

**Transcription:** Grand Canyon Historical Society Oral History

**Interviewee:** Mark Law (ML), Part 3 joined by Barbara Horning (BH)

**Interviewer:** Tom Martin (TM)

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TM: So this is the third part interview with Mark Law. Today is the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May, 2016. This is in Page, Arizona at the home of Mark Law, and my name is Tom Martin. What I did, Mark, was just restart this again just because I want to save the data in case. So another question I had for you, the helicopters, you know, you mentioned getting the helicopter and going to the great unknown not knowing person, place, thing, whatever. In 1955, the Park Service didn't have a helicopter. The Transcanyon Pipeline introduced helicopters to the inner canyon in a big, big way, and Hulick was using the contractors' helicopters for some rangering work there in the late '60s. Do you recall when the Park Service actually acquired a helicopter for use in the Canyon?

ML: When Barbara and I moved down there in October of '81, they had a contracted helicopter that was provided by Madison Aviation, and the Park Service, you know, up until they acquired the NOTAR helicopter I don't think they ever owned a helicopter. I think all they did was contract, and part of the contract, I know they contracted with Papillon. I think they did Earth Star. And the, and then when they settled, and I'm sure it was a contracted GSA-supplied helicopter when they got that NOTAR ship. The NOTAR ship changed the world as far as rescue is concerned because it had such an incredible payload, very big interior space. You could literally put two gurneys in and, and a couple of medics plus your pilot. When, when I started doing medical flights and that happened before I went into this River Subdistrict ranger job because I was at Phantom Ranch and I was an IEMT down there and the helicopters came and went from Phantom Ranch really on a routine basis in 1982. Somewhere between '82 and when I went to work in the inner Canyon at the end of '85, first part of 1986, there had been a roll back on the use of helicopters and there was no longer daily flights to Phantom Ranch. The ranch itself used to ship their dirty sheets out every day on a helicopter and when I went to work there in '85, '86 that had fallen by the wayside and the only time you actually got a helicopter in there is when you were moving some heavy piece of equipment or some required piece of equipment or you had a medevac emergency. I developed the title of Frequent Flyer during my first stint down at Phantom Ranch because I always seemed to have some dire medical emergency on the day that I was supposed to hike out of the Canyon. (laughs) It was purely coincidence. Sometimes it's hard to keep those heart attacks down there for more than a day or two.

TM: So it must have been in the 1970s that the Park really started using helicopters intensely.

ML: Really heavy use and, and then when the SFR went into effect for the Canyon maybe that's the event that eliminated those daily flights to Phantom Ranch and stuff.

TM: And then NOTAR came in in '94-ish, '95?

ML: Pretty, right before I left the River I probably did 25 medevacs out of that NOTAR, and that was a really, really nice ship to ride in,

TM: What year was that?

ML: prior to that, I don't know, I left there in '95, '96 and

TM: So it would have been '94 '95?

ML: But see, Tom, everything gets jumbled up because I went to Desert View for a couple of years and then I went back in, I requested to be assigned into the Corridor District job after Andrea Langford left and (laughs), and I think I did that by pulling the EEO protected class old age guy card because I don't think anybody wanted to send a 50-year back into the Canyon (laughs) but, but it looked like a good job to have at the time and it turned out to be an excellent job at the time, and I went into the Corridor for about 14 or 15 months and, and reestablished my title as Frequent Flyer (both laugh) and anyway the, the aircraft thing really did change, and I'm sure you can find when that SFR went into effect. That had a dramatic effect on daily operations at the Phantom Ranch, and it definitely got the helicopters out of there and, and we didn't have to deal with that anymore. So when I first started flying medevacs we were flying these little whatever they were, Jet Ranger 206s or something. There was enough capacity in the helicopters that you had your pilot, you had your responding ranger, and then when you had your patient, particularly if they were in a gurney, that was all you could have in the ship at the time; and the gurney would take the full left-hand side of the ship, which meant the medic would be sitting immediately behind the pilot and you could only reach about a third of your patient (laughs) and that, it, it was not a good, a good thing at all. And I remember the first time I flew in a bigger helicopter it was like, whoa, we need to get a couple of these things. (TM laughs) These, you know, you can put a whole circus in there. And

TM: The other question I wanted to ask you, too, I forgot yesterday I told you the story about Ken Hulick and the Kleppers and you'd mentioned "I remember seeing some Kleppers at Lee's Ferry."

ML: Yeah. When I first went to work there in 1982, and we were operating out of that dilapidated double-wide trailer, which stayed in place for another 10 or 12 years, there was a plywood, frame-constructed building that sat right off to the west, northwest corner of that building where there was a basketball court, you might remember the basketball court, and in that little shed there was a fabric Klepper kayak. It was kind of a dark rusty red color and, and at one time somebody had told me what that boat was but by 1984 that boat was gone.

TM: Just one?

ML: I believe there was just one.

TM: That could have been Walter Kirshbaum's kayak? Well, the kayak, I said it was a kayak that he took to the Grand Canyon. Now, they'd given that to the Park in the '70s. It could have been there.

ML: Well, there was another boat there and the other boat was a, I believe it was a Larson aluminum runabout like you would have for your family in the mid-'60s. It had a windshield on it, and it sat in that boat barn that first winter I was down there, and then later on, five or six years later, in Grand Canyon Village there's a row of storage areas called the Dory Sheds, it's where they used to put the dories. Well, there was this, the boat that had been down on a trailer in Lee's Ferry was then in one of these dory sheds, and I was told that it was a boat that had operated both at Lee's Ferry and at Meadview and, but it wasn't part of the property inventory for, for my district so I never really paid any attention to it, and it was, it was there up until the late '90s and I remember going in there once with somebody, it was probably O'Neill or Traube, and looking at that boat trying to decide is there any reason why we want to get involved with this boat. And I think the decision was no, it's just gonna be a whole lot of work and we didn't want to deal with it. So it's probably still sitting up there, Tom. (both laugh)

You wanted me to tell you some stories about concessioners. I went to work in September of '82 at Lee's Ferry and I've, keeping in mind that just the year previous I had been in Yellowstone, and one of my, my hobbies and passions was fly fishing. So, you know, now being assigned to work down in the Hell Hole, you know, I've discovered, oh, shit, there's fish here so this is a good place. And one evening I get off work and, you know, it's like 4:30 in the afternoon. I go home, get out of my little Ranger suit and grab my fishing gear and my waders and I drive down to the boat ramp because somebody in the campground has shown me this humongous cutthroat trout that they caught, "We caught it right there on the boat ramp." (TM laughs) You know, so, so I'm going down there and I go down there and there's this big, big ugly boater rig on the, on the gravel part of the boat ramp and, but it's, it's pulled up way out of the water. It's at least six feet away from the water. Well, maybe the water's going up and down because that's what happened then and, but I don't think anything about it and I wade out til I'm about waist deep and I'm just thrashing and I actually catch a couple of fish so, whoa, this is really hot stuff and, and I'm, and I'm using this big, heavy weighted nymph, olive green. I even know what color it was. And, and you know, I'm casting this thing 60 feet, just beautiful. It's just, you know, a drunkard's dream fly-casting, and from behind me somewhere I hear this voice that says "Young man?" I look around and don't see anything so I just keep thrashing away and "Young man, young man?" And I turn around and, and here's this old wrinkled up lady and I remember the leopard skin tights, but nobody had warned me about this lady and, and I said "Oh, hi. Can I help you," and she said "You can't fish here." And I said "Oh?" And she goes "No," and I said "Well, I didn't see any signs that said you can't fish," and she goes "Well, you're endangering my boat." And I said "Oh." I said "Is that your boat," and I probably said something worse, like "Is that your ugly boat," and I remember she kind of stomped her foot and she said "I need to talk to you." So I'm slowly casting but backing out of the water, and I get up there and, and I'm looking really dapper in my big plastic waders and, and here's this woman that might have been

