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**Robert Cardin:** Good afternoon. This is Robert Cardin. Today is April 28, 2010, and I'm at Joe Klostermann's residence, conducting an oral history interview with Mr. Joe Klostermann for the South Atlantic Fisheries Foundation project with the Fort Pierce fishermen on the Oculina Bank HAPC [Habitat Area of Particular Concern]. Welcome, Joe. Would you please state your name and spell it—please?

**Joseph Klostermann:** My name is Joseph Klostermann, Junior. That's J-o-s-e-p-h K-l-o-s-t-e-r-m-a-n-n, J-r.

RC: Thank you. And your place of birth, Joe?

JK: Woodbury, New Jersey.

RC: Joe, when were you born?

JK: 6-19-51 [June 19, 1951].

RC: Okay, thank you, Joe. When did you move to Fort Pierce?

JK: In sixty-eight [1968].

RC: Okay. Joe, what brought you here to the Fort Pierce area?

JK: Fishing.

RC: Okay. (laughs) Hey, Joe, are you currently married?

JK: Yes.

RC: When did you get married?

JK: In 1974.

RC: All right. Thank you. Hey, Joe, do you have any children? How many and how old are they?

JK: Yes, I've got a boy and a girl. The boy is thirty-four and the girl is twenty-eight.

RC: Okay, Joe. Joe, as far as yourself, what kind of education do you have?

JK: I've got a high school diploma and an associate's degree in oceanography.

RC: Oh, really? What's associate's? Two years?

JK: Yeah.

RC: Where did you do that at, Joe?

JK: FIT [Florida Institute of Technology].

RC: Did you learn how to catch fish any better?

JK: No, but I learned to understand the biology of fish a lot better.

RC: That must be pretty interesting, knowing that and [going] out there actually catching the fish, putting the two together.

JK: It helped some, yeah, to understand the way a fish moves and why they do certain things.

RC: That's pretty cool. Hey, Joe, do you have any other jobs besides fishing?

JK: No.

RC: Have you ever had any other jobs [aside from] fishing?

JK: I've been making a living since 1972 commercial fishing.

RC: That sounds like straight out of college, huh?

JK: Pretty much.

RC: Okay. Joe, do you currently own a boat? If so, what kind and how big is it?

JK: I own four boats. One's a thirty-nine [foot], number one. Second boat is a twenty-two foot Portsmouth; it's kind of a lobster-looking boat. I've got a fourteen foot cast net boat and a twelve foot cast net boat.

RC: Joe, a cast net boat? What is that? Like a—

JK: A small runabout.

RC: You select cast net? What do you do?

JK: Shallow water boat; and catch bait with.

RC: Oh, okay. You cast net your bait for your fishery, or for yourself, or do you sell 'em?

JK: For my fishery.

RC: Okay. All right, now I'd like to ask you some questions about the Oculina Bank. Joe, how familiar are you with the Oculina Bank?

JK: I know just about every good spot on there.

RC: Is that through experience of fishing or did someone tell you?

JK: Experience.

RC: Okay. Do you know why the Oculina Bank was protected as an area to protect?

JK: Do I know why? No. I know what they said, but do I really understand why? No.

RC: Well, why was it designated? What was their reason—I guess the government's reason?

JK: Supposedly, it was a grouper and snapper spawning area. [It was done to] protect spawning beds, grounds.

RC: Is there anything else you can tell me about the Oculina Bank?

JK: Well, there's a lot of area that's sand that's considered the Oculina Bank, and there's a lot of area that's mud that's considered the Oculina Bank. The actual reef itself is a lot smaller than the area that is designated.

RC: What do you think about the closure of the Oculina Bank to anchoring and bottom fishing?

JK: Well, it cost me about \$40,000 to \$50,000 a year, the first year it was enacted. After that, I couldn't really tell. I just know what I lost.

RC: Joe, could you help me understand how you—what do you mean you lost forty or fifty grand?

