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Bruce Reed
October 31, 2012

Interview conducted by Alison Steiner
Transcribed by West Transcript Services
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ANPR Oral History Project

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[START OF TRACK 1]

Alison Steiner: So, I always start out by saying that this is Alison Steiner, and I'm here with Bruce Reed, and we're in Palm Desert, California at the Rendezvous of the Association of National Park Rangers. It's October 31st, 2012, and this is our interview for the oral history project. Thank you for being here, and do I have your permission to record this interview?

Bruce Reed: Yes, ma'am.

Alison Steiner: And I feel like origin stories are a good place to start, because they often help us understand people's Park Service careers or their careers in general. So, can you tell me a little bit about when you were born, where you grew up, and what your family did?

Bruce Reed: I was born in a place called Clatskanie, Oregon, and someday I'll need to learn how to spell that. My dad worked for the electric company, the power company. My mother was a homemaker, born [in Minnesota and lived] in the same town not far from where my dad was born. We small activities, not a lot of camping until we were about six, I was six, and then that kinda started my outdoor interests, and, you know, you're born and raised and grade school, high school, everything in the same community.

Alison Steiner: And so, you said that you went camping when you were young?

Bruce Reed: Right.

Alison Steiner: Did that continue on to—

Bruce Reed: I've thought about it over the years and, you know, talking with other folks or kids particularly about how you got where you were. Now the camping – I think I was about six – in eastern Oregon was the first event of camping, and looking back that was probably one of the things that pointed me where I ended up with, you know, in land management, so to speak. Years and years of that growing up and then into the Navy and we had visited Mount Rainier National Park on the weekend with another couple and gone to the campfire program and went over and visited a park ranger. And, prior to the Navy I had been in college and decided I was ending up in Forestry or Forest Recreation. By the time I finished with the park ranger at Mount Rainier that evening, I had pretty much decided I was going to work for the National Park Service, and it took a while to get there. You know, a four-year degree that took eight years to get and two or three different colleges, I mean, when they tell you to go home and not come back, well, you've gotta do something with a GPA. I'm talking to a lot of kids, and I say,

"Hey, I've got a 5.0 my first year in college." And they, "Oh pretty cool." I say, "No, no, no. You add up the first and the second and the third and you get 5.0 out of that." And remind them that my last year in college, I found out you get four whole points in a quarter. And, you know, I did well after I got out of the service and settled down on where I wanted to go, and I ended up getting my degree in Natural Resources Outdoor Recreation at Utah State. And I'd been there earlier in a Forest Recreation program, and when I was in the service, they had changed that, dropped technical forestry out of it, and converted it to Outdoor Recreation, enhanced the sociology and told you to find a minor in a field you wanted. And when I got back to school, that was exactly where I wanted to go. The curriculum fit where I wanted to go with the Park Service and at that point, once I got my degree, when I was in school, I was working at Grand Teton National Park, which is 150, 200 miles north of Logan. And we went back and forth.

Bruce Reed: I graduated in June of '72 and headed back to the Tetons for a summer ranger job right after I got out of school. I mean, they called – I was supposed to go up a week after graduation – they called on Friday, graduation was on Saturday. I left Sunday and went to work Monday. They accelerated the schedule of going back to work. So, it was good, and we had a good time with that. When I was finishing school, you know, I had applied for Park Service jobs through the years and trying to get up on the Federal Service Entrance Exam the highest score you can get so you can be considered for employment. And there were a series of job applications that showed up at the university, and my adviser looked at them and he says, "You know, you're so focused on the Park Service, you'll never look at anything else, you may spend a long time trying to get a job." And he was right. So, I dug out my paper and applied through the FSEE, and it was the Bureau of Land Management had decided to open up the Outdoor Recreation field. And they were hiring 80 outdoor recreation planners across the bureau – which is the eleven western states. And it boiled down to the final end, is I ended up with one of those jobs, and there were actually six in Wyoming, and the one I got involved with was the one in Pinedale, Wyoming, which was 70 miles south of Grand Teton. And so, I was, you know, one of the first outdoor recreation planners in the BLM, and the first one in the Pinedale District Office at that time. So that's how I became a permanent employee, after four seasons with the Park Service at Grand Teton, plus my active-duty military time and the veteran's benefits and the preference that dealt with that.

Alison Steiner: So in order to kind of make sure that I understand the chronology correctly, can you kind of go through, like you mentioned that you were obviously in the military and then college and these seasonal

jobs at Grand Teton, kind of lie that out a little bit, and if there are years associated with it, you know, that you can remember associated with that?

Bruce Reed: Well, high school graduation was ‘64, went to Oregon State then to a junior college [Lower Columbia, Longview, WA] to fix that 5.0, and then in ‘67 I went on active duty with the Navy, got out in November of ‘68, went back to work and worked for about a year, but that was the time I started applying for my first seasonal jobs. I applied for five jobs the beginning of the 1969 season and ending up going to Grand Teton as a seasonal park ranger, a GS-4, basically manning the entrance station from the 1st of May through September, and then they had an extended season in Grand Teton for the elk hunt, elk management reduction, that was actually handled by the state of Wyoming even though it was inside the park. And I was fortunate enough to be able to work through that season. So that was ‘69, back in the Tetons in ‘70 and back in school in fall of ‘70 and ‘71, ‘72 graduated in June and seasonal in June, July, and then picked up the BLM job [Pinedale, WY] in August of ‘72.

Alison Steiner: And I think it’s interesting that you, when you were talking about the BLM was opening up this whole new field of outdoor recreation planners, I’m curious what it was like to be in an organization, the first in this field in the organization has just created, you know, what was the reception to having these new positions and what was your job and what kind of challenges did you face?

Bruce Reed: The bureau had developed an inventory program for resources, unit resource analysis I think it was called. URA and then turned into a Management Framework Plan, an MFP, and when we started as new recreation planners, it was a recreation information system, and it was an inventory program that the recreation planners went through the different recreational activities – water sports, winter sports, off highway vehicles, hunting, fishing, archaeology, primitiveness, those kinds of things – and identified areas on the landscape where these activities were taking place, and then plugged that inventory data into the resource inventory system and then developed out of that the management framework plan recommendations that then would drive the direction that the bureau or the resource management of the area would go in managing resources. And there was a lot of assistance from the folks who had been around in those offices for years and years, had a lot of information in their hind pockets and would just pulling that out and getting it documented on basically colored maps and then Mylar over the top, and you'd just draw and colored circles you know, back in the second-grade coloring again. So.

Alison Steiner: So then in that location in particular – you said you were in Pinedale, right?

Bruce Reed: Yes.

Alison Steiner: What were the kinds of recreation were you seeing and then what kind of management actions I guess followed the identification of those different types of recreation?

Bruce Reed: Well, obviously, I mean, in that part of Wyoming, hunting and fishing are big. Some winter sports, with snowmobiling. Downhill skiing was commercial, so it was offsite of the bureau. There was very little cross-country skiing at that time. There were not many bodies of water warm enough to swim in, and so there wasn't a lot with that. Wild recreations, primitive-type things, couple of major resources sites for that. Archaeology and zoology and geology – just lots of opportunity for traipsing around the countryside and looking at the prehistoric, native activities that were there. We were on two legs of the Oregon Trail, the Lander Cutoff and the Sublette Cutoff, and helping document some of those things. There was a buffalo trap on the resource area that had been identified a number of years ago, and it had periods of occupancy back to, I think it was, three, six, and nine hundred [300 - 900 CE], back in that far back, and then, you know, modern day, probably the 1700s, 1800s activities, where the Indians actually herded buffalo into a trap. A lot of these were off of a cliff, into a jump. Well, they actually herded these up a draw, and then closed the gate, so to speak, behind them, and then harvested inside the trap. And we worked with that for quite a while. It had some resource issues, real nasty erosion, because it was in a draw. A lot of exposure of the remains of the bison. And we worked on some ideas and things that would hopefully solve some of that. And I noticed 40 years later, when I went back in the Pinedale area when I retired, they're still working on some of those issues and still having some of the problems with erosion. But the site apparently has been developed a little more.

Bruce Reed: The wilderness came on a spinoff of the Wilderness Act obviously. The BLM system at that time allowed the highest level, which is a primitive area, and through the process we actually designated the Scab Creek Primitive Area just out of Pinedale as one of the first primitive areas in Wyoming. One of the advantages is it butted right up on the Bridger National Forest and the Bridger Wilderness, so it added about 7,000 acres to, you know, an already pretty remote piece of Mother Earth to get into and get out of. We worked on some of the ideas of – oil and gas were starting to get hot, and mostly at that time it was oil production – writing stipulation for leases that would put use limits and times of year that people could go in or do the development for the oil and gas

products. Trying to avoid particularly breeding season and calving season for the elk and antelope and wildlife. And there weren't a lot of recreational activities going on in those areas at those times, but also looking at maybe slowing down snowmobile activity while they were in the areas or particular high-value resource areas or sites maybe, moving their drilling away from those areas so that it wouldn't impact visitor use. I remember I had worked on a sand and gravel quarry site that a private person wanted, and it was on a piece of BLM land going into Boulder Lake. Unfortunately it was a quarter mile off the road that went into the Boulder Lake, which was a, you know, pretty prime recreation site, and I ran into a guy one day that was grumbling about BLM wouldn't let him do that, and I kind of chuckled under my breath cause I was the one that stuck my finger into that dike and basically had them move that site someplace so it wasn't intrusive onto a site. You know, I was a kid two and three years out of college, and you had a million acres of resource to deal with and it was pretty heady stuff. And I feel at that time we were making decisions based on resources, the impact on the resource, you know, pro or con, and a lot of the decisions were made in resource because there was oil down there and we needed to drill and get that product out, and some of our decisions were "Well, how can we do that and mitigate the impacts?" So, like I say, kind of heady stuff for a kid fresh out of college, even though I was probably five or six years older than most of the kids coming out of college at that time, you know, because of the eight years in college and the military time behind me and seasonal work in the middle.

Bruce Reed: Then after Pinedale I was looking for a place to go and working on a wild horse management plan for the Little Colorado Desert and things that would not typical for an outdoor recreation person, and I changed my field to Lands and Realty. You know, Lands and Realty deal with the transfer and permitting of activities on federal land, all the way from, you know, Homestead Act and the land acquisition through the Mineral Leasing Act, everything that is out there that you can transfer from public ownership to private ownership. And in that process, I ended up in Casper, Wyoming, as a realty specialists and got tied into an environmental impact statement team that was gonna follow an inventory. Well, they pulled six of us from different areas around the state, sent us back to Rock Springs, Wyoming for six months, two weeks in [then] a week out, but basically doing what I had done in URAs and MFPs in Pinedale for four years. We had six months to do this job, down out of Rock Springs. It was based on a Kemmerer Sweetwater Coal group that was gonna go in and do an environmental impact statement on extraction of coal there in the Kemmerer Sweetwater area [southwestern WY], and we spun out of that and ended up

working on environmental impact statements out of Casper for the Eastern Powder River Basin of Wyoming [northeastern WY], and that would've been in '76, '77. Worked on three environmental impact statements Kerr-McGee, Carter-Caballo, and Arco Black Thunder, where they're extracting coal on a typical ratio of coal extraction to overburden is, well, we'll take twenty foot of the top off, the overburden, for a coal seam. Well, you went in the Powder River Basin, and it was just the opposite. You were taking a foot or two of overburden, getting into 20- and 60- and 70-foot coal seams. And writing mitigation measures on a project that probably wouldn't be completed in my lifetime. How do I tell 'em how to rehab something? Oh, by the way, that pit's probably gonna be 300 feet deep and who knows how long, and how do you write those when the technology hadn't even been thought about back in that area? So those were interesting, to deal on those kinds of projects. It was just strange.

Alison Steiner: So, okay. So, I have a couple of questions, maybe going back a little bit, what you talked about. First, I guess you said that you were interested in working for the Park Service and then you were advised to potentially look at other agencies, and I'm wondering what you thought about working for the BLM? You know, what did you think about the mission or what did you think about in comparison to what you had wanted to do—

Bruce Reed: Well, the first idea behind that was you get a permanent job and then someplace down the road you can apply and get where you want to go. Change agencies. And in my case the Park Service and Bureau of Land Management were all in the Department of the Interior, so that kinda kept it in-house. I grew up in Oregon. After I got to work for the Bureau, I found out there were more BLM employees per state in the state of Oregon than any other state in the eleven western states. I'd never heard of BLM until I got to college. And so, it was an interesting, you're going someplace where you don't know where you're going, it's a land managing agency to go look about it. I remember driving through the countryside with a couple of guys after I first got down there, and they're looking for a range transect site, we're gonna major vegetation site, you know, what'd been going on out on the landscape. And we're driving down the road and all of a sudden, the guy turns right and goes, and my jaw drops open, and I'm trying to figure out what he's doing, and he's just out driving across the sagebrush, you know, the back of my mind says "This isn't right." When he got to where he was going, I said, "You know, Roger, three months ago when I was working for the Park Service, I'd have given you a ticket for what we just did!" And it was just, it just really struck me that that was the wrong thing to be

doing, but that's what you did and that's how you got your job done. So.