five feet tall and she goes “You can’t fish here. If you continue to fish here I’m going to have to go tell the ranger.” And I said “Oh, okay.” I said “Is there a rule that you can’t fish here,” and she goes “No, but you’re going to damage my boat.” And I remember, you know, this was back in the day and I’m fishing around inside my waders and I, I find my little badge wallet thing and have pulled it out and I go “I’m the ranger.” And I remember her staring at me, and then turning around and marching off, and she got in a pickup truck and left. (laughs) And didn’t think anything about it for a number of years, and at the first concessioner outfitters meeting that I attended in 1987 I walk in and here’s all of these people, some of them maybe I’ve met before but most of them I haven’t, but here’s this old wrinkled up old lady and the moment I walked, and this is in the Shrine of the Ages Auditorium and I’m walking through the door and the chief ranger’s gone in right in front of me and I’m walking in with Butch Wilson, and this wrinkled up old lady from all the way across the room, at the far end of this huge table they had set up, she goes “Young man, I want to talk to you.” (both laugh) Anyway, that’s just a little story. For some reason she took a liking to me and, and she used to call me up and, and tell me stuff and say you need to look for this and you need to watch for that and, you know, most people didn’t give Georgie much credit for being very interested in the environment down there. I think she had a tremendous interest in their, I don’t even know if I can tell this story, if I can recall the names. This was a mirror flash story, happened four or five years later and there, there was a, oh, it came in, the call came in from high altitude aircraft, a Hatch River company was reporting that a private river runner had fallen off a cliff and disappeared in the water. This was right, I think it’s called Shady Grove Camp. It’s on the river right, right below Crystal, or the Gems, it’s right in there somewhere. And I went “Oh, shit,” and it’s late in the afternoon and, but we gear up. A guy by the name of Dana Morris was the helicopter pilot. I jumped in there and we think we’re flying to a place where there’s possibly been a drowning and, but we don’t have any other information. And we fly in and, you know, we’re going like a hundred and ten miles an hour, fifty feet up off the deck, [sound effect], and we get right to where the little shady grove camp is and there’s a big orange X marked out in the sand and we’re by it and it’s like, whoa, that’s where, okay, that’s where we need to be. So we’re going down and we’re finding room to turn around and come back up, and as we’re going down, just right around the corner from there, and maybe it’s the Bass Camp on river left side right where the trail comes in, here’s two big motor rigs and there is a blue tarp wrapped up with PFDs on it floating in the water. And I took a look at that and I said “Dana, Georgie found our body,” and he goes “Oh, shit, where do we go first,” and I said “Well, I think we better go talk to Georgie here.” So we fly in, we land, and I walk over and I know something’s wrong but, you know, finding a body, you know, you think that’s probably wrong enough and, but then I remember just as I was getting out of the helicopter Dana said “Mark, look at that boat,” and I look over and here’s Georgie’s rig and here’s another mirror image Georgie rig. It’s upside down. And I go “Oh, shit, what’s going on here,” and anyway I get out of the helicopter and I’m walking over and Georgie walks immediately over to me and she goes “I have a major problem,” and I went “Uh, we’re down here, we’re looking for a, the body of a person who drowned right up from you. Is that who that is,” and she goes “No, that’s my boat,” and it was Marty Hunsinger who was a longtime boatman for Georgie and romantic interest of hers, and going in at the top of Crystal he apparently suffered a fatal heart attack, fell out of the boat and drowned and the boat capsized and all of her people were in the water but Georgie was downstream from them, collected all the people, collected the boat, collected the body and pulled it all into that camp. And, I mean, I was just completely blown away from, with this. I’m expecting, I’m looking for a drowned boater but I didn’t think I was gonna have to deal

with this and the fact that there was no substitute boatman and stuff. And we managed to, well, we flew Marty out of the canyon and we got, this is during the days when the sheriff still came in and, and investigated fatalities on the river and we, I just stayed onsite down there and flew this deputy in. But while I'm there in Georgie's camp this kayaker comes downstream from the camp up above and he's telling me "What are you guys doing?" Then he sees, well, he was there when the body was still floating, he goes "Oh, you found Christian," and I believe the guy's name was Christian Jacobi. He, you can look this up in Tom's book, I know it's in there, and Christian was kind of a stowaway on a private river trip. He was a German National, showed up at least very, right as this private trip was leaving, they asked him if he wanted to go, he said yeah, and jumped on there. When they got down there everybody went for a hike, he decided he was gonna scale this vertical cliff because he was a rock climber guy, and I guess he got about halfway up and something happened and he fell and drowned. And we, we flew Marty Huntsinger out of the canyon, got a boatman in to operate the other boat. Georgie's boats were designed so you could operate them upside down. I don't know if you knew that. I didn't. All you had to do was flip the motor around and transfer the, the equipment and gear and stuff to the bottom of the deck which then became the top of the deck and, and you could operate the thing right side up or upside down. Pretty interesting little historic thing to capture. I don't think I've ever seen that anyplace else. And so we, we got that taken care of. I remember it was a very tearful little moment but, you know, I'm getting ready to fly away and I'm looking over there and Georgie's just looking at me and she's just looking as forlorn as you could possibly think, and I walked over and I said "You don't look like you're doing so good," and she goes "I'm gonna have a really hard time with this trip." And I remember she gave me a big hug and she said "But I'll be okay," and off, off they went. And to sum up this story now, three days later we get another high altitude radio message through the LA tower that a Hatch River trip has located what appears to be a drowning victim and they have secured the body at the edge of the water. I don't know how much of this story I should tell (laughs). It, it is grizzly. It's late in the evening, we can't fly, the helicopter's actually off doing something else and by the time he gets back it's too dark, we can't go. So the next morning at the crack of dawn Dana's flying again. Ken Phillips is coming with me on this flight just to do this body recovery and talk to the people in the camp and we're flying down, and just river right above Bass is, once again we're going a hundred ten miles an hour and we're flying and here's this thing with bright orange ribbon wound around it and it appears to be hanging from its neck from a rope. The water level had dropped about eight vertical feet and talk about freaking us out (laughs). All three of us just wanted to keep on flying (both laugh) cause we do not want to deal with this. And we came back and the, the closest place to deal with this was a little sandy spot right across from where this body was hanging and Ken, Dana dropped us off, Ken and I got the body where we could get it into a rigid litter and then Dana picked the body up and flew it across to the sandy spot and picked Ken and I up and took us over and we completed bagging up the remains of Christian Jacobi and flew him out of the canyon. But that's the way I am, Tom. You know, there was no such thing as posttraumatic stress debriefing (laughs) at the time. You know, we just lived with this excess baggage all the time, but I remember talking to Ken about it. He goes "Man, that was the most freakish thing I've ever seen in my life," (laughs) and I won't even tell you the rest of the story on record but...

TM: About Georgie, did Dan Davis, Jr. ever talk about her relationship with his father, with Dan Davis?

ML: Nope, nope.

TM: She offered him half her company to become a partner,

ML: Oh.

TM: and he thought long and hard about it and, and stuck with his career with the Park Service.

ML: I didn't know that

TM: And Junior was pissed. He was like "I could have been a, I could have been there." Yeah.

ML: Dan Davis, Jr. was hired into that Canyon District ranger job, which at the time I was a subdistrict ranger. Beverly Perry, I don't know if you remember her, was the Corridor District ranger, and we both applied for that job and when they hired Dan we were both mad at Dan for his whole career at the Grand Canyon. (laughs) We didn't get selected and they hired this guy, you know, and I don't have very many memories about Dan and I can't even recall if he was ever on the, I was ever on a river trip or anything with him. But, but you know, he, later on he got assigned to the North Rim and, and every once in a while I run into him in Tucson. I spent some time in Tucson down there and I run into Farabee all the time because we stay in his living room half the time and, but every once in a while I'll run into Dan Davis, Jr. Dan Davis, Sr., I, I don't think I ever met him. I got introduced to lots of people and

TM: If, if you were superintendent for a day, all right, a little more than a day, what would you do with, with a river unit that's been dissolved? How would you rebuild it? And how would you keep it from the pitfalls that trapped the last one?

ML: You know, that is like the million dollar question and I guess the first thing you have to do is an analysis—do you really need that work unit—and I'm kind of prejudiced because of, you know, eight and half years of my life I ran that work unit so I think that was a valuable entity that did good work and, but I think there has to be an assessment—do you need that? My answer to that is, yes, I think you do need that but maybe a truly critical analysis you can come up with a way to get the work accomplished down there without actually having to have a river patrol. I don't know why you couldn't contract an independent researcher/scientist to do concessions evaluation kind of trips, why you couldn't do, you know, contract to have other entities similar to that doing other components of the work, like doing whatever it is we did down there. I guess it's kind of hard to do law enforcement if you're not a part of the Park Service, but you can certainly make observations and take pictures and, you know, take names. And so that's one concept. Maybe, maybe you avoid the whole issue, at least from the government perspective, by contracting for services rendered and somebody else deals with the issue of how do you keep this civilized in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. One of my favorite movies is Apocalypse Now, which is a spinoff from my probably favorite novel, "The Heart of Darkness," Joseph Conrad, and the story of the "Heart of Darkness" is a guy who's exploring the Amazon River and he's dispatched to, or in the

Congo in, in Africa, and he works for a company that has established a trading post out in the middle of the jungle in Africa and, and the person that's supposed to be running the trading post at first was doing great and, and sending lots of goods and profit-making stuff back to the company but then over time the results diminished. So they dispatched this guy, Marlo, you know, one of Conrad's favorite guys, and he runs out and charges himself some little boat that will chug up the Zambezi River and whatever river they're on, and when he comes to where the trading post is it, there is just evidence of debauchery everywhere and the concept in "The Heart of Darkness" is that if you take civilized people and put them into unsupervised, uncivilized environments you become uncivilized, and that's what Apocalypse Now was all about and I kind of always have that in the back of my mind when I think about how do you manage this river thing because you've kind of got the, the drunkard's dream, if you will. You're hiring these people, you're putting them in an environment that they love, but it's an environment so foreign from the civilized world that's managing that existence that they, they start, unless you're monitoring real closely, they start to slide the other way. And, okay, that may be a rule on the South Rim but we don't need that rule down here on the river but, you know, from a law enforcement perspective I'm always amused when I hear somebody say "You guys should be doing wildlife or environmental law, law enforcement. You shouldn't be doing social law enforcement." Well, the law only recognizes one thing, and what the law recognizes is the law. There's no wildlife law, there's law. There's no environmental law, there's law. And

TM: But what you just mentioned was close monitoring and maybe that's what was missing. It kind of, I sound like a broken record, but it seemed like you were doing the close monitoring—this is unacceptable behavior, we do not do this—that kind of fell by the wayside. So it's like how do you build this up? It, it seems as though, you mentioned about wildlife and, okay, it would would make sense to me that trails needs a trail trip to work on the trails there, you could charter the boats and the boatmen from an independent contractor. Archeology needs to do Arch site monitoring, you could charter boats from independent and

ML: Sure. Sure. Why couldn't you go to Canyoneers, for example, and say "We need a 14-day river trip during this time period and it's, you know, you're gonna have a special use permit to do this."