JK: I used to catch 40,000 or 50,000 pounds—\$40,000 or \$50,000 worth of fish off of that area.

RC: So, by not allowing you to fish there, you've lost that revenue. If anchoring and bottom fishing in Oculina Bank was not prohibited, would you fish there?

JK: Yes.

RC: How and for what, Joe?

JK: For grouper and snapper, and for sharks.

RC: Grouper, snapper, and sharks. How would you be fishing for these grouper and snapper and sharks?

JK: Well, either bob bandit or longline, one of the two.

RC: Joe, could you explain to me a little bit about what the difference between a bandit and longline is?

JK: Bandit is a drop where you might put anywhere from one hook to seven hooks, depending on the rig, with a weight, one wire line going back to the boat; where the longline is a lot heavier gauge cable, not just a wire. You put anywhere to from 100 hooks to 1,000 hooks on it, or even more. It's more than—you know, a lot more than ten hooks.

RC: Well, that's—100 hooks. What, are you, like, spreading it out? Is it—oh, that's like what's considered horizontal gear? And you're fishing a bandit: is that more of a vertical gear?

JK: I guess it can be considered more of a vertical gear or a single—a small area, much smaller area.

RC: With a bandit?

JK: You're with the (inaudible) with fish.

RC: Overall, how has fishing changed since you began fishing in the Fort Pierce area?

JK: It's changed a lot. Used to be a lot of bandit boats that fished the Oculina Bank; now there's none. I'd say there was probably at least—oh, in the teens of boats that fished the Oculina regularly. My boat was one of 'em. Now they're all gone. I converted to longlining, sharks and tilefish, to compensate for the loss.

RC: Of the regular grouper and snapper?

JK: Of being able to produce grouper and snapper by means of bandit.

RC: All right. And the sharks; you said you used to shark fish in the Oculina Bank, but now you've converted to shark fishing. Now, what does that mean, outside of the Oculina Bank?

JK: Yeah, yeah. There's still a lot of sharks inside the Oculina Bank, it's just that I'm not privileged to 'em. You have to go outside, at least stay—you have to stay outside the Bank where it's legal to put a longline.

RC: I guess—so by losses in the fish you caught, you catch fewer outside the Bank? Is that one of the losses? You catch fewer sharks?

JK: I have to travel a lot further. It makes me travel a lot further. I don't catch fewer; I catch the same amount of sharks per year, depending on the quota. And, actually, I'm catching more per set than I used to catch, but I'm having to travel a lot more to make the same catches.

RC: So are you following the sharks, because they're not in the Oculina Bank?

JK: I'm going to different spots besides the Oculina to catch my yearly quota.

RC: Okay. Joe, have you had any experiences with law enforcement within or regarding to the Oculina Bank?

JK: I've been boarded by federal marshals on the edge of the Oculina Bank. They checked my fishing and where I was, and they thought I was fishing really close to the line, which I was close to the line, but I was on the legal side of it.

RC: Okay. So you weren't within it, but it was regarding the Bank.

JK: And the Coast Guard also observed me for probably eight to ten hours one time when I had shark gear set on the legal inside of the Oculina Bank. They boarded me after I pulled the gear and checked my catch to see if it was legal.

RC: Well, it sounds like none of this resulted in any kinds of fines or violation.

JK: No, I was legal at all points.

RC: Okay. All right, Joe, now I'd like to talk to you a little bit more in detail about your fishing history. What was your earliest memory—excuse me, what was your earliest memory of fishing, and how old were you? Like, at the lake with your grandpa or something like that?

JK: My earliest memories of fishing was trolling bluefish with my father in the Delaware Bay. I'd steer the boat while he pulled the fish in.

RC: Joe, how old do you think you were then?

JK: Four or five years old.

RC: All right. How did you learn how to fish? Did your father teach you?

JK: With my father. I fished on a six-pack charter boat as a mate, and a head boat as a mate, till I turned sixteen, from the time I was twelve until the time I was sixteen.