Bruce Reed: But one of the things that happened in Grand Teton, back another step or two, was the beginning of law enforcement, I think, for me and also for the National Park Service. After my first year as a seasonal ranger doing the entrance station – it was a dollar per day and Golden Eagles were seven bucks – and Grand Teton you could roll a thousand to two thousand dollars per shift of cars coming in a dollar at a time. But the second year, because I was a seasoned seasonal, a little older than some of the others, again, because of having been in the service, the idea was then you moved into a ranger position in law enforcement and road patrol, and you kinda likened it to old Barney Fife, you know, the bullet in his pocket and the revolver in the glovebox, because the revolver was in the glove box. And, you know, you didn't do much with it, but you were the law enforcement arm of the Park Service as a summer ranger. You had a little bit of training about, you know, we were basically highway patrolmen, and we dealt with traffic and we dealt with the things that happened in the campground, you know, dumping water where you're not supposed to, building fires where you're not supposed to, fishing licenses are required in Grand Teton so you played that game, and you wrote a violation notice and then you had to get a permanent ranger to come in to actually do the final violation notice before it could be technically issued. So that was kind of an interesting growing experience, and part of that, I realize, well, law enforcement is gonna be part of what I do as a park ranger. I might do better to kind of get some information, and I took two college classes, criminology and criminal law and corrections, in the university curriculum. I went to the city of Logan Police Department and became a reserve police officer [ended up a sergeant] and picked up a couple other courses through the department. I think one of them was Municipal Police and Administration and something else, and that helped, you know, build a little bit of that law enforcement stuff and got a little bit of training with them. I'd been familiar with firearms for quite a while and got involved with a – "Okay, I'm gonna carry a pistol" – I hadn't learned how to use it, and we did training in the park, you know, a little bit, with firing .38s and then the police department also the same thing, and then eventually end up buying my own. So, with that they you go in and you're a law enforcement ranger in the Park Service, and whee, away you go. Then you've probably heard the term the 'Yosemite massacre' and, you know, however that happened, whatever happened down there, you know the rumors I hear it's the long-hairs and the hippies were in Stoneman Meadow and the park rangers, the maintenance guys corralled them and made them do right, whatever right was at that time, and

the next – that would've been the summer of 1970 – in 1971, spring break, the National Park Service held its first seasonal ranger law enforcement training center at Grand Canyon. And there were, my recollection is 80 or 100 seasonal rangers that went to that training session, and those are the first officially block train, bulk-trained law enforcement seasonals. The permanents started getting let into the Park Police Academy, and if you were a little higher up, maybe the FBI Academy, and the second one of those sessions was in the end of May, first of June at Harpers Ferry, and I was in that class with 90 other people. So that was the second law enforcement training session for the Park Service seasonal-wise, and we came back and hit the ground running. And you know there we'd had 80 hours of law enforcement training and little bit of time in the skid pan in a high-speed car on an airport track, and that's pretty much the way it went. And then someplace between that and when I came back to the Park Service permanent, FLETC had been developed and people started being sent to FLETC, you know, you could go, and no, not could go, you are gonna go if you're gonna do law enforcement in the Park Service. So that was kinda at the real beginnings, you know, for us guys carrying a bullet in your pocket and revolver in the glovebox, that was a change. And it was a good change at that time, because we didn't really know what we were doing and were we really doing it legally? We hoped we were, but who knew?

Alison Steiner: So, when that change occurred, I mean, you just said that was a good change, but sometimes changes seem good in retrospect but at the time they don't. At the time did you think this is something we need, and we're glad the agency is recognizing it or, you know, what was the response to, I guess, taking law enforcement more seriously?

Bruce Reed: From my standpoint the response was I was at least better informed to do the job that they asked me to do. How do you make a car stop? Self-defensive tactics? Firearms? Weapons, talking to people? How do you enforce laws and regulations and not be on the wrong end of a confrontation? And I think, you know, at that point in time, those were steps in the right direction, and it took us a long ways. It took us in the long run where I didn't want to go. Being a park ranger encompassed law enforcement. It was one of the things we do. When I left the Park Service just before I retired, law enforcement rangers were doing law enforcement, and that was the primary function of their job. That's where they were headed, that's pretty much all that they were hired to do, you know, they do resource law enforcement, you know, felonious and criminal and a little bit of civil law enforcement, but the focus had changed. You know, if you became a law enforcement ranger, you wore your defensive equipment, your vest, and all that stuff all the

time, and that's the job you did. It wasn't, you know, you did a little of this, a little of that, interpretation and maintenance, cleaning this, and resource management, just it became the focus of that portion of the O25 Ranger Series, which was law enforcement. So, long run, I hated to see it become that tight because I really enjoyed my job as a ranger, being able to focus on a variety of things, as opposed to specifically law enforcement. And it's not as – I felt more comfortable because most of the parks I worked in were smaller parks and we were able to kind of keep that park ranger'ism to ourselves, you know, the whole thing where your Yosemites, your Yellowstone and the Blue Ridge and the Natchez Trace, you know, the mass people parks where the visitation was just crazy and that you needed that kind of a law enforcement cadre to do that job, and I did my best to stay away from those kinds of positions, because I just wanted to be more of a general rounded career ranger.

Alison Steiner: Well, I guess, going back to something you had talked about BLM in Pinedale [WY] and then you moved to Casper [WY]—

Bruce Reed: Casper, that's right.

Alison Steiner: So, was that a different BLM district or?

Bruce Reed: Casper was a different district, and I had a different position in that job, so.

Alison Steiner: And what was your position?

Bruce Reed: That was the realty specialist.

Alison Steiner: Okay, and you ended up doing a lot of EIS.

Bruce Reed: Yeah, a lot of environmental impact statement work, that and the planning on the Kemmerer Sweetwater Coal. But someplace in that bouncing back and forth to Rock Springs, I—

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Bruce Reed: —realize that maybe it was time to start making that look for the Park Service. And I had applied to the, you know, every regional office in the Park Service, and that would've been in '77. A job came open with Fish and Wildlife Service. I was looking to get back into something I felt a little more comfortable with, and I ended up going to Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge in Minnesota and was an interpretation and recreation specialist with Fish and Wildlife Service, and it was a great job. What I had been told I was gonna do, they'd just finished doing when I got there. So, I was kinda, you know, between a rock and a hard place, twiddling my thumbs more than I wanted to, and I continued looking at the Park Service, and someplace in my application

process it was still on file, and when they opened up the Intake Trainee Program in 1977, I got an application and notification was out there. So, I applied for this thing. And at the end of the process, I ended up being selected as one of the intake trainees out of that group. There were actually two classes out of that hiring, 'cause they hired 80 rangers in that one big fell swoop, and I was in the fiftieth class that went through Albright in 1978, January - February, and then the next class picked up right when we walked out the door they walked in. It was the other half of those folks that'd been hired out of that bunch of 80. And so, I was back with the National Park Service permanent, on the Buffalo National River in Arkansas, and my wife says, you know, I called her up and said, "We got a job that's on the Buffalo River. Find out where it is." And she went looking, "Oh no! It's in Arkansas." So that was kind of a little down-heartening thing, but finally this step back into the Park Service. I had to go down a couple of grades in pay to do it, but you know I had gone GS-5/7/9 as an outdoor recreation planner and shifter over to a 9 as a realty specialist, went to Fish and Wildlife Service as a 9. Intake program says, "You're gonna start as a 5." So, I went back down to a 5, but because of the years as a 9 I was able to get a mid-level 5, and it was technically a two-year training program. I was in my permanent job out of that training program in 18 months and because I had such a diverse background and experience behind me and had done some things.

Alison Steiner: So, I'm not very familiar with the intake program. So maybe it you can describe it a little bit more? You say it was a trainee program – like, how did it work exactly?

Bruce Reed: It didn't work the way that the first folks I met were involved. Originally when we, when I was a Grand Teton, we had some intake rangers that came in and they had been to the Albright Training Center and then, from Albright, you were sent to your trainee park. And you spent a year or two there, and if you did well, you got assigned to your permanent park. Well in this process we all went through Albright and then we went, but we had already been assigned our training parks. I worked at the Buffalo River for two months before I went to the Albright Training Center, and then I went through my two months of training. And you had that commitment, and then after that a lot of folks were reassigned to different areas and others were, you know, accepted permanent positions in the park that they had trained at. I think the idea was to train you someplace and then to send you so that you kinda got a little more diversity in your background than where you went. So, I did mine on the Buffalo River, and the Buffalo was an interesting park. It was fairly new, let's see, Yellowstone was March 3rd, 1872. Buffalo was March 3rd, 1972. And when we got there, Buffalo River was about five or six years old, and they were still

acquiring and buying land, which was something you [in NPS] didn't get involved with too often. So, they would identify parcels of land and put 'em up, they'd buy the land from the folks, the folks would move off, and the Park Service would take up ownership and management, and sometimes it worked and sometimes it's a challenge! [Chuckles.]

Bruce Reed: But it was a good place for me. It was a very, very – rural Arkansas is rural, rural. Good place to learn, work with a variety of people, because I set up my training program where I worked in every division of the park. I worked for maintenance, I worked for the interpretation, I worked for the ranger division and resource management, I even worked for admin, just so that I could learn what was going on. You know, you wrote your individual development plan and had the benchmarks in it. When you achieved those benchmarks, then you could move on. You know, time-in-gradewise, I was ready to go. I was, you know, ready to get my 9 back. My boss says, "I'll give you your 9 back when you go to FLETC, and you have the capability to do law enforcement with a commission."

Bruce Reed: So, two months after I walked out of Albright, I walked into FLETC. Two months out of FLETC, I was back on the Buffalo River and finished out my time there. We worked in law enforcement, we did search and rescue, we did some resource project issues, worked with some youth groups, but a lot that happened on the Buffalo River depended on the water level, and we were on the very upper end of the river, so in the springtime when the water was high, it was just crazy. People were everywhere, but there were times you'd close the lower end of the river, were the only times that you could use the upper end of the Buffalo – it was the only time there was enough water. But you know for that spring break and down till probably early June, July, the upper end was pretty busy. Lots of weekenders, three guys in a canoe – oh, they had two canoes, the other one was full of beer – and that's the way a lot of people came in and, you know, we would put 500 to 1000 people on the river at a launch point. Where are they going in the next couple of days? And somebody's gotta go down and pick 'em up and with friends and commercial folks, they managed to get all of that done, and most of them stayed alive. Few incidents and accidents, but that was the way that folks chose to recreate on the Buffalo River. And it and the New River Gorge were national rivers. They weren't under the Wild and Scenic River Act. They were a piece of legislation that this river is significant as a national river, you know, it changed a little bit on how they were managed. You didn't have the wild and the recreational component on the Buffalo that you did on a wild and scenic river.

Alison Steiner: You mentioned when you moved there that your wife wasn't too happy about it, so I was wondering if, you know this is going to be a bit of a backtrack, but if you could talk a little bit about your personal life through all of these changes, and to whatever degree you feel comfortable with.

Bruce Reed: Yeah, when we left the Tetons headed to BLM in Pinedale, we had a just short of one-year-old daughter. Just born before New Year's my last year in college. So, she experienced a little bit of the Tetons, didn't remember any of it, so we took her back 30 years later. We went into Pinedale and, you know, having a young family and being in a new job and Nance was pretty much the homemaker, take care of Angela through the years, and you know watching the little kids grow, and we moved and in the Bureau they don't have housing like the Park Service did, and so we rented and rented and finally built a home in Pinedale. And building a house while you're working fulltime was entertaining, but we grew to like that kind of stuff and unfortunately, we learned how well enough that we've done it more than once, in the same town 40 years apart! So, but, you know, Angela and Nance at times, you know, we'd go to different places where there was a meeting, you know, Lander or Jackson someplace, we'd go together and rent a motel room and, you know, they'd wander around town while I went to the meeting and then we'd go back. Nance got into barrel racing and horses, and we had horses in Wyoming. Angela would – once in a while you'd find her sitting out on the ground underneath the horses just playing in the dirt and horses were just standing there, they didn't care. So, the family stuff, you know, was a lot of fun, and they grew up that way. And our son was born in Casper. We spent Christmas in a motel. The BLM sent me to a full three-month training session in Phoenix. January, February, and March. I got home Sunday night the first weekend in April. My wife backed off having our son until Tuesday so she could show me how to do the new washing machine. She went into the hospital, you know, to have a C-section for our son, and called up, found out what was going on, I took my daughter to dinner in Casper, and we had a party, managed to lock ourselves out of the house just for something to do [chuckles].