TM: Yeah. And that would be a way to basically contract that out. So I guess the question is do you need a navy or can you hire one?

ML: Well, the question's even a little more simplistic—what's important, to have the navy or to have the work results? And I think what's important now is to have the work results. You may not, and I've already told you, you know, I failed miserably trying to turn park rangers into boatmen, and I failed trying to turn river guides into park rangers. They, they just don't seem to come together very well.

TM: And that's historic,

ML: Yes.

TM: meaning other people I've talked to, yeah, it has never worked. The river guides want to be river guides, and finding the one that wants to be the other, it isn't gonna happen.

ML: It's pretty rare.

TM: But there were, there were a lot of people that were upset with the closure of the river unit because what it meant to them was a lack or a loss of NPS doing science resource monitoring, resource maintenance, trails maintenance, not just the, the rangers of river patrol,

ML: Yeah.

TM: not just the helicoptering in and out of the, the, the wounded and,

ML: Yeah. The injured.

TM: and the dead, the injured, yes, which will continue on.

ML: Yeah, that's never gonna stop.

TM: But, but what it, what it meant was

ML: Well, you know, and, and so you're at another elemental question—is it important for the government to have a presence,

TM: Right.

ML: or is it important for the government to have the work product they want? And you already know that I probably lean a little farther to the right than most of the other people you're talking about and having now a very lucrative retirement and, you know, I can say "We don't need any more government, (laughs) we're, we're plenty big as it is," and maybe this is a private sector opportunity. I mean, there are wonderful companies out there, Caruthers, you know, Larry Stephens is actually pretty objective. You know, you could contract these guys to do the social science stuff that you need and, and they can do concessioner evaluations and they could, you know, they could probably be more objective than, you know, those of us that became immersed in the culture because what the, what the culture does is take all the harsh edges off of stuff and you're able to justify why things get done the way things are done. And, and maybe what the Park Service needs is to establish a little more of an objective look on what do we really want and, you know, there may be some 13-year old kid out there someplace that's just dying to be a river ranger but if that opportunity doesn't exist it's not the end of his life. And so when one thing fails government always finds a way to, to get what they want. They just might have to find a little bit different avenue to get it and, and I guess I'm proud that I was one of those river ranger guys, you know. Never got involved in any debauchery. That's a little upsetting (both laugh). You know, there, my wife wouldn't like that comment, but

TM: I was gonna say. How would you solve the, the do-it-yourself dilemma, as I call it? You sort of, the do-it-yourselfers had a golden, had a golden age actually, which was the late '40s, early '50s,

ML: Umm hmm.

TM: there was a lot of, of, of interesting thought about

ML: That's the, the exploratory phase.

TM: boats and boat design, people were figuring the river out and having a good time doing it.

ML: Yep.

TM: And the Park Service said "Gee, you know, our boundary starts at (?), the Gateway at Pearce Ferry, Lee's Ferry, we have no control over, people can jump on the water there. Had a, they had a couple of river trips that had to save themselves, and Dan Davis said "You know, we're not in the rescue business, you know, I don't know how to do this, we're not gonna do this so we're gonna start permitting this and we're not gonna let anybody go who hasn't gone before." Pretty simple way of dealing with it.

ML: But that may be the point of the initial mistake. And the initial mistake is with somebody saying "We're not in the search and rescue business" but in the organic act it clearly says we're there to provide for the safety and wellbeing of the people. That calls me into play, which is that's search and rescue, that's visitor protection, that's, that's what we're doing.

TM: It's not we're gonna keep you out.

ML: Yeah. You're not worthy cause you haven't been here before. Well, that's really a self-limiting kind of perspective (laughs). We're going to travel where no man has travelled before, but there's no way to get there with that mentality.

TM: Right. We're gonna boldly go where somebody else has gone in front of us, so suddenly now there's a closed set that grows and grows and grows. You know, commercial use explodes and then the do-it-yourselfers are being denied until they can legally force and, and really push into what became the, the '79 Management Plan,

ML: Umm hmm.

TM: The lawsuit at that time, the judge said "Hmm, looks like they're changing this allocation for the better. Okay, we're gonna do that" but by then it was 20 years of being behind the eight ball for the do-it-yourselfers.

ML: Yep.

TM: And the commercial growth that eventually forced the Park Service to turn the special use

permitees into concessionaires to stop their growth, which I just learned about last week. I didn't realize that happened. That was how that worked to corral these people in. And now, of course, the do-it-yourself growth has exploded. Commercial services oftentimes, certainly in 2007, had difficulty filling their river trips and the commercial, and the do-it-yourself people are still overrunning the lottery. This is 2008, 2009.

ML: Yeah. Sure.

TM: How would you sort that out?

ML: I started to think about something while you were talking and here are a couple of thoughts. When I worked at Lee's Ferry in 1982 in September and had not a fricking clue what was going on down there, but I was given the orientation, it seemed to me that 60 to 70 percent of the noncommercial river trips which I was giving the orientation to, those people had been on the middle fork of the Salmon, they had been on the Columbia River, they had been on the Snake River, they had been on the Nantahala, they, every one of them knew something that I didn't know but, but I had to give them an orientation on how to behave on our river. And very early on in my mind I questioned why do they have to have a qualifying person? Why do they have to have somebody who's been here before because to me and, and I'm more of a climber and a backpacker kind of adventurer guy, I don't want to go somewhere where they guy sitting in the boat with me is gonna tell me "Okay, right up here, you know, there's a little ripple and you gotta go on the left hand side, and don't get too far to the right" and, you know, if the reason for the adventure is adventure do we need to diminish it by requiring all of this experience? Keep in mind, this is 1982 brain thinking about this in 1982. It never made any sense to me at all. I mention that and we didn't talk about the 1988 river management plan and the promise made in the plan. From '80 to '88 when the new plan went into effect, there, that eight-year period of time, the noncommercial boaters had their allocation. I forget what it was. It was some ridiculous number, 26,000 user days or something. The commercials had 178,000 or something. Just making those figures up but they're close. When we got involved in the assessment and the public meeting process for that '88 plan part of what we discovered, and this, we discovered this in part due to how smart Susan Cherry was. She was the permits clerk. She was issuing these noncommercial river permits, and Susan could tell you right up front "They're not using their allocation. They can't. We haven't allowed, we haven't built a process and a structure to allow them to use their allocation. If somebody cancels a trip or somebody doesn't show up, those user days are in the ether, never to be found again." And that was a light bulb coming on, and that was the promise in the '88 plan. From 1988 to '96 when they started the new plan, what we were supposed to be doing was maximizing the opportunities for noncommercial boaters to gain access to the river. We did that, we kind of developed a kind of user day pool thing for them, and if your trip said you were supposed to have 16 people on it but you only had 13 you didn't get assessed 16 user days per day of your trip, you only got assessed the 13. Those extra days went back in, and remember everybody would be calling in 42 times a day trying to see did a trip become available today and as soon as Susan had enough days to satisfy an average normal private river trip she'd issue another permit. And so at the end of the '88 plan in '96, '97, whenever it was, the promise had been if you guys, if we have developed a process that allows you to have, to use a hundred percent of your allocated days and the demand still indicates that you need more then that becomes a focus of the management plan. Well, obviously it did

become a focus of the management plan but not in the respect of the promise made, which was basically we're gonna do something. And as it turns out, you know, I pretty much lost interest in that, the new plan revision, period. I was off building ranger stations and stuff and it seems to me we fell short. I didn't see any major reallocation of user days from commercial sector to noncommercial sector. The, the whole concept of user days, to me, kind of got thrown out the window because they added user days, and when they asked where did those days come from because supposedly you're at saturation total here under the old plan, and now you're just grabbing thousands of additional days. Where do those days come from? Did you build a new beach? Did you find some place? And, there's not a, what can I say, valid explanation for where those days came from. That is politically motivated, those parts of the new plan.

TM: And can you point that out to me in the '89 plan where it made that promise cause that's new to me.

ML: It was in the public meetings. It's how we bought the public. We would go to these meetings and we would be overwhelmed by people complaining about that and, and that was, you know, first of all we discovered, well, we haven't been giving you enough days so this is what we're gonna do now to get you guys to agree to this plan in '88. We're going to allow you to use every one of your user days and then at the end of the next period we're going to reevaluate this and if it can be proven that additional days are needed that's where we're going to focus our attention. But it didn't happen that way.

