

Transcription: Grand Canyon Historical Society Oral History Project

Interviewee: Dickson “Dick” Hingson (DH)

Interviewer: Tom Martin (TM)

Subject: Hingson discusses work on aircraft management/overflights at Grand Canyon in the early 2000s

Date of Interview: 11/17/2019

Method of Interview: In person at the home of Tom Martin

Transcriber: Lauren Stephenson, Brandon Chu

Date of Transcription: 04/03/2020-07/09/2020

Transcription Reviewers: Sue Priest, Tom Martin

Keys: Senator John McCain, overflights, FAA, NEPA, Grand Canyon Trust, Earthjustice, Zion National Park, St. George, natural quiet, Elling Halvorson, Dragon Corridor, Karen Trevino, Jim McCarthy, David Nimkin, soundscape metrics, Lynne Pickard, Dave Uberuaga

Note: Lots of acronyms are used by the interviewee. A partial list is at the end of the transcription

TM: Today is Sunday, November 17th, 2019. This is a Grand Canyon Oral History with Dickson “Dick” Hingson. This is a Part 10 interview. My name is Tom Martin and this interview is being conducted at our home in Flagstaff, Arizona. Good morning, Dick. How are you?

DH: Oh, good morning, I’m looking forward to talking with you again today.

TM: Thank you so much for your willingness to continue on in the journey of your life story and your work on overflights for Grand Canyon, noise issues. Last time when we wrapped up Part 9, we had talked about two pieces of litigation, Grand Canyon 1 and Grand Canyon 2, and an alternative dispute resolution attempt that Senator McCain had tried. So, can you pick that thread up?

DH: Well, alright. I can pick this up in two parallel ways. One was a regional aspect which was emerging because the FAA, given its differences with the Park Service during all of this period of time, was undoubtedly fearing and probably resenting the idea of all this NEPA soup that they were going to get into to settle Grand Canyon. It was pretty clear there were major differences in how to do that. So on the side, even as we were doing Grand Canyon, we had this case of a Grand Canyon...actually an environmental organization involved with both. Grand Canyon Trust versus FAA involving the St. George replacement airport. As the notes show, I had been very instrumental in bringing that in at the last minute...save, you might call it, just before the deadline.

TM: You talked about this. It was like 11 at night and you dropped it in the box.

DH: That’s right, 11 at night. The eleventh hour, literally, the case went into the box at the court.

TM: Can you stop for a minute and tell me a little bit. This is in 2002, I believe.

DH: Well, it might have been late ‘01, given the time it takes to file it. I don’t have a filing date.

TM: Okay. Right. Why did the FAA fear NEPA? I’m confused there.

DH: I think that NEPA was clearly becoming very onerous to them, because they had always operated from a standard that the noise floor below which they didn’t have to be concerned was 65 DNL, or at most 60 in a few cases near residential neighborhoods. So their whole thing, their safety net about

getting in trouble with NEPA, was this extraordinarily high, noisy standard that they had to... It was actually a noisy standard that they had to adhere to. It was 65 DNL, which is mainly whether an area or a residence is inhabitable or not.

TM: Right. This is sort of a community level of when a fire truck goes by or an ambulance...

DH: That's right.

TM: Not a wilderness area where natural quiet is more involved.

DH: That's correct. So now, you had thrown the FAA into totally uncharted waters. You might have blasted them off into outer space here, in terms of the threat that they felt to their organizational motion forward, because this threatened... To get involved with the Park Service threatened them all the way down to the level of audibility. The Park Service had known that when they pulled that trigger with FAA over Grand Canyon way back in the early nineties, and in the law about percent of time audible. So now the FAA is on very uncharted water that they were going to only try to dip toes into when it suited their convenience, or all the way when they thought they could win something. That's why anything involving these airports, airport law and airport expansion if you're talking about parks, had a potential area they didn't want to get into. As I said, not only Grand Canyon had it but Zion, too, because they wanted to refer to their 65 DNL. To get to anything other than that, you had to get to what would be called "supplemental noise metrics" and apply the supplemental noise metrics to satisfy protection of park land and wilderness. So the Zion case had raised the question as to whether not only the impacts from flights out of that given airport, that might be air tours or low level commercial incoming and outgoing, but all air traffic that might be related had to be considered altogether in the cumulative impact section because NEPA has a cumulative impact section. That probably, to this day, worries the FAA greatly because they're very vulnerable if you're going to add in noise from high and low. Air tours, and commercial, and general aviation, and different altitudes, and so on in a complicated airspace system. This is a very complicated new world for them, as was for the NPS as well.

So the Zion case got resolved, finally, that we referenced earlier, by a decision... I was still in Utah, but it was 2002, in the summer of 2002, where Earthjustice and Grand Canyon Trust basically won that case. The court announced it's decision August of 2002 and you have reference to the case number in your files now. That meant that FAA had to review all of these noise calculations, not only for Zion National Park which had been the central focus of that case, but also the innumerable designated wilderness areas around Zion that might be impacted by some kind of increased flight activity out of St. George Airport or even different routes, possibly. So that's what we won in terms of Zion. But that had implications as we'll get to for the Grand Canyon. But before I leave Zion I'll just say the coincidence of this weekend where we learned that although finally the thing got settled for the time being with the St. George Airport, now, it was announced yesterday November 15th, 2019 in the Cedar City Press that that airport will be their airport. It's up the road from St. George by 50 miles near the Kolob section of Zion National Park. They're going to close that airport next year, 2020, beginning on March the 16th, I think, for four months. The reason they're going to do it is because they've got to stiffen the runway to accept airplanes that will be up to triple the capacity of the present runway in weight. Now we're not talking about runway length as much as we're talking about runway depth. It is to enable flights which will have potentially a much larger carrying capacity and a much larger potential LMAX, which is the noise peaks, as they come in over surrounding parklands and wilderness areas especially on takeoff. Big heavy airplanes. That closure is going to take four months to do that construction. So this morning just before

walking over here, I notified the Zion superintendent who was my big ally in 2002. He's now superintendent of Zion, whose hundredth birthday is this Wednesday as a National Park centennial.

TM: So are they going to need to do NEPA or have they already done NEPA?

DH: That will be the question. There's been no... The application NEPA will immediately become the issue once they look into it and compare it with what the court decided about the St. George Airport. And I'm not saying, because I don't know, what the lawyers will say about that but the analogy is a clear and present danger to the construction of this runway if it's to enable more big, heavy, noisy flights.

TM: Right. Right. And this goes to the sort of infilling of the southwest by an ever growing population with water demands and noise production.

DH: Exactly. That's right. Yes, that's right. And now, under the present administration with clear discounting of potential effects of all of it on global climate change. So that's a continuing clear and present danger, but on a little slightly different timescale than the noise will be.