Bruce Reed: We went from there to Minnesota and, you know, the kids on the national wildlife refuge, which we lived in government housing there. Minnesota was hot and humid, compared to Casper. And we fortunately were in Fish and Wildlife for seven months, from March until November, so we didn't get into the Minnesota winters. We did gardens and took the kids here and there and poked around, whatever you could do family-wise to go out and see, and then once we hit the Buffalo River in Arkansas, Angela had been introduced to kindergarten in Minnesota, went to pre-

school on the Buffalo River, went to – cause we went to the Grand Canyon for law enforcement for the first intake training – she went to pre-school at the Grand Canyon and came back and finished up pre-school that year back in Arkansas. And our mailing address in Arkansas was Dogpatch. Andy Capp and Dogpatch, and there was actually an amusement park just outside the park and people just "Dogpatch, Arkansas?" "Don't laugh!" But that was us. So, you know, Nance had some good friends, you know, with park staff or BLM staff as we worked around the different areas. One day she must've had cabin fever. When we went to the Buffalo, they put us in a house that the government had bought, and it was kind of a temporary quarters for us. And then once this other fellow changed positions, we were gonna move into that house. And Nance remembers looking down the side of the wall of the bathtub and seeing the snails crawl up the walls and, you know, the daylight, and you had, you didn't walk around a lot because you had to climb over, and one of the kids had a bedroom that had a bed in it about and that's all, and the crib was in the living room. It was a small cabin, log whatever, it was just a small house. We moved up out of that one just before Christmas, spent Christmas there and then took off for the Grand Canyon right after Christmas, and drove in the Grand Canyon, went to Flagstaff, got groceries, you had a little bitty Toyota Corolla, one kid on each side of the back seat, and we just bought groceries and packed 'em around that. Put a birthday cake in Angela's hand cause her birthday was the next day and said, "Don't eat it," and we drove up to the rim at Grand Canyon to get to the Albright Training Center and had birthday, had training, and then when we were in – when I went to FLETC – as soon as school was out, we were down there in May and June. And when school was out, Nance came out a couple weeks with the kids. We poked around down there and then we drove back through different parts of the country, so that we could see different parts of the southeast, and kind of experienced some of that.

Bruce Reed: We ran into a friend on the way back that we'd worked with on the Buffalo and we kind of got involved in that "Oh, find a friend and stay with 'em" thing that the Park Service is so good at. So, pretty much, you know, that was the Buffalo. An interesting park. You know, wouldn't be one of those that I would want to call home. Just, you know, poison ivy and ticks and chiggers, and three of the four kinds of poisonous snakes in the country, and the only one you didn't have was the coral snake. So those weren't the fond parts of it anyway.

Alison Steiner: So where did you move then?

Bruce Reed: From the Buffalo we went to Wilson Creek National Battlefield, which in the long picture was only about a hundred miles away in southwest Missouri, Republic.[1] August 10th, 1861, first major battle of the Civil War west of the Mississippi, and that's all I know about the Civil War. [Chuckles.] I mean, I'm not a Civil War person, so my remember of Civil War stuff is not that good. But I went up there out of my intake program into my first permanent position. I was the chief of everything other than administration. We had a real small staff, a superintendent, chief ranger, a permanent maintenance worker, and two permanent admin folks. And one permanent interpreter, historian. The rest of our workforce was seasonal. We were involved in stuff everywhere from managing what we had, which was a trailer and a small maintenance complex, to actually developing the park. And we built the maintenance complex one year and then we went in and worked on the building of a visitor center for Wilson Creek National Battlefield over about a year and a half period. Came up with a really nice facility which allowed us to present, you know, the battle of Wilson Creek in a little better picture than you could out of the front room of an eight by thirty-foot trailer. The back half of which was my office. What else did we do? A real active YCC program. Youth Conservation Corps program. It was not an in-house program. The kids actually lived at home and came to work every day in the park, and we had at times as high as thirty kids in the group with I think there were seven, a camp director and then six others. Five group leaders and an environmental and camp director. So, seven of those people that basically herded and corralled and worked them around. Over the winter we developed the projects that we wanted them to do, and then they'd come out in the springtime – or the summertime – and do their projects, and they were usually around, seem like, six to eight weeks in summer. It was busy. Lot of work but we got a lot of stuff done. It was really a good program and, say, it was active every year that I was at Wilson Creek, which was four and a half years.

Alison Steiner: So, was that a new park? You said that you developed the park. Had it just been designated?

Bruce Reed: No, it had been around a while, but it'd been working out of an office in Republic and a trailer in the park and a maintenance shed, and that was about it. Through Congress plus local, were able to push funding through to develop a visitor center. You know, pretty much, phase I was the maintenance complex, II was the visitor center, and then we carried into it just as I was leaving and after I left was the development of a totally inside the park tour route. The original tour route went down a county road through the park, over

[1] Narrator removed misspoken direction "southeastern or" during transcript review.

the river and through the woods, back up onto a county road and back up through the park to the headquarters where it started. It was about a six- or seven-mile loop as you went through it and, through the design with the Denver Service Center and Harpers Ferry, we pretty much were able to wiggle that, pull it so that it was all inside the boundary. You went in the park, you did the tour route, and you came back out where you started and never had to leave the park and get on the county road to do that. With the county roads, and we had three or four park gates that you opened every morning and closed every night, cause it was pretty much a day-use park, no overnight camping or staying, that kind of thing. And most of the time we didn't have problems with that. If you missed the gate, then you figured out how to close so that you weren't pushing people out the back door as you were coming in the front and working through, you know, and before we got the gates up, we would do an occasional evening patrol and you would find many interesting things going on in the park in the evening and you'd just kind of gather them up and move 'em on out and say, "No it's a day-use, come back in the day" and you probably won't do that stuff in the daylight, but. So, once we got the gates, that solved some of that program. Developing a visitor center and getting it constructed, implementing that was just an interesting process, you know, the dealings with the two service centers, Harpers Ferry and Denver, construction and interpretation, and getting so that when the exhibits were ready the building was already done, you know, as opposed to exhibits sitting out in Harpers Ferry for two years while you're still waiting for ground to get broken. So those came together pretty well for us. We did some things wrong, looking back on 'em, you know. We put in a solar system that was hydronic-based, and apparently after I left it was just so much wrong because it was based on a glycol system and you were moving, you know, sun-heated fluids through this system, and it just wasn't as efficient as today's photo-voltaics and those kinds of things. So, we were able to, one of the last projects was the YACC program. Young Adult Conservation Corps? And maybe it was the last year I was there, they came up with a bunch of money to push the YACC program and you went out and you hired people to do that, young adults. And then we actually had enough money that we were able to rent equipment and buy materials and contract certain things done, and we did a lot of work with those guys.

Bruce Reed: And one of the goals at Wilson Creek was to return the landscape to the 1861 period, the way it looked, you know, in 120 years, trees grow fast in Arkansas and Missouri and they just – lot of cottonwoods, lot of hardwoods – and with YACC, we were able to get a good jump on that. And one of the big things that the YACC

program did was mark the old property lines with split-rail fencing, and we were able through that program with a little extra money to buy split-rail fencing. You know, we'd spend thousands of dollars over the winter and get all this stuff up and then the kids would come in and they'd build fence. We were pretty well on our way by the time I had left on getting those done. One of the things that Civil War, research-wise, happened was that the park had a pretty good Civil War library. There was an attorney in town that we were talking to that was thinking about he had a Civil War library and he was thinking about leaning toward the Park Service acquiring that. And there was a lady on the city council who had an uncle in Columbia, Missouri that – he was a librarian? I don't remember what he did. Gilbert somebody. Out of Columbia [MO]. And she found out that he had a Civil War library, a library on the Civil War, a library on Americana, just he built these over the years. So, one of the seasonals and I went up and looked at this, and the fella had a, he was in a boarding house, in a room that was about the size of this room, which is about 15 by 15, had a bed in it, was in the middle, and there were books stacked all around it. And then he had a storage unit and there were books stacked in that. And we decided he had some stuff that we really would like to have, and we talked with him a little bit and then went back and talked to his cousin, and she negotiated his donation with, I think, this other fella [attorney] providing a little capital for the fella [Gilbert] to have some money in his waning years, and it seems like we brought back about a thousand titles. Titles. And we had a couple of folks on the staff that were 'eat, sleep, and drink' Civil War people, sons and daughters of the Confederacy. And the first thing I had to do was I basically had to lock everything up and we just, we got 'em in. I'd been dealing with archivists on how to acquire a library and what do you do, and says, "Well, you need to inventory it, but before as you get around to doing that, you're gonna store it, and then you start bringing everything out." So, we wrapped everything in acid-free tissue, put it into storage. And then, as it went in, one of the gals typed up the title and author of every book that went in, so we had a cheat-sheet to start with. And we, once we started pulling those out, we decided, "We're gonna sit down and write library cards?" No, no, no, no. Isn't that thing called a Library of Congress? And with the title and an author, you can get the cards. You can buy them. And we started doing that. All of a sudden boxes and boxes of cards started coming. So when we would pull the books out then, we were able to take the book, match it with a Library of Congress card, put it there and have the card file and the backup file and the author and title files and all that stuff, and at the same time, when we developed the idea of doing this, we developed an acid-free library sticker, and we

stamped number stamp every book on the library cards and on that library stamp as it went in. A concern about a library that's a research library with that many titles is that, and we worked with a company to develop a [theft] detection system, so that if you took the thing out, beep beep beep. Actually, it entailed slipping a magnetic strip in the spine of the book, and you passed the beeper going out and it beep, beep beep – it'd go off.

Alison Steiner: So, we did all that stuff, and I think out of the thousand there were less than 50 books that didn't have Library of Congress access to them, which I thought was pretty good.

Bruce Reed: And it took us about two years, because we'd take 'em a piece at a time, and the hardest part was when they showed up was keeping the Civil War folks out of 'em until we could get it done. Out of that we probably had 50 to 100 books that got in lockup cabinets because they were that rare, and so we had a real good deal that came out of, like I say, I don't remember the fella's last name, but Gilbert. And later down the road, after I'd left, I'd heard that this gentleman in town [the attorney] eventually did put his in with the park, and it was probably one of the largest research libraries on Civil War in Park Service at that time. Just things that you don't think you're ever gonna want to get involved with.

Bruce Reed: You know, I went up to Herbert Hoover and spent three or four days figuring out and learning how to do these things and put a library together from scratch to 'here's a pretty nice one'. You know, lot of work from a lot of people to make that happen, but just something you never 'I'm gonna go start a new library'. Oh. Someplace I think I used to have a file folder that had a couple of those acid-free labels in it. We actually had 'em printed up with the Wilson Creek logo on it, so if somebody walked away with it, they knew that 'No, you don't want that.'

Alison Steiner: So, one thing I heard you say which I thought was interesting was you're talking about the YACC program where you were trying to recreate the battlefield essentially—

Bruce Reed: Return it back, right.

Alison Steiner: So, when you said a cultural landscape, which I know today the Park Service is very interested in cultural landscapes, I guess I was wondering how common that was at that time to be doing that kind of work? If on maybe battlefield sites that was common or?

Bruce Reed: I would imagine it was going on other places. I do know that in some of the administrative or the history of the area, there were some pretty good documentation from diaries for what had been on that park. Native grass complex for grass, the farm fields we knew that John Ray had a cornfield here, and somebody else had a

cornfield here, so how do you bring that back to what it was during the time of the battle, before the cornfields and the battle? So, we had some pretty good documentation that helped, and we had some help from other parks that had done a little bit of it, but I think we were at that point maybe on a little more leading edge. Since I didn't bring Civil War with me, I brought resource management with me, and we went out to SCS, Soil Conservation Service at that time, and took soil samples to them and had them assess what's going on with the ground, and we set up a number of the old pastures so that they would be farmed—

[END OF TRACK 2]

[START OF TRACK 3]

Bruce Reed: —with crops that we identified that would help return nutrients to the soil, and the plan was to do that for four or five years and get that soil balance back and then come back in and draw [drill] it with the native prairie grass, and that would, you know, we had some that we had tried before and because we hadn't done the groundwork behind it. Some of it would take in little spots but not a whole complex that worked, so that's some of the things that would be fun to go back and see, 'Where is that process now?' 'Did it really work?' Or did I just, another one. I think the idea was good, I think we did some good things in putting natural resources into a cultural park that helped return and worked for the things that we were looking for. You know the difference in superintendents makes different things happen, you know, one superintendent was really into the development and building and in those kind of things. That was one of the things that he was really good at, and we ended up with a good visitor center. Then we started the others and we had one that was really history oriented, but had a good resource base, and he started those kinds of things, and you know as you play those, you've heard some of these on interviews, you know, the superintendent can make or break them. In the case while I was there, these worked real well for us in what I saw as where we were headed with this park.

Alison Steiner: So, you said that you stayed there for four years—

Bruce Reed: Mmhm. Four and a half years.

