin Cup there on an old Forest Service—there was an office there and they done away with it. I stayed there, and then I bought five acres in Wayan. I had the sheep all the way around me. That’s where I stayed through the week, and then come home here through the weekend.

(Oh, ok, so you were gone during the summer, particularly?)

Yeah, the whole time the sheep were out in the forest, I was out there during the week.

(And in the winter, did you go out as much for those days at a time?)

No.

([chuckles])

I didn’t stay in the wintertime, only right here. [chuckles]

22:45

([laughs] Because you were living here in Soda Springs?)

Yeah, we did stay once in a while over in Aspen, Wyoming, 'cause the Wyoming line, you know, comes close to Idaho there. And when we'd work over there, there was a few nights we stayed in a motel over in Aspen. Otherwise I was stayin' here.

(Well, it probably was kind of nice to stay in a motel, as opposed to what you were doin' in your other places, kind of campin' out?)

Yeah. That helicopter, that jet helicopter'd fly 140 mile an hour, so if you wanted to go somewhere, it didn't take long to get there. [laughs]

([laughs] Just drop you off, huh?)

Yeah. They had baskets on both sides of the helicopter, and when the coyotes were worth a lot of money, why, he'd just hover, you know, and I'd grab the coyote and throw it in the basket.

(Wow!)

Then we'd come in and land in my backyard. There wasn't any trees there then, and this other trapper, he'd drag 'em up and spend all day skinnin' coyote.

(So you'd land in your backyard! [chuckles])

Yeah. That's where we had all them trees back there.

23:49

(And then you said that the money was used, was put back into the program from the furs?)

From the furs.

(That must have been in the fur boom in the late '70s?)

Yeah, they'd sell this fur in Pocatello. They'd have a big sale there every March, and they'd have the fur from all the states all around us there, and buyers'd come from all over and bid on this fur, and then the highest bidder'd get it, and then the money would go to the Caribou Wool Growers, they called it here, and that money would go for our wages or more flyin' or whatever.

([pause] So you worked in this district?)

Yeah, five or six counties around here.

(For how long did you do that?)

Well, 20 years.

(And then retired?)

I retired July the 1st, '84.

(And then did you do any work for the government after that?)

No, I went back to work for Fish and Game, did depredation work for them.

(How was that different than your work for the government?)

Well, the government was strictly predators. Fish and Game was beaver, and in the wintertime we'd go out and live-trap deer and elk and put tags and bells on 'em in the snow with a big old Snow Cat.

25:14

(So that's how the work was different with Fish and Game, was the predator—?)

Water animals instead of predators.

(When you worked for the government you did coyote, bear, anything else?)

Lion.

(Lion. No wolf at the time?)

No. Once in a while bobcats would get in trouble and I'd have to take a bobcat.

(How did you trap a—I'll ask you two questions? How did you trap a mountain lion?)

I never did trap one. I shot one that was killin' sheep. I set a snare for one once that had killed some sheep and caught him in a grizzly bear snare, and he drug a big green quaking aspen a ways and then chewed the swivel in two and got away with a snare on his... [raises his hand]

(On his paw!)

—on his paw.

26:02.

(So what'd you do the next time?)

Well, that winter I tracked him with snowshoes down into a canyon and jumped him out and shot him. I wasn't supposed to, but I did, you know, because he was causin' trouble. And the sheep men—he'd a been a big headache the next summer. 'Cause a lion'll kill and then they'll maybe go 10 miles from where they stopped. So they're hard to get ahold of in the summertime. One guy came in with dogs and stayed two weeks, and when he left and went back to Boise that next, the lion killed 12 sheep. [chuckles]

([chuckles] Why weren't you supposed to go back in and get him?)

Well, because I was supposed to a killed him that summer, when he was killin' sheep, see, and not in the wintertime. I don't know it that ought to be—

([chuckles] That's OK. I was just curious. How did you know it was the same one? Did he still have the snare?)

He had the marks. He'd gotten rid of the snare, but had the marks on his—big old tom, great big lion.

(And you only caught one, you said, in your—?)

Yeah, there wasn't a lot of 'em. Once in a while I'd have trouble with 'em. Mostly the trouble was coyotes, a big problem. Still is. Coyotes is still the problem.

(And not so much bear in this area?)

Yeah, there's not a lot of bear, but there's bear on both sides of Tin Cup, Caribou Mountain, all this country out here has got bear in it, and there's a few of 'em down here in these mountains.

27:34

([pause] Did you ever do any work with the Research Center?)

No. [pause] Can't think of any.

(I know some people did some testing, like lures, and those kinds of things, but no work with the Research Center?)

No.

(Ok.)

Well, now, wait a minute. [chuckles] Denver Research Center sent Rick Phillips and me a whole bunch of lures to test.

(Ah!)

One fall. So we tested 'em. So that was with the Research Center, see. Some of that came from Texas and some of it from Denver. We tested all the different lures to see which worked the best for trappin' coyotes.

(How did they work?)

Most of 'em wasn't any good at all. It was Russ Carman and O'Gorman's lures. They're professional trappers, private trappers. Their scents worked good. But the rest of 'em was—just didn't work. [chuckles] Did Rick tell you that?

(Yeah, he mentioned the lures.)

Yeah, that—

(So who was your supervisor in this area?)