TM: Right. So one of the things that was happening, I think, that in the, between '79 and '89, if I get this right, maybe not, maybe it was between '89 and the next plan, which was eventually 2006 plan, the, the winter trips, there was a use, a certain number of user days allowed, and a certain number of trips allowed and the number of trips did not equal the user days. So once you exhausted those trips you had the dates but you couldn't put the trips on the water and that's one of the things that I think Linda Jalbert tried as an experiment was to put out more winter trips and see what happened and, well, they disappeared in a minute. She put them out, they were gone.

ML: But the reality is people, people would take any Grand Canyon trip offered them. A winter trip is not a quality trip in the respect of what 85% of people that want to take trips in the Grand Canyon want to see.

TM: Correct.

ML: I've been on a trip that lasted 32 days in January and February, the most miserable, cold, wet, soggy, moldy trip of my whole life and, and we came across noncommercial river trips. They were having the same less than wonderful experience we were having. Nobody could get warm, nobody could get dry. Sure, people are going to go when you say you can go, but the reality is those aren't prime. And if you have 150 people launch in a day because they're paying \$300 a day, or you have what, what is it, 26 people a day, how many people, how many noncommercial people launch in a day?

TM: It's two groups of 16.

ML: That's 32. Yeah, that's up from what it used to be and

TM: Right. Or it's, or it's one group of 16 and one group of 8.

ML: That's, yeah, they have that half trip thing now. To me the half trip is still seven people too many.

TM: So what that proved was there's a huge amount of demand and if people are really desperate they'll go in the winter.

ML: Yeah.

TM: But it didn't really say these people would rather go in the winter than the summer. Nobody's really looked at what that demand is.

ML: Yeah.

TM: So given that there is demand for, you know, ice climbing in Rainier, to get to the top of Rainier, there is demand to climb Half Dome in Yosemite, there is demand to do outdoor wilderness type experiences in our national parks, how should the agency distribute these permits to scarce resources? You can't just crank out more permits. As you say, you can pull user days out of the sky but the resource will suffer for it

ML: There's two way to get more user days. If you made an initial mistake and you underestimated the capacity of the resource then you can fill the capacity.

TM: By adding more trips.

ML: But I think there's enough studies on the Grand Canyon that you don't have to do that. We already know they're way, you know, how many times have you been rowing an extra hour or two to find a camp because every camp that you thought you were gonna pull into was full?

TM: Or I'm almost to the camp I want and a motor trip comes right past me and doesn't talk to me and pulls right into the camp I've been rowing all afternoon to get to.

ML: I'll tell you a little story. Doug Deutschlander and I, we didn't break the Grand Canyon speed record but I don't know if you remember this, but back in the late '80s, early '90s there were a lot of trips launching from Diamond Creek, particularly Canyoneers and there, another company was doing it and I forget who that was, but in order to get their boats to Diamond Creek they were running from Lee's Ferry to Diamond Creek empty. And Doug Deutschlander and I launched a trip one day four and a half hours behind a Canyoneers trip with no people on it, piloted by a guy named Marty Borges who you might know, he's a wonderful guy and some swamper, and I forget her name. Doug and I take off on our little motor rig and we motored a hundred and nineteen miles the first day.

TM: And didn't catch them?

ML: And didn't catch Canyoners. We got up at 0-dark-30 in the morning and took off and we caught them right above Mohawk Canyon. We just wanted to see how fast they were traveling. And you know, they weren't doing anything wrong. They had convinced the park that this was the only way for them to meet these obligations downstream but we reported, at the end of that Doug and I pulled out at Diamond Creek at 9:00 in the morning on our third day. (laughs) That's a fast trip. And these guys were doing that twice a week. To run a half-day river trip from Diamond Creek to Pearce Ferry where they'd get picked up by a boat that would take them to Pearce Ferry.

TM: The jet boat would pick them up at Separation and take them out?

ML: Umm hmm.

TM: And, and it didn't count against their user days

ML: No, it, it was categorized, I remember Susan, her neck veins used to pop out cause she just hated this stuff, and they just found a way to manipulate the system, but the whole point of me telling you that story, not to ding Canyoners, when Doug and I are doing our hundred and nineteen mile day in the afternoon we literally started looking for a place to camp up around Monument and we didn't find a decent place for a single snout boat to pull in until we got to 119 Mile. And I remember at the end of that day and I tried not to ever let anybody know that I could actually run a boat cause that was one of my admonitions from Dick Marks. When they assigned me into this river job they told me under no circumstance are you to operate boats. (laughs)

TM: You're the head of the shop but you're not supposed to operate the boat?

ML: That's right. And for, I don't know, I probably was on portions of a hundred different trips down there and every once in a while I would be thrust into the role of actually having to operate a boat. A boatman would fall off and hurt himself and I'd have to run their boat and, I mean, Ken Miller kept me honest with that. If, if he found out I was running a boat he'd say "You're not supposed to be running boats." He wanted me to be the manager, not the worker, and so it's kind of lightened out but that hundred and nineteen mile day, and then the next day which was (laughs) over, well over a hundred and twenty-five miles, I ran the boat the whole second day and Deutschlander slept on the bow the whole time. And I remember waking him up in the afternoon saying "Hey, you gotta go. You gotta do this. I'm tired." (laughs)

TM: So how did the park stop Canyoners then there?

ML: Well, Canyoners has a way of stopping themselves (laughs). They ran amuck of the Hualapai river running company. Canyoners was booking three times as many people as they were and their revenues for the Hualapai tribe were diminishing and they said "No, you can't do this anymore."

TM: Controlling the access point.

ML: There was probably more to it than that but I do remember sitting in on some Hualapai tribal meetings where they were talking about that and they were not happy with that.

TM: And their trips now from Diamond down continue to grow. They've grown way out of sight of the 2006 river,

ML: It's a wonderful little day trip.

TM: river management plan was supposed to control all that. They've given up on that completely, the number of, of boat dock tours down there and the helicopters coming and going and the trips launching, and the park has basically walked away from their obligation to control river traffic below Diamond Creek.

ML: Yeah. There just hasn't been a horrendous air crash or catastrophe down there and, you know, the skywalk, I was a very outspoken critic of the skywalk until somebody in the service told me to shut up, sister agency, we're not gonna shit in their nest, and the, I have a picture in my little bookshelf there in the hall of the Hualapai skywalk. It just looks like every other tourist picture you ever saw, but that was awarded to me at my retirement party because (laughs), by somebody who knew how frustrated and upset I was with the construction of that thing (laughs) and it represented, as far as I'm concerned that whole skywalk thing represents a major failure on the part of the government to protect the Grand Canyon, whether it's Hualapai side or not.

TM: It's a failure of the 1975 Enlargement Act which recognized the entire Grand Canyon, no matter who the, the overseeing agency is.

ML: I know that. Yes, yeah.

TM: And, and we didn't figure that, I don't think the environmental community figured that out, but now with the Navajo tramway proposal people have figured that out.

ML: Yeah. It's been thrust back in the forefront there.

TM: So kind of behind the eight ball. Couple more questions I want to ask you and I think we can kind of sort of tie this up. You mentioned about needing a qualified boatman and you know, I would assume, always assumed that the agency wanted someone to be in charge. If you have people that are breaking the rules, you know, it's like the, the person driving the car with the driver's license, it's the person you're gonna go to for infractions if there's any, you need somebody you can go to. So you have a structure that has a permittee and you have a structure that has a bus and you're trying to sell seats in the tour bus and you're trying to bring in people and when the bus is full or not you go in the driver and off you go, and that's sort of the commercial vision of it anyway. We're just selling seats in a bus.

ML: Yep.

TM: And over here we have one permit going to a trip. Is there a way to reconcile these to bring these together so that there's a, a common journey, a competition for the golden launch for that permit?