TM: Well, this reminds me... To change the subject just a little bit, I do want to get to this alternative dispute resolution, but it reminds me of the Grand Canyon Airport and Tusayan and its growth issues there.

DH: Yes, that's correct. Absolutely.

TM: So here's another airport right next to a park...

DH: That's right.

TM: ...with many additional airports in surrounding regions from Vegas to Phoenix to Flagstaff to Page, and north to St. George, surrounded by airports. So it does kind of beg the question about how...

DH: It raises a question of what's going to happen in 20/40 years when that money/profit-making industry wants to grow commercial air traffic in there from other farther away places. So it's all part of the same mix, whether now or later.

TM: So, let's go back to the alternate dispute resolution and your recollections of that. Who was it that went to McCain to suggest that be attempted? Do you know?

DH: I honestly don't know the avenue to McCain, except to say that he had this center for environmental conflict resolution based in Tucson, anyway, which he had some key role, obviously, in establishing this in Arizona. So one would have to look into a little bit about the history of that. And they had a track record and wanted to demonstrate a track record of solving key environmental cases in a collaborative ADR way. And so McCain, looking at this, saw probably a fork in the road here and deadlines. I don't know how this was brought to his attention, but obviously he got interested in the use of this center in Tucson to be the saving grace here on an alternative way to resolve Grand Canyon that might get them past the formal NEPA exercise, or get them past in kind of a shortcut way. So he began floating all this idea somewhere around 2003 and 2004. This is when I was finishing at Zion. I was out of that loop because I was in Utah and didn't know. But by the time I got to Flagstaff, it was obvious that this was where McCain wanted it to head. All I could say is that I questioned that such a solution would

be possible given the powers and forces at play, because it would have to be a consensus thing. And then would it be correct for the Sierra Club?

TM: It needed to be a unanimous consensus, or like 80% consensus? How did that work?

DH: No, it would have to be a unanimous consensus. I saw this as a possible end-run around getting it done, because I did not see how playing this route would be to the advantage of the park given the cast of players and the complexity of players. However, the answer I got from people in the know was simply: McCain wants it. Well, then you play ball and end of discussion.

TM: Who chose the representatives? Okay, we're going to bring in this community in that community, and this stakeholder and that stakeholder. Do you know who was responsible for that?

DH: Well, yes. The stakeholders had to be identified, of course, and they were set up in a way which we've seen ever since where you have tribal interests, so you've got to select the relevant tribes. That's pretty self-evident.

TM: Did the FAA do this? Did the Park Service do this? Did they do it together?

DH: I don't know the mechanics of establishing stakeholders. I wasn't party to those discussions. So I don't know why. I can only tell you who they were and it's in the record. You've got the agencies, obviously, that's a no-brainer. Then you've got to have tribes.

TM: That was the FAA and the NPS. Were there any other agencies involved?

DH: Oh, on the side. The Forest Service would possibly have a... Seems to me we heard from them at certain points because some of this would involve Forest Service land. An example and case would be the Saddle Mountain Wilderness, just north of the North Rim. So clearly you had to have some other agencies informed, even if they weren't at the table. Fish and Wildlife, I think. It seems to me like there may have been a Fish and Wildlife person at the table, actually, because there was specialized expertise needed about that. Then, of course, you had the question of which environmental organization... It was clear that the air operators would have three, or whatever the number was. The big players/big boys were brought in on that. And then the environmental organizations, it was going to be Grand Canyon Trust and NPCA and I think Sierra Club. NPCA knew me well and the Grand Canyon Trust knew me well. NPCA, in fact, right at that point, awarded me the Marjory Stoneman Douglas national award for my work on air tours in that next year of 2005. So they had me well-identified and I was invited to serve as a dual appointment by both the Grand Canyon Trust and NPCA as their representative during the opening sessions of this. It changed later. NPCA, I think, had a vacuum in their southwest field representative at that point so I wound up representing both at the table.

TM: Dick, you mentioned the tribes. Do you remember which first nation groups were involved?

DH: Well, the Navajo had a seat. The Hualapai had a seat. They were obviously the center of the whole Grand Canyon Enlargement Act of '75.

TM: That wouldn't have been the Havasupai?

DH: The Havasupai. Yes. And then the Hualapai had been identified by the FAA way back when, because in the late nineties FAA made a decision. Flights that had to do with them were exempt from the Overflights Act. It was a hardship exemption that was allowed to tribes. They'd been eyeing tours since the late nineties/middle nineties as an economic salvation for one of the poorest tribes in the country and this was going to be their golden door. So there was a Hualapai representative, of course, at the table. I do not remember very much controversy about who was to be seated once the selections were made.

TM: And these meetings were scattered around the region?

DH: Yeah, the opening one, of course, sticks in mind. We could check that against the date. It would have been some time in '05. It was held up there at the big auditorium that's up there by the Elks Club up on the mesa north of Flagstaff. I'm trying to think of the name of that auditorium. Who owns that now?

TM: The Elks Lodge?

DH: The Elks Lodge. Yeah, it was held there. Never forget the big scenic view of the San Francisco Peaks as all these people gathered for the first meeting. Of course, it all began reasonably politely and peaceably enough because you've got to spend...that gives probably year of all kinds of orientation, fact-finding, presentation of findings. It would have had to have been done under NEPA, too. You had to engage these agencies in ways they would have done on NEPA, but now they were in on this collaborative process where their experts would be bringing in different kinds of information: values, value sets, economic needs, all the kinds of things that you would have introduced into NEPA in a more formal way, a still more formal way. But, of course, here we had, you know, it's all transcribed, meticulously documented, much money being spent on doing the science or starting the science that had been...

This was all substituting for what should have been done in the five-year Comprehensive Noise Management Plan that had been directed by Clinton's '96 directive. That should have been completed by '01, but clearly wasn't. I'd been part of the push and shove on that. I remember meetings with Tom Hale and others who were in charge of that for the park. But the agencies had not been able... That actually must've been one of the instigators and supports for doing it this way because they had not produced in a timely manner the five-year plan under the executive order of Clinton—executive directive. So they were left hanging out to dry, otherwise, with nothing but now they have this ADR process that McCain substituted. It might not be that comprehensive, because comprehensive might've then included other noise sources. But who knows, you got the question here... You also got to get the high-flyer issue on the table and the general aviation on the table. There was a representative from GA, I remember her. FAA represented its own interests in terms of the high-flyers. I don't think we had United Airlines or American Airlines at the table.

TM: It seemed as though there was an air transport group there.

DH: There may have been. It would require double checking if there was. This is easy to check from the record. I don't recall every person.

TM: It seems like they came to one meeting and then left as a....