Well, I started out with Milt Robnison, who was the supervisor in Pocatello.

(The district supervisor?)

The district, yeah. And he retired and I had Duane Rubink. He was my supervisor for—I don't remember how many years. And then they transferred him to Arizona to be a state supervisor, and this Wonacott, Rich Waniacott then was the supervisor till I retired.

29:28

(And there was one of you for five counties?)

When we flew, we worked in five counties. Now there's other trappers, you know. There was one in Montpelier, he didn't want to fly, and there was one in Idaho Falls, one up around Dubois, but my area went that way to almost the Snake River, and his was beyond that, then clear to Pocatello, you know where Pocatello is?

(Mm-hmm.)

Went Pocatello clear to the Wyoming line that way and you Utah line this way.

(That was your area?)

When I flew.

(When you flew.)

Just when I flew the helicopter.

(‘Cause it could go so fast, you could cover lots of ground. [laughs])

Yeah, it could fly at a standstill, move sideways, back up, or fly 140 mile an hour.

([laughs])

And what I really enjoyed, one summer, one of my main jobs was to keep the coyotes, the predators, out of these whoopin' cranes out here in Gray's Lake. Me and another fellow that worked for the refuge. That was part of my job, of course, they got quite a bit of money out of it. So any time I need the helicopter, whatever I needed, money was no object to keep the predators out of those whoopin' cranes.

30:43

So one fall they was gonna have a conference up by Donnelly. It's a way up above Boise, back up there, and a coyote got into the whoopin' cranes out there, and my supervisor called me and says, it was this jet helicopter, it was in September, said, "He'll be there in the morning and go out and kill that coyote and then he'll bring you to the refuge, or up to the river," to the big meeting they was havin' up there, you know. So we got up early and went out and flew and shot the coyote, come in and got my suitcase and we flew right straight through to Donnelly, to where they was havin' the—like this, you know, all the trappers got together and all the bosses and everybody, and they was havin' a big meeting down in a place where—they was havin' a class down there in the school, you know, and here I come in this helicopter and landed and Jack Hansen come over there, and he says, "Moore, how the hell do you rate? You come in here just like old Jimmy Carter!" [laughs]

([laughs])

But at that time, while they was tryin' to get the whoopin' crane started out here, you know, which failed, it failed completely, but at that time, why, that was part of my job.

31:53

(Did you do any coyote calling?)

Yeah, I did quite a bit of calling.

(Did you do it with your voice or did you—?)

Both.

(Both?)

We all learned the voice howl, and then sometimes—like, in the mountains, you know, the different calls wouldn't work. The best one was a fawn deer, even a woodpecker, 'cause there wasn't many rabbits in the mountains, you know, and the coyotes get smart pretty quick.

(So who taught you how to coyote call?)

Pardon?

(Who taught you to coyote call?)

Oh, other trappers, and then trial and error. Myself, mostly.

(Did you—people have told me that they made calling things out of aluminum and those kinds of things. Did you do any of that, too?)

No.

(You just did it with your voice?)

Yeah.

32:49

(And did you use dogs at all?)

No, I didn't. At that time they wouldn't pay us for dogs, 'cause these bosses we had didn't believe in dogs. But the trappers now are usin' dogs, and they're really workin' out good. He'll howl, the trapper who took my place, the coyotes'll howl, he turns his dogs loose and they go out where the coyotes are, and of course the coyotes'll chase the dogs and bring 'em right back to him, and he shoots him. So they're payin' 'em now for—along with their horse pay, dog pay.

(But in your day they didn't do that?)

No. They wouldn't pay us for dogs.

('Cause they didn't believe in it in this area?)

No.

('Cause I know in some places, like Utah, they used a lot of dogs.)

Well, they are now. Everybody's usin' 'em now.

(Now.)

And they got trappers that use the dogs to chase the mountain lions now. There's one government trapper in Idaho, I think, goes all over Idaho with his dogs where they're havin' lion problems, and then he's their professional wolf trapper, too. He takes care of the wolves in Idaho.

(And he does the whole state?)

The whole state, yeah.

33:58

(So you saw a lot of changes in those?)

I sure did

(20 years?)

I sure did. Yup.

(In the things you could use and not use and—)

When we were usin' 1080 it was easy, because you could really control the coyotes with 1080. When we lost that, we lost our main weapon.

(What did you like best about your work?)

Being where no boss—as long as you were satisfyin’ the sheep men, your boss leave you alone. Long as you could make them happy, you only saw your boss maybe once a month or so. And the mountains, bein’ out alone and out in the—lots of elbow room, bein’ in the mountains.

(Did it change the longer you worked, in terms of seeing your boss more and paperwork?)

Well, we had to send reports every two weeks, one to Pocatello and then one to Boise. Now it’s all computer. They’ve issued them all computers. But at that time we sent reports, what we did each week and what animals we’d taken and which counties we worked in. One to Boise and one to Pocatello.

(And you always had to do that?)

Mm-hmm.

35:16

(What did you like least about your work?)

That paperwork.

([laughs])

[laughs]

(That was it, huh?)

I done it every night so it didn’t pile up on me. I had a trailer house out to Wayan where I worked out of, and every night I’d do that, so I didn’t have to do all of it Friday night.

(But then you’d probably send it once a week, I suppose?)

Every two weeks.

(Every two weeks.)

Every two weeks we sent it. Now it’s all computer.