ML: Yeah, yeah. Well, I try to avoid getting onto social media sites and websites and, but there are billboards everywhere on the internet that if you've got a private permit river trip and you need somebody to go with you and you are advertising. There's lines of people. There's billboards for qualifying boatmen and, you know, and there, I know from my times in that office some of those qualifying boatmen, they weren't just being participants on a noncommercial river trip. They were being paid or their share was being waived because what they were bringing was the qualifying boatman that they needed for their trip. And that doesn't make any sense to me. If you're up for adventure, then go do a river trip, you know. I have some horror stories, of course, because I spent a lot of time at Phantom Ranch. I remember this really goofy little private river trip came in, two boats, four people, two husbands and two wives and, married to each other, and they were swathed in white clothing from head to toe and were completely, their faces and hands were completely covered with white zinc oxide and they pulled into the Phantom boat beach and they tracked me down someplace demanding to be flown out of the canyon. They never wanted to see this place again and I, of course, interviewed them and what's the problems. "Well, we just, this, the current doesn't run the right way. We're spending all of our time rowing upstream and then downstream and sideways and we can never get to where we want to go," and what we ended up doing is we wouldn't allow them to be flown out of the canyon cause this was their trip and they claimed they had a qualifying boatman. He had run some comparable river, but it turned out he had been a commercial passenger on some comparable river. And we ended up, there was, I'm trying to remember the guy's name, out of Moab, John Williams, Tagalong Tours. These people were basically gonna camp at Phantom Ranch until they were rescued and they didn't need a rescue. But what I did was I talked to them. I said "If I can get you people to operate the boats will you complete your trip?" "Yeah, but we don't want to have anything to do with this." Okay. "You got money?" "Yeah, we'll pay." "If I can find you boat people to come down and operate your boats will you do this?" So I called John Williams and I'm telling him what the situation is, and he goes "Hold up, Mark. Wait a minute now. These people are going to pay me and another person, five hundred dollars apiece to come down and take boats through the Grand Canyon?" (both laugh) I said "Yeah, that's it." He goes "When do you want us there?" I said "When can you get here," and he said "Well, it takes eight hours to drive there and a couple hours to hike in." He said "What do we need to bring," and I said "Whatever you want to bring," and I said "I'll make sure it gets down there in the morning." And we did, we packed their gear on mules and it was taken in and these guys rode a noncommercial river trip and they were paid to do it, and the reason for that and the decision making was we don't want to set a precedent that if you're having a bad time or it doesn't meet your expectations that constitutes a helicopter ride and a rescue.

TM: But what this begs the question for is there is no middle commercial ground,

ML: That's right.

TM: meaning there's a turnkey,

ML: Yeah, yeah.

TM: you buck the whole deal, lock, stock and barrel, or you're doomed to

ML: Cruise ship.

TM: Yeah, cruise ship or you're renting, you could rent everything, rent the stuff, but there's no middle commercial ground for bringing in a consultant. You get to row the rapid but the consultant's in the back saying "You know, right by this rapid on the right there's a nice camp, you know, let's pull in there, get ready." No, it's not allowed. And, and a lot of that goes back to the concessionaires not wanting it to be allowed because that would bite into the commercial chunk of the business.

ML: Well, see, and that's probably the reality. You're not the concessioners at Grand Canyon, because of that debacle in the late '70s, they're distrusting. They have always viewed the government as the intruder because they were there first. How dare you come down here and tell me how to run my business? I started this business, you guys weren't even here. And that continues to be a major bugaboo. There is no trust, and I can understand why, but if you're a government contractor you gotta understand contracts end. You have to understand that situations can change and things can be reconfigured. The end of the '70s unfortunately there was a strong enough voice weighed in on the concession side that it threw those other considerations out. That, you know, how many times does this wheel have to turn around

TM: Well, that's my question. How many times do we have to keep going through this? How many more river management plans will we have to go through until we can get back into a real sort of real world state? My last question is, I want to ask you is about Glade Ross, the first Grand Canyon river ranger, left Grand Canyon, ended up being the Lodore ramp ranger. He refused to wear a duty belt when he did his river orientation. He thought that his relationship with these people that were gonna go on this river trip heading down there and going through Hell's Half Mile and, and down joining the Yampa and go out through Split Mountain that he did not need to orient them to the river with a weapon on and all that that entailed. At Lee's Ferry the orientation for the do-it-yourself river runners was nothing for a long, long time and then became a pretty intensive orientation with a slide show in a crappy trailer and then there was a video made and everybody had to watch the video before they saw the slide show in a crappy trailer, and then they stopped the slide show but you still had to go through an orientation with a ranger, full LE in full duty dress and, you know, checking for people who were, you know, making sure that the license, that the identifications matched up. In a day and age now, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, where we have videos online, where we have so many other resource demands put upon an agency in so many different ways, what are your thoughts on that orientation at the Ferry? Is it still required? Is it still required in the way it's being done?

ML: I don't, I don't even know what the program is there, Tom. I haven't been on the river since 2004. (laughs)

TM: I'll just paint the picture for you and, and some of this I, I still think is valid. In the afternoon while you rig the ranger will want to see first aid kits, units, slop screen, look at every

single life jacket, look at your throw cushions, make sure that the printing is still on the labels and there's no tears there, and then the next day there will be an hour-long down by the river, covering the ravens that will steal your watches, scorpions, rattlesnakes, water, heat-related illnesses, archeological site sensitivity and, of course, checking of course the roster and making sure that's all right.

ML: So, part of your answer is self-evident. But because it's not with you (both laugh), I will make it evident. What division of the National Park Service is normally engaged in visitor information and orientation and interpretation? Could it be the Interpretation Division? Back in the early '80s, of course, I was a law enforcement guy. I already had three or four or five years worth of law enforcement experience. I had watched NPS 9 descend upon us and in NPS 9 it particularly specified this is how you behave. NPS 9 was created because there were superintendents that denied they needed law enforcement in their parks, and NPS 9 was the rulebook on how law enforcement personnel were going to be managed. I have an interesting story. In 1979, I'm a young buck seasonal ranger in Yellowstone Park. One of my duties is to go to the entrance station at the north entrance station of the park in Gardner, Montana and pick up the day's revenues and take them up to Mammoth Hot Springs and convert them into money orders. This is how we did the business at the time. I drove to the north entrance station, I got my bag of money which I signed for at the entrance station, \$28,000 cash. I went to the post office where I stood in line like everybody else with my bag of \$28,000 and when I got to the window I bought my money order for a buck 95 and \$28,000 (laughs). I hadn't even got back to my patrol car when I got a call from my district ranger, his name was Terry Danforth. Terry called me and said "Mark, you gotta come to the superintendent's office immediately." Well, okay. You know, I knew I hadn't done anything wrong so I go to the superintendent's office, the secretary ushers me in and there's Terry and there's the park superintendent. His name was John Townsley. Old school. His father was Forrest Townsley, superintendent of Yosemite back in the '50s. This is part of the nepotism, you know, that plagues the Park Service. Anyway, I go in there and I'm just absolutely puzzled and I'm figuring, well, John's got some assignment for me, and I walk in there and what am I wearing? I'm wearing my duty belt with my 1936 Colt Police Special revolver and Mr. Townsley said "Sit down, we're gonna have a talk." And I got a message that under no circumstance was I to be seen in public wearing my firearm. Now, think about this, Tom (laughs). Was it safe to drive around with \$28,000 on the front seat of my patrol car? No. Mr. Townsley was one of these superintendents who, who had really good attributes but when it came to law enforcement he saw that as a negative impacting thing and under no circumstance did he want anybody to be offended by thinking that there might be law enforcement problems in a national park. Fast forward 30 years later, 20 years later, to Paul Berkowitz and his little publication "The Middle of Nowhere Syndrome." I don't know if you've ever read that but it's worth reading. Anyway, back to where we were. Anyway, I remember sitting in Mr. Townsley's office and I said, you know, and he's asking me "Why were you wearing your revolver?" And I said "Well, I had just been to the entrance station, I had picked up my \$28,000 and it seemed like the way to safeguard that money," and he said "Were there burglars there? Well, did anybody accost you? Did anybody try to take the money?" "No." "Well, then, you didn't need your firearm." I'm sitting, this was not John Townsley's mindset; this was the mindset in 1979 and probably two thirds of the superintendents in the National Park Service. That's what spawned Ken Miller and the law enforcement advisory group to make these rules NPS 9, and NPS 9 stated in there here's the working agreement for

people that carry law enforcement commissions, this is what you will do. You will carry your firearm. You will be identified by the following equipment. That's why that was happening and is still happening at the Lee's Ferry orientations or anywhere where you have commissioned park rangers.

TM: Hang on, because right there I lost you. I understand that if you're a law enforcement ranger you should be wearing your duty belt and you should have your bulletproof vest on. I understand that, but why that needs to happen at the Lee's Ferry launch ramp is where things kind of fall apart for me.

ML: Because you're a commissioned ranger first, you're a duty assignment second.

TM: Well, so, so how is that an interp ranger

ML: They're not law enforcement commissioned. All you're doing is talking about here's the rules of the road,

TM: Right, but I get that when I'm gonna go get a backpacking permit, I don't have to visit with a Law Enforcement Ranger.

ML: I'm obviously in your camp because back in '82 when I started doing that stuff in September, in the fall, I'm thinking this is actually interpretive work, you know. They don't need me, a law enforcement commissioned person, to be here. I'm like I'm not doing any law enforcement. I'm doing the day orientation program and an interpretive program and you know, I think interpreters obviously could do a, well, much better than I certainly ever did (laughs).

TM: Well, that's an interesting question about how should the Park Service move forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century with the troubles it has with the concessionaires, with the trouble it has with the do-it-yourselfers, with the trouble it has with its own in-house stuff. It'll be fascinating to see how it goes.

ML: We'll see, and it all boils down to a bunch of trust issues. The concessioners don't trust the Park Service, the Park Service doesn't trust this band of wild haired people that are descending on them to go down their river. There isn't anything and the concept of an orientation program, I think that's relatively pure because it's a real reminder to people, you're in a national park, there are rules, and this is a privilege not a right, and, but as far as who administers that particular program I've never been a supporter of commissioned park rangers doing it.