DH: That's right. And the minutes will show meeting after meeting and you've been provided a link to all of their meetings and minutes. So that's in our mutual record.

TM: What do you remember as some of the highlights from those meetings, the alternate dispute resolution meetings?

DH: Well, of course I remember... Some highlights were my own presentations of which I got to present the values and underpinnings and expectations around natural quiet preservation and audibility as the metric of choice is a valid one. I also remember a great frustration when I tried to introduce or wanted to promote other supplemental metrics, which the FAA found ways not to allow. Well, they let us talk about them with even a side committee working them up between the two agencies, but that doesn't mean that they were prepared to allow that for final vote on the table. It was a side stream that I remember being frustrated about because a lot of effort went into saying things and promoting some various supplemental metrics like we were trying to do for... Especially supplemental metrics that might have to do with peak noise intensity such as the one we call LMAX. Then you would get in arguments about using L90 versus L50 as the floor for audibility. I wanted to promote number of events per hour. How often, in other words. "How often" do you hear X at a certain level? I remember frustration about trying to get... I got it on the table, but that doesn't mean the FAA would buy into it. You would have to get them aboard if you're going to move that. So I do remember the supplemental metrics.

I also remember Elling Halvorson, who of course was the big boy on the block for the air tour operations. Still alive, he won big award for his work for promoting commercial tour aviation. But then he was saying that, well, this business about, you know, roots. Of course, you come back to the question of the Dragon Corridor when you come to Elling Halvorson over at Boucher Trail and over the Hermit Trail and over the Tonto Trail impacting all those very heavily. One memory that comes back that stunned everyone, including the Park Service, was Halvorson saying, "Well then maybe the solution is to close those trails." That was a shocker. Stunning. That's like going all the way back to Ralph Cameron and his trail, which was the Bright Angel Trail. But Halvorson, he knew how to just say what he wanted and he wasn't afraid. So close the trails. That, of course, was never approved by the committee.

TM: Didn't he say something that backpackers shouldn't expect quiet?

DH: Yeah, the Grand Canyon, that's the last place you should expect quiet. Grand Canyon is so incredibly noisy. But, of course, in defending that he tended to point to all the gaggle at the viewpoints, noise on the road, train horn, whatever he could throw into the sink and say it's impossible. And, of course, he neglected and wouldn't talk about what was going on on those trails at 17 decibels ambient.

TM: Right. And natural quiet.

DH: Yeah. He couldn't hear anything there. He never acknowledged anything, any more than our president now acknowledges anything about climate change. They just don't hear. That's what Jim McCarthy would constantly say. They hear nothing, if it suits them.

TM: Was there a compromise put forward? I believe there was a request to sort of have the two major routes, the Dragon route and the route that went...the Zuni, I guess, is that right?

DH: Zuni.

TM: That went over the Little Colorado River.

DH: And then there's a connector.

TM: The conservation community wanted one or the other depending on the time of year?

DH: Yes. Yes, you're correct. We came into a place where we had an opportunity to bring forward a proposal. It's a form of what we now would call a respite proposal, not in terms of days or months or weeks, which had always been part of the toolbox. We brought in a proposal that involved seasonal use where you would close the Dragon Corridor for a period of half the year, which would include some of the North Rim visitations season so as to protect Point Sublime on the North Rim, which is arguably the finest viewpoint in the entire Canyon on either side and accessible, actually, by a car or a truck. We argued for at least some closure of that North Rim classical season because we knew the North Rim was getting hammered by the Zuni-Dragon connecting corridor, as well as both the short loop and the long loop of the Dragon-Zuni complex. There are two loops, remember. Still to this day you have a short loop of the Dragon, where they turn around at the north end of Crystal Creek and come back, and a long loop where they go clear around the whole east end of the park, go up the Zuni, too, and then a Zuni-Dragon connector of 10 or 15 miles. It just bred noise all through the plateaus, and the meadows, and the forest of the North Rim. This was a form of sharing the pain, so to speak, of the whole thing where you open up a long respite period.

His name was Dennis. Oh, what's Dennis's last name? I'll think of his name...from Sierra Club, a big hiker. The name will come back, the last name. Dennis was a teacher in geography at a school in Orme, Orme School south of Flagstaff. He developed, with my input, a map and a very well-formed proposal which I can bring in here and refer to at any point, I didn't today, but that was our seasonal use proposal. I still remember one of the great moments there was I still remember Karen Trevino, who was the Park Service representative at the table, just mouthing the words to me after I presented that: "Thank you." Mouthing those words. She couldn't say it, but she mouthed it at a moment where I could see her. That was very important to the Park Service, because then that could be used as leverage in this whole process on a precedent to enforce movement if the circumstances were right where we had clearly an environmentally-preferred proposal on the table that had the backing of the environmental organizations that I and we represented.

TM: So, in the dispute resolution give-and-take with this conservation proposal of seasonal quiet, one route open, one route closed, and then change that over other times of the year, the air tour industry came in with their own proposal to accept the conservation proposal with an additional route. Can you explain their additional route?

DH: Well they never really... I do not believe they accepted the respite proposal.

TM: I thought it came with this additional route. They said, "We'll do that, if we get this."

DH: Then you wouldn't have the respite. I mean they would want it to go over. It is true, they wanted a variation in the route for the winter months, that's the best they would do. The variation in the route was to move the Dragon Corridor. Shift it westward some miles so it would fly over areas closer to where Deer Creek Falls would be. Now that is true, they proposed that as a winter route which didn't satisfy my concerns about protection of the North Rim during the summer at all because the North Rim

is closed during the months that that route would have been open. But it would have been respite for winter months, let's say on the Hermit and Boucher Trails.

TM: Except that the alternate route to Deer Creek went over the Hermit and Boucher on their way out to Deer Creek and back. So it would have given some respite to the Crystal drainage to the Dragon amphitheater there. But it would have kept the noise over the Hermit and the Boucher.

DH: Yes. I think you're right that we had trade-offs involved like that, that involved tricky trade-offs here. I remember Jim McCarthy telling me... What happened was that even though they did finally bring this to the table for a consensus vote, they couldn't get the consensus. I was no longer at the table, by the way, once the Sierra Club substituted their permanent field representative, David Nimkin, in my place. So I no longer had the influence I had before. I couldn't vote. I was just simply present during that time.

TM: So Nimkin was a NPCA employee. He came in as a Southwest regional director.