(What did you find the most challenging about your work?)

Catchin’ an old killer coyote that was just as smart as I was, smarter.

(Really. [chuckles])

That was a challenge, to go out there. You’ve gotta get that coyote, ‘cause he’s gonna keep killin’ lambs. You’ve gotta figure out how to get that coyote.

36:09

(What made him so smart?)

A coyote is the smartest animal in the world, you know. I always said they can think like we can. They can figure things out, think things out, you know. They're really not hard to trap, but if you make a mistake, you don't catch 'em.

(Really?)

'cause they're that smart.

(So then it's just as hard to catch 'em the next time, I suppose?)

Oh, yeah, if you missed 'em once, why, you just as well forget the trap.

(Really?)

'Cause they're that smart.

(So if you missed one once, then what would you do the next time to get it?)

Try to call him or set traps different. I've set a trap and had my scent here and the coyote'd come and dig this trap up and then take the bait or scent. So I'd set the trap back, and then set one back here and hide it real good, a real clean trap. A lot of times I've caught 'em that way. He come that close.

(So you'd use two traps, basically?)

Two traps, yeah. He knew the one was there, but he didn't know this one was back here.

(Did you usually use two, or only for the really clever ones?)

Yeah, just use one. 'Cause the less ground—you have to dig a hole and set your trap and cover it up and camouflage it, and the less ground you can disturb, the better. 'Cause you want it to look just like you'd never been there.

37:26

(So you only used two if you had a really clever one?)

Yeah, well, if he got to diggin' the trap up, turnin' it over, gettin' it out of his way.

([chuckles])

They're smart. That's why there's still coyotes, you know.

(What was your favorite animal to trap?)

Coyotes.

(Coyotes? Was it because they were so challenging?)

Yeah.

([laughs])

Yeah, 'cause bobcats is easy to catch, you know. The bear, they wasn't hard to catch. But the coyote, everything had to be right or you didn't catch 'em.

38:05

(What was the most difficult political or social situation you found yourself in?)

The most what?

(Difficult political or social situation?)

Well, with the environmentalists, 'cause they was always tryin' to eliminate us, you know, tryin' to get away with that ADC program altogether.

(Did you have much contact here with environmentalists?)

No. My boss said they might come and talk to me, and I says, "Well, not on my private property, they don't. They can talk to me out there on the street. If they come down my driveway, they're gonna go out faster than they came down." He says, "Well, we gotta get along with 'em." And I says, "Not on my private property, I don't."

(So you didn't really have to deal with anybody face to face?)

No. That was my boss's job in Pocatello. [laughs] No.

([laughs] Did you have any problems with the sheep guys sometimes?)

38:58

Not as long as you satisfied 'em.

(Really?)

If you could stop their killin'. We had one big sheep man here, he was one of 'em that went to Washington DC. He was the president of the Idaho Wool Growers, the Caribou Wool Growers, and anything I needed, if I needed a horse, if I needed anything, he'd get it for me. It was there right now, you know. So I made sure they didn't—they'd range-land out here in these mountains, and I made sure he didn't lose many lambs. [laughs] 'Cause he was a rough guy, you know. He drunk once in a while and was kind of mean. His boy now has got the whole works. He died. But you had to satisfy him, or you wouldn't a had a job.

(Because he was the biggest one?)

He was the big shot, yes.

(You were telling me before we started the tape about the sheep man that went to Washington after the 1972 ban.)

Yeah, he was one of 'em. There was Osidaway [?] up in Rick's district, and then Faulkner [?] was down by Soldier Mountain, down out of Twin Falls. They all three went back there.

(And there purpose was what? What did they want to do in Washington?)

40:15

Well, find out what the government was gonna do to control predators, 'cause they took our 1080 away from us, our main tool. They went back there to see what the government was gonna do, 'cause the government had a contract with the livestock people to control predators. And of course, he wasn't gonna let 'em in to see Andress, 'cause he was the top environmentalist, he's from Idaho, you know.

(Oh, one of the guys in Washington?)

Yeah, he was the Secretary of the Interior. At that time that's what we was under, was the Secretary of the Interior.

(And he was from Idaho?)

Yeah, he was from Idaho. In fact, he's got two nephews down here below Lava that's runnin' sheep. They said, "He was our uncle, but we don't claim him!" [laughs]

([laughs] So what did the guys accomplish in Washington?)

The helicopter. They got money for the helicopter, government money, to try it out. That's why they sent this fellow from Washington DC, to ride with us in the back, to see if the helicopter was gonna work.

(Oh, so it'd be the pilot, you, and the guy from Washington?)

Was in the back, yeah. He flew with us for, oh, a week or 10 days.

41:27

(Did he say it worked?)

Yeah, he could see it worked.

(So that's how you-all got the helicopters here in Idaho?)

Mm-hmm. I suppose Wyoming and other states, too, I imagine, same way.

(Interesting. What was one of the funniest things that happened to you while you were capturing or handling animals?)

I'd have to think on that one. [laughs]

(You probably had a couple try to get away a few times.)

Yeah. Yeah. It wasn't all work. But when we trapped Gray's Lake out there for the whoopin' cranes we could use a big old flycall with tracks that wide. I think they were 10 feet long, to go through the swamp.

(What was it called?)