RC: Okay. Joe, how did you decide to become a commercial fisherman?

JK: Always liked being on the ocean, and I was always able to catch more fish than my family could eat.

RC: Can you recall a point in time that you said, "I'm gonna do this for a living"?

JK: After I got out of college for oceanography, I didn't like the options. The options were to go to the Indian Ocean for about \$16,000 a year or work for the state for about \$8,000 a year. At the time, my father was a commercial kingfisherman, and he was making about \$40,000 a year. A boat came up for sale, I bought the boat for \$5,000 and went commercial kingfishing, and earned about \$50,000 that first year.

RC: Joe, I would assume that was here in Fort Pierce where you started?

JK: That was Fort Pierce, yes. At Charlie's Seafood, which is no longer in existence.

RC: All right. Our next question is—Charlie’s Seafood is no longer in existence. What does that mean?

JK: The fish houses have gone.

RC: How many fish houses were here back then? Do you recall?

JK: At that time, there was—let’s see. There was Hudgins [Fish Co., Inc.]; there was D&D fish house; there was another fish house alongside that, I don’t recall the name. There was Black’s; there was MMM; there was a co-op at the time, I forget what the name of that was. So, I’d say five to six, maybe seven; might be a couple more fish houses off the water that would buy fish from fishermen.

RC: All right, sounds like there were several. So where are we gonna assume that you started to work as a fisherman, in Fort Pierce? Would that be—by looking at what we said, it looks like around seventy-one [1971], maybe?

JK: I started on my own in seventy-two [1972], but I fished with my father as a hand on deck from sixty-eight, from 1968.

RC: Oh, while you was going to school and everything?

JK: In between going to school, summertime.

RC: Okay. You stated that y’all fished for kingfish. When you were mating with your dad, how did you fish for kingfish? What kind of gear and bait and stuff?

JK: We trolled with our ears and with flat lines, like a bug reel with—you know, a line that we’d either troll a featherhead or a bug off of a flat line, surface line.

RC: What do you mean when you said “bug reel,” Joe? Is that like a certain reel?

JK: It was an electric motor with a spool, a wooden spool attached to it, that wound the fishing line in.

RC: You, like, pushed the button and it pulled the fish in?

JK: Yeah.

RC: Okay. When you were fishing with your dad—that was your dad—he owned his own boat?

JK: Yes, my dad owned his own boat.

RC: What kind of boat was that, Joe? Do you recall the length?

JK: It was a twenty-five foot Luhr's, a single gas motor boat.

RC Now, Joe, where did you and your dad go begin fishing? Can you show me on this map? Here's Fort Pierce. (indicates)

JK: Mainly between Cape Canaveral and Jupiter Inlet out to, say, 120 foot of water from the inlets out.

RC: So not only did you fish this whole map here from Fort Pierce to Vero Beach, but you fished way up here to the north?

JK: All the way to Cape Canaveral and as far south as Jupiter.

RC: That was when you all were based—living here in Fort Pierce, right?

JK: That was when we were living in Fort Pierce.

RC: Okay. Thank you. You stated out to 120 foot from the inlets. So, like, from 30 foot out to 120 or something?

JK: Yeah, basically. There's times when we caught fish right in front of the inlets a mile offshore.

RC: Okay. During what months of the year did y'all fish for these kingfish?

JK: All months. Twelve months a year.

RC: How long did the fishing trips last, Joe?

JK: They were anywhere from—I'd say four to five hours to sometimes ten to fourteen hours.

RC: So, basically, you did day boat?

JK: Day boat fishing, yeah.

RC: What was you and your dad's average catch back in those days?

JK: I'd say the average catch was probably around 800 or 1,000 pounds.

RC: You stated you sold your fish to Charlie's Seafood?

JK: That was one of the fish houses, yeah.