DH: He came in as the Southwest regional field rep at the time when the high-level jet stuff was coming to a crunch, too. You have to take this thing in layers when you're talking about it. We've been talking about the low-level when you talk about that seasonal shift in the Dragon Corridor, that's low-level stuff. That gave people like Jim McCarthy and Rob Smith heartburn because to them that was opening up a previously totally pristine area to low-level, never mind what month. That was a precedent over all these more acres. Now you've expanded the acreage cover at low level and letting them all in... This is still all proposed wilderness and they wouldn't accept it. So even though it was a plausible thing to do to spread the noise around or offer some respite to certain places and not others, Smith and McCarthy wouldn't accept that. And the Trust either. The Trust wouldn't vote for that.

TM: Neither would any of the other conservation community, hikers, and backpackers.

DH: Right.

TM: I don't believe any of the environmental community stood for that.

DH: No, they didn't like that. Then there was a question of a dog leg, too, up around Point Imperial. So they would avoid as in where the Zuni connector would be. You fly your route up the Colorado River north of Point Imperial further up and you make what was called Snoopy's Nose. There was a Snoopy's Nose tweak, which would help them avoid coming so close to the Point Imperial viewpoints on the North Rim.

TM: And the Little Colorado River confluence, wasn't it? Both of those would be bypassed?

DH: Yes. I think so. Though it certainly is in the record. I can't remember the impact on the confluence. Yes, there might've been another bend there in the confluence that would help with that. So you had east end and west end tweaks. But that wouldn't really be the respite winter thing that was on the west side there. That west one was, I think, proposed to be a still east end sector, but on its west edge which never... I know Jim McCarthy, and I don't know if you did or somebody else from the environmental... Who else was on that plane? I wasn't, but they did a test flight over it. It was a spectacular test flight, alright.

TM: Yeah. I didn't fly on that. But people that talked about it said it was stunningly beautiful but, of course, the increased noise to new areas of the park was a showstopper.

DH: Well, it was a showstopper, but then it depends upon whose show.

TM: That's right. For the conservation community.

DH: How many people would have been affected? That's an arguable question that not very many people would have been affected by that, including in the permitted backcountry. Not many compared to who uses the present Hermit and Boucher routes. I mean, you would have changes that might help those people some by moving over in there, compared to the number of backpackers far down in that west edge.

TM: Only that the Deer Creek/Thunder River area is used year-round because people go to that water source, where the waterfalls are.

DH: Well then, you've got the river trips, you see. And the river people, by the way, of course were one of the groups that had a seat at the table so they had representative there, too. One would have to look in the minutes, meeting by minute, to see who voted for what at any given moment of crisis. But the vote on that was the critical thing, which I remember. This goes back to your original question, "What do I remember most strongly?" I was not thinking this was a satisfactory outcome the way it had come down in the end, though, because they weren't going to do our seasonal plan, you know, close the Dragon route for several months. I was very distressed that this might go through, but, I remember, this is a memorable moment, that I think it was Rob Smith and Roger Clark who finally provided the two "no" votes when Lucy Moore brought that in for consensus vote. Lucy Moore being the facilitator from the Tucson center the Morris Udall Center for Environmental Resolution. So because of those two votes, they couldn't pass it. Then at that point it was a very dramatic moment when Lucy Moore went up to the microphone and announced, "This confirms that we are unable, in this organization as it's presently constituted, to achieve consensus and therefore we are concluding alternative environmental resolution. It cannot be done this way. It will be returned to the agencies to work through the NEPA processes that are required by law."

TM: And that was 2006-ish?

DH: That happened around '07 or '08. You'd have to look at the record for the last meeting, but it would have been maybe '07, something like that. Now this all begs the problem of the high-flyers, of course, and the noise of high-flyers which was the other big... See, that was on the table at the start. I mean, I'm taking this somewhat piecemeal here when we talk about the low-level air tour routes because you still have the court ruling, including from St. George, that NEPA means you're going to have to add it all in, folks. From high and low you're going to have a cumulative impact. But if you put the jets in... Well, that was always the thing that bamboozled this whole process from beginning to end, because you were going to have 99% time audible. Or, well, sometimes you would. Actually the jets would have added 40% time audible, say, every day just because of jet noise, which would have been, as far as achieving substantial restoration of natural quiet according to the definition, you couldn't achieve it. That was a conundrum.

TM: I remember there was an attempt to even simply having a notice to airmen for night flying to avoid the Grand Canyon, if possible, as just a simple notice and the FAA refused to do even that.

DH: They wouldn't do it, yeah. Yeah.

TM: I think Lynne Pickard...

DH: That was her name.

TM: ...was the FAA representative. She was the deputy director, or the director, I forget.

DH: Of AEE, which was their environmental office. Head of their environmental office.

TM: She said, "We've got this new technology coming in that will allow the jets..." which was the GPS system, "...which would allow pilots to change their routes a little bit so we're going to wait for this new technology," which now of course has come in and everybody's using it. But the noticed airman hasn't been forthcoming.

DH: Well, that's correct. You had several fronts in that war and we opened that front, too, with our proposal that there would be this flight-free polygon over the park. So it's important in this oral history to recognize that Dennis and I and Jim McCarthy worked very intensively, not only on this respite alternative for the low level routes, but in terms of opening up, we said the way you could solve this would be to set up a flight-free polygon over just that eastern section of the park that we drew in as a polygon and then the flights would avoid flying directly through. That would be kind of like other restricted zones which the FAA uses all the time.

They use it all the time to protect Trump, for example, or any president out to a distance of 15 miles from, say, Mar-a-Lago when he's there. They can open and close these flight-free polygons, usually it's a circle, at any time, at any altitude that they choose. We knew they had the precedent and the ability to do it. We also knew that they had modifications that they have to do periodically in airspace overall management about their different divisions, like their southwest divisions. I mean, they had a periodic way that they were used to thinking about these, but we knew that they could do things like that which has a parallel, also, with what are called noise-free zones which are supposed to exist around sensitive location points in the nation where nothing is below 2000 up around these noise free points. That would typically protect, to some extent, some wilderness area. There was one over Point Imperial, actually, supposedly. Whether it's enforced is a totally different question. They had a noise free circle around Point Imperial on existing maps, but we wanted this flight-free polygon up to a higher level in there. So that paper's in the record very beautifully done, professionally-done paper. None of that, though, could achieve a consensus at the table. That's the bottom line. For various reasons, FAA wouldn't go along with something like that.

TM: So with the different stakeholders unable to achieve any sort of resolution, then the issue went back to the agencies to continue their NEPA planning.

DH: That is correct, with FAA as the lead agency because they were the lead agency in the beginning. I mean, it was not a coequal business. We did come to a point, though, where the Obama administration, seeing that we were having trouble even getting an EIS out. And it was now 2000. They had an EIS that they were working up, but the FAA was delaying and stalling, and there was this and this and this and

this and so finally there was an agreement, which apparently was forced through Obama's administration, where on January of 2011 it became the Park Service's EIS and the FAA was removed as the lead agency. Right after that, they released it as a draft EIS but the problem was that there was no time to rewrite large sections which had been written under the FAA hammer. So the Park Service could not go back and write it as a de novo EIS. It became under their control when to release it.

