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Environmental Lands Acquisition and Protection Program (ELAPP)  
Oral History Program  
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**Joe Guidry (JD):** This is Joe Guidry on August fifteenth. I'm interviewing Pete Fowler at the All People's Life Center. Okay, let's start. Like, when and where were you born and raised?

**Pete Fowler (PF):** I was born and raised in the Finger Lakes area of New York state.

JG: Wow. Well uh, how did you come down here?

PF: (PF laughs) Oddly enough, I used to watch all the football games, the bowl games and see people in T-shirts and shorts, and I said, "I need to move to Florida." Because I enjoyed sports, outdoors sports, fishing, canoeing, hiking, sailing. And you can do it year round down here (PF laughs). So, as I sat in the cold winter—

JG: For you, it would be an argument for the economic impact of sports (PF laughing) for people who say there's no economic return on them. When you first moved here, where did you live?

PF: Well, I lived on Davis Island in an apartment that was month-to-month because I didn't know where I was going to end up, but um first actual place was an apartment complex on Waters Avenue called Waterford Village. And then I moved to River Del Rey where I was the recreation director there for the apartment complex as well as working for Hillsborough County.

JG: Did you come to Hillsborough to go to work for Hillsborough County?

PF: No, I uh, I had graduated from the University of Florida and went up to Springfield College in Massachusetts to get my graduate degree, and after one more winter, I came back to Florida just looking for a job. And Ed Radice<sup>1</sup> was looking for somebody to enter into the department, and he offered me a job so I said, "I'll be there." (PF laughs) I love it.

JG: So what was it like working for the parks department at that time?

PF: It was like I was on vacation because, you know, I just said in high school, "I'm not going to do something I don't enjoy." And I enjoyed all types of team sports and lifetime sports and well, hiking, fishing, tennis, golf. You know, always being active. It was just a blessing to be able to work in a business that promoted sports and—

JG: And Ed Radice was something of a legend in terms—

PF: Yes.

JG: —of his concern for serving the public.

PF: Well Ed, Ed was—and he would tell you, his first love was baseball. But, actually, Jan Platt came to Ed at one point and said, "I'd like to have an environmental land program in Hillsborough County," and Ed embraced it. And he really coordinated the beginnings of the program with Commissioner Platt.

JG: The ELAPP program.

PF: The ELAPP program, yes.

JG: Well, prior to that did the—would the parks department have any kind of conservation effort? Was there any element of—

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<sup>1</sup>Director of Parks, Recreation and Conservation in Hillsborough County for 28 years. Under his leadership the number of parks in Hillsborough County increased from 75 to 205.

PF: They did. They have the regional parks. The department had—talk to people about what's a park, and you're going to get 10 different descriptions of what they think a park should be. But you have your neighborhood little playground areas, and then you have your sports complex. And then there is the large, regional parks, where they're usually resource oriented, and the activities are camping, fishing, hiking, bird watching, that nature. And we had, at the time, I believe, nine parks. And Ed was instrumental in establishing a referendum that put, at the time, 10 million dollars into the regional parks. And that's when we built upper Tampa Bay, Lettuce Lake, E.G. Simmons, and a number of other parks that were renovated. Old parks had been there forever like Alderman Ford and Lithia Springs, so.

JG: And they all had high environmental value.

PF: Yes. Yeah.

JG: Joel Jackson<sup>2</sup> was involved.

PF: Yes, Joel was very much involved. He was the assistant manager of the bond program, the construction and development of the parks, and eventually became the director for that program.

JG: Do you think that effort on those regional parks kind of helped when y'all started ELAPP? That created a foundation?

PF: Absolutely. Yeah. One of the things that kind of prompted the ELAPP program was the state had the conservation and lands program, CARL<sup>3</sup> program. And one of the first purchases, which Joel was actively involved with, as [was] Rob Heath and some of the other people in the department, we purchased the Bower Tract, which is next to Upper Tampa Bay and the state provided at least half of the funding for that, I believe. And

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<sup>2</sup>Joel Jackson, a Tampa city planner, hired by Ed Radice to help with the development of the parks, recreation and athletic centers in Hillsborough County.

<sup>3</sup>The Conservation and Recreation Lands (CARL) program was established by the Florida Legislature in 1979 to acquire lands of environmental and cultural significance. In 1989, the CARL program was replaced by Preservation 2000.

that's when people started realizing that you had to have matching funds to leverage the state grants.