RC: When you fished all the way to Cape or Jupiter, did you bring your fish back to Fort Pierce to sell 'em, or did you sell 'em to—

JK: We sold to whatever port we pulled in, whether it was Cape Canaveral or Port Salerno or Jupiter Inlet. There was Penders down in Jupiter. There was several fish houses in Port Salerno. On the water, there was Stillers; there was—what was that other? Bobby—I can't—Stillers, and what was the other name of that fishing family down there? I forget. Anyway, there was several fish houses in that empty pocket that you could unload at. Then you had to go to Fort Pierce, and there was several fish houses on the water in Fort Pierce you could unload at. Sebastian, there was three or four fish houses in Sebastian you could unload at. Cape Canaveral, there's also three or four fish houses alongside it.

RC: Sounds like there was quite a few fish houses back in the seventies [1970s], huh?

JK: Yeah, there was quite a good number; every inlet had quite a few fish houses.

RC: Okay. Joe, how long did you fish with your dad there, from, like, sixty-eight [1968] to seventy-one [1971]? Is that like three years?

JK: About four years.

RC: Okay. Why did you stop fishing? I guess 'cause you went on your own?

JK: I bought my own boat, went on my own boat.

RC: Okay. The other question: What did you do next? You went right on to kingfish there in seventy-one [1971]?

JK: I kingfished till 1977. Then I bought a thirty-four foot Crusader, and then started venturing offshore out to the Oculina and the different deep water places to grouper and snapper fish. In 1981, I converted to longlining, along with bandit fishing, and did some swordfishing and decided I needed a bigger boat than a thirty-four Crusader. I was catching more fish than I could handle with the boat, and built a bigger boat. In 1984—

RC: At seventy-seven [1977], you switched into the snapper grouper fishery, you said?

JK: Yes, not totally. I still kingfished, but I snapper and grouper fished, too.

RC: Okay. I assume you kept trolling for your kingfish?

JK: Kept trolling for kingfish, bandit reel fished for snapper and grouper, and hand lined about five miles of longline gear for swordfish.

RC: Man! Hand line and longline gear—I guess you're talking about—you can have 100 to 1,000 hooks, and you actually pulled—

JK: I fished about 250 hooks, and about five miles of gear.

RC: Okay. So who did you fish with after the period of 1977? Did you own the boat?

JK: I owned the boat. I was the captain, and I had quite a few different mates or stokers.

RC: This is on a thirty-four Crusader?

JK: Thirty-four Crusader, yeah.

RC: Okay. You had quite a few different mates. I guess they're just—how are they related to you? Just people you met off the street?

JK: Other fishermen; they weren't fishing at the time. Sometimes they were friends and family members. Other times they were just people that were looking for a job fishing.

RC: Just anyone who was willing to work, basically? Well, that's good.

JK: At the time, yeah.

RC: There in seventy-seven [1977], when you fished with your Crusader, kingfishing and snapper, grouper and swordfishing, where did you go to fish for all this stuff? Now, I got this little map from Fort Pierce to Vero; can you show me on here locally, here first?

JK: Well, basically, the offshore and inshore bars and Ten Minute Reef, where the main—and then there was—off of Sebastian, there was a wall of basalt rock; we fished there, and Thomas Shoals. To the south, we fished St. Lucie Shoals. Thomas runs all the way through Fort Pierce and up to Sebastian.

RC: How 'bout here, this part of the map here, which shows us Oculina Bank. Did you fish in there in the seventies [1970s] and eighties [1980s]?

JK: Yeah, I caught a few bottom fish bandit bottom fishing after seventy-seven [1977], after I started going offshore.

RC: I know that you point at these humps that just keep going further and further north, at Jeff's Reef and on up through Sebastian, all through the Oculina Bank there.

JK: All through the Oculina and even all the way up off Cape Canaveral, and even all the way up to St. Augustine and Jacksonville.

RC: Oh, man! All right Joe, during what—shoot, I guess I could answer this for you. During what months of the year did you fish for—the kingfish, you said all year.