TM: And in February of 2011, the Park Service did release a draft.

DH: That's correct. They released a draft then with the usual comment period. All sides piled on again about everything. You could talk about anything. You had to. All sides saw this as court fodder. So everybody's weighing in again. You've already spent \$6 million on it, just from the two agencies and just to do the ADR.

TM: So it was pretty clear that when the park came out with a final EIS, this was going to go to court.

DH: Oh yes.

TM: Okay. But to this day, November 17, 2019, that EIS...

DH: Yes. Well then, I can talk about what we know about that.

TM: Please.

DH: Yes. Because that should be part of the record. I've been involved with it closely since the DEIS came out. Well, of course, it had a comment period of 90 days, which probably was extended as they often do with something very complicated, you get some kind of an extension. Can't remember the exact date of that, but everybody piled in and there's where Sierra Club actually produced a new thing on... Because the Park Service was kind of hamstrung by just using this percent time audible as its sole reference point, Park Service never... This is one of the failings in the process. The Park Service never could account for loudness and the number of loud intrusions per hour just using that percent time audible thing. That was too superficial in terms of any kind of noticeable or louder events, louder than noticeable, to adequately cover what's going on in terms of the human's experience. That may apply to animals as well, because it's about listening distance and so on. So we developed a two-pronged method where we noticed that the Park Service was measuring let's say 60-second LEQ, which is a measure of noise intensity, as well as audible or not over 1200 location points on a grid. That allowed a very powerful tool to show because the Park Service had also introduced a standard about how loud that LEQ could be before you were into major adverse. I think that was 35 decibels. There were many periods, on the east end particularly, where you were in the red on both the percent time audible and the LEQ.

TM: Dick, what does LEQ mean?

DH: Average noise intensity accumulated over a certain time. It can be a short time, it could be a longer time. Just say for a minute or an hour, you could measure by the Park Service's own assertions and its own EIS, that you were out of compliance especially on the east end and also way down on the west end. Not only because of Hualapai, there are other tours regularly ongoing down there, but both ends of the Canyon would score as plainly out of compliance on most important location points and backcountry permitted sites combining the two. And you could illustrate that by putting it onto a rectangular plot as to how many were out of compliance on both plots. That was very convincing. That was very strong

evidence from our point of view of impairment of the park and remains that to this day, but we will get to that later. That was an important contribution that we made to the EIS that I think was and does remain significant and unsolved issue.

TM: So with that information and the comment period, which eventually closed... Again, I'm curious to know why the final was never released.

DH: Well, this is, of course, the next question. They were taking forever and a day with all kind of behind the scenes lobbying that we don't all know about.

TM: This is the Park Service was taking time, or who was...?

DH: Park Service was taking time, but you had the industry and the suit for sure and all of its political people. So there were all kind of reasons they were struggling to do their review before they would publish it.

TM: Then, Senator McCain came out with a new position on natural quiet over the parks to exclude the high-flyers.

DH: That's correct. Well, that was done at some point in there that they had first done it administratively and then it was, I think, legislated into one of the FAA bills that you wouldn't count the high-flyer noise. Now you had it as a law, which gives it much better standing with a court because the Congress had decided that. So the Congress itself finally weakened the SRNQ definition to exclude the high-flyers. That doesn't mean you wouldn't talk about it in the EIS as part of your cumulative impact section, but the law still was the law. You could put the data in there, but the law gave them cover.

TM: I would assume that a simple standalone legislation might not necessarily pass Congress. Was this a rider put in some sort of must-pass legislation?

DH: Yes, but I don't remember which piece right now. It would have been a rider as part of a one of these omnibus big bills. It was not a standalone. That went in buried in some other piece of must-have legislation as so much does happen. It was already in there administratively, so now you've got it in there written into the law that you're not going to talk about the... You can report it. You can report and it'd be now the Park Service's EIS. They won't take out the reports that showed what it was.

TM: Well you can report impairment, but you can't do anything about it.

DH: You can't do anything about that. Not not under that law you can't. You could imagine another law where you addressed it, but not that law, not the 1987 law. That's too weak to handle this as amended in various ways. So then you're just stuck with what you can do under that law and all this machination going on. However, what was happening, I think, was that you still had a provision where the Park Service was trying to raise the level of general aviation, which was one of the elements, up to 18,000 feet. They didn't like them flying through the park at lower altitudes. So one of the things that Dave Uberuaga and his people at the park, and I was working with them all through this time, was that they wanted to elevate all that including on the west end as well as on the east end. But the problem that I think that they kind of got into was a big argument. The west end was getting close to the Las Vegas airspace and that introduced another basis of argument that I'm sure the commercial industry and the FAA was using. Well now here we've got incoming flights, they've got to start dropping down towards

LAS, which is the McCarran airport. And now what? Now we got these other people you're raising to 18,000 over here. Although actually all this was entirely resolvable and it was resolved, not in time. It was delayed, and stalled and allowed arguments in the end about tweaking this and that. So this is interference coming from Lynne Pickard's shop of the FAA, which we've documented that they were definitely into this to the last minute. So you got to a point where here's the timetable on finishing the FEIS by April 30th of 2012. I've been monitoring this in close consultation with Mary Colleen, who is the Park Service's NEPA and planning coordinator at the park, month by month by month. Everything she's telling me on the phone corresponds to the record we eventually extracted. So I've confirmed that it was all ready to go. The whole FEIS was ready to go and filed securely in computer as of April 30th, 2012. They felt that they had resolved all of these things, but of course, filing it in both agencies vaults is not the same thing as publishing it.

So then the question is, when are you going to publish it? And the information I'm giving you now is partly from FOIA, that I did later, which showed they then shifted the date to something in May, and then there was another tweak and so forth. But they finally identified June 4th of 2012 as the roll out date on the rim of the park, where Superintendent Uberuaga will give a big speech, because the whole thing was ready to go to the press and public. It'd be big press event. They finally got to the end of the road on the 1987 law. The problem in the days leading up, about the week or two leading up to that, you still had frantic pushback from the FAA which didn't want this. What we know from the FOIA was they were just holding it back day by day.