And some of the other counties, like Volusia County, had initiated a local land program, acquisition program. And that's about the time that Commissioner Platt said Hillsborough County needs one, so we did. We were one of the pioneers, I think, statewide. There were a few counties that had them, but we were right on their coattails. The first referendum was just a straw poll saying, would you like to do this? And it was approved overwhelmingly: 70 to 30 percent by the voters. And that a funding source to leverage state funds that we utilized probably as much as, if not [more than] any other county or municipality in the State of Florida.

JG: Well you had—by the time that ELAPP was approved, you lived in Hillsborough county for quite a while.

PF: Yes.

JG: Had you seen a dramatic change in the landscape? And then, you know, the need for saving what was left, was that apparent to you?

PF: Oh, yeah. Yeah. The regional parks, some people—I remember we did a brochure and it was called “The Hidden Gems.” Somebody said, “They shouldn't be hidden gems. People should know about these,” because so many times people would go and they'd say, I didn't know this existed in Hillsborough. They'd go up to Lettuce Lake Park and see the Hillsborough River flowing through it and the wildlife that's there and [say], “I didn't know this was here,” you know.

And it's not only there, but it's at E.G. Simmons, and Lithia, and the ten regional parks that we have. So we've expanded the natural areas of preservation through the ELAPP program. And now there are a number of preserves where they're open to the public. And I think one of the reasons it was so important was that we had, not just conservationists or preservationists, we had the fishing people that enjoyed fishing, hiking, canoeing, kayaking, off-road biking, and we've partnered with those groups to come in and create trails and maintain them, whereby saving the taxpayers some money. These special groups would say, you know, “If you allow us to come in and build the trails.” We go, “Well, if you do that will you maintain them as well?” (PF and JG laugh) You know, take out the trash, you know, keep them up.

JG: And they did do that.

PF: Yeah, they did do that, and they saw the value to it. I think that, you know, the county needs to realize that. I read when I was doing some research for the most recent referendum, some economist said that the economic value of eco-tourism is the equivalent to holding two Super Bowls. (PF laughs) So uh there's a return on that investment as well.

JG: Well, when ELAPP passed, you were over ELAPP's staff that had to implement. Correct? You had to see—

PF: Yes.

JG: —that ELAPP got off to a solid start. Did you face any real challenges, certain challenges on—?

PF: Well, it wasn't that difficult because ELAPP was based on a citizen's advisory group that's always been very strong. And they set the tone for how the program should be run, and they set goals, objectives, and suggested—and they met at least four times a year probably. And they have very definite ideas on how the program should work. It works—basically, people, anybody, can nominate a piece of land. It goes through a process. There's an application form that you fill out. It has certain criteria, which were developed by that citizen's advisory group, a list of like 14 criteria. And then there are a number of subcommittees from the general committee. Some of them go out and analyze it, based on the application, and another group will review it from a scientific standpoint. And then, a site selection committee gets together, and they actually rank it.

And then, based on the ranking, that sets the—well, I don't want to say priority because any site, once it was approved, was available to purchase once the board, the report—the committee would submit an annual report to the board of county commissioners. And once that was approved, the resolution stated that the county could then seek acquisition of any one of these sites. But they were all categorized and ranked. The higher rank—the first year that it was approved, there were, I believe, 16 sites, and the number three site came into our hands at a good value. But people said, “Well, why aren't you buying the number one site first?” Because there are a number of factors. You know, number one is the willingness of the seller to sell to the county, so. The person who owns the top ranked site might not be willing to sell, or he might want too much money.

So there's yet another committee that was made up of people from the real estate community and finance; they scrutinized every proposed acquisition. And they might say,

“Well, they can’t sell that for this.” So they were very important too. They saved the county a lot of money, and they would actually review each site before we submitted it to the board of county commissioners for approval. But, with the citizen involvement, it really wasn’t that difficult to coordinate with them. The board of county commissioners always asked, you know, what does the committee say?

JG: Well, I mean, so by time it was submitted to the county commissioner, it had been thoroughly scrutinized on financial level, environmental level. I mean, you never experienced any case of the commissioners trying to push one site—

PF: No.

JG: —because of some political influence.

PF: No.

JG: There was never any incident of—

PF: No. It’s one of the most transparent programs that I’ve ever seen in the county—(PF laughs)

JG: That’s why it’s never—

PF: —unfortunately. (JG and PF laugh)

JG: Well, there’s never—there’s never been a case of any scandal, any remote—?