A flycall [?]. They're still usin' 'em out there. And we could use air boats. We had an air boat, with a propeller in the back. This is somethin' funny that happened, now.

42:30

This coyote was killin' some of these chicks, the whoopin' crane chicks. So we wanted to set traps, and the ground's so soft out there, you can't drive pegs in it. So we went and got some rocks and put it in the back of this air boat and had it in a trailer, [chuckles] and you know what they are? The big propeller in the back?

(Uh-huh, the air boats.)

We was gonna tie our traps to these rocks, see, and bury 'em, to catch the coyote. Well, this fellow, he was standin' on the air boat, and I backed it off, and when it got in the water, it just kept goin' under. [laughs] He was in water clear up to here! [laughs]

(Because of the rocks? [laughs])

Because of the rocks. And all I could do was stand and laugh. I told him, his name was Dez [?], I says, "Dez, you're a faithful captain, you went down with your ship!" [laughs]

([laughs])

That was funny! He wasn't laughin', but I was! [laughs]

([laughs] Did it go all the way down?)

Yeah, clear to the bottom! [laughs]

([laughs] Bet you-all didn't tie rocks on it the next time, I suppose!)

No, not in the back of it. [laughs]

43:35

(Did you ever have any scary things that happened?)

Scary things?

(Yea, like animals you thought were dead and weren't, things that were dangerous that you realized afterwards maybe were dangerous?)

Yeah, I had that wounded lion come after me.

(Really!)

When I killed it, it was right there.

(So about a foot away from you?)

Yeah, about three feet away from me, big old tom lion.

(The one you were talking about with the snare? So what happened? How did he come after you?)

Well, I got it wounded, and it went down in a thicket of pines in the snow, and I tracked it down there and went around and around to find it, and it hadn't come out. I come back, lookin' up the tree for it, and it was under that pine, and it come after me, draggin' its back quarters. If it hadn't a had its back quarters paralyzed, it'd a got me, killed me. When it came, I was shootin' at it just like that.

(So it got three feet away?)

Yeah, before I killed it.

(Wow. That had to be pretty scary.)

44:39

Yeah, the next summer my supervisor says, "Wonder what ever happened to that old lion that was out here last summer that caused so much trouble." I says, "Rich, when I retire, I'll tell you." He says, "I don't want to know." [laughs]

([laughs])

And I've had coyotes come after me, you know.

(Really?)

Yeah, they'll get aggressive sometimes.

(Were they in a trap?)

Sometimes in a trap, or if you wounded one and he got mad, why, he'd come after you. Not very often, you know, but it did happen.

(Did they get close?)

Yeah, close like that. [chuckles]

(Three feet again! [laughs])

Another thing I used to do with the trapper in Montpelier, our first supervisor bought us an old circus pen. We'd put a tent in the bottom and put two or three coyotes in there, you know, and collect the urine, 'cause you had to have urine in the summertime, or you couldn't catch coyotes. If you didn't have coyote urine in the summertime, you wouldn't catch coyotes. The urine'd go by and I'd catch it in a can for him and I, for summer trappin'.

(Oh.)

45:50

We was turnin' a coyote loose in there one day, he was helpin' me, and it bit him in the hand, and before we got it turned loose, we took him down to the—my first wife was a nurse, and we took him down to the hospital to get a shot, you know. "How in the world—? What did you do to get bit by a coyote?" my wife says. "Just shut up and just give him a shot." [laughs]

([laughs] Don't want to know! [laughs])

Yeah.

(Did you ever get bit?)

Nope. Got bit by a beaver right there.

(Really?)

Me and her [wife Pat sitting in the next room] was live-trappin' beaver for the Forest Service, and the biologist in Idaho Falls would meet me out to Gray's Lake. You come through there. And then he'd take these live beaver up to Tetonia in Rick's country and turn 'em loose, try to get 'em started up there, see. Now, this tickled Rick, you know, 'cause—anyway, I had this beaver and was trying to get him in a live trap and he got me right there.

(Just bit you?)

Bit a whole in me right there. And then one bit her on the leg. I had him in the live trap. That picture, that's a live trap. And that thing got its nose out of there and went around and bit her on the leg before I could jerk him back. But I was getting' \$50 apiece for these beaver, see, for replacin' 'em. And they'd turn 'em loose up there in Rick's country and they all went down the Tetonia River and he trapped 'em that fall! [laughs]

([laughs])

Rick says, "Do that every summer! Bring a lot of 'em!" [laughs]

([laughs] And that was when you were working for the Forest Service?)

47:24

Well, I was just—I wasn't really workin' for 'em, I was just live-trappin' these beaver for 'em, for this biologist. And he was givin' me \$50 apiece for those live beaver.

(That's pretty good. And then Rick was trappin' 'em for you at the end! [laughs])

Yeah, when the trappin' season opens, you know, he traps. They moved down into the Tetonia River, most of 'em, I guess, and he trapped 'em.

And then two years before that, I live-trapped some for the Idaho Fish and Game Department, too, and they did the same thing. They'd turn 'em loose in cricks where they wanted 'em and pay me \$50 for 'em.

(Wow. [pause] What's your favorite lure recipe?)

For coyotes? The gland lure that I make myself.

(What was in it?)

Well, [laughs] I take the glands. You know where the glands are?

(Explain that.)

You want me to tell you?

(Sure.)

Well, you know where the anus is?