Alison Steiner: Where did you go then?

Bruce Reed: I applied for a job at Isle Royale National Park, neat spot up on the lake, wilderness type thing, due for a change. It was actually a District Ranger Unit Manager job, and one of the things I liked about it, when I first went to Wilson Creek I was chief of everything except Admin, well this particular job at Isle Royale, maintenance was the responsibility of the District Ranger Unit

Manager, pretty much Unit Manager. And that was one of the things that attracted it to me, because I would still be able to keep my fingers in some of the other things. And I got the call on that in early September, and they wanted me in two weeks. Primarily because the park closes in the wintertime, but the chief ranger wanted me to come up, spend six weeks through the close-out process, then come back, move my family up, and be there to go to work first thing after Christmas, but you know time he got everything done. So that's what we did. And I left Wilson Creek and headed north in September and spent six weeks on the island learning a little bit about the island and closing down. The district ranger on the other end of the island and me from my end of the island, we were the two that were the final people on the island. Everybody left seven to ten days before we finally pulled the plug and headed out. And it's – you put the plug back in and headed out, because you had fifty miles across Lake Superior to get home. In the end of October, first of November. And the most popular song on the radio then was The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald. Crossing Lake Superior and going down. And every year we crossed in November, that was the popular song, cause that was the time she went down. And you're lookin' out there, "That's fifty miles. Can I see where I'm goin? What's the lake doing? Is it this stuff or is it moderate? Is it flat?" We liked flat. But I don't think I ever made that crossing on flat flat.

Bruce Reed: I made, I think the biggest was five-foot swells and fifty miles open water. Mother Superior did what she wanted when she wanted, and it didn't make any difference what you had to say. But then, you know, we moved up to Isle Royale in the fall, early winter, and we got in there I think about the first of December, maybe a little earlier, in that we got into our house just before Christmas. I made an offer on the house while I was up during that six-week period, and so we moved into the house then and started the process of being an Isle Royale ranger, you know, pretty much the winter is get ready for everything to go and do the island and stuff for seven months in the summertime. And then you come back.

Bruce Reed: Couple of things going on at Isle Royale is a thing called "winter study" and that relates to the moose-wolf interaction resource study, probably the longest ongoing study in the National Park Service. Wolves returning to the island in the late 1940s and then people finally realizing they were there and then developing a research program to monitor them. Through the time I was there, we had never put our hands on a live wolf. I think a few year after I left, because of population dynamics, they were concerned that maybe domestic dogs had gone on the island someplace and we were dealing with parvo. That wasn't the case, from what I

understand, so that one of the first things, one of the last things in my first winter was, we had to go out. There was always a ranger on board during the winter study program. It was handled at that time through Michigan Tech University, and they would fly in, they would do patrol flights in SuperCub, and they would fly from Grand Portage, Minnesota, to Grand Marais, Minnesota, to the island and land on the ice. Well, the SuperCub went in first because it was like, as long as it was enough ice, then they'd bring the Beaver in, so every about week and a half, they'd rotate the permanent Park Service person who was on the island. It was either, typically, one of the district rangers or the chief of resources or the resource management specialist or the chief ranger and sometimes the superintendent would go out for a week or two. And this typically ran about six weeks, and basically they were there to help and to observe what was going on during the winter study program and see if they need anything, what can we do, and keep track and all that jazz. Food'd come in on that plane and somebody'd go out and a new set of socks at the end of the bed the next day and next week do the same thing. And we did that every year that I was out there, so it was kind of interesting. It was another good way to take a look at, you know I hadn't been on the island for a summer, I'd been there for six weeks in the fall and now I'm here for a week in the winter when it's froze up harder than a rock, and then a month and a half later I'm comin' back in on a boat, and it was a neat park to work in. Yeah.

Alison Steiner: How long were you there?

Bruce Reed: About three and a half years. It's the one if you take Nance and the kids and sit 'em in a corner and just start talkin', you know, what was your favorite spot, and just "Isle Royale." You know, just pops up. Was such a unique place to live. You know, it's 130,000 acres wilderness land base, and half a million acres with the water. You had a four-and-a-half-mile water boundary.

Alison Steiner: So, during the summer, how did family life work? Did all of you go out to the island?

Bruce Reed: We'd go out on the island about early April, and I'd be there until the first of November. Soon as school was out, then Nance and the kids would come out. And in our case the boat that brought 'em across was the Park Service vessel, the Ranger III, and they would come across to headquarters and then they'd catch a small boat to our end of the island. We were the furthest district office from the headquarters, which I thought was pretty nice. That's a good place to be. And they'd come down and we'd spend all summer there. You know, before I would go out, we would particularly have all the dry goods that we could and as much freezer stuff going and the [R]anger [III] came behind the two district rangers, they

brought our opening seasonal staff. They also brought most of the food for the summer. Headquarters, because of the proximity with the rangers, could get groceries about once a week, and if we could, we could get it every week, though they'd just have to put it in a plane and fly it from Mott Island down to us. We finally got to the point where "We can do this every two weeks," I mean, it's pretty expensive. I tried to work with Minnesota, which was only 13 miles away, and we had a boat coming every day, and see if we could work that, and it wasn't received very well, but it was just that was the way you learned to live. Park Service housing on the island for the staff, you owned your own home on the mainland. You just packed up and away you went back. We were fortunate a couple of the years to be able to have one of the [seasonal] rangers that was working in headquarters office at Houghton rent our house, "Stay here, might as well." So those worked good for us, but it was the back and the forth, moving, loading it all up to send away, you know, Nance and the kids would come out and the kitchen would go whatever the way they wanted, and when they left I put everything back the way I wanted. It was there next spring when I came back, and then next June I did the same thing and we'd roll it around. But we had a three-bedroom Mission 66 home, two baths, it was a nice place. We were, our house, was separate from the rest because it was the ranger's house as opposed to the rest of the staff, and they were, you know, a quarter of a mile away in a bunkhouse and a couple of real small cabins. And we had a telephone that had about three extensions on it. Was all the same line so, you know, everybody played wrestle with the phone, and we had radio contact, you know, with the other end of the island. The kids, that was just their place. They had about a mile that they wandered around, with the maintenance area and the bunkhouse, you know, has the only television on the end of the island, you know, the guys and maintenance folks lived in one and then there was the gals and the maintenance foreman at one end, lived, had a house for him. I supervised all that stuff, and it was really a neat operation. It was a totally different lifestyle than a lot of folks are used to, but lots of neat things with the moose-wolf program. Isle Royale has a dive program. There's a hundred vessels around the island, and there's probably twenty of those that have actual dive markers on them that scuba divers can come out – you've gotta be careful scuba-diving Lake Superior, you know, she might get 50s in the shallows in the summer. I learned to scuba dive in Lake Superior. My most memorable dive was 32-degree air, 34-degree water!

Bruce Reed: It was all dry suit diving as far as I was concerned, and if you twisted your head just wrong, you had a bead of cold water right down the back of your neck. But it was deep water. You were not

far from spots in Lake Superior that are a thousand feet deep, so we didn't have, [there was] nothing [vessels] on our end of the island that was much over 100 feet, but we had a major wreck that was about 50 feet, set at an angle in the water, you know, when evaporation was at, you could stand on the bow, the tip of the bow and have you head above water. And that was a fairly popular dive, so that was a major activity on the island.

Alison Steiner: And so, you had a dive program because you had visitors diving there?

Bruce Reed: Yes.

Alison Steiner: And did you have rescues that you—

Bruce Reed: Fortunately, not while I was there. Yeah, they've had rescues, they've had fatalities, the whole gamut of stuff with submerged cultural resources. Fox, moose, wolf, the predators and telling those stories, and the island with its copper geology, and the Native American impact on the island over the years, and fisheries. Major fisheries in Lake Superior. We had three fishery operations on the island at that time, had two on the west district, and commercial fisheries would do their stuff and take the fish to the market, that worked out pretty neat. Some of the last innholders of the national parks were – they held the land when [NPS] bought it, "Okay, we're buying it from you and this generation has the right to use it and beyond that it becomes Park Service property," and those were, I think I had two of those still living on the west end when I was there and, like I say, the two fisheries.

Alison Steiner: And what was their relationship like between the innholders and the park?

Bruce Reed: The one that I dealt with was pretty good. You know, we'd go out and visit 'em and swap dinner back and forth. One of 'em came out about once a year, and one came out about all summer, so you dealt with 'em as you came and went. But didn't have a lot of problem, from my aspect, at that time anyway. I would guess now that the parents are gone, I don't know, I'm sure that the kids are having some issues with having the ability to go back and use the house they grew up in during the summertime, but now dad signed the thing and that's what it says, so. They were neat folks to talk to. They had a lot of history, you know, their families had been there for generations, and you could pick up things that were going on.

Bruce Reed: Probably the neatest project that happened while I was on the island, the Coast Guard starting automating lighthouses. Took the old lenses out and put in strobes. The Rock of Ages lighthouse and the Washington Harbor had a second-order Fresnel lens, which is

probably about seven feet across. It's big enough I can stand up inside of it. The prisms are two to two and a half inches on a side, maybe three inches on a side, all in the typical Fresnel configuration that, as the lens rotated and the light source focused on that center beam that it shot that beam out. The Rock of Ages was a ten-second light, and it was a seven-three combination, [there] was a flash at seven seconds. And another one at ten, or flash at three, and then the next one seven seconds later, and then three seconds and then seven seconds and then three seconds. And this thing rotated and rotated on the top of this lighthouse since the 1920s until, oh when did that come out, '86 maybe, '85, '86. [It was '85.] Somehow, we got into discussion with the Coast Guard because basically they owned it, and we talked 'em into bringing that lens to the ranger station at Windigo. Once we got approval, we made – the visitor center was a long building, probably maybe 20 feet, 24 feet wide, and longer than that the other way. And on one end of it, the building went tall enough for the lens. The lens was probably close to 15 feet, 18 feet tall, with its pedestal. We poured two slabs of concrete about eight inches thick and probably seven feet square on each side of the visitor center. In the wintertime that building had a floating floor, because when the ground froze, it did what it wanted to do and, in the spring, it'd come down. You'd go into the visitor center in the spring, when you first got out there and hopefully you'd left all the inside doors open, because the building would move, and it might be a month or so after you got there before all the floors and the foundation when back to where you could open all the doors and windows. And no one asks us why we poured an eight-inch slab to put the lens and the base on. We decided we were going to put the base on one side and the lens on the other side, and so when the Coast Guard came out, they removed the lens. They lowered it off the tower. There's actually a crane on top of the, a mini crane, on top of the lighthouse. They lowered it down onto a barge and it ended up at Windigo. And because of the technique of taking the lens apart, they put the lens back together for us, and remounted in basically on the deck of that one concrete slab, and we got a small light bulb that we put on the inside of it, and you could at least click a light on and see what was going on. I managed to get my hand on the last bulb within that lens. It was a 1000-watt quartz halogen, and it would push 17 miles out of that lens. It was that big.

Bruce Reed: It was second order. There's only one bigger. The pedestal came in and they dropped it on the docks, says, "Have fun." And Nance and the kids were there, the seasonals were there, the maintenance crew was there, and we turned everybody loose on scraping paint and cleaning this thing up. By the time most of the seasonals left, early September, mid-September, the base was pretty clean. We

found out historically what the original colors had been and picked up that color of paint, and we painted the pedestal that way. The pedestal has a four-foot base that's about 24 to 30 inches high. It's got a cylinder that sits on top of that that's about six feet high that's probably two and a half, three feet in diameter, solid cast iron. On the top of that cylinder is a thread, like a bolt, and there's a nut that goes on top of that, and it's two and a half, three foot in diameter and actually screws down. Sitting on top of this nut, you've got – you're familiar with bearings and races? You've got a bearing and a race on a wheel, and one supports the other as it goes around. The bearing and the race on these are about ten to twelve inches high and probably twelve to sixteen inches wide, and this sits on top of the nut. This is all up there on the ceiling. Originally the bearing floated on a bed of mercury in the lighthouse with one finger, you can move that lens because of the friction-free mercury. I mean, this thing's huge. Just one finger, and you could push it. So, one of the maintenance workers and I assigned ourselves the task as "We'll see if we can put this thing together." And the only way we could figure out to do it is take the bearing and the race to the ceiling and hang 'em, and then put all this other stuff together underneath it, and then lower that bearing and race down on top of the bolt and the nut. And it can be done. We had three or four-quarter inch comealongs, and we just cranked them up, and I'm sure we were stretching limits on things with that kind of stuff and everybody was, you know, there were only – we decided there was only gonna be two of us down there. If it crashed, we didn't want to wound too many, but we had some timbers that we were able to use to help us support and we got the bearing up and then we got started to put the four-piece base together and put the bolt on top, and we got the nut up in there, and we couldn't get it down. Well, you want to get a nut to turn, you grease it. So, we put a bunch of grease on it and just spun it right down, and then it was just a matter of wiggling that bearing and race down on top of that. So, I asked one of the folks here this week if it was still there, and he said, "Yeah." Last time he was out. So, you've got this huge Fresnel lens sitting on one side of the visitor center, and you've got it pedestal and base sitting on the other side. All you have to do is imagine this sitting on top of each other, and this lightbulb in the middle of it being the warning to vessels coming down the slot between Canada, Minnesota, and the island for years and years and years and years. That was just one of those projects that was so neat to be involved with and see something like that that was something you can talk about, and you can interpret. I mean, the stories you can build on that. Then you can build a story just on how it got there, let alone what it did and all those kinds of things.