PF: No. In fact, most—I would have to check. Well, they also hired an acquisition manager in the real estate department, and I can’t think of any purchase that went to the board that wasn’t approved unanimously or at least, you know, by majority. There was never any, and none was ever rejected to my knowledge either. They all were approved. And they’ve acquired over 65 sites now, so (PF laughs) that’s pretty remarkable.

JG: It must have been pretty exciting to see all this. Was it a challenge to manage that land and make sure the public had access?

PF: Yeah.

JG: When I heard the initial criticism, if I heard anything, was, “Well, the public doesn’t have access to this one.”

PF: Yeah, well, the public has access to, I think, 100 percent of the land. The only time any parcel would be closed would be if we’re doing some restoration project where we have heavy machinery in there and so on. But funny story is that, this was like ’87, I think, when I first went to a conference on this in Sarasota. The topic of the discussion in one of the sessions was, should you buy land if you can’t manage it? And of course, the answer was yes because, if you don’t buy it, you may never be able to manage it. (JG laughs) It would be gone, developed.

My last year that I was with the department, I went to another conference in Sarasota. There was a guy there, presenting—that probably wasn’t even born when I started—and the topic of the discussion was, should you buy land if you can’t afford to manage it? I’m thinking, I’ve come full circle here (PF laughs) in 25 years, well we just had the 25-year anniversary of the ELAPP program. And I love to tell that story because it’s like, yes, you know. What doesn’t [sic] people understand about this, because—?

JG: You were able though, pretty much, to manage. I mean, you know, if there was occasional backlogs on loans(??) or anything.

PF: Right. And we had some discussions with the agricultural community about land management. It took a while, but we finally got on the same page with them because they were saying, “Well you know, you have all these exotic plants growing on this property that you just bought. And you know, they’re encroaching into our area,” and we said, “Well, we did just buy it. It’s been there for the past millennium, but we will work with you to try to eliminate, you know, the exotic seed source coming over into your crop area and everything.” And so, we would try to coordinate eradicating exotic plants, especially along the property lines and so on. And but, yeah the money for management was hard coming, and it still is. It still is today.

JG: So you have to make priority lists of what gets done.

PF: Exactly. And again, fortunately, there are a lot of grant programs. Our staff is very active working with the Southwest Florida Water Management district in, you know,

managing, in which they're also partners with some of the acquisition. We partner with all the municipalities: City of Tampa, Temple Terrace, Plant City. We have management agreements with them to assist. But there's always going to be some land that needs to be prescribe-burned or restored. And once you restore the land, it's a lot easier to manage, so it's always going to be a challenge. Some people, you know, don't see the value of managing land. But prescribed burn is something that, if you don't burn on a regular basis and lightning strikes, it's going to uh going to be a lot bigger fire. (PF laughs)

JG: You'd have a wildfire.

PF: Yeah, you've got a wildfire. So there's a lot of benefits to burning, and I'm not a biologist, but our staff can tell you extensively about what the benefits are. And there's just so many benefits. And with the acquisition, I know our flood insurance levels have gone down. The economic value of ELAPP is tremendous, more so than most people realize.

JG: Well you mentioned that, you know, there was some push back from the agricultural community. Were there any other, like, critics or opponents early on? Because, as I recall, the development community really didn't oppose it.

PF: No.

JG: I think they saw the value of the land of the land being preserved.

PF: Oh, yeah.

JG: Enhances—

PF: Well, there was a discussion about, okay, you're taking all this land off the tax rolls and depriving us of taxes. What we found was that the adjacent property, like waterfront property, escalated. If you live next to a preserve, your value of your property goes up, which more than compensated for—we did some work with the tax office, and we found that the impact was less than like 1/10th of 1 percent on the overall tax base of the county. So that was a discussion for a while, but I think that people eventually found—you mentioned developers. A lot of the land we bought was bought from developers, and it was during the recession, when we could get tremendous—you know, 50 cents on the dollar for some of the acquisitions. And some people said, "Well, you're bailing out the developer." But that wasn't the case. It was valuable land. We got a good deal for it, and

it wasn't developed. And land that isn't developed reduces your need for services to that area. And so the trade-off kind of all balanced out, I think, in the end.

JG: And you only bought from willing buyers.

PF: Exactly. If they didn't want—if people didn't want—that was the first thing we'd say: if you don't want to participate—

JG: And your citizen's committee wouldn't approve it, if it wasn't fair market value priced.

PF: Oh, yeah.

JG: They would not have—if anybody's asking too high, they don't approve.