(Mm-hmm.)

There's a gland on each side of it, a little gland, about like a small pea. You take about an inch of the anus and then in their back legs right here, there's a crease, and there's a gland in each one of them, in the back legs. And then behind their ear, there's two glands, but one of 'em's the best, it's about the size of a bean, pretty good size. You put all them in a jar and grind 'em up, mix coyote urine with 'em, and let 'em rot for a year or so. The longer they—they don't smell real bad. They smell all right, but that's the best scent there is for killer coyotes or smart coyotes. 'Cause it's an ordinary scent that they're used to, you know, from smellin' each other.

49:05

(So it was pretty much just the coyote?)

Yeah, it's made from parts of the coyote. And then I'd take—what'd make it work real good is, take it all off and a couple of coyotes' liver to put with it and it'd make it work just like yeast makes bread work. It'd make a real fine scent out of it.

(So that was your favorite?)

That was the favorite, 'cause it worked. [laughs]

([laughs] Did you ever buy lures, or did you always make your own?)

Well, I pretty much made my own. I tried a few others. They sent Rick and I these—all these lures, you know, I'd set a trap out with my lure and go over here 50, 60 feet and set one with their lures, and nine times out of ten I'd catch a coyote, it'd be with my lure.

(Not the one from the Research Center?)

Yeah.

49:58

([pause] Did you use any other scents for any other animals?)

Yeah, it worked for fox, bobcats, badgers, skunks [chuckles] anything that got close to it. I'm still usin' it, the same lure. Anything close. It works real good on fox, worked for bobcats if they get close.

(Did you trap any fox for the government?)

Yes, when we was trappin' for the refuge out there, they wanted the fox out of there. And then the Fish and Game had an island out here on the Blackfoot Reservoir where the geese and the ducks nested, and I trapped a few fox there, put out strychnine drop baits, you know what they are?

(Mm-hmm.)

We used a lot of them, till they—till Nixon outlawed that, you know.

(And since you trapped fox a little bit for the government, how did you trap it?)

Not for the government.

(Oh, really?)

No, I never trapped any fox for the government. If they'd a been a problem, we would a done it, if they'd a, like, killed chickens or somethin'.

(And they weren't doin' that?)

No, there wasn't a whole lot of fox there. There is now. The foxes moved in here. Raccoon, we never had any raccoon. Now we got 'em in town, we got 'em everywhere.

(Really!)

All over. But my main thing was the coyotes, was the big problem.

51:19

(What's your favorite trap to use?)

Well, I like that old 3N, I still got quite a few of 'em. I like that. I got some #2, ahhhh, what are they? They're coil-spring traps that I bought from the trapper in Montpelier. I really like them 'cause you don't have to dig a very big hole to hide 'em. When the ground's wet like it is now, they'll come shut faster than the 3N.

(So that's why you like the 2's better?)

Yeah, they're smaller and they come shut faster.

(Some trappers modifies the traps.)

No, I've never done that.

(Really?)

I think it's a waste of time.

(Really!)

Yeah.

(How so?)

52:06

You can't—I don't think you can improve on that old 3N. The government has improved on 'em. Now, they still use 'em, but they modified the trigger so that it—they can tell how much weight to put on there so it don't catch birds and that. And they filed the triggers, the toggle that fits into the pan, and that makes 'em better, 'cause the pan don't wobble, it stays still. And they're still usin' 'em, the government trappers are still usin' them traps that way.

(When you left in '84, had they made those changes?)

No.

(No?)

No.

(And they probably didn't have a soft-catch ones, either?)

No. I used to set 'em—if it set 'em in the wintertime for coyotes, we'd use a food scent, you know. And the birds'd come and I'd take a little willow that had a fork in it and put it under the pan so it'd hold the birds, but when a coyote stepped on it, it'd go down.

(Oh, so it wouldn't catch birds?)

It wouldn't catch birds. They could dance around all over it.

(So you made your own modification before the government did?)

Yeah, yeah.

([chuckles])

With that little limb. I figured that out myself, how to do that.

53:23

(Would you accidentally get a lot of birds?)

If you didn't—in the wintertime, if you didn't use somethin', you would, 'cause they were always lookin' for—magpies, you know, were always lookin' for somethin' to eat. They're a nuisance.

(That's kind of impressive, you figured out how to modify the trap. [laughs])

Now they've done it a different way but....

(It's the same thing.)

It just takes so much weight to set it off.

(How did your trapping techniques change over the years?)

Well, those coyotes got smarter.

(Over the years?)

Over the years the coyotes got smarter, yeah. A coyote, he can figure things out, you know. You gotta change with him. If you think you know it all trappin' coyotes, you're lost. 'Cause you can learn somethin' every day, somethin' new. And the coyotes'll change. They've changed a lot from when I started to now.

(How so?)

54:22

Well, they just got smarter, harder to catch. Takes more precaution to have everything right.

(Is there a reason for that, do you think?)

I think it's because they've been pursued. Everything that anybody in the government could ever think of or anybody else, it's just made 'em educated coyotes, we call 'em.

(So they kind of evolved?)

Yeah, 'cause they've been pursued with everything.

(And so you had to get smarter?)

I had to get smarter.