BH: I have two points from an administrative point to add. Commissioned park rangers make more money, get higher benefits, get 20 year retirement, and some of them have had a problem getting 20 year retirement when they were doing non law enforcement work, and Mark could probably go into details about that

ML: Yes.

BH: but standing giving orientations, to me that doesn't qualify for all the extra money that they are paid, and the extra benefits.

ML: It actually falls into a little niche called regulatory outreach. (laughs)

TM: So Barbara, do we need to pull up a chair here?

BH: No, but I did bring this. When I heard you talking about the inner canyon pipeline if, if you've ever seen this

TM: So Barbara, hang on for a second. Your last name is what?

BH: Horning.

TM: And just for the record, so this is Barbara Horning and this is the Part 3 of an Interview with Mark, and so Barbara has just brought me this, this amazing drawing of the Grand Canyon. There's a little condor that's trying to fly over the canyon here and there's this amazing plumbing system going from one side to the other, it's the North Rim at 8,000 feet and the plumbing goes down the Roaring Springs, and the plumbing goes down past Bright Angel Creek and Phantom Ranch and waiting there, goes across the suspension bridge and then up to Indian Gardens where there's a giant pump, underground, pumps it up to these big tanks on the other side. And so you wanted to show me this because?

BH: I just heard you talking about the pipeline and I didn't know if that was going to enter into anything at all, but that was someone who worked for the Park Service for maintenance that drew those and

TM: It's a great drawing.

BH: It is. It was a going away gift cause I dealt with utilities from the administrative end and it drove me absolutely bonkers, so I got one of those. Or maybe that's the only one. I don't know, I think he made a bunch.

ML: But, you know, it's, it illustrates, the Park Service has been very adaptive in modifying the environment to accommodate, now I understand 5.5 million people last year, and nobody would be there if there wasn't water literally being piped all the way across the canyon, a totally unnatural process, totally impacting in every way, I'd like to know what the carbon footprint of that is, and (laughs), hot issues, and we have made adjustments and made that intrusion the status quo, and that's the totally acceptable thing not to be questioned, sacred cow. There's no reason why we couldn't rethink this whole river orientation thing.

TM: It's really interesting because what you're saying is do we really need a river unit. We can rethink everything.

ML: Why not, you don't need, you don't need a river search and rescue unit that sits there waiting for a river emergency. You know, Ken Phillips pretty much solved that problem. We

have a few people available regardless of what the emergency is. Those people are flown or, or ambulated and respond to emergencies, and the park rangers are all held to a pretty high medical intervention stand so they can respond. You know, there I was in my office, the river office on the South Rim. Every time there was a mirror flash, every time there was a radio call, whatever the emergency was, Mark sent the helicopter flying off to do that. You didn't need a river patrol to do that. I don't think the river patrol ever dealt with more than 5% of the total incidents that were going on down there.

TM: Well, so this, this kind of goes to a question I'm thinking about, the orientation at Lee's Ferry. The river patrol is meant to look for people that are noncompliant.

ML: That's just the nature of law enforcement. (laughs)

TM: Totally understood. Totally makes sense. The regulations say I need two spare oars,

ML: Umm hmm.

TM: I need a workable Type 5, Type 3 life jacket, I need a fire pan, I need a bathroom, I need a kitchen, three bucket recommended,

ML: I need a pottie.

TM: I need a first aid, I need, there's a, okay, so the thinking is not here's what you need, we're gonna look to make sure you've got it sometime during your river trip. We'll stop into your camp or we'll interface with you on the water, we'll just make sure you got this stuff. It isn't like we trust you because these are the regs, it's we are going to make sure you have this stuff at the ramp before you start. And then we're gonna check you down the line.

ML: But, and I will share with you my river patrol experiences, we never pulled into a noncommercial camp and said "Tom, show me your first aid kit."

TM: Because you knew that was done already.

ML: Yeah.

TM: Okay.

ML: Yeah, we, it wasn't of any interest to us, we assume that you had one because you'd gone through the orientation.

TM: If my life jacket wasn't buckled or looked like I didn't have my fire pan up where I should have, that, but you're sort of putting two and two together saying "Well, they should have a fire pan yet I don't see it."

ML: Yeah.

TM: So at what point is the person sort of creating more work for itself, saying we really don't trust these people to do it on trust, we don't trust these people so we're going to have them jump through these hurdles.

ML: Yeah. So you can't have an online orientation program because people will just boot it up and click "I viewed it" and well, yeah, I did, but then when they fall out of the boat and they smack their head and their survivors are saying "Well, you know, nobody told him he could fall out of the boat and smack his head and die. That wasn't part of the orientation. He clicked here but we went through the orientation and it didn't say it was dangerous." You know, that's why you can't do it online because people just click the little check mark, I did it, and it opens up this world of liability.

TM: So I'll, I'll push back in this a little bit. It's very good, because a year or two ago I, I got a back country permit to go backpacking for two weeks by myself from Diamond Creek to Pearce Ferry.

ML: Oh, oh, man.

TM: And I did it all over the phone, paid for it, I was done, I got my permit. Okay? No one interviewed me, no one sat down and said "Beware the ravens are gonna steal your watch. Be careful because this can happen and that can happen."

ML: There's Mojave rattlesnakes down there.

TM: Nothing. It was like good luck.

ML: Well, did it dawn on you that it might have been personality driven?

TM: (laughs) Yeah, see you later. Hope he doesn't show up.

ML: (laughs) Oh, wait, wait, it's Tom Martin?

TM: Give him the permit, don't give the permit, maybe, maybe he'll die. So, clearly there's a little bit of a double standard here. Now, you could argue that a solo two-week hike from Diamond Creek to Pearce Ferry is not as dangerous as going with 15 other of your friends from Lee's Ferry to Pearce Ferry with a whole list of requirements.

ML: They really look like similar activities, don't they?

TM: They look kind of like similar activities and what is required of these people going out for this type of recreation, but between bowling and badminton, as Dr. Meyer has said, this is the danger factor. And this other, you know, is by himself with a backpack for a couple of weeks, really?

ML: Well, I'm sure when you were down climbing Mohawk Canyon that wasn't difficult to do. (laughs)

TM: No, no. As I started Diamond, I already done that.

ML: Done it, huh? (laughs)

TM: Yeah. So these are the things, I think, that vexed the public looking at the agency and going this just doesn't make sense.

ML: Yeah. Oh, and I don't think there was any way that you, you say this resource is so much more valuable that we have to do this to protect that resource. Maybe it's because when you go on a river trip it's not as purely an environmental adventure as a backpacking trip is. A backpacking trip your environment is limited to what you've decided you can carry on your back, but when you're, and I can almost guarantee you that when you did your two-week backpacking trip you didn't take a case of beer and you didn't take a couple of 1.75 liter bottles of tequila and you didn't have a library other than maybe a guidebook, and that, and there is a difference in the experiential condition. When you're backpacking you're immersed in that environment. An original river trip, John Wesley Powell, those guys were totally immersed in the environment. They were starving to death. They could barely make it, but we've refined the science of river running to the point where, God, I've seen blenders on the river, I've seen solar powered (laughs) operations, I've seen water filters, I've seen everything in the world that you can imagine somebody has adapted to make, to literally bring their civilized environment to this place that everybody's questing to go because it represents wilderness. So explain that to me on your 21-person motor boat cruise ship on the Colorado River with gas powered blenders and everything that you can possibly take to have a gourmet dinner as good, if not better, than any restaurant you'll find in Northern Arizona. You know, the cat's out of the bag. You're never gonna shove this back in there and say, you know, why isn't wilderness travel truly wilderness travel? Why aren't you immersed in the experience?

TM: Right. I guess the, the question I'm asking is is one I think, I, I've been really struggling to figure out but it, it's, as you say, the, the Park has been late to the game and as the concessionaires, as you point out, it's a really good point, you know, here comes the government to help, oh, great, we had this all figured out before you showed up. Well, did you or didn't you look at the beaches, look at all the solid waste that was scattered all over the place. And, and the do-it-yourselfers, you know, go sit in the back of the bus and that really hasn't changed, that relationship of the Park Service to this set of users, really hasn't changed.

ML: No.

TM: And I'm, I'm, I guess I'm looking forward to the day when it does.

ML: Yeah, yeah. But, and then, you know, back to this more proximal issue, do we need this river unit, I call it that although that's derogatory. And I would say there are a lot of smarter people out there than me and I'm pretty sure that this could be remanaged and renegotiated, contracted, reinvented to, to make it work, and whether we need a full-time crew of people that it's merely their business to move boats down the Colorado River maybe, maybe we don't need that. Maybe we need to only have a presence there when we need to have the presence there. If

we need to go look at an Arch site maybe we need to be there. If we're starting to notice through these constant beach monitoring programs, there's not a beach down there that some river company hasn't adopted where they're counting pieces of charcoal and looking for waste paper and looking for micro trash. That used to be all stuff that the river patrol unit was doing. That's really been displaced by a lot of the guides' association work and what they're doing. I don't think that there could be any kind of significant environmental damage down there, significant being a tree cut down with a saw. Okay? It could even be a tamarisk tree, but you could cut a random tamarisk tree along that 225-mile corridor and I bet you it wouldn't be six hours before there's a phone call, "Somebody cut a tree down" at whatever the location was. So, you know, I'm a park ranger, I valued that experience and that life, but do we really need that now because we have developed a third eye that's really far more reaching than whatever that patrol would have ever seen. That stuff's being done for us for free, you know. There's no contract with the guides' association to, with their beach monitoring. Now, here in Glen Canyon we've got a bunch of old retired people in Green Haven that are monitoring beaches, you know, that didn't even know what sand was a couple years ago but now they're down there monitoring beaches. There's ways to keep an eye on this without having the official presence there.