At the same time converging with this was a seemingly intractable highway bill, unrelated surface highway bill. A five-year must have bill. Otherwise, without that bill coming to a satisfactory signing by July 1 of that same year, there would be thousands of contractors with no money who do highway contracting and other kinds of transportation work. Even though this is really unrelated, being an air business, Congress still fudges stuff like this. Still transportation, isn't it? So "fudged" is a talking point into last minute negotiations going on. We had a point where, and I know this from the FOIA material, where we've got conversations between records, memoranda, Karen Trevino to Lynne Pickard, saying "Lynne, we really need to wrap this up. We need to finish this within the next... And here are three appointment days for our final session." They're the lead on the FAA. It's a moment of incredible tension between Pickard and Trevino, undoubtedly, knowing that the highway bill had squeaked through whatever final Senate vote that had happened, but it now had to go to conference. So now you've got the conference committee.

TM: So what was in this highway bill? Was that where the McCain rider was about excluding the high-flyers?

DH: Not that. What was the most interesting damaging, it that turned out, was that they were going to take out the "50% or more", the two words "or more", that had always informed the Park Service's... The Park Service always had leverage with the "or more" because with the "or more" those are all these things we need to achieve our management objectives.

TM: Who slipped that little rider in there, who had done that?

DH: The record of the conference committee is, and we did a lot of research into this... There is a report which has got to be given to members of the Congress. We do know that a senator from Massachusetts, let me think of the name here. There were more than one senator. One of them was Senator Markey and one other senator, may have been on the House side, Jerry Nadler, I believe, would not sign the

conference report and among the reasons they gave was what they saw as the cheating about Grand Canyon.

They would not sign the conference report because of that. So that's on the record and any court can look at that down the road, who wants to look at it. Something had happened there. But the way that is, is there was nothing in the report that came from the conference committee where the push-pull is... You don't have none of the push-pull. This is all secret. All they do have to disclose a certain amount of information about what was done in there. The push-pull is not in there and so we, to this day, don't know except to say that during those days and hours was that... And, you know, you had got to the point where you were within about 24 hours of the speech on the rim that Uberuaga was going to give. We know from the record that Uberuaga had a memo that has the words "White House" in big, bold type all across the top of it saying that the White House was not entirely satisfied with the business of... I think it was about the high-flyer angle over there on the west end. So, it would just to take a few more days, you know, a few more days and we can resolve this. We need a few more days and so forth. In other words, what this tells us is the FAA had gotten into the White House, which of course they can do. I mean, they know their way in. That's easy. They got to somebody in the Obama administration who had a certain amount of authority. That might've been a transportation person or a secretary, you know, somebody in there talking. Anything can happen there. Obama, he's got many things to do. He's all about Chicago Airport from the beginning, anyway. He's used to the FAA doing things for safety and this was arguably something to do about safety in a nebulous way. So we're going to have a hole till we have that final meeting with the FAA and the NPS. And they couldn't, it wasn't time. It was rolling. The ball was rolling down and reached the pins and knocked them all down. And that was the end. The transportation bill was passed with the language that we think it was McCain's shop, but also Kyle [sic] Gosar, of course, having his influence. He had a bill on that subject anyway. He had influence. So you wind up taking out the "or more." That's easy. That's an easy little thing and all of a sudden it's gone. The "or more" is no more. That's a good line. The "or more" is no more at a certain moment, an hour that we don't know because we don't understand. There's no televising of a conference committee.

And so, now you have passed a must-have bill on the 30th of May. Let's see when it would've been. Well, you blocked on the rim...you've blocked it. It seems to me that the conference committee makes a report, but now... Yes. Then the question is can you raise a point of order about the conference committee. You got time still, because a report comes out of conference committee so then the next thing we knew was it will go back to the respective houses to accept the conference committee report. Now I've learned from the rules that you may then bring in points of order about what happened. They would have to be brought in as a point of order under the rules of the Senate. McConnell, then, gets into the picture because McConnell gets to decide how many points of order. That would've been put maybe in the rule-making in the Rules Committee for each bill like that, especially an important one like that. They would've said, "Well, we'll allow not all the points of order, but we'll allow three." So they allowed I think it was three, maybe five, points of order. Well, guess who had the influence to bring in points of order. Certainly wasn't our side. In McConnell's shop three people got to bring in the points of order and they brought in... Most of those are going to be voted down anyway, because it's all must-have and behind the scenes this is slam-dunk pretty much, although not always. So they dealt with the three points of order, but no more points of order are allowed. Markey, therefore, stymied because he can't bring in a point of order on the Grand Canyon even though he wouldn't sign the conference report. He may have tried. We don't know what his office did. But this is not a Democratic Senate, it's McConnell's. And must-have. And the start of the 4th of July weekend at hand. So just at the end of June, in the final days of June, I don't remember the day and hour, this was passed out of the Congress just in time and

gotten to the president's desk for signature, which I think happened on July 6th. And that's it. As far as that goes.

TM: What was the ramifications of that losing "or more"?

DH: Well, you know, we didn't even know for sure because the "or more," all this is supposed to be... When do you measure the 50% and when do you measure the "or more" and how much more? You know, you still got the question: Is that satisfactory that you achieved that on one day of noise modeling in 2005? Which is when they did it.

TM: So what losing the "or more" would say was that if you had one day with 50% of the park in natural quiet, that was good enough for the year.

DH: Yes, although you would argue in court if you had no buffer to it that there's a margin of error, too, with that. So 50.0 may not hold up very well. If you have a margin of error, you can argue things in court maybe about that. But generally speaking, the 50-point... Now you're talking about the... It's not the "or more" that the Park Service wants, like 65 or 70 or 80 that they were trying to get...

TM: Or even 51%. "Or more." That's 51% cause it's more than 50.

DH: Yes, so then... What was the question about?

TM: Well, the ramifications of that loss, which is, did it mean without the "or more" that one day that had 50% of the park experiencing natural quiet, was that good enough for the year?

DH: Well, then that would be one of the things you would bring to court. But to bring to court what you have to have is a final EIS and a record of decision. Those are the last two steps of NEPA that we never were allowed to reach. So you wound up with McCain having put an amendment in there which affects this, so I'll go into what they have as an interim deal here. There were two elements. One was there had to be incentives for the quiet technology part. They always had been promised that there would be these incentives to introduce still evermore planes that met the quiet technology definitions. So there were gonna have to be incentives provided if it didn't impair or didn't get in the way of the 50.0. Okay? But you still had to measure the SRNQ because if the incentive involves letting them have more flights in there at certain times of year, that might interfere with the SRNQ. So you still have to measure the SRNQ for each day of each year, subsequently.

TM: Okay, so you couldn't rely on one day being at 50%.

DH: No. Any day that exceeds 50 is illegal. That remains the case, but now you've got to account for it. This is like a bank where you got to account for all 365 days if it's a year. What is it on each given year?

TM: So are you saying you could have a day that was 25% and you could have a day that was 75% and that equaled 50 so those two days canceled out and that average was okay.