([laughs])

Yeah. [laughs] You gotta change with the coyotes. This guy that publishes this book sent me some—well, I won a bunch of books and stuff from an old trapper back there, and I sent him a letter to thank him. I told him I've trapped for 70 years, but I'm still learnin', could still learn every day. And I've had young guys come along learnin' to trap, you know, and in a week they think they know it all, and they're lost. They go out and try to trap coyotes, and they don't catch any, 'cause they think they know it all, see? You don't do that trappin'. You've got to be versatile so you can learn somethin' new and learn from lookin', you know, what the coyotes do. I've followed coyotes for miles, you know, just to study their habits, what they do.

55:50

(You probably enjoyed that.)

Yeah, enjoyed it—got paid for it! [laughs]

([chuckles])

What better job can you do than to get paid for hunting every day, huntin' and trappin' every day? [chuckles]

(And learning every day!)

And when I stayed out, you know, I got \$14 a night every night I stayed out away from the house in the summertime. I got paid extra money when I was flyin', hazardous duty pay.

(And you loved to fly.)

Loved to fly.

([laughs])

Yeah. That's the only thing I really miss, is helicopter flyin'.

(Really? [pause] If you had a grandchild asking you about any trapping secrets—)

My grandkids are just not interested in trappin' at all.

(Did you have any secrets? 'Cause some trappers, you know, just like some modified traps—?)

I got 'em now.

(Did you have any secrets that you didn't want to tell people?)

I'd tell the young trapper. I got one out here, he works in the INEL, you know what that is? It's a—

(Why don't you explain that?)

It's the government—INEL, well, it's where they made the uranium and stuff, the atomic bombs. It's the government. It's out on the desert, out of Idaho Falls. And he was born down here on a ranch, and he went to college and works out there, but he loves to travel. So I'm gonna take him with me and show him everything I know. He caught a bobcat last winter down on his father-in-law's place a little out from Pocatello, got \$375 for it, so he bought him some more traps.

([laughs])

I skinned it for him and everything else, sold it for him. And he wants to trap coyotes out on his father-in-law's place. So I'll teach him everything I know. There's no secrets that I wouldn't tell him.

57:42

(When you were trapping for the government, did you share those kinds of—?)

Not with a private trapper, because the private trappers sometimes would cause us problems, you know.

(How so?)

Smarten the coyotes up, set traps rough or not boil their traps or get the coyotes more educated. I think that's why the coyotes has changed over the years. 'Course the government done that, too, you know, they used everything they could think of to control coyotes.

(I've heard that before, that sometimes people try to trap things on their own land, and then by the time they call the government trapper, that coyote would be—)

He's got a problem.

(Yeah, would be really hard to catch.)

He's got a problem. I've had that happen.

(Really? How—tell me about that.)

58:27

Well, the best thing I could do is have him move the sheep somewhere for a week or 10 days and let that coyote kind of forget what happened, you know, and then go in there with some special sets, or call, try to call him first. You call him once and don't get him, they'll never come to a call again.

(Really?)

That's that. If you miss 'em or somethin', why, they're gone. You had to figure out different ways to get that coyote. I've set snares for 'em, camouflage the snares, caught 'em in snares, too.

(If they got too smart for traps?)

Yeah. [pause] They're used to jumpin' through fences, and the snare cable, I'd boil them in sagebrush so they were green, like a green twig, and then camouflage 'em with leaves or grass so the coyote'd stick his neck in 'em.

(And you'd put 'em by a fence?)

Well, under a fence or in the brush where there's a trail, where they was goin' through the brush. You had to be careful with snares. You couldn't set 'em where there was any livestock, 'cause they're deadly on livestock. Or somebody's pet dog. [chuckles]

59:40

([laughs] So would you share trapping techniques with other government trappers?)

Oh, yeah. When they'd have these conferences, each one of these older trappers'd put on demonstrations.

(Oh!)

How he done it, you know, and how I done it or how somebody else done it. That's what the conference was for, kind of a school, to learn, see. And callin', we'd have different classes on callin'. That's what they was doin' up there when I come in in the helicopter and landed.

(They were calling 'em? [laughs])

Yeah. [laughs]

(That had to be quite the sight, Warren. [laughs])

Yeah, it was. [laughs] Them trappers all looked at me, comin' in there in that 500 Hughes jet helicopter, climbin' down with a suitcase. [laughs]

(Just as they were callin' a bunch of coyotes! [laughs])

“Comin' in here just like old Jimmy Carter!” he said.

([laughs] Do you see a difference in the younger government trappers now in terms of gaining knowledge and those kinds of things?)

Well, the two that I know, the one in Montpelier and Mike Foster, that took—he lives down here to Lund, that's about 10 miles below here, he's got my job—they're good. They know what

they're doin'. But they're smart enough to learn, you know. They come to me and went out settin' traps, everything they could learn, they were smart enough to learn everything they can, makin' scents. [pause] This guy that took my place lives down here, he won the state championship of howlin'. When he howls, it sounds just exactly like a coyote.

(Wow!)

01:01:34

He's really good at it. He's got a degree in zoology and biology and he'll eventually go up the ladder. But the one up here, he's just got a high school education. He's a real good government trapper. He'll stay there as long as they got the money to pay him, you know, 'cause he really knows what he's doin'.

(So they come and ask you about stuff?)

Oh, yeah. How to make scent. Want to watch me make scents. I went with 'em when they were first here, you know, showed 'em how I set, told 'em how I made the scent. This supervisor in Pocatello, Greg Maycock, you've heard of him, I guess?