Alison Steiner: Yeah, it's a good story that you just told about how it got there, so. Wow.

Bruce Reed: But it was such a neat place to work. It was basically your wilderness. We had a tractor, and we had a Jeep. Had to get stuff from the dock to the bunkhouse and my place and the power plant. We generated our own power. We pulled our own water out of the lake and had our own treatment plant, all on a spot down on the end of the island. And they had ones at the other end of the island, so. But there were technically no vehicles on the island, mostly wilderness. Very, very little private aircraft traffic, but commercial, we had two commercial flights that brought people to both ends of the island. Once in a while you'd get a private plane coming in. We were deputized as U.S. Immigration and Customs Agents to deal with that stuff. And we had a lots of boat traffic. If you wanted to come, you came by boat. And there were days that the piers and the docks would be just full of boats. Just it was out there and that's the way they came to see. We had two commercial boats that brought people out. One was a day boat through early June through early September and brought folks from Grand Portage out to the island. They would spend about three hours on the island a day and then away they would go. Then we went to another vessel that came and it went around the island three times during the summer to Minnesota. Come out spend the night on the other end, come grab us and go, do that three times in the summer. In the fall and spring, it would do it just twice a week. So, if you really got into trouble, you could do stop, but those were operations that we as park rangers had to supervise and manage, maintain concession-type things. We had a small grocery store that was run by the lodge company at the other end of the island, was on our end of the island. Nance was bored stiff, and it took just short of an act of Congress to get permission to let her work for the lodge company, because I supervised that function. But we did. And it worked. And somebody at the end of the season finally approved it, we'd been doing it all summer. That works, too. So, but there's just a lot of stuff about the island. It was so unique. But at kind of the tail end of my island experience, the district ranger on the east end had moved. He'd gone to Wrangell-St. Elias in Alaska. And the chief ranger decided I had become too comfortable on my end of the island so next year he was gonna move me to the other end. And I'd applied for a couple different jobs and, because I had been involved in maintenance functions with this and also my Navy Reserve stuff of being in construction with the Seabees, I actually did Park Service work on my days off for the Navy to get my drill credit so I didn't have to go back to the mainland for two days and then come back. They let me establish projects that I could work,

so the Park Service got use out of the Navy while I was there, too. And that was kinda strange, but it worked.

Bruce Reed: But when I left Isle Royale, I went to Guadalupe Mountains National Park in Texas as the chief of maintenance, and that threw some people for a loop. I got a pretty good recommendation from the Isle Royale chief of maintenance, who was new, who had been a maintenance foreman with me on the Buffalo River and he knew my background and skills in that arena, and he said that if it wouldn't have been me as the unit manager on the west end of the island when he came to the park, he would've pulled the maintenance function from it, said because he knew what I did in maintenance, he left it with me. When I left the next guy didn't get it. So. So off we go to Guadalupe. When was this? 1987. And the family issue came up. Angela was a freshman in high school Guadalupe Mountains National Park is fifty miles from Carlsbad, New Mexico, 100 miles from El Paso, Texas, and about sixty miles from Van Horn, Texas. Van Horn, Texas is the school, 70 miles one way and you change time zones. Teenage daughter, blond, blue-eyed, fairly active. I lived in Carlsbad, New Mexico and drove 50 miles every day to work just so we didn't have to deal with kids. You know, Kris is about four years younger, so he was just starting to get into kid activities, so that would make him a little more interested in both of them wanting something to do. So, we lived in Carlsbad, you know, Nance had two or three different jobs while we were there. Angela finished high school in Carlsbad. But Guadalupe was just like going from one end of the world to the other, from 300 inches of snow in Houghton, Michigan to the wilds of Carlsbad, New Mexico, and you come out of the park at 70 - 80 degrees in the summer and hit home at Carlsbad, it's 110. But you just dropped 2,000 feet, you know, coming off the pass. But Guadalupe was, you know, the highest spot in the state of Texas, which I thought was pretty unique. There's about, I think, seven of the top ten peaks in Texas are in Guadalupe National Park. Some of the stuff were dealing with my maintenance, be a new foreman, and then my maintenance—

[END OF TRACK 3]

[START OF TRACK 4]

Bruce Reed: —a road and trails foreman, having been a 'one of them damn rangers – ah, gah, what are we gonna, how are we gonna deal with this', and I sometimes wonder what the fella who hired me was thinkin' about, but I'm glad he did. And we had a good program, lots of good maintenance activities going on with lots of buildings and utilities and roads and trails and was the same time that the Park Service implemented their Maintenance Management System and, you know, having come out of BLM doing management

inventories and stuff, this was right down my neck of the woods. You know, inventory every maintenance resource that we had, and facility that we had, and how we're gonna take care of it and program the long-term projects with that. Lot of interesting things. And we did a lot of different maintenance projects. Superintendents and chief rangers were able somehow to come up with money and "You get money, we'll build it." And we had a resource management specialist that took a picture of a fence line, fair-lookin' vegetation on one side, zip on nothing on the other side, and that was down the park boundary, and that park we still had about 80 miles of boundary that weren't fenced, and we were getting into areas where there was a lot of cattle grazing and his project turned loose a hundred thousand or 650,000 dollars over was it a two- or three-year period. And we hired a couple of boundary-fencing crews, and this was all done by hand, driving steel posts and all our gear was packed in because of wilderness on horseback, and we had hired a wrangler that did that for us, actually had a position on the staff. We had about eighty miles of trail and in wilderness, and a lot of it just prime stuff, been taken care of. Facilities, we developed or got some funding to replace an ambulance barn, and then we got some funding to replace a vehicle barn, and gave us a fire cache to store wildfire stuff and all of a sudden I'm back in the visitor center building business because Guadalupe Mountains built another brand new visitor center. And was involved, you know, real heavily in that, from the maintenance side of the house and what we're gonna do and how we're gonna get everything to work and having to understand all the systems so that when we opened it and it's yours, here's the key, have fun, don't call us, you know, fighting the battles that we did have to call 'em a few times. But just a real nice state-of-the-art building, you know, a few issues. I remember some of the roofing on that. It was a steel roof, and they rolled it, like out of the back of a truck like seamless gutters. Well, the same thing's on some of this steel roofing, and I remember seeing pieces of roofing going on seventy feet long. About five guys would come out of the machine, they'd just grab it, take it up, lock it down, and away they'd go. But a lot of quality stuff in the design of the facility, how it was gonna work, how it was gonna operate.

Bruce Reed: One of the issues was they were gonna move museum storage, which was in a small defunct old musty building and to a new proper curatorial storage space, and we were having problems with the system because it was kind of a swamp cooler to keep stuff cool and the humidity would go up and, you know, it'd fight with the temperature and be bouncing back and forth. I was walking around one day and looked in the closet where the drain from this thing came out. It was a three-quarter inch pipe, running full head

down in the drain, and I got to thinking, "I'm feeding twelve park houses, six state of Texas houses, two visitor centers, two maintenance facilities, and I have 200,000 gallons of water, and I'm running three-quarters of an inch full head down the drain to keep this room cool. Wrong design." And we went back on the block and redesigned it, pulled that whole system out, put in a heat pump, took care of it to save this water, because when your water wells or have a water well go bad. Our water well's 2,000 feet deep. I had to go to Midland, Texas to get an oil company rig to pull my well, pull the pump out, replace it. So, we'd get into 200,000 and you're running it down the drain, you don't want to do that. We had a fire in the park one time, and they needed water for that. And we had a couple places and reservoirs that they could deal with, but they were also tapping us pretty hard on our domestic, and before they left there was a contract and they brought in potable water and filled us back up to 200,000. But, you know, some of those would get pretty crazy at times, when we've got all these people out here and we're running visitor centers and "You're takin' my water to put out a fire in wilderness!" [Chuckles.] So that was kind of an interesting, you know, developing and working on a visitor center.

Alison Steiner: Did you find that it was advantageous that you had been a ranger before?

Bruce Reed: Oh yeah.

Alison Steiner: In what ways?

Bruce Reed: Knowing where they were going and where they were coming from and what some of their processes were. One of the – the first fall I was there they had a thing called Fall Color, both of the trees in west Texas turn red and yellow and there were two or three canyons that had turned pretty spectacular, and they were talking about "What're we gonna do? We get so many people out; we don't have any way to control this." And I scratched my head, and I says, "Chief Ranger, you ever heard of ICS?" He kinda scratched his head and said, "Incident Command System"? Yeah, okay. Says, "We could put Fall Color under Incident Command System and make it work and solve all the problems that we've been having." So, we sat down and talked about it for a while and he says, "I don't have enough people to do that." And I looked at my shoulder patch, "Says National Park Service, right? I think everybody on my staff wears the same patch as you do." "Really?" he says, "Nobody's ever talked like that before!" Said, "You got maintenance, you got interpretation, you got admin, you got your ranger division. We'll put the package together, see how it works, and we'll run it through. I don't have any problem that it's gonna work." Poor guy was dragging his feet because he wasn't sure

about this stuff. So, we got it all set up and we had green and gray scattered all over this sides, sides of the mountain, the main canyon McKittrick and Bear Canyon, up behind the visitor center, just all different places that people could go. "We got this parking lot, what're we gonna do with that?" Said, "Well, you know, we've just been parking people—" I said, "No, no, no. Parking lot, if I remember has lines in it, right?" And we go back to the drawing and it shows 120 cars. "There's your number. 120 cars, it's all marked out. When the parking lot fills, we're done. We stop 'em out here a mile, give 'em a place where they can turn around, explain what we're doing. You know, more than likely, they're gonna sit here five or ten minutes before somebody leaves and you can go in. Okay, they want to go here? Send 'em up to the Frijole Ranch or up behind Pine Canyon, place they can go." "Okay, we'll try that." So, he kind of playing the bobble-head but not sure that's what he wants to do, and superintendent at that time, we were in transition from a unit manager to a superintendent. And the unit manager had left, the superintendent at Carlsbad at that time was Rick Smith, and he'd been in Santa Fe one day recently, talking to the regional director, who just happened to be John Cook, and they had a little conversation and Rick was telling him, you know, I could just see John nodding his head, "Ah, hope to hell these guys know what they're doing." That got back to the chief ranger, and I almost lost it. Says, "No no. No no no no no no." I said, "Don't worry about it, Phil, it's gonna work." And so trepidatiously we launched on Saturday, Sunday. It was about three or four weekends in mid to late September, and we launched that thing and we got done with the first day and everybody's jaw was dropped, and their mouths were wide open. We hadn't had a confrontation, we actually had people telling us "It's about time you guys got your act together." It worked so smooth! People just couldn't believe it. And we ran it for that year, and I think Phil and I may've done it the next year as the Incident Commanders. And I says, "Had enough of this crap. District rangers, resource managers, and maintenance foremen are gonna run this next year" and we just spun it out to them. "Okay, you've seen what's going on for two years, you know how it works, these are your roles," and we said, "We're here, we're gonna help you get through this." And I don't know if it's still working or not but to me that was one of those that I brought in something from someplace else, you know, from the ranger side of the house into maintenance, but put it into the park, and when I went to Isle Royale, I was up there two weeks and they sent me to Incident Command Training, to learn how to teach Incident Command.

Bruce Reed: I taught it for three years before I ever got on an incident, and I was like, down at Guadalupe, my mouth was open, "This stuff

really works." So, you know, we played those kind of games and had a good time doing things, and we burned a lot of the park over the years with wildland fire, a lot of trail work, a lot of building repair and rehab. They had adobe pink housing, so to speak, desert houses. The houses that Guadalupe were built in vegetation, which is sagebrush, and I didn't see any pink or tan sagebrush. So, I got to talking with the superintendent, I said, "Let's try subduing this a little bit, as opposed to driving down the highway and seeing twelve houses standing out here just sticking up at your thumb." Couple folks thought that we were degrading their housing by hiding it, but so we played color games and we picked two or three colors, and we did three houses and, out of that, we found one that first pretty much through that vegetation type. And we painted 'em all. And that was pretty good except the roofs were the same color. And so, the next year we decided "Well, let's tackle the roofs," and found a roof coating for an asphalt shingle that not only would change the roof color, but it would add life to the shingles on the roof. So, we played that game, and I was talking with one of the guys that was out with the roller, just walking up and down repainting it, and you know just kinda gazing at the world, and he stopped because a cloud had gone by and a lot of the houses that he had seen in front of him just disappeared because of the shadow difference. "This stuff really works!" So, it was kinda fun to do that.