JK: Well, the kingfish didn't bite that well from July to November, so I concentrate more on bottom fishing in the summer months. We always had a good run from November till February on the kingfish. And then sometimes I'd alternate bottom fishing from February until May, 'cause the bottom fish would bite pretty good during that, depending on weather conditions.

RC: So I guess you could just seasonally fish what was in season or what was—

JK: Whatever was biting, whatever stocks were available: that's what I tried to access.

RC: Okay. Joe, I guess we need to break this down. How long did a fishing trip last? Let's say for kingfish?

JK: Kingfish is a day trip that was anywhere from five hours to fourteen hours.

RC: And then at certain times of year, you would snapper grouper fish?

JK: Sometimes a snapper grouper fish would last two or three days, depending on where we found fish, right in front of the inlet or had to travel to find them.

RC: Okay. And then, of course, that brings us to the hand lining of the swordfish.

JK: We'd run south of West Palm Beach, set our gear, let it fish all night, pick it up in the morning and run back to the inlet.

RC: Sounds like a twenty-four hour overnight trip.

JK: Yeah, it'd be twenty-four to forty-eight hours—or not forty-eight; it'd be probably from twenty-four to say, like, thirty-six hours.

RC: Okay, Joe. So, let's say, how much—during this time fishing on your Crusader, what do you think your average kingfish trip caught? What was your average catch?

JK: Average was probably around 800 pounds.

RC: How 'bout the snapper/groupers? When you were on a snapper/grouper trip, what would an average catch be?

JK: Average catch would probably be 800 to 1200, or 800 to 1500 pounds.

RC: Okay, and that brings us to the swordfish, Joe. What would you average on your trips?

JK: Anywhere from 1,000 to 4,000 pounds.

RC: A thousand to 4,000 pounds, that's pretty remarkable. Thank you. Where did you sell this catch? Once again—

**Gale Klostermann:** Is this an interview? (laughs)

RC: This is Captain Gale Klostermann. (laughs)

JK: Owner of the *Gale Mist II*. Mainly in Fort Pierce.

RC: Okay. Joe, how many years did you fish for these kingfish, snapper, grouper, and swordfish?

JK: I guess forty-some years. Still doing it today.

RC: I guess there was a point in time that your fishing switched?

JK: It changed year to year, what you targeted or what was the best species. I mean, just depending on what was available.

RC: But as far as, let's say, fishing in the Oculina Bank: when did you stop fishing in there?

JK: When the restrictions came in, when it was illegal to fish there.

RC: Are you speaking of the ninety-nine [1999]—the 1994 closures?

JK: Yes, and before.

RC: What happened before ninety-four [1994]?

JK: We were restricted to not fishing inside fifty fathoms.

RC: Okay. That's not fishing inside the 300 feet, okay. I guess we've covered your history here from seventy-seven [1977]. When did you—you mentioned the number one boat, the thirty-nine foot. When did you sell your Crusader?

JK: Sold that in eighty-four [1984]. That was the year I built the thirty-nine number one.

RC: So you've been fishing your thirty-nine number one from 1984 till present?

JK: It was actually in eighty-five [1985], when I actually got that boat completed. I started fishing it.

RC: Okay. You use the same gear on that boat. We've discussed the way you fish and where you fish.

JK: Pretty much the same gear as I had on the thirty-four Crusader, I had on the thirty-nine number one, but my holding capacity was doubled.

RC: All right. When we were speaking of your catches of snapper/grouper, you know, averaging over 1,000 pounds, was that fishing the Oculina Bank?

JK: Yes, in parts.

RC: Okay. Well, you did so much, you're confusing the heck out of me. I heard you mention tilefish. You switched. At one point you relied more on tilefishing.

JK: That was after the closure, the Oculina closure. Actually, it was before the Oculina closure, 'cause we were catching anywhere from, oh, 1200 pounds to 4,000 pounds of tilefish a day using the longline. A good day on the bandits was probably 800 to 1200 pounds, and we started using the longline and catching up to 4,000 pounds of tilefish a day.