(Yeah.)

He gets Russ Carman's scent and issues it to the trappers, which is real good scent, I guess.

('Cause I've heard more and more that usually the ones working now don't make their own. I mean, sometimes they do, but often they buy it.)

Yeah. They buy it. Because I don't know, they could make it, you know, but they—I think the one in Montpelier makes scent, but this one down here, I don't think he—he's got a pen built to keep live coyotes in to get coyote urine, he does that. That's the main thing in the summertime, 'cause—this trapper in Montpelier had run out of urine and he come down here, "Gotta get them coyotes, gotta have some urine!" Of course the pen was for both of us, so—and a gallon of coyote urine costs \$35 to \$40.

(Really?)

If you have to buy it.

01:03:14

(What do you think trapping and wildlife management will be like in 25 to 50 years?)

Boy, that's hard to tell. The sheep numbers are decreasing, you know, all the time. 'Cause the cattlemen are havin' problems now, they found out coyotes'll kill calves. So for them to stay in business, there's gonna have to be a program of some kind of control predators. So I have no idea what it'd be like.

(But in your mind there still has to be some kind of program?)

There'll have to be, or they can't stay in business.

(Were there many cattle around here when you were working?)

Yeah, a lot of cattle. But we was usin' 1080 and keepin' the coyote population down. They wasn't havin' problems, you know. They thought they wouldn't have. But when we quit usin' it and the coyotes increased, then they started killin' calves.

(So then did you work more with the cattle ranchers?)

Some. But the sheep were first, 'cause that's where we was gettin' most of our money. But now the cattlemen are kickin' in some money, too. [pause] Without the cattlemen now, I think they'd be in trouble, 'cause the sheep has decreased. Lost all the little farm flocks, you know, if they had coyote problem, well, they just quit.

(And you think that's one of the reasons that—?)

It's one of the main reasons.

01:04:38

(What do you see as one of the biggest challenges facing people in your line of work?)

In what kind of work?

(In your work. What's one of the biggest challenges?)

Same thing I had, I guess, satisfy the livestock people. 'Cause they kicked in the money, you know, and if you didn't satisfy 'em, why, they'd find somebody that could. It was just that simple, you know. People said, "How do you get a job like that?" And I said, "It's not as simple as you think it is. You've got to get results, or you're not there." And with this scent that I made, and the way I done my traps and one thing and another, I could pretty well get their coyotes.

Now, one spring here, our state supervisor was Joe Packham, did you ever hear of him?

(I did.)

And he was our supervisor out of Pocatello at that time. No, he was in Boise. He was the state supervisor. But anyway, the first six trouble calls I got, I went and set traps, caught their coyotes, and I said—they never had another loss after I set traps. I said, "I think I ought to have a raise." He says, "Raise? Hell, that's what you're paid to do!" [laughs] That's what Joe told me. You know Joe?

(I don't know him, but I've heard a lot about him.)

He's retired now, lives down in Boise somewhere.

(So that was your job?)

Yeah, that was it. He says, “Raise? Hell, that’s your job, that’s what you’re supposed to do!” [laughs] Which it was, you know, but I thought I’d done really somethin’ good there. [laughs]

([laughs])

Stopped their losses, you know? These sheep men, if you went and set traps and a week later they was still losin’ lambs, a trapper’s no good. You had to satisfy ‘em. And the only way you could do it was kill that killer coyote.

01:06:30

(And when you first got hired with Fish and Wildlife, they probably knew your work from Fish and Game, I suppose?)

Well, they knew I’d worked before. Yeah, they gave me a—‘course, I was a veteran, that helped me get the job. And then Wendell Twitchell [?] was the big shot at Fish and Game. He gave me a recommendation when I put in for the government job. But the veteran, and then I had quite a bit of experience trappin’, is mainly what—they find out right quick whether you can catch coyotes or not.

(How do they find that out?)

If you satisfy the sheep men. [laughs]

([lagush] Once you get the job?)

Yeah, if you catch the coyotes.

(Do you still trap?)

Oh, yeah, yeah. I’d have traps out now if it hadn’t a rained and snowed. But the ground’s muddy, you know, and if you set ‘em now, it’s hard to make traps work. You can use dry dirt, but when it keeps stormin’, why, they don’t stay dry. Yeah, I’ll probably go out—I’ve got an appointment with a doctor in Pocatello tomorrow for my eyes. I’m havin’ trouble with this macular degeneration. And then the next day, if the sun keeps shinin’, I’ll go set a few traps. You came through Henry?

(Yes.)

I’ll set traps there, around there, out in those hills and the brush, for coyotes and fox.

01:07:47

(Do you run your own trap line, or do you trap for other people?)

Just my own. I’ve had a dozen different partners, they’ve all give out or died or [laughs] so I’m on my own now. [laughs]

(What other hobbies or interests do you have?)

Oh, I used to like to fish, but I don't fish any more. Just I'd say hunting and trapping is about it. And my grandkids and great-grandkids, I enjoy them.

(Any of them interested in—?)