Bruce Reed: We had an employee recreation facility, which was a trailer about a day and a half short of being condemned, and we had a concrete pad for an apartment that had never been built. So, I sat down and we designed a facility to replace that trailer and eventually, you know, through a little bit of park labor, parts and pieces that we were able to gather in materials, and mostly volunteer labor from the people working around, and we built – what's it called – the Cholla Chateau, and it was just a neat little rec center. And we hauled the trailer away one day and never saw it again. Just as we finished building the visitor center, which was headquarters, the old headquarters was two old FAA buildings from down the bottom of the hill in Salt Flat, Texas. And when FAA had their old aeronautical stations down there for cross-country air traffic. And they brought two of those up and they stuck 'em together and called 'em park headquarters. And I got to looking, "Okay, I gotta get rid of these somehow." And the siding was always in question. It looked like hardboard asbestos, and I talked to the public health officer, and he said, "Don't ask the question until you're ready for the answer." And I says, "Thank you," and left. Couple years later, I found a piece that had chipped off and I called him, and I says, "I'm ready to ask the question," so we sent it in. Eight percent chrysotile asbestos. Now what do I do with it? So, you go to

contracting, "I want to sell this building." Says, "On public health – what do I do?" He says, "Well if it sells the way it is and goes away, you're fine. If somebody lights that building off and burns it, you're in deep doodoo because you have a hazmat site." And that was before they knew how to spell hazmat, and he already knew that idea. And all I remember is waving as it went down the road and we sold out and it disappeared. Don't know where it went anymore, but it was gone. But anyhow, it's one of those, you know, it takes a year and a half, but don't ask the question till you're ready for the answer. That was one of those you probably wouldn't be able to beg forgiveness for ignorance. So.

Alison Steiner: So how long were you at Guadalupe?

Bruce Reed: About four and a half years.

Alison Steiner: Seems to be your M.O.

Bruce Reed: Yeah. With a couple short ones out there. You know, it turned out, when we finally retired at three years, ten duty stations in 36 years. So, from seven months to five and a half years.

Alison Steiner: So where did you go after that?

Bruce Reed: Um, I saw a job application for Alaska. Unfortunately, it took me out of maintenance or fortunately it took me out of maintenance, whichever way you want to figure it. But I pick up a chief ranger job at Klondike Gold Rush in Skagway, Alaska, and we launched out of Guadalupe Mountains and Carlsbad in mid-December, spent Christmas with parents and grandparents, which we'd never done, with the kids, and landed in Skagway at five o'clock the 30th of December, 1991. The next day was New Year's Eve. There's one store in town, there are two restaurants in town. A few conversations, you realized you'd better hit the stores soon and the restaurants weren't gonna be open with New Year's and the holiday and all that stuff. And they had kind of a welcoming dinner for us, you know, on the 30th, so we hit the store a little bit, says "Don't worry about food for the weekend." "Really." Said, "Yes. This is football weekend, it's a holiday weekend, we've got about four places you can visit, and you won't have to worry about food," and we didn't. We ate like, I mean, whatever it was you ate, it was out there. So that was our introduction to Alaska. Had a personnel officer in Anchorage in planning my trip to Alaska, "You get on the ferry in Bellingham, you go up the Haines, you get off the ferry at Haines and you drive around to Skagway." And I'd done a little bit of research and says, "Well, I'm not gonna do that. I'm gonna stay on the ferry at Haines and go thirteen miles to Skagway and get off right there, as opposed to driving 300 miles around through Canada to get where I needed to go." She'd never

run into that before. So, we did our 13-mile trip, and we were happy.

Bruce Reed: But Klondike was another interesting, you know, it's a national park built, established in a railroad town. White Pass Yukon Route Railroad was the town. The way out on White Pass Yukon Railroad was into the Yukon. The way out the other way was on the Alaska Marine Highway, or an airplane, like? You couldn't get there. They finally built a road. It was a company town, and we weren't the company. Land acquisition had occurred before we got there, but the attitude because we were "them, the guvmint, the park rangers, the Park Service," National Park Service bought 15 buildings in Skagway when they went into town, and started a restoration program and brought those buildings back from basically scratch to, you know, premier facilities. There hadn't been a new [building start], from the Gold Rush till the 1940s, on the Alaska Highway when they started building it? There hadn't been a new structure built in town. Lot of folks had moved buildings around, you know, things had moved around, and others had gone away, but the first year we were there was the 50th anniversary of the Alaska Highway. You know, lots of things going with that. Ceremonies, events, had a big – the Alaska Visitor Association pulled their annual conference to Skagway that year. We had a big to-do and we filled everything in town as far as motels, hotels, and whatever you could find. Lots of people around, but over the years the Park Service has restored the buildings. One of 'em is a headquarters, one of 'em is a visitor center, one now is a Chilkoot trail information permit center. One of 'em is actually a museum. Most of the rest of them have been leased to private business through a commercial property leasing program. They make a bid on a property, and they can lease it. I don't remember, the leases were five- or ten-year something, seems like a ten-year lease. And the first leases were really cheap. People really got a good deal. For a couple thousand dollars a year, you got a piece of Broadway frontage. Well in Skagway, Broadway's only five blocks long, you know, fifty foot of that with a plate-glass window, you're in a primo building. Was worth a whole lot. When I got there, we were just finishing restoration on a couple and getting ready to lease those, and one of the buildings came up for lease, and I called the regional office fellow that I was dealing with and I asked him, "What happens if the lease on the Arctic Brotherhood Hall," which was a city building, "is leased for a whole lot more." And he says, "Well, it'll probably impact what's going on with the Park Service leases." And I says, "Okay, AB Hall last night went for $28,000 per year from about five [thousand]." He says, "[Well] you just establish[ed] a new fair-market value?" And when we leased the Lynch and Kennedy

[Haberdashery and Dry Goods Store], it was upward of $20,000. And people says, "You can't do that," and "Fair market value." In leasing the Arctic Brotherhood Hall just raised the bar, and the bar hadn't come down. When we went to Skagway there were what we call flagship days on a seven-day week. There would be cruise ships in town five out of seven days. Today there are no ship days. They were light ship days and heavy ship days. Now seven days a week ships – typically 2,000 to 5,000 passenger ships – typically two or three of those a day in Skagway. Holland America was talking about bringing stuff in, and they were talking to White Pass, who owns the dock, who gets a docking fee and who gets a head fee for everybody that comes in and who also gets a dumping fee and a water fee and all those kinds of things. So, Holland America says, "What kind of a price can you give us if we can guarantee you two more ships a week for the next 15 years?" And White Pass goes kaching-ching-ching-ching, the dollar signs start ringing up. It's a lucrative market. There were 282,000 visitors at Klondike in 1991. When we left in 1997, that had gone well over 500,000, and now it's in the sevens and better.

Alison Steiner: So, is that increase because of the Park Service site?

Bruce Reed: We think so. They're comin' to see the Klondike Gold Rush. We've got the visitor center, we've got the buildings, we've got the museums. A lot of it is the cruise ship industry has found that destination. Early on there were a lot of craftsman-type shops. Those – gold and jewelry and different things – and they got gold from Columbia or Columbia emeralds or somebody's diamond store. There's still a lot of rubber tomahawk stores, but the market has changed away from a lot of the Alaska traditional stuff that we saw twenty or thirty years ago to high-end stuff. Columbia emeralds, it's a little Switzerland, big amp, and they're comin' in with big bucks and they're willin' to pay for that stuff. You come in on a cruise ship and you're in town, you shop, and you shop, and you go away. "Ah damn, tomorrow there's gonna be 7,000 more in," and "You weren't here yesterday" and when you start runnin' that seven days a week for three and a half months, it changes the complexity and the complexion of the community.

Alison Steiner: So, you mentioned that it was a company town, and you weren't the company.

Bruce Reed: We weren't.

Alison Steiner: What was the local, the relationship between the Park Service and the local community?

Bruce Reed: Head butts, pretty much, because they were them and we were us. They weren't really receptive, they didn't like the government, they didn't seem to turn down all the money they were taking to

the bank. If you get one or two of 'em around the corner, you know, out of the group, there was a lot of head-nodding on what the Park Service had done had been a real kickoff for what was going on now and the draw is still there. Without that, you know, who knows what Skagway would've looked like. Maybe it would've been more of a Sunset Strip type thing or maybe a Gatlinburg. You know there was no control. A lot of push was to get the downtown under a historic district format, and the community bought into that. What the storefronts are supposed to look like, what the colors are supposed to look like. A lot of that stuff was pushed from the Park Service to the regional office, too, and you know the historians on how we want to ensure that we don't end up with neon signs flashing anywhere. I think there was only one neon sign in town, and I think it's gone now. So, but, you know, I was the second chief ranger at Klondike, and the first one and the superintendents before, my superintendent had some real battles dealing with the community and the town fathers and mothers and sisters and what's goin' on and how do we deal with this?

Bruce Reed: There was a big issue before we got to Skagway. White Pass was hauling lead and zinc ore out of the Yukon, down the rail and putting it on a ship and shipping it out. And their loads weren't covered, and the town of Skagway was basically buried in lead dust. And through some efforts, you know, once the flag finally went up, the Park Service pushed hard and I'm sure other groups did, but the town was, I don't know if it was essentially vacuumed, but it was cleaned up quite a bit, and it helped a whole lot. I don't know if that was the kick, but the end process also was most of the shipping now comes by truck, when the price of ore is high enough to have it come down. But it entailed building a road from Skagway to White Horse in Yukon, and they built a truck that would haul or a road that we would haul what they call muffin trucks. And these are tractor trailer rigs with these big round canisters on the back, and there's four of 'em on a truck and trailer load. They built the road double-dense and double-thick because of the weight. All they're haulin's lead and zinc ore, and we had one ship that had to turn around at the end of the harbor because they got the decimal place in the wrong spot, and his freeboard, if he'd've gone beyond the Lynn Canal, he'd've been on the bottom. They just overloaded him, because somebody got the decimal point in the wrong spot, and when you're talking lead and zinc, down is down. We had a underwater landslide in the harbor in Skagway, '92 I think. There was a White Pass dock, which was a main dock, a boat harbor, a state ferry terminal dock, and then two other docks, and the White Pass dock, which was a quarter mile long, just disappeared. And basically, in microseconds, was gone. There

was a guy workin' a bulldozer, I don't think they ever found him or the bulldozer. Whatever created that sucked enough water out of the boat harbor that people in boats in there bottomed out on the harbor bottom. It took the—

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Bruce Reed: —state ferry system dock and put it someplace else. It took the walkway and make a corkscrew out of it. The ferry went to the smallest ferry that they had because theirs was one dock up against these other, one ramp against these others, that the smallest ferry could get into, and that's the only traffic that went in and out of Skagway for months, other than by air. White Pass has since rebuilt their dock and made it bigger. The state has rebuilt the ferry system dock and it's bigger. I'm not sure whether there's a fifth dock down there or not, I don't remember, but I think they were, cruise ships were using the ore terminal dock because of the numbers of people, but, you know, that was just one of those events that happened out of nowhere. Nobody still probably figure out what happened, but they were working on the back side of the White Pass dock driving piles, you know, to make it stable because they wanted to extend it. Don't know whether that's part of what caused this, and I don't know if anybody's been down to do any seismo in the bottom to find out what the bottom looks like. You know, those are natural things. We taught the local volunteer fire department, we had a couple wildland fires up in Yukon and they finally realized maybe Skagway could have troubles and I taught the Skagway Volunteer Fire Department both advanced Red Cross First Aid and Incident Command and Wildland Fire Training, off duty for these guys just to, and I did that two years in a row to get 'em caught up together and then we'd sit down when we'd have incidents and we'd, "Okay, let's plan this, let's see what's happened." And it's real hard to get a fire chief who's a fire chief to be not the incident commander. Or when he's incident commander not to be the fire chief. "No no, it's not your job, it's his job. Go sit down." You know, "Sit down, let this guy do his job." It was tough, you know, because I was the Park Service, but they had somewhat gotten over that, because of what I was trying to do and train, so that worked a little bit better. But, you know, just Nance was involved with church and things and the kids were involved in Scouts and Angela was in college doing her thing and I was doing Red Cross First Aid and teaching fire, just you know, tried to get involved in the community as much as you could, and some of 'em were tough, and some of 'em were tougher. This one was hard. There were people that had seen me in the bank maybe three times in five and a half years. There were folks that knew

who she [Nancy] was and our son, and I was living in the same house, but didn't know we were married. And, you know, they focused on what they wanted to focus on. You could either be it or not be it, and sometime not being it was pretty good, too!