TM: It's funny that you mention this because this is something that's really been bugging me is, you know, last 10 years, maybe last 15, I have seen more and more gardening of the camps. It's cutting the tamarisks here and there to make more campsites, making the kitchen a little bigger.

ML: It's only a tamarisk tree. I mean, they're trying to get rid of them all over the west.

TM: Exactly, exactly.

ML: They got Puckett biology going where they're throwing beetles everywhere. (laughs)

TM: And this is the thing that bugs me because if we are really looking at the concept of wilderness, it, it means it's unmanaged by man. You're not supposed to see the tree laying and the cuts ends of the, well, they can say tamarisks, it's okay, we're just gonna cut this and make this bigger, and I often wonder who's doing this. And I would like to think it's not the commercial river guides and I would like to think it's those bad do-it-yourself river runners but I, I haven't seen the bad do-it-yourself river runners do it and I have seen the commercial river guides do it. So there is a continuing improvement or hardening, a hard surfacing that's happening on the river corridor

ML: Yeah.

TM: and that I find concerning.

ML Well, and those are the, part of that campsite monitoring program is actually, I think, turning into a campsite maintenance program and (laughs) you talked about the Gates of Lodore before, Gates of Lodore, your permit tells you which campsite you're staying in, they're basically numbered although when you get down there you can never find the number.

TM: Big holes in the ground

ML: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, is that necessary? You should know where you are, but the, I don't think, and we thought about this for years, you can't have designated campsites at the Grand Canyon because all it takes is a upset boat and you're a day behind schedule and, and, and so nothing would flow. The campsites themselves, there are prime campsites and there are lesser campsites, and how often do you pull into a prime campsite and when you pull in there there's a big hurrah go up "We got a prime campsite" (laughs) instead of the normal "Okay, we had to pass up the first three places we wanted to stay and now we're down here on a rocky, sandy mess with tamarisk growing all over it, but it's home for tonight," you know. There is a lack of supply of quality campsites. I don't know how many times, river patrol had a lot of flexibility and adaptability. We would do a lot of work in the Tapeats and Deer Creek area, a lot of trail, a lot of backpackers in those areas, messes everywhere, we'd do a lot of work in there so we would always snag Ponchos Kitchen cause we could be in there at noon and we had motorboats. We could go up and down the river. We'd snag that camp. I don't know how many commercial boaters would boat by us going "God damn them. Park rangers, you know. They took the best campsite. They're always taking the best campsite." The reason, but the reality is we're just grabbing the only place where there's any shade cause we're working, too, and there aren't good places down there. The resource is disappearing and we all know that. Maybe that's the diminishing infinity on this whole issue is when all the beaches are gone I guess we won't be worrying about that.

TM: Or we'll all be sleeping on our boats.

ML: Yeah, you know. I think when I hear stories about replenishment of beach sands, that is a very self-limiting factor unless we start dumping something in there and then what you've done is create a totally artificial kind of environment and you've destroyed probably hundreds of miles to truck or canal or pipeline heavily sedimented waters in to restore that resource. So, you know, there's a, I don't think that's ever going to happen.

TM: That's a whole 'nother discussion.

ML: Yeah. And, you know, it's a national park and the Park Service is completely conflicted over all kinds of management decisions they're making all the time. Riddle me this one—why is it okay to have Rocky Mountain elk on the South Rim but you're not allowed to have Rocky Mountain elk on the North Rim? Historic places where those animals existed. Why is it that when a bison pioneers through a poorly maintained fence and ends up on the North Rim they have to be immediately removed, but when javalena have pioneered onto the South Rim and Indian Gardens and all along the Tonto that's okay? (laughs) And the people that are making the decisions about these things are saying "Well, it's totally unacceptable to have an elk on the North Rim." Well, why is it totally unacceptable to have an elk on the North Rim? You know, that doesn't make any sense. None of them are indigenous to here. You know, after Merriam's elk got wiped out by you Flagstaff pioneers they reintroduced elk and they've spread and done very well. They're coming out of Utah onto the North Rim. You can go today and buy an over the counter permit to shoot any elk that you see on the North Rim. To me that's a little perplexing because we have injected ourselves into natural processes. That's how animals have

spread all over the world, through pioneering populations, but we've decided that that is a bad pioneering. So the Park Service finds, you know, they're making decisions on both sides of the issue all the time with, with no real consistency to it. It's all based on God knows what, whoever your local manager is.

TM: Well, so, so I'm gonna wrap this up. The one thing I have here is I have a list of just employee after employee after employee and superintendent after superintendent after superintendent. So some of these conflicting management operations I just wonder as, as people, myriads of people come and go and as you, you told us about throwing material out, or the person coming behind you throwing out all your files,

ML: "Well, that's old shit. That doesn't have anything to do with me."

TM: Exactly. So we lose institutional memory it seems like within the agency and management visions are dependent upon superintendents' ideals and visions. You know, you were telling me about a superintendent who says "Why are you wearing that duty belt?"

ML: Umm hmm.

TM: There are Park policies...

ML: Even more so, you're not allowed to wear that duty belt.

TM: Right. Park policy's being made in Washington, DC that come down to local service units and apply or don't, that are misapplied or not. It seems as though the system is ripe for troubles right out of the gate and how we move forward in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, as you know, is critically important for, for all this.

ML: Yeah. You know, I don't have an answer for that. I've spent a lot of time in the brand new park, Redwoods, where it was just utter chaos and if you remember Marin County in the '70s, where they put 6,000 people that made their living cutting down redwood trees out of business, it was a very hostile environment and the people got shot at, people had pistols pointed at them, it was a very hostile environment. I bailed out of there. I went to Yellowstone. You don't get any more provincial in Yellowstone. I mean, "Well, this is the way we've always done it." And for years that's exactly the mentality. Nothing, the world didn't exist outside those park boundaries and they managed, "This is the way we manage our park," pretty much oblivious to anything going on out there in the rest of the world. You get down here at the Grand Canyon where there are influences beyond the imagination of the managers at the time that didn't understand the strength of politics and didn't understand that politics were probably a more powerful force than the Organic Act. I don't know. I don't think there's a lot of answers to it. I think the world has a problem and humanity is the problem (laughs). There are too many, we think there are too many people now. What's it gonna look like 50 to a hundred years from now and, you know, we're trying to preserve these little, these little islands of original turf and I just don't see it happening. Not given the current mindset, which is we want to keep it the way it was when we took our original snapshot, when we made it a national park. I just don't see that that happens. The parks have to be adaptive and fluid and be a part of the evolution, not the snapshot

of the time because it can't exist. The Grand Canyon is a perfect example. They're got their quality problems that originate hundreds and hundreds of miles away and, and you can't turn off Los Angeles, you know. So there's a problem that they have to live with even though they're not really adapting to it very much. Over time things will adapt to it. They'll either live or they won't live, and I think there's a lot of similar parallels. I mean, we've got this huge lake now posed right above a totally different kind of resource and they both are managed by the same organic act. (laughs) The enabling legislation for the Grand Canyon and the subsequent 1975 Enlargement Act critically lay out how things are going to be and how things are going to be managed and then you look at the enabling legislation for Glen Canyon Recreation Area and because of the incredible political influences and buyouts that they had to do to, to even get the national recreation area here the whole thing's a total hodgepodge, totally different than the park that they interface with at Lee's Ferry.

TM: And the bookend on the far end, Lake Mead.

ML: Yes, yes. Another totally different place and I don't think they've ever come to grips with that because they manage the entity. You know, Grand Canyon is Grand Canyon and we're gonna manage that, and Glen Canyon is Glen Canyon and we're not gonna manage that. (laughs)

TM: So I have a manmade construct with a giant reservoir and I have another one of those and in between there am I gonna manage this amazing wilderness resource of 1.2 million acres of just national park. There's another three-quarters of a million acres

ML: Well, yeah, and they're adding to it all the time. (laughs)

TM: Well, just looking at the non park managed land that,

ML: Umm hmm, the, the Indian

TM: that the Tribes own, that the Forest Service manages, that the BLM manages, you put it all together and is your snapshot Lewis and Clark? Is it the Pleistocene...

ML: Yeah, yeah. Or John Wesley Powell?

TM: That had bison, that had an elk, that had a wild peccary?

ML: Saber-tooth tigers.

TM: That had saber-tooth tigers.

ML: We had sloths.