RC: All right. So, I guess your bandit fishing would have been your main fishery in Oculina Bank—below 300 feet, when you fished in the Oculina Bank, that would have had to have been bandit fishing?

JK: Yeah.

RC: All right. Man, you've done it all, Mr. Klostermann. Finally, I'd like to talk to you about how your fishing—how fishing's changed over time in regards to the Oculina Bank.

JK: Well, I—

RC: Go ahead, sir.

JK: I've had to change where I fish.

RC: Okay. Well, I'm gonna read out a few law changes here, and you can tell me if they affected you and how so. Since 1984, several changes have been made in regulations of the Oculina Bank. I'd like to know if any of these affected you. The Oculina Bank was initially closed to trawling, dredging, and bottom longlining in 1984. Did this affect your fishing?

JK: Yes.

RC: Mr. Klostermann, would you mind telling me how it affected your fishing?

JK: I had to go fish other areas. I had to fish further south or further north or further inshore or further offshore to adjust for it.

RC: So this—it was closed to trawling, dredging, and bottom long—so the bottom longlining was—

JK: Bottom longlining affected me.

RC: So, I believe you were catching sharks, or sharks and grouper?

JK: Sharks and snapper and grouper, on the longline.

RC: So that was a cost of—would we call that a negative impact?

JK: Definitely a negative impact on those years.

RC: Okay, Joe. In 1994, the Oculina Bank was designated as an experimental closed area where fishing for and retention of snapper grouper was totally prohibited. Did this affect you?

JK: Yeah, it stopped me catching snowies and yellowedge groupers in that area, and sharks.

RC: So the eighty-four [1984] affected you, and the ninety-four [1994] just magnified the effect? It just—

JK: Yes, it restricted me even more.

RC: By a larger closed area?

JK: By a larger closed area.

RC: Okay. And then in 1996, all anchoring was prohibited, even up through here off of Sebastian and stuff. Did that affect you?

JK: Say that again?

RC: In 1996, all anchoring was prohibited within the Oculina Bank. Did this affect you? Did you ever, like, need to anchor up to fish in—

JK: I used to, when I bandit fished, anchor up. Now, when you're longlining, you don't anchor up, but bandit fishing—it basically cut out all the bandit fishing in that area.

RC: So that even—that was another impact on top of—every one of these apparently has impacted you in some way.

JK: Yes.

RC: And when we say how, it's loss of catch?

JK: Basically, it cut out all my deepwater grouper fishing in this area.

RC: Okay. Ninety-eight [1998]—excuse me, let me start over. In 1996, trawling for rock shrimp was prohibited in the area east and north of the designated Oculina Bank; and in ninety-eight [1998], the area was incorporated into the HAPC. Fishing for bottom longline, trawl, [and] dredge, was prohibited and expanded, as was anchoring by all vessels. Did this affect you? That's when the Bank got real big.

JK: Yes.

RC: Once again, how?

JK: It just decreased the amount of deep water groupers that I caught, and sharks.

RC: Okay. We're getting close to the end here, Joe. Is there anything you'd like to share with me about the Oculina Bank? You know, anything that we didn't cover here?

JK: I think that you could fish a lot closer to it without disturbing the corals. There's a lot of closed area that you could fish without a negative impact on the coral.

RC: Instead of this great big encompassing—

JK: Instead of encompassing the whole thing.

RC: All right, Joe. So, in your experience, it sounds like you've fished the Oculina Bank for many—or you did fish it for many, many years. Can you tell me, just in general, is it a somewhat productive place, or is it just like any other place?

JK: It was one of the most productive bottom [fisheries] that I ever fished with bandit reels, or longline, per hook or however you want to—or per set. It outfished most places.

RC: Earlier, we were talking about kingfishing and that you fished from Jupiter to Cape Canaveral, I assume. Have you bottom fished all the same area?