DH: No, you couldn't... It's not the average day, it's the peak day. So the 75% day is gonna be illegal. That's not allowed. They are not allowed a 75% day under this legislation.

TM: Okay, so 50% of the park, half the park, has to be quiet...

DH: Quiet every day of the year.

TM: ...every day of the year.

DH: That remains the case, but that means they've got to measure every day of the year because this is variable depending on various circumstances. You can even exceed the 50—and they have exceeded the 50 on days in the autumn, recently. We've seen that. It's not a given magic day like August 8th originally was. That was the original standard day. But what they do, they now have this spiked wheel, like a flower with 365 petals, and you can determine from that which days, how many of them are out of compliance. You should do that, properly speaking, for a whole series of years as long as this law has any effect. As a matter of fact, it does have effect through 2027 because they are given that long to introduce the quiet technology, otherwise it all has to be quiet regardless of whether they were incentivized or not by 2027. So there's a basis here for something that would help us with adaptive management or with the whole assessment, the bookkeeping, day by day by day by day. They're accountable for every day through all the continuation of this law, which is not done, until 2027 at the earliest.

TM: So the Park Service is just about to announce the FEIS. The very fundamental definition that they're working with suddenly changes in Congress.

DH: That's correct.

TM: Did that mean that the park, basically, would have to throw out all that and go back and start from scratch again under NEPA with the definition of an environmental impact statement. If there's a change like that, how does that affect the planning?

DH: This is the good legal question we're still working with is to exact what do you do. For example, one of the things that is supposed to go along with the FEIS when it is released, actually it only may appear in the ROD. See, the ROD is not just a dotted-line signature. The ROD itself is a document.

TM: "ROD" stands for record of decision?

DH: Record of decision. So that's where certain things... And these things have been a sliding target for us because Park Service, NEPA, has changed over the years where it used to be that you saw certain things in the FEIS like the impairment decision or what is unacceptable, that's another standard they use. It used to be they were forced to give us that with the FEIS. But in some recent years, they've slid that to that it has to appear in the ROD. The ROD comes out about 30 days after the FEIS. So, to actually put all the cards on the table here, you've got to carry it through to an ROD. Undoubtedly, they had written... Now, they'd written the FEIS and I got it out, extracted it from them under FOIA. I've had that for some time and that's been made available to some key people. I'm not the only one that has it. Others and individuals have this FEIS. That is still only, from the agency's and a court point-of-view, a provisional document. It was never released as a final. It was held. And then, of course, you don't have the ROD. But the question we're working on right now with our lawyers is alright, but one presumes that these people are under pressure and it's late, late, late, late, late. They probably have the ROD written and it's in a file. It's in an electronic file. I'm discussing with our lawyers now the question about how do you get that out? What did that say? After all these years, I think the public's entitled to see anything in the file on this.

TM: And you didn't FOIA that when you FOIAed the FEIS?

DH: We didn't...

TM: Ask for it?

DH: Not at that time.

TM: Wouldn't it be a simple FOIA request then to ask for it?

DH: It may be and I'm discussing it with the lawyers now. You may raise the question and I think this is a current question.

TM: Then again, as you said, wouldn't the court see that as a provisional document because it was never released and...

DH: Yes, it's an incomplete NEPA.

TM: And the...

DH: That's correct.

TM: ...landscape shifted. The rules of the game, the size of the ballpark shifted with the loss of "or more."

DH: Well, that and then also you have a third question and we are talking about strategy now, to be sure.

TM: Well, just remember that we're on tape here, so anything you don't want to talk about strategy-wise today, don't mention here 'cause these tapes go online and the other side can listen to this. Just as a disclaimer here.

DH: Okay, yes. I think maybe what we could do is say that it is okay to talk about this part because most lawyers wouldn't... It's fine. I mean, this is the way NEPA is supposed to conclude and it didn't. So many lawyers probably have wondered about things like that if you've had other projects that were blocked somewhere short of an ROD. I don't know myself. I do not know the law about extracting a long-withheld ROD or the incompleteness of a NEPA. This is the way NEPA is supposed to end, though. I have researched that much. And the Park Service has its own... CEQ has been on top of some of this. That spills down to the Park Service. The agencies under CEQ guidance and its own internal guidance from the Park Service, they have a new NEPA policy.

TM: CEQ is...?

DH: Council for Environmental Quality.

TM: Thank you.

DH: The Council for Environmental Quality and the agencies have their own ways of... Sometimes you get to projects that, for some reason it stalled. We have a parallel issue right now with the Grand Canyon's backcountry management plan, which is as of next week four years late. Four years. That's a big benchmark. So it has meaning and the people who are interested in that had better be starting to think about this with their lawyers. We're at the four-year junction next week. The Grand Canyon one, of course, let's see, was ready to go on July, actually, it would've been released to the public in June of 2012, so we're now at 7 ½ years. The Park Service, in my view, is delinquent under its own NEPA by not having said anything at the five-year mark. The Park Service's own regulations say either you withdraw it or you suspend it and make a statement to the public about what was achieved, what you got, and why you can't proceed, and when you intend to proceed if that's the intent. Otherwise, say you're withdrawing. But you got to say something. The agencies, they withheld this from the public. So if you go on the PEPC site, which is the Park Service's online planning site, you'll just see reference mainly to the fact that they started it and with the documents on there, I think, through the DEIS, and then the screen goes blank. They pulled out everything about whether SRNQ was achieved or not, on which days or not, at what level or not. It's not there. There is no new information, aside from the noise modeling and validations that were done in 2005 to prove that they achieved it.

TM: Well, this would then beg a legal question it would seem...

DH: Yes, it raises a question.

TM: ...to say the agency has to justify non-impairment, 'cause that's in their mandate is not to impair the resource. So the agency would have to show that they weren't impairing the resource.

DH: They'd have to show it like a bank, which shows the money's still there.

TM: Yeah, using a NEPA document, which they don't have. So somehow, they have to come back and do the NEPA compliance so the public can see that the resource is being protected.

DH: To what extent? To the nearest tenth of a decimal point and to the nearest acre. They owe that to the public, legally. They are out of compliance on that, legally. So this raises an interesting point. Then, of course, you get to other interesting points about how many acres of a given park may you impair or how many acres, or what percentage may you impair or make unacceptable. The unacceptable standard is a yellow light that they use. It's in their own NEPA compliant... Every superintendent is expected to know what is acceptable versus unacceptable. That is specifically designed to give a buffer zone around the red light of impairment. They have both a red light and a yellow light. The yellow light comes on at a certain point short of the red light. So this is not secret strategy here because every environmental lawyer who follows Park Service knows that you got to account for unacceptable as well as impairment under NPS's own management policies and if you're not going to do that, then you owe an explanation to the public why not. This is gonna apply to the backcountry plan, too. But the backcountry plan is being, for whatever strategic reason, is being withheld. We could give them about till let's see what happens next year, you know, and then maybe we will think about that harder.