No. No. I got a grandson—well, he lived in Denver for a while, now he's in Las Vegas. He flies all over Canada and the U.S. and makes a quarter of a million dollars a year. I'm glad for him, you know, that he can make that kind of money. But he's always away from home. He's got three little girls. He's got their college all paid for, when they get ready for college. And my son, he spent 20 years in the Air Force. He never was interested—he liked to hunt, but he never was interested in trappin'. And he's retired now and works in the veterans hospital in Salt Lake. My daughter and her husband, they're retired. They're well-fixed [pause] for money. I was the only one in the family who was ever interested in trappin'.

01:09:21

(That is the end of my questions.)

The what?

(End of my questions. Do you have anything you'd like to add?)

Well, some of this, like that lion, you know, I wouldn't print that or write it up.

(OK, we can talk about that when we're done.)

Yeah. 'Cause I did it illegal. [laughs] But I saved the sheep men and the cattle men. That lion was killin' cattle, too, killin' big steers. I saved them a lot—that next summer, there weren't any problems. It's kind of under the rug, you know.

(Because—why was it illegal? Because you were only supposed to catch 'em in the summer?)

When they was—

(When they were actually doin' the damage.)

—doin' the damage, yeah. But that same old lion was there, and he'd have been a big problem the next summer.

(And you knew it was the same one.)

I knew it, yeah. So I got a chance to eliminate him and I did. [laughs]

([laughs])

But that, don't print it or don't—

(We'll talk about that when we're done. We'll talk about how to limit that. But it sounds like you really enjoyed your job.)

I did. I enjoyed every bit of it. Yeah, wore out three or four horses out in those mountains, had to do quite a bit of ridin'. In the summertime it was all horse work at that time. Now they've issued these guys four-wheelers, and they use those wherever they can. But it's still a lot of horse work, trails goin' back to the pack camps.

(Even now?)

Even now, oh, yeah. They pay 'em, I think—they only paid me for one horse, but now they're payin' 'em for two horses and a dog. [chuckles] I got I think \$25 a month year-round for one horse at the time I was workin'.

(\$25 a month? Did that cover it?)

It about paid for the feed. But I owned a piece of ground out here, four miles out here where I was born, and I kept him there through the winter, and then I had five acres out to Wayan that had a lot of grass on it, where I worked out in the summertime. You came through Wayan and you followed the highway around, you know. If you'd a turned right there where the old store used to be and went around through Wayan, over on the south end of it, I owned five acres in there. I had the power in there.

01:11:44

And here's another thing that I might mention. When I was workin' out of there, I'd caught two coyotes on the bed ground, way back up there in these mountains. Well, this environmentalist from Jackson followed 'em, thought they was wolves. They was all dried up, maggot-eaten and dried up and rotten, and he thought they was wolves. So he called the regional forest office in Ogden and said, "I want that country locked up for a wolf sanctuary, 'cause there's wolves there." So here come my boss from Boise, and the state supervisor and assistant supervisor in a helicopter, picked me up out there. This was in August, out there in Wayan. And we flew over there and I showed 'em them two old dried-up coyotes, you know, I'd caught. They brought me back, let me out, about scared my horse to death, let me out there by my camp, and they called that guy and said, "That's a couple of coyotes was killin' sheep the trapper caught." "Oh, no, no, them's wolves." When I retired, he was still tryin' to get that whole country into wolf sanctuary. And that's what we had to be careful of. So they told me from then on to bury the coyotes so nobody could see 'em.

He was just unreasonable. He hated sheep, he hated cattle, this guy. You know Harrison Ford?

(Yes, well, I know him through the movies.)

01:13:07

He's not against killin' coyotes. 'Cause this friend of mine now flies an airplane that belongs to the Wool Growers and the livestock people, and he was in Idaho Falls the other day gettin' a little work done on his airplane, and this Husky come in, it's a little bigger plane. He crashed his Husky last winter. He's got a Supercub now. Anyway, this guy come in lit, and he's got a flagger on there. If he shoots a coyote, he can drop a flag about this long, you know? And Harrison come over and says, "What's that thing?" This guy's name is Sam Cogerhan [?]. He trapped here for me to start with, and then they made a pilot out of him. Anyway, I looked at him and says, "I

know you, don't I?" He says, "Yeah, I'm Harrison Ford." He says, "I'm not against killin' coyotes" when we told him what the flagger was for.

(What was the flagger for?)

When he shot a coyote, he'd touch a button and a flag'd fly out there so if they wanted to pick him up, they could see this flag in the snow.

(Did they used to do that when you were flying?)

No. All I ever flew was a helicopter. I don't know what they did in an airplane. They just flew the desert. He don't fly much here. He flies the desert. But he was flyin' last winter and shootin' coyotes, and he shot one coyote and come around and it got in his prop wash and the plane went down just like a rock. Knocked him both out, hurt their back, and broke the guy's ankle. He come to, and Sam was, I think, a good pilot. He was out, and he shook him, 'cause the gas was runnin' out of the tank in the wing. "Sam, we gotta get out of here, we gotta get out of here!" Of course, it was crashed, you know. They got out, and he had a cell phone and he called his wife in Dubois [?] to come and get him. They were hurt pretty bad. Kinked their neck, broke some bones in their back. But he's back to flyin', flyin' this Supercub, and that's when he met Harrison Ford. [laughs] They kill a lot of coyotes with that airplane in the desert.

(I'm at the end of this CD, Warren, so unless you have anything else to add?)

I don't think so.

(I think we're done, then.)

01:15:19 End.