PF: Right. And we had Will Bassett on it. And just a number of people that were—Bill McClain<sup>4</sup> was a local real estate attorney—about seven and eight of them. People come and go, but they took the job seriously. Of course, they all lived in Hillsborough county and did business in Hillsborough county, and they didn't want to create any problems in the community. The biggest problem we had, I think, was the Fishhawk<sup>5</sup> development. We bought a lot of land from Fishhawk. But every major business had some part ownership of Fishhawk development, so it was questionable. And then the board was like, "Well, doesn't this person own—?" Like, everybody and his brother had some part of that Fishhawk balance.

JG: Really? So you still were able to—?

PF: Oh, yeah.

JG: Without major conflict?

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<sup>4</sup>Attorney William "Mac" McLean authored the first chapter in the Florida Eminent Domain Handbook. McLean served as either assistant Hillsborough County attorney or as a consultant attorney to Hillsborough County for eminent domain for many years.

<sup>5</sup>Fishhawk is located in east-central Hillsborough County and is bordered in the north by the Alafia River.

PF: Yeah because it was all right along the Alafia River, which is—and if you look at it, most of the property that we bought is adjacent to water. And I asked our biologist one time, I said, “Well, unfortunately the same property that’s environmentally valuable is also attractive for development.” You know, waterfront views and anything along the river, the coast. So, in a sense, we were competing with them, but we had a good relationship with them. And, as we said, it was all voluntary. If you didn’t want to sell, we didn’t, you know, because of the cost of condemning the land would be outrageous.

JG: Did you ever have a tract that you really wanted to get that you just couldn’t work out?

PF: Yeah, yeah. There’s a couple. I can’t remember specifically. There’s a couple. And those tracts are generally ones that will connect to existing preserves, and this would provide a connection, a corridor, for them. And there’s been a number of them, and there’s still one right now. I can’t remember off-hand what it is. Kurt<sup>6</sup> could tell you. But it’s a linkage. I think it’s down the south Triple Creek<sup>7</sup> area.

JG: Create a corridor.

PF: Yeah, create a corridor and the owner just, he just wants too much money. In fact, they’ve asked about, you know, could the general committee, which I still serve on with would Jan Smith<sup>8</sup> as the chair. And she says, “Don’t you think we should just this one time?” And we’re going, “Jan, if you do that you’re going to set a precedent,” and that oversight committee was the acquisition committee. They were proud of the fact that we, for the longest time, never paid more than 80 percent of appraised value.

JG: Wow.

PF: That was their goal. In fact, I can remember one time, the Violet Curry Park tract, which is out in the Lutz area.

JG: I live next to it.

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<sup>6</sup>An interview of Kurt Gremley is available as part of the ELAPP Oral History Project collection.

<sup>7</sup>Located in Riverview, Florida.

<sup>8</sup>An interview of Jan Smith is available as part of the ELAPP Oral History Project collection.

PF: Yeah.

JG: I ran on it this morning. (JG laughs)

PF: We were negotiating with the Curry family, and we offered them a price. And they said, “Well, that’s not acceptable.” And they said, “Give us another offer.” Well, the committee gave them a lower offer. But we were able to work with the family and eventually the site was named after Violet Curry. (PF laughs) So—

JG: I had always heard, I don’t want to get off track, but I had heard that it was the mother, who was Violet Curry, that actually wanted to do the deal, and it was either her son or son-in-law—

PF: Son.

JG: Who was being so difficult.

PF: He threatened to sue. (PF laughs) He came in. He met Ed and myself in the office, and he’s an attorney. And he threatened to sue Ed and I because we were taking the land. And we said that was not the case. We said, no it is a voluntary program. If you don’t want to sell—but it was Bruce, Bruce Curry.

JG: Bruce Curry. Yeah, I dealt with him. He’s a big railroad buff too.

PF: Yeah. (PF laughs) Well, it turned out that we eventually saw eye to eye and got together.

JG: Well, I love it. It’s my, I mean a beautiful piece. But I could see too though, it’s not in terms of, you know, it’s not as big as most of your tracts. It’s not necessarily connected. I do see deer in there sometimes.

PF: Oh yeah.

JG: I think they come from the Cypress Creek, which is not too far.

PF: (PF laughs) Exactly.

JG: It's not connected though.

PF: Yeah, yeah. We occasionally get some people who be upset because they would nominate sites that, you know, they just wouldn't support wildlife.

JG: It's like a good neighborhood park but not—

PF: Exactly. A retention pond in the back and all the wildlife. Well, the wildlife was raccoons and (PF laughs).