JK: Well, yes. There's a lot of times when you'll troll up a grouper or snapper while you're trolling. And of course, we'd fish those areas. Kingfish like live reef—of course, that's where all the bait is—and they're generally over a live reef. A lot of times you'll mark a piece on the bottom that indicates there might be some kind of bottom fish there and we'd try it: first a drift, and if we caught on a drift, then we'd anchor up and fish till the fish stopped biting.

RC: But in general, the Oculina Bank is, you said, one of the most productive—

JK: One of the most productive areas that you can go time and time again and produce a commercially equitable catch.

RC: All right. Well, Joe, the design of marine protected areas that are closed to all fishing is being used more and more frequently as a management tool. What do you think about the use of these closed areas?

JK: I think there's a lot of poaching going on by sport fishermen that isn't being addressed by the councils. Most of the boats you see in those areas now are big money sport boats, and they appear to be drifting and dropping bottom lines.

RC: So, you don't think that closed areas are an effective management tool?

JK: I think management is being directed towards commercial and not the recreational.

RC: Okay. What do you think of using closed areas as a fishery management tool, compared to other types of regulations like quotas, closed seasons, et cetera?

JK: I think it's a tool that they should have in the toolbox, but I think we're going—the closures that are anticipated in the 17A are too encompassing.<sup>1</sup> It's killing the industry. But it's the—I think the desired effect could be—you could get the desired effect without all the closures that were anticipated.

RC: Like the question and what you said here—so do you think quotas and closed season would have the effect the fishery management needs?

JK: I think the MPAs [Marine Protected Areas] should be doing the rebuilding that is the desire for the stock. So we already have these MPAs in effect. I think it's over-regulating. We've already got designated areas that these fish can go unmolested and rebuild, and then move out to areas outside. Closing other areas is just putting more pressure on the commercial fishing that really doesn't need to be to rebuild the stocks.

RC: All right. So which do you prefer: closed areas or quotas or closed seasons?

JK: I prefer smaller closed areas than closed seasons.

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<sup>1</sup> This refers to amendment 17A to the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan (FMP).

RC: What do you think is the best way to manage a fishery?

JK: The best way to manage the fishery?

RC: Yeah.

JK: It would be to figure out exactly what the actual MSY [Maximum Sustainable Yield] the fishery is and then operate it to that maximum yield.

RC: You said to find out what it actually is. Do you have any ideas on how to find out what it actually is?

JK: That's a good question. All the management is—all the stock assessments are prone to show the stock is a lot smaller size than it actually is, due to err on the side of conservation. I think it's hard to count every fish in the sea; but the way that the stock assessments are being done, it's showing a lot less stock that is actually out there, due to erring on the side of conservation.

RC: Joe, it sounds like maybe you're not too supportive of the numbers of fish that the science says or something. Are you saying, through your experience, that you think there's more?

JK: There's a lot more fish out there than what science says.

RC: And you speak to this through your experience.

JK: Through my experience. And I think the stocks rebuild a lot faster than the science says. We saw a significant increase in the sharks from ought-five [2005]. I'm involved in the shark research fishery, and places where I used to catch twenty-five, thirty head, I'm catching fifty, seventy head with the same amount of effort. Just a in short period of three years, I've seen an increase of over 50 percent of the stock—or it would be over a 100 percent increase, actually, in the stock in less than three years—where they say the rebuilding is gonna take 60 to 400 years.

RC: Mm, interesting. That's a pretty good increase in such a short period of time. Joe, thinking ahead to the future, what do you think fishing in Fort Pierce will be like in ten years?

JK: I think it's gonna keep getting better. I mean, we're putting more and more restrictions on people that aren't necessary. The fishing is already improving due to the restrictions already in force right now. So it should be getting better and better, even though the science doesn't say so.

RC: So you believe some of these management measures taken here in the past are actually starting to show signs of some benefits?

JK: I think that a lot of areas are showing quite a bit of stock increases, in my opinion.

RC: All right. Thank you. Well, Joe, that brings us the end of this, and I want to thank you very much for sharing your fishing history with us.

*End of interview*