Bruce Reed: There were a lot of things going on with the Alaska Gold Rush, with the 50th of the Alaska Highway was a big event. Couple years later the Northwest Mounted Police, RCMP, had their 100th anniversary. Those folks know how to celebrate. They started the 1st of January, and they didn't really quit until the 31st of December. They had lots of activities, lots of events, because we worked across the border with 'em we got involved in some things. We talked them into bringing the Musical Ride, which is the RCMP Equestrian Drill Team, 32 mounted riders on black horses in red serge and flat hats. Impressive. They brought them to Skagway. The driver said, "They probably wouldn't do that again," because of driving across White Pass 100 miles through the Yukon. But if you can imagine moving a bunch of Clydesdales, that's eight, this was 32, and there was a kind of open meadow in front of the headquarters visitor center before you got to the waterfront, and that was the only big spot in town to do anything. And they would put barriers up for folks and if you're in the wrong spot when they make their final charge, it raises your adrenalin all the way up, cause they're comin' right at you. Full bore. It was a lot of fun to deal with those guys. Boss didn't want to go, and Nance and I says, "Hey, we'll go to the banquet," their final banquet. Holy moly! It was something you just wouldn't believe. It was a treat, you know. Everybody was in Mountie uniform except for my green and gray, just oh, they had a buffet feed that moved fast, and it was better than most served plate dinners that you'll ever run across. It was super. What other stuff to be thinking about?

Alison Steiner: So is there wilderness associated with that park or—

Bruce Reed: No.

Alison Steiner: Backcountry?

Bruce Reed: It's backcountry. Chilkoot Trail.

Alison Steiner: I was gonna say, [name unclear] been offered a job on that, working as a backcountry ranger.

Bruce Reed: Chilkoot Trail was based on the route that stampeders traveled after the discovery in the Yukon, and basically they plunked down in Skagway and they hiked to Lake Bennett, which was across the bottom, up the Golden Stairs, the snow ridge that you see people in the line of people goin' up, over the top into Lake Bennett, then they wintered there and they made boats. And when the ice went

out, down the Yukon they went, down through Whitehorse country into Lake Laberge, to Dawson. And that was supposedly where the gold was discovered. Well, a year and a half later, by the time the stampeders get there, gold's been picked up and, you know, everybody's making money and the ah, you're down there to help or kind of work your way, and services industry's where you're makin' your money in gold rushes, from what I hear. Never been in one, but so that worked pretty good. We managed up to the Canadian border. We had about fifteen miles of the Chilkoot Trail. So, then they launched and they hiked up from Dyea and up to Sheep Camp and up the Golden Stairs to the border and that's where they inspected for the ton of goods – 2,000 pounds or the years' worth of supplies that each stampeder was supposed to take with 'em. But they had problems in Dawson and up on the Yukon. "There's all these people they're dyin' and we don't have any food in there. And there's more of 'em comin? Nah, they're not comin' 'less they bring their own." And the Mounties were up there, and if you didn't have it you didn't go. So, it, so we, you know, we bumped, you know, day to day with Canada, because they had the station right at the summit, and they had people up there. There were a couple, two, three backcountry rangers on our side that worked the trail and then our maintenance crew worked the Chilkoot to be sure we kept it safe for people. The anniversary brought a Dyeas to Dawson race. There were fifty-two-person teams hiked the Chilkoot, hit Bennett and canoe it to Dawson. And whoever got there first won. And, you know, when the clock start time and they hit Sheep Camp, they stopped the clock. They hiked 'em up the Golden Stairs so they could reenact the picture, and then when they hit the summit, as long as they had their stuff is when they started the clock again. And there were guys makin' that in seems like a hundred hours or less if I remember. And the first year was by invitation and roulette. But I think the second year was open, but they still were only gonna do 50 teams. So.

Bruce Reed: And then there was a group on the 100th that decided they were going to reenact the gold transfer from the Yukon back to Skagway, put it on the Portland, the ship, and dock in Seattle the same day a hundred years later that the Portland hit Seattle with a ton of gold. Well, that ton of gold was a million bucks, and they were bringin' it down and a lady by the name of Sue Henry was writing the book – don't remember the title of it now, I'll think of it someday. But she was writing a book about, she wrote one about a stampeder goin' through it – it's a murder mystery. Sue Henry wrote *Murder on the Iditarod* and three or four others. Well, the second one, she picked a stampeder and took him up through the Gold Rush and the modern-day that did that. She actually wrote the stampeder diary to be used in her book, you know, based on

research. Well, the other one was bringing the gold out and she wrote her book, you know, explained how this happened, came down and parked in Skagway and then it got on the ship and went down, and there's a murder that happens in this whole thing. "Sue, don't publish that book yet! Let us get the real thing done first!" But the idea was to bring a million dollars' worth of gold, you know, not necessarily in bullion, but in, you know, whatever jewelry y'know – bring it to Skagway, set it on display in front of the visitor's center, which was right out my window, and put it in the bank for the night and then put it on the ship in the morning and go. And I haven't heard that there were any big robberies in the Yukon after we left but I just – goin' on and on – I don't remember, *Death Takes a Passage. Death Takes a Passage* by Sue Henry. That's 'Oh don't do this to us!' So those are just things that happen and part of being a park ranger, you know, every day that way.

Bruce Reed: Skagway's a closed spot. It sits in a valley bottom; you know a narrow bottom. In summer the sun comes up above you and it goes down above you, and your daylight 23 hours a day. But in the wintertime, because of the way the canal sits, it crosses the bottom of the canal in about two hours. You can drive without lights in Skagway in the winter short day, probably nine to three, but other than that you're in a valley, you don't see a lot of sun, you don't look out a much other than you've got the harbor but the harbor turns and goes away real quick. Was a neat place to live, but it was a tough place to live.

Alison Steiner: So why did you or when did you ultimately make the decision to leave? We left in '97. Five and a half years. Skagway was the longest. But it was, you know, I had done the kinds of things that I thought I could do and wanted to do within about half of that time, so I spent a lot of time filling applications to get out and move on with my career.

Bruce Reed: I ended up going to southwest Pennsylvania, to Allegheny Portage, Johnstown Flood, Fort Necessity, and Friendship Hill. They had just done a reorganization. They had originally had two separate units. Allegheny Portage was one unit with a manager and a staff, and Johnstown Flood, Portage and Flood. Fort Necessity and Friendship Hill were further away, and they had another unit with a manager and staff. They put in a superintendent. They pulled in a management team, which was a chief of maintenance, a chief of interpretation, and a chief of everything else. And we tried to decide whether it's C-A-R-P Carp or C-R-A-P Crap, but it's chief of resources, administration, and protection. And I had that one, had all four of those divisions or three of those to deal with. And it was an interesting place. It's one of those that in my history I'll say

it's the first time in my career I had a job, as opposed to a career. It was personally the roughest place I worked, you know, as far as the way I felt about being a Park Service employee. Some of it was staff, some of it was management. The tougher parts – it was hard to go places where, you know, I'd been in the Park Service for twenty-something years, and most of the people that I had dealt with had been around the Service. A lot of my staff had never been barely in the Service. They had a job, it happened to be with the Park Service, and it happened to be at Johnstown or Allegheny or Fort Necessity or Friendship Hill, and that was it. They didn't understand, from my perspective, what gray and green, [the] arrowhead, what the Service was all about. They were good at their job in the park, but I felt that, you know, they hadn't been in those other areas to come up with appreciation, and that made it tough for me to work with. I think there were only maybe three, maybe four out of my whole staff that'd been anyplace else, and those just happened to be the rangers, because they were law enforcement and had gone to a couple other parks in their careers. But, you know, the admin staff were all one-parkers, the interp staff – well, I didn't deal with interpretation, so – but the admin, protection, resource they were pretty much all one-parkers. And it's projects and workin' in the park's fine but being able to pull the whole picture and relate to what the agency and what the bureau's doin' was really tough.

Bruce Reed: And so, we didn't always see eye to eye on some of those, but we did some neat stuff in those parks, too. I mean, it just, the management issues beside, you know, there were things goin' on at Johnstown and Allegheny and Fort Necessity and Friendship Hill that were just unique and neat operations and things that, you know, worked or didn't work and they got fixed or didn't get fixed, and how do we deal with 'em, and just tunin' people out sometimes helps, you know, and's what needs to happen. We got some people into career ladders that were stuck in a base position someplace, you know, they're in a system like you're talkin' a 5/7/9 career ladder for some of these, you know, ranger careers or resource careers, but they hit and the rest of the world didn't know about these career ladders and how you worked those to get those people moved around. We played the game of the space odyssey, you know, 2000 was out there. What's gonna happen when that clock ticks, and the computers and all the anxiety that went with that, "What d'ya mean I might not be here tomorrow?" Well, your computer might not be, and your clock might spin backwards, who knows? We dealt a lot with, you know, from that end, the money and budget issues of trying to get funding, you know, for the parks, and having to start out and "I need this," and the goals and objectives when you know "This is the big one, this is the little

one, little one," makin' those so they tied down to what you're doin' today, as opposed to "I'm gonna fix widgets." Well, how does that relate to I'm fixin' 14 of these and three of these and six of those? How do you build those stairsteps and you understand what happens? Getting some cultural resource issues with the historical stuff goin'. There were a couple parcels of property that needed land acquisition issues handled and cleared up, and we were workin' on some of those. And those were in my side of the house. What else did we do?

Bruce Reed: You know, law enforcement was always, we found somebody was talkin' about a group of folks wanted to put up bluebird boxes. 'We want to put bluebird boxes on a fence in a national park.' I'm goin', you know, my resource management thing's goin' sideways, "How do you make that happen?" But in checkin' that out, we found out that there was a boundary line that was off, and trying to work internally to get that realigned and then dealing with the landowners to get that figured out, I mean, there were some interesting discussions over those issues. Talk about, you know, new facilities, building trails and all, I'm back in the visitor center, Fort Necessity. Decided to build a visitor center at Fort Necessity. Well, there's Wilson Creek, there's Guadalupe Mountains, now here comes Fort Necessity. And I lived at the other two areas and, you know, it was a hundred miles down there, so I didn't get there much, and I wasn't as involved with that as I really would've liked to have been. So, but I was also administration, protection, and resources, and that wasn't my job. We got back into zones [separate units].

Bruce Reed: When I first went to Grand Teton, there's north district national park and south district national park. And I saw the chief ranger in the north district national park in four summers once. And this was very similar to that, even though I was responsible for staff in both areas and tryin' to get the communication goin' together and, you know, the personnel officer sat over here next to me and my finance officer was a hundred miles down the road. We were spendin' money down there and dealin' with people up here, and "Hm, how do you?" So those made the job challenging, but it was also interesting because you're havin' to pull all that together. But the visitor center was an interesting one. You know, we had an event in the park that the governor was gonna, wanted to do a 5K or 10K and wanted to start at Fort Necessity. All of a sudden the superintendent's spinnin' like this, "How do you do this? [Sotto voce.] Dammit, dammit, dammit." "Listen, there's a thing called Incident Command System, ICS." "Mmm, what's that?" You know, "I've only taught this for 20 years now," so says, "Well, you think it'll work?" I say, "Yeah, it'll work." "Well, train my staff." Allegheny Portage, Johnstown Flood. I say, "Okay." And I got the

basic book, you know, the little thing that you can read and fill it out and send it in. Fortunately got everybody on the list through that, and a couple of the managers, we sat down and put this thing together, you know, the superintendent's still doin' like my chief ranger [at Guadalupe Mountains] was. And it was one of those, you shuffle the cards, put it together and you deal 'em out and it goes just like it's supposed to go. "Wow, it works!" Says, "Where you been for the last 20 years?" So, you know, those were an interesting. It was, like I say, the park was a job to me as opposed to a career. It was tough, personally. Superintendent and I didn't see eye to eye and some of my management team, three or four of us, didn't always see eye to eye. We got done what we had to do, you know, but it was just the frustration in that particular position, it was the toughest one in my career. So.

Alison Steiner: Given that it was, as you're saying, the toughest one in your career, how long did you stick it out?

Bruce Reed: Just a little over three years. Summer of '97 to [May] 2000.[2] So three years. And that was it.

Alison Steiner: What did you move on to after that?