JG: Well, Violet Curry is better than that they have (PF laughing; inaudible) including great horned owls, but it's not—it's probably about, on the lower end of.

PG: Yeah, yeah.

JG: Well, you mentioned too, before I forget, that you got people to build trails and volunteers. You all also work to get volunteers to work on some of the land management, do some clearing. Do they do that? I think they do some of that now; they have work days.

PF: Yes. They have work days. They'll schedule workdays. We work with Keep Hillsborough Beautiful<sup>9</sup>, the Tampa Bay Watch<sup>10</sup>, Peter Clark's<sup>11</sup> group over in Pinellas. Well, they're based in Pinellas county, but they work in Hillsborough. So they do a lot of refilling and stuff along the coast lines. We'll work with boy scouts. I sometimes have an eagle scout project. They want to do something to the sites that we have, and we'll work

<sup>9</sup>Keep Hillsborough County Beautiful merged with Tampa Bay Beautification in 2012 to form Keep Tampa Bay Beautiful, an affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, the nation's largest volunteer-based community.

<sup>10</sup>Tampa Bay Watch is a nonprofit organization established in 1993 for the preservation, restoration, and protection of Tampa's bay and ecosystem.

<sup>11</sup>Founder and president of Tampa Bay Watch.

with them as long as it's within, you know, the—every site by the way, has a management plan as soon as it's acquired. Within a year, they're required to have a management plan that outlines what the resources are, what the goals are, what restoration needs are, and any activity on any of the sites should be covered by that, that management plan. If it's not in there, they have to. And the management plans are taken to the public again and they're reviewed. People have the opportunity to comment on, you know, what should happen on these sites. And so it's a very public program still.

JG: Going forward, what do you think are the challenges for ELAPP? Or do you think the program—?

PF: Well, the funding right now for acquisition is—the last referendum was approved for a certain amount of money. Of course, they have to issue bonds for it. And the current administration doesn't want to issue bonds unless we have sites lined up to acquire. And so, there's been some meetings between the chairman of our public, our citizen's committee, and the county administrator. And they've assured us that if we have something—if something's out there that we can get—that there will be funding available for it based on the approved wording in the referendums. And then the management. Always the funding of management activities.

JG: Is management—the funds—does the management funding come from a different pot?

PF: Yes.

JG: Or does that come from just general revenue?

PF: Yeah, the differentiation there is management versus maintenance. And management, when they would talk management, we're talking about capital projects. You know, putting in a fence would be a capital project. And then we could fund that through the bond revenues. Repairing the fence is maintenance, and you can't—

JG: Yeah. That's an ongoing—

PF: That's an on—yeah. And so, I probably should clarify it and say maintenance of the existing facilities that we do have. And we have a number of facilities. If you go out, there's the trails the themselves, of course. And then there's the parking lots and kiosks, and we have some picnic shelters on some of the sites, and they do need to be routinely

maintained. And but, that's an ongoing cost that is in the ad valorem funding for the department. But we did—it was a big discussion in the legalities of, you know, bond funds and what you can spend them for and what you can't spend them for. But we finally, even restoration we've been able to set aside some bond revenue for restoration if a site has been degraded by clearing or whatever. If we can show through going back through old aerials and show that it was a forested area that was cleared, we can reforest it with bond revenue. But, as I said, the routine maintenance of the paving and everything, that's ad valorem funds.

JG: Now, so far, none of the ELAPP money has been used for lessened fee for buying development rights, or have they?

PF: There have been attempts to do conservation easements.

JG: You could do it.

PF: You could do it, yes.

JG: Later under the program.

PF: Yes, yeah, yeah. Lessened fee, where a life estate or something of a farm or a preservation area, where we say you're limited to this as far as development, but we'll give you so much money, which would be less than acquisition. But any other improvements would not be allowed on the sites, so. We could do it, but we haven't done it yet, to my knowledge. There might be—we might have purchased a conservation easement here or there. I can't remember. Kurt Gremley would know. He's our acquisition guy.

JG: Well, [from] what I understand, usually by the time you pay lessened fee, it's almost you might as well pay for the whole—

PF: Yeah. Yeah that was pretty much the—

JG: They want so much for that.

PF: We had one tract of land out in the Plant City area that we were working with a family. And we never just could agree on the price. (PF laughs) But that was the stumbling block was, well, if you're paying this much money, you might as well buy it.

JG: Well, what do you think has been ELAPP's biggest accomplishment?