TM: Well Dick, this is really fascinating 'cause I think you've wrapped this up in a nice way to help us understand where we are today. One of the things that I'm curious about is the different agencies and their different mandates. In these wonderful interviews, you've been talking about an agency with a non-impairment mandate working against an agency that has a transportation mandate.

DH: That's correct.

TM: But I also am aware of other agencies that have different mandates, as in the Bureau of Reclamation. So there are other agencies out there that have different mandates that conflict greatly with the Park Service's Organic Act. What would you like future conservationists to understand about how precious the Park Service mandate is for non-impairment?

DH: Well, the Park Service mandate has to do with visitor enjoyment of what amounts to another world, on that world's own terms and own original terms, in genuine terms not contaminated by what amounts to littering. So I would say that what's at stake here is can you continue to litter the Grand Canyon, which is a proposed wilderness and remains on the table that way... Can you continue to litter it for decade after decade after decade, every day from 8 A.M. to 6 P.M. over 400,000 acres, say. That is what needs to be understood because the values are irreplaceable, having to do with the reason we named Point Sublime "Point Sublime." It's ineffable, the absence of noise at places like that because that's the natural condition of timelessness, of antiquity, of what was given to us, which Theodore Roosevelt said needed to be preserved for... Among four things he said was is great loneliness, which is the word for solitude. And solitude there, then, has to do with a... You can measure it by listening distance, then you have to be able to hear out, say, 20 miles and you don't hear anything from a given place. And there's nothing. There's nothing that's coming in from an area at least as far as the boundaries of that park, that's outside that park. That's an external impact you're supposed to preserve. He put it just in terms of the great loneliness, because to him that's what he noticed when he went there and spoke in 1903. And that's what is still possible there if we manage this for those same values in a responsible way. You can still experience that, or should be able to experience that in places like Point Sublime or at any place on the...any Tonto Trail backcountry camping site, any day or at least some days. But if you can't experience that on any day, then we've really got an issue. So that's what's at stake. I think it was what your question was.

TM: Absolutely, absolutely. Thank you. That really wraps it up nicely to talk about a place mandated to be protected for future generations.

DH: And enjoyed.

TM: Unimpaired.

DH: Unimpaired, that's right.

TM: Unimpairment is the foundation upon which you get to enjoy.

DH: That's right. And wonder.

TM: And wonder and contemplate and be inspired by.

DH: That's right. And inspiration, the inspiration depends on that. Absolutely depends on it.

TM: How do you think this will be or could be resolved between FAA and the Park Service?

DH: The easiest way for them to start, I think, is to introduce respite periods where people will have the option to choose, who want to experience that inspiration and that natural environment unimpaired,

respite days at regular intervals and varying durations throughout each and every year. At least we start with that. It's simple because then you don't have to deal with levels so much. Either it's natural or not but the respite day is the day where that you don't have that impact. So you designate these days and you also make... And there can be different rationales for which days, depending on... An example, of course, would be the confluence and the Native American need to have quiet for a week there during the annual solstice pilgrimage. That would be a rationale that would point to that that's an important week over there. Then at Point Sublime, you might have something that corresponds to the Aspens peaking in October all along that road out there. Then you're out there in the fall, which is off season anyway, and yet the North Rim is open. So there's practical considerations as to where and how much is covered by respite periods, but I think that's a starting place.

And I will say the Park Service has been very... We've presented this at pretty high levels with the Park Service and at Grand Canyon and they are rather taken by that. A variation on that theme, of course, was the flight-free... Well, we suggested a flight-free polygon or the seasonal shift was a way of accommodating that. Through that variation that was one way of designing that, but for the reasons we've been through, our own people weren't ready cause they saw it taking more at another place. What we're saying is, with a lucrative industry here that's made more than enough money... Well, I can add another consideration. If you're talking about solutions and bases for solution, I'll add another one in but this one just concerns audibility and noise. Noise, this covers noise. But I would say, too, that the situation...

This is a conundrum for the politicians to be sure of what we're going to do, but I learned yesterday, for example, that we are coming back to the need to have CO₂ budgets, CO₂ emissions. If we say that we're going to become carbon-neutral by, say, 2030, because the urgency is now, this has to start somewhere and it has to start with certain things that are most doable. If the Grand Canyon Trust, for example, has a goal which they announced yesterday in their ten-year plan, is that the Coconino Plateau be carbon-neutral by 2030. 'Cause it's only ten years away, how in the world are we aided in meeting that with an air tour industry of hundreds of thousands of flights a year over the Grand Canyon? Helicopters, the most carbon-intensive vehicle on the planet. How do you square these two needs in the face of an onrushing disaster? I think this is coming more and more into focus, as I heard yesterday.

TM: I think this has been a really incredible interview. I thank you so much for it. Kind of wrapping this up, is there anything else you'd like to add for future generations, somebody who's listening to this interview 20/30/40 years down the road...

DH: Well, I just would add another dimension of the Canyon. The Canyon, it's whole essence and authenticity relies on the fourth dimension of timelessness, or a sense of timelessness. That would mean more like an original creation with the attributes of five senses that would correspond to the creation of the thing. That's the genuineness. The power of it lies in maintaining all those dimensions in the original sense which is very powerful because the natural silence of the Canyon as a landscape combined with the 17 decibels of the Tonto Plateau is unparalleled on the Earth, almost anywhere, in a situation which is accessible by people. So to lose that when it was actually as accessible and could be managed that way, is a terrible loss. So I would just fold in this sense of... This is actually quoting from J.B. Priestley, English writer, who recognized what I'm talking about since 1930s, that that fourth dimension of timelessness or extraordinary antiquity is only reinforceable or only generally met if you do not allow noise in there any more than Roosevelt won't allow the hotels on the rim of the canyon in 1903. It's the same principle.

TM: Nice. Dick Hingson, thank you very much for this wonderful series of interviews. I am very grateful for your time here. I think this will conclude Part 10 of Grand Canyon Oral History interview with Dick Hingson. Today is November 17th, 2019. My name is Tom Martin. And Dick, thank you very much.

DH: Alright, thank you very much for the privilege.

Partial list of acronyms used in the text

DNL – Day-Night average sound level
LMAX – Noise peaks
ADR – Alternative Dispute Resolution
DEIS – Draft Environmental Impact Statement
FEIS – Final Environmental Impact Statement
LEQ – a measure of noise intensity
SRNQ – Required Natural Quiet
CEQ – Council for Environmental Quality
NPCA – National Parks Conservation Association