TM: Brush ox. You know, talk about North American camel and lion, so how do we manage these vestiges of resources in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century that are millions of years in the coming together as systems with, with bookends on either ends of these giant reservoirs with manmade dams?

ML: And, of course, the humanity management problem and we're probably not smart enough to realize that there are concepts beyond this wonderful idea of permits. There are probably other ways to look at that issue and to achieve at least the same if not better result, but we haven't thought of it yet. And we don't know how to deal with that.

TM: It seems a lot of the issues that we're dealing with, the troubles that we're dealing with, we are trapped in the past on, we're running subsidized businesses and they sort of trundle along. We can't get out of, or at least we haven't been able to yet. As you say, it's a political gerrymandering.

ML: Well, Tom, this is the world we live in. And that's what people are looking for their experiences. How many times you drive down the road and you see this thing hanging out the window of a car cause somebody's taking a fricking selfie as he's driving down the road?

TM: It's the selfie stick, yeah.

ML: And I have some friends and we go out to a hillside out here at sunset time and do sunset photos, and it's amazing to us. We'll spend four hours out there waiting for, you know, two seconds worth of good light, but people are driving in and out the whole time taking pictures of themselves with their cars in the background or the lake in the background, but that's the experiences capturing the photograph, not capturing the moment. (laughs) And actually being there. And I wonder, you know, later on when these people go to sort through the 5,000 photos they have on their telephone I wonder if they're going "Oh, where the hell was that," because, and I know this, and this is a cynical statement about people that visit Grand Canyon Park, that 5.5 million people. How many people are postcard viewers? They drive up, they step out of the car at Yaki Point, they, they look at it, they snap their picture but, "Oh, yeah, I've been to the Grand Canyon," you know. Maybe that's what we need to promote.

TM: Well, we do. Those 5 million, you know, again, one-tenth of one percent of America in a hundred years is gonna take a river trip through the park, one-tenth of one percent in a hundred years at current population levels, at current recreational use levels. The majority of people that show up at the South Rim, they're there for 30 minutes and they're gone. And if you look at the population over the last hundred years.

ML: So the Park Service response to that one-tenth of one percent of a hundred years has been we're going to issue permits and then we make them go as fricking slow as you can go. (laughs) So what would happen if we said "Yeah, you can go on a Grand Canyon river trip but you've only got five days so you get your ass in gear?"

TM: Well, there's a logic to that.

ML: If all you're looking for is a postcard why would it, why would you need any more time?

TM: It was Bob Bishop, Utah Congressional Representative, and I talked to his staffers about, you know, this whole equation. They said "Listen, the answer to this is very simple. It's called a

highway on pylons over the river. Americans do not boat, they're not river runners, they drive cars. You can stop at Phantom Ranch, get some lemonade, back in the car, and within the scope of a little over a half a day you can drive through the entire Grand Canyon

ML: Well, that's the Navajo Tramway to the mouth of the Little Colorado.

TM: Exactly right.

ML: We want to expedite people seeing this wonderful place. Yeah.

TM: So, so how do we balance this in order to, in such a manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations, what are we managing for? And we can build tramways, we have the technology to build escalators up El Capitan, right up the face, boy, how about that? Wouldn't that be cool?

ML: Tom, we don't even have to build anything anymore. I just saw this on the news two days ago. A guy has built one of these little radio controlled drones that you can stand on and it can fly you anywhere and he's got it up to about 21 minutes of flight time now.

TM: Is that right? So he's made an aircraft.

ML: He's made an aircraft but it's an individual, personal aircraft. Of course, it's only a matter of time before you add a couple of seats and sell tickets. (laughs)

TM: Yeah, yeah. So it's a little plane.

ML: Yeah. (laughs)

TM: And we've had these already. But the real question is as our population explodes how do we preserve these places and the types of experiences that we would like to preserve and therefore why, and if we're gonna have a five-day motor trip through Grand Canyon who gets to go and at what price?

ML: Yeah, yeah. You know, and I guess my thought is river trips are privileged experiences. There's no right, and there's no right for anybody to be any particular place unless it's specifically outlined in the U.S. Constitution and, and I don't believe it is. There's, you know, I think it's a privilege to visit your national parks. It's not a right, and if the park suffers, you know, we have to have a clear vision of what we want these parks to be. If we do want this park to be the little microcosm of the world of 1916 and 500 years from now then the only way you're really gonna do that is by keeping the detrimental influences out, of which we already identified is the humanity aspect of it. There isn't a lot of shit going on that isn't human related. You know, who cares if the southwest willow flycatcher starts nesting in a tamarisk tree? Pretty benign little thing. You know, we don't need to manage our world because of that, but if you get the humans out of the environment down there you're not worried about capacities and modes of travel and beach sands and the habitability of the beaches and whether it's good for people or not. So I could become the wilderness Tsar saying nobody should go there because you're just

gonna trample and make it something less than what it is. But I don't think that's the way we want to manage things.

TM: No, but it's fascinating questions because especially as our populations grow and intact ecosystems become more and more scarce, is it heating up, is it cooling off, is it global warming, is it global cooling, is it the next Ice Age right around the corner, is it drying out, is it getting too wet?

ML: Well, see, and we, we didn't capture enough of the initial environment and ecosystems to make them sustainable. So we're doing patchwork stuff and, based on some really weird stuff. You know, we added Parashant and we're, we're going to add the Watershed National Monument, and we're adding the Grand Staircase, a wonderful place. You know, don't get me wrong, the Vermilion Cliffs, wonderful places but we're adding them in to, to just try to, to make a little patchwork quilt of these ecosystems but we've already lost most of it. I mean, the whole South Rim of the Grand Canyon is basically not in the control of anybody.

TM: It's interesting about the bison. Here in the late 1800's there were less than a hundred. In 1899 or 1901 or so they almost went extinct. These creatures like big landscapes to go through. Even the woodland bison covers lots of ground. But I got BLM over here, I got Forest Service up there, I got Park Service over there, I got Fish and Game involved in all this. To actually have a species that would love nothing better but to cruise the entire Arizona strip from Lee's Ferry all the way out to the Grand Wash and maybe even beyond a little bit. It takes an awful lot for us as a species with multiple organizations and multiple players and tribes in the game to be able to work well enough together to let these species try to thrive. There's the Mason-Dixon Line that is the kill line and the bison are smart and they figure that out and they say "I cross this line going north I'm gonna be shot." So

ML: That's right. That's where those guys that you can't see are hiding.

TM: I'm gonna stay south of the line and be fruitful and multiply.

ML: Sure. And now all of the sudden there are 500 of them.

TM: If the agency isn't smart enough to say "You know what, we need to get a couple of our own cullers in here and we can start driving this herd all across the Arizona Strip with some hunters and some cullers, how cool would that be?"

ML: Yeah.

TM: We have the ability to do this but do we have the smarts to figure it out?

ML: Well, you know, in the case of the Arizona Strip, I have a tendency to be a little more of a multiple use kind of guy and I hunt and fish and do that sort of thing. I have a permit to shoot a pronghorn antelope out in the Strip about, let's see, I've got eight loyalty permit points stacking up so it was eight years ago. So I'm out on this antelope hunt, and I'm by myself. I'm out in what they call the Serengeti of the Arizona Strip and there are a few antelope around, and I drive

to this place where there's this old homestead, a subterranean dwelling built about 1900. And I'm sitting there and I see something up on this ridgeline kind of coming towards me 400 yards away. I went what the hell is a dog doing out here? Keeping in mind that we've got to be 15 miles from the first scraggly little juniper tree, and I keep watching this thing and I go "Well, what the hell is that," and I get my rifle and my big scope out and I'm looking at it, and it's a black bear, and it weighs about ninety to a hundred and ten pounds, it's dark brown in color, his fur's all matted up and he's just rolling rocks over and chasing lizards and he walks within a hundred and fifty yards of me all the way down this ridgeline and just takes off, and I think, now, there aren't any black bears on the North Rim. And you never hear any stories. This is just a pioneering little cub, it was probably a male bear, out in the middle of the Arizona Strip, a pioneering animal, and given the management decisions being made in all of the managed areas right there, he'd be eliminated. But (laughs), you know, to me pioneering animals are pioneering animals. You know, they don't live in the world we live in. There's not a black bear out there that understands he's being managed (laughs). There's not a bison out there that understands they're being managed other than like you said, geez, when I walked in here the fence was all trampled down but now somebody put the fence back up, I'm trapped, but that's a good thing cause there's a guy over there with a bow and arrow who wants to kill me. Interesting decision

TM: Yeah. But we showed up, we showed up as a pioneering animal ourselves.

ML: Of course we did. We came over here in boats in 1492. (laughs)

TM: And we forget that.

ML: Yeah. And, and the Indians came across the land bridges.

TM: That's what I mean. It was 10,000 years ago, 12,000 years ago, you can debate it, you can argue it up one side and down the other, but it doesn't matter, we came here as a species. We pioneered here. Just like all the other species that got here before us or evolved here, and how do we manage this as a resource? Hmm. Mark, well, I thank you so much.

End of Part 3, and end of interview.