PF: Oh, well, the sheer volume of land that's been preserved. I talked to a few people from the general committee and, you know, when they acquired four or five thousand acres down there at Balm Boyette, that was one of the first major purchases, the Balm Boyette scrub<sup>12</sup>. You know, people thought we'd never be able to do that. And here, the volume of land that we've acquired is close to 70 thousand acres now. And who would have thought? And I think one of the challenges right now is, you know, how much do you buy. You know, when do you stop?

We were so close to seven, I remember the first meetings of the ELAPP general committee, and we get people go out and map, actually map Hillsborough County and what, where are the areas that could be preserved. And, oddly enough, it pretty much follows the riverine corridors<sup>13</sup>, the coastal areas, and it was 70 thousand acres. That was in 1985, at the very inception of the program. So the program has pretty much—

JG: Did you say 62 thousand, is that what is has?

PF: It's like 64 or 62, in that area right now. But so, we're darned close to what the initial projection of the program and what could be done. And so, I think that that's a tough question because, like, Pasco county I believe has some astronomically high percentage of land that's in public ownership. But, you know, it's all rural area.

JG: And water district owned.

PF: Yes, SWFWMD. And it's public ownership, you know, water district, state, counties, whomever, but that's a question too that a lot people will, a lot of the critics say, well, you know, you're putting too much into public ownership. You know, if you go out and you paddle down the river, or hike across you're going to see value of it.

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<sup>12</sup>The Balm-Boyette Scrub Nature Preserve is a 5,723-acre preserve located in Lithia, Florida.

<sup>13</sup>Plots of land directly adjacent to rivers. The protection of these landscapes is crucial to preserving a river's watershed and ecology.

JG: Yeah.

PF: And so many—I personally had friends who have come down, and they’ve been to Disney, and they’ve been to Busch Gardens and Sea World. I take them kayaking down at Cockroach Bay and, there you see the gators and the dolphins and the fish. Two weeks after they go back home, they send me a letter and say, “The highlight of our trip was the canoe ride at Cockroach Bay.” You know, because that was native Florida. And people don’t realize the value of that. Like I said, the hidden treasure is something we need to put behind us and start showing the people. These are resources you have here, right in Hillsborough county. And they’re available to you through the ELAPP program. You can canoe, hike, bike, camp. We have camping at some of the sites. And I’m glad to see our staff branching out and doing some more things, innovative. They’re doing night hikes now. I saw that there’s a night swim at Lithia Springs. (PF laughs)

JG: I may go on that. I want to go in the night time. (PF laughing) I think it sounds great.

PF: But yeah, I think it’s great to watch these things and watch them develop. But they’re doing more and more things like that. And I think the more they do they with it, the more support they’re going get for their management and maintenance of the facilities and everything.

JG: Do you have a favorite ELAPP site or—

PF: Oh, probably Balm Boyette because I do off-road biking, and the trails down there are challenging. Some I won’t go on because they’re too steep. But it was just one that—it’s funny, Mike Kelly was a real estate director, was a good friend and turns out that we were born like ten miles from each other in New York. But he retired a couple of years before I did, so he went around scouting out all the areas and what could be done. So we go out now and go to Cockroach and kayak and fish, or we go Balm Boyette and do off-road biking. And you know, people say, “Oh, this is so great!” and “Oh, you guys sure know a lot about this site.” (PF and JG laugh) We’re like, “Well, yeah.” But it’s fun to go back and see what, you know, your career really. I spent the whole 30 years with Hillsborough County.

JG: Something to be proud of.

PF: Yeah. It’s nice. It’s fun to finally go out and enjoy them. (PF and JG laugh)

JG: Well, is there anything else I should have asked that I didn't?

PF: No, no, just, uh—

JG: Anything you want to add about ELAPP?

PF: No, I'd just like to you know. I know Ed Radice was somehow the father of—Jan Platt was the mother of ELAPP, Ed was the father.

JG: As much as he loved sports and baseball.

PF: And we, oh—

JG: He embraced the conservation.

PF: Yeah. He did. And it grew under Ed. In fact, one of the—I'll never forget, one of the articles—and you might have wrote [sic] it—about county government ought to be run like ELAPP. (PF laughs)

JG: I did write that.

PF: (PF still laughing) It was great. But no, it's been a pleasure to work for the county for, you know. Like I said, I felt like I was on vacation every day. It's fun to come to work when you do fun things. So.

JG: Well, great. Well, I appreciate it.

PF: Oh, anytime.

*end of interview*