Bruce Reed: I was in a place called East, you know, Rocky Mountain's not a bad eastern seaboard, and I was not far from the wrong ocean. I really needed to get back west. I was in a position at that time career-wise, with the wrong generic makeup, the wrong ethnic makeup, and two or three others of the wrong things that my success in getting a next-level position with the Park Service didn't happen, and no place in my horizon could I see it happen. I had a couple of folks that I dealt with in the Park Service and, you know, "It's just wrong place, wrong whatever, all those whatevers at the wrong time. Gonna be slim chance." I remember one time we were hirin' seasonals and we threw this minority game in there, and "Okay, what're we gonna do?" "The law says de-de, this is what the boss is sayin'." So, we managed to meet that goal that year and we went back the next year and says, "We met that," and says, "That's too bad, this goal is increased. You will meet it this year." And we managed to make it, but it was tough because you weren't, you were bending some rules that I didn't think you should bend to get to 'minority applicants' to fill the holes, and you will have to figure out who the director was at that time, but anyway. Those were, those made some tough things to how do you make it work and you can hire a minority, or you can just stay with what you've got. Well, when I started as a seasonal, we had permanents and we had seasonals. Your permanents made up, you know, maybe ten

[2] Narrator removed some spoken, but incorrect dates ('87 to May of '91—'90—2000) during transcript review.

fifteen percent of your summer operation, and you pull the seasonals in and the place exploded. Permanent numbers have gone down, but the seasonal numbers have significantly gone down, and the Park Service is trying to operate on a word that to me is wrong and that's volunteers. You can't present or provide the same service level with a volunteer as you can with a permanent committed employee. Key is committed [chuckles] but you know when the funding has become so bad, you know, pay grades are out there, step increases have to happen. That happens and that happens, then you know your balance all of a sudden goes way out of whack, well the only way you can get the people to do the job when you've got the money that you can't have is to use volunteers. You know, somebody threw out how many million-dollar maintenance backlog? I've never seen the Park Service without a maintenance backlog, and it's gotten worse and worse and worse, just not able to put the money in the infrastructure and nobody's comin' up with ways to do it. You know, our budget is – we're not budget managers, we're what how many trillion? The national debt. I spent 36 years with the Department of the Interior, congressional budget was passed on time in 36 years once. And in the middle of that 36 years, they changed the fiscal year from July/June to October, so they'd have three more months to pass the budget. One time. Most of what you see now is you're in continuing resolution until, if not into April, on a regular basis. How many days don't you go to work because the budget's not passed? How many days have you had shutdowns? We're broke and we don't know how to fix it. So, but that's another soapbox to get off of. [Chuckles.]

Bruce Reed: But anyway, I was lookin' for a way to get west, couldn't find it with the Park Service, flippin' through the Interior and all of a sudden, BLM shows up again. And I got to, you know, just keepin' that on my radar screen, and Fish and Wildlife Service. And there was a manager job in Malta, Montana. It was a district manager, field manager, whatever you want to call it. So, I said, "Well," threw my hat at it. Took a couple of days vacation, month or two later, and then went out for an interview, and couple days or weeks later picked up the phone and says, "Nance, drain the waterbed!" Exactly what I told her.

Bruce Reed: And we ended up accepting a manager job with the BLM at Malta, Montana, you know, was a – Klondike was a GS-11, went to a 12. Pennsylvania was a GS-13, and I took a lateral to BLM, 13 as the manager of Malta. Went out for the interview, said "Well, you've got an extra day or two, you wanta drive to Malta, check the place out, see what's goin' on." I hop in my car and drive 200 miles to the field office from the [state] office and saw less cars in my trip up there than I did goin' to work in Pennsylvania and twelve miles

– in 200 miles. Went in and met some folks in the office, told 'em who I was, "Oh crap. Park Service guy lookin' for a BLM job," you know I could, their eyeballs started rollin'. So, I start throwin' out a few names, you know, so-and-so, "Yeah, he worked here." Oh so-and-so, I used to work with those guys over here in BLM. "Oh." So, it wasn't quite as dramatic as the ranger goin' into maintenance at Guadalupe Mountains, but there was still a little cultural shock of the Park Service comin' into BLM, but eventually they realized that I had been in BLM and some of the managers looked at me for a while and I was talkin' to one of 'em at a meeting one time. Had a little, you know, satchel thing that had a cauldron on it, and it was a BLM orientation session. He says, "What's that, darnit. Where'd you get it?" Says, "Well, I went to BLM orientation. When did you go?" He says, "I don't know, 1976 or something." "Okay, I went three years before you did." Just little bombshells you can drop now and then.

Alison Steiner: How was that transition for you? You talked about how people received you as Park Service coming into BLM, but did you know what you were going to?

Bruce Reed: Pretty much.

Alison Steiner: Or was it a difficult transition?

Bruce Reed: Pretty much, yeah. You know, knowing what the programs were in BLM, I may've not known what the issues were at Malta, but I knew what the programs were in BLM, and it didn't take long to realize that some of the programs that they were dealing with today weren't any different than the ones I was dealing with 35 years ago. They hadn't changed.

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Bruce Reed: The program issues were still kinda the same. Oil had changed to natural gas, grazing was still the same, recreation was still at the bottom of the pile where it had been before, wildlife wasn't much higher, you know, the concept hadn't changed a whole lot. It was just up here I was dealing with different issues, up here I had a gold mine that the corporation had paid all the CEOs off and filed Chapter 11 and walked away and there's a hole in the ground that is adjacent to a Fort Belknap Indian Reservation, and what're you gonna do with that? And how do you – it's heap leach acid, you know, arsenic to just spray it on and you get the gold down at the bottom of the hill a month or two or three later. How do you stop that? And they had started some restoration programs just before I got there, and we played that game the whole time I was there, and I was the name position on the court suit filed by the tribes against

the Department of Interior, and my name was on that one, you know, for three years. But over three years between the Bureau and the Department of Environmental Quality in Montana, we came just short of completing the restoration, rehab of the mine site. And we came in way under budget that some of the folks were thinking it's gonna take, by millions. You know you spend three and four and five and six million for a year's worth of project and you're still comin' in under, so that was an interesting one to deal with. Black-tail prairie dogs and black-footed ferrets, Fish and Wildlife Service for years had been trying to get Malta to release black-footed ferrets because of the prairie dog population in southern Phillips County was huge, thousands and thousands and thousand of people, you know, shooting sports groups would come out by the hundreds of people over a year, you know, just to shoot prairie dogs. They got lead poisoning down there, just more and more, they were shooting and shooting and shooting. Pneumonic plague went through and knocked the prairie dog population down pretty hard, so they suspended the shooting or at least they quit advertising as much as the shooting sports folks had. And in that recovery period Fish and Wildlife said, "You really need to introduce ferrets and that way you can, you know, get this ferret-prairie dog thing goin" that was supposedly how the moose-wolf thing, well, there's a whole million of those and only two ferrets per million acres. But so, they play that and every year the Bureau would go back and says, "Well, we can't qualify for the five conditions that you provide us so we're not gonna submit." Well, that's crap. We'll submit our proposal not qualifying for every one of the conditions they say and get 'em off our back and go on with our business. Fish and Wildlife Service sucked it in, even though we didn't meet any of the five criteria for release of prairie dogs, the Fish and Wildlife Service accepted it. So, all of sudden we're in the prairie dog, the black-footed ferret business and we did I think two releases of prairie dogs or ferrets while I was up there. Long-term results, whether or not there was a ferret that lasted more than a year or even end of a long season, I personally doubt that it ever happened, but you know just that's what the country wanted and whatever was goin' on, and we were dealin' with oh gads – Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument. It was one of those designated by Babbitt about the same time they did Grand Staircase Escalante, and that took a lot of time and resource management, and it was just the south boundary of where I was responsible for. I had two million acres of federal public land in Montana to manage in my resource field office. I had more federal public land than any other BLM office in the state. And I think I had more than all of them put together, about two million acres of it. And one manager and then the others had their things to deal

with, but it was a pretty comprehensive job. We were starting to play oil and gas games in that part of the country. We were playing BLM reorganization number 5, 6, 7, 8 – it had happened so many times. You know, we had two of 'em when I was working 40 years ago and now we're into 'em again and, you know, I, you played some games with it and you tried to figure out what would work best and who can do this the best and who can do that best, but the computer had killed us at that point, I think. We were dealing with fulltime career professionals and again in offices that this had been their only office, that to me hadn't done a meaningful days' work of fieldwork in the last two, three years. Because they were stuck at their desk playing computer and paper games to justify whatever whoever wanted it and were neglecting the resources out there. And that was the most frustrating part, I think, of that particular deal, is just "Get outta here! Go to the field. Deal with a landowner, deal with the range leases, deal with what's goin' on. Talk to somebody! Just get out of the office!" You know, and all of a sudden here comes another call for this or call for that and just it was really a tough one. And again, it was a tough one, too, because many people in that office had not been anyplace else with the Bureau, you know, that's all they had ever seen their whole career. Got out of school, they got a job, they sat out a desk and they worked a 5/7/9/11. That's as far as they went, far as they wanted to go, and didn't care. That's good. I mean, that gives you a good base, but it doesn't give you the rounded base that I think you have with the Park Service, being in other organizations to see how the thing works.

Alison Steiner: So maybe that's a good, so first I take it that's the job you retired in.

Bruce Reed: That's the one I retired from. Somebody said, "When do you know?" And says, "I know!" [Laughs.]

Alison Steiner: And what you just said about kind of rounding, having that diverse experience, I mean, what stands out to me about you is that you've worked for many agencies and in more variety of positions of, maybe bigger variety of positions than maybe anyone I've ever talked to. And I guess, you know, I'm interested in kind of lessons you learned through that, like, you know, what, in looking back, what do you think are important things to remember or what's helped you through your career.

Bruce Reed: Well, yeah. I think one of the things that helped me was the moving. The opportunities to be able to move different places, change what I do. This one'll tell you [referring to Nancy] my focus doesn't last real long and in jobs you get out there—

Alison Steiner: It lasts four and a half years!

Bruce Reed: You know, for me, four or five years, and I may not have done everything I could do, but I feel I'm up against a wall because I don't see the next steps that I can do in this job to do better, so I look for what can I do to go someplace else, pick that one up and do. And at the same time, I was doin' this, I was draggin' Navy Reserve career behind me, and when I'd move one park, I'd move a Navy command. And I'd do a different job with the Navy, then I'd move and do the same thing. And that helped that one, too, because I didn't get that stalemate, I think of staying in one place really long. I think that was a good one. Just the ability of the diversity of what was out there to deal with. You know, I can go anyplace on BLM ground and find you a natural resource equally equivalent to anything the Park Service has got. I can find 'em out there. They're there. They're just not the grandiose one. They're not the Yellowstone, they're not the Yosemite. But I can find places on BLM turf that look like that. Cultural resources, we don't have the structures in the Bureau that the Park Service has, but your other cultural resources, they're out there. Fish and Wildlife Service talk about a wildlife base. There are as many national wildlife refuges as there are National Park Service sites, almost 400 each. Most people don't know there are that many refuges. Pull up a Fish and Wildlife refuge map, and it's got as many dots on it as we do. And those are the things I think, you know, just being involved in federal land management, to me, has been a real thrill. Sometimes talkin' to Nance and the kids, you know, draggin' 'em around the country. I introduced her as a druggie one time. We were at a Promise-Keeper dinner, and introduced, "This is my wife. She's got a drug problem." And I mean you could hear the jaws hit the table. "Yep, I drug her to Arkansas, and then I drug her to Missouri, and then I drug her to Michigan, and then I drug her to Texas." And I, neither one of us think that everybody got what I was sayin', they were still thinking she had a drug drug problem! But, you know, they saw a lot of places. We've been in all 50 states. Our son has been in all 50 states, our daughter's missin' Hawai'i, and she's gonna have to figure out how to get there on her own, but, you know, we've seen the country not in-depth. You know, you listen to a lot of people at the meetings and conferences, you know, and they've stayed in a place a long time and I mean they beat it to death, and they've been here and there and there, and they can tell you the name of the rock and the tree, you know, all that. 'This is the tree I stood by' or 'That one got burned or something': I don't have that, and I'm somewhat comfortable that she doesn't feel that we've done the in-depth tromping the countryside in the park areas that a lot of Park Service people have done. And also because of the way we've moved around, I don't think we've got the Park Service

community tie. You know, there's three or four Park Service people that I know that I talk to, you know, in the last couple of years that I've talked to on a every-couple-of-years basis, very few. And the same with the Bureau, and there's nobody in the Fish and Wildlife Service that I've talked to. I met a lot of Fish and Wildlife folks that I can talk to, because I worked for them and we can swap stories back and forth, but and when I listen to some of these guys talk, I think that I've missed something, you know, not doing that. And I look at what we've done and the places that we've done things and the diversity, the difference. I don't hear these folks talk about churches, I don't hear 'em talk about Lions' Clubs or Masonic Lodges or Boy Scouts or things like that much, and we've been involved in those groups for years and years and years. And that's part of, you know, our lifestyle, too. So there, you know, I can enjoy what you're doing sitting at hospitality hour, you know, just sittin' and listenin' to 'em and you just kinda shake your head, 'Y'know, okay' and I've done some crazy things. None of the scope of some of these that I've heard about, but you know we've done a few hair-raising ones over the years and know what they are and won't do 'em again, I hope!

Bruce Reed: But just, you know, it's been a good ride, 36 years worth, enjoyed it. You know there's some not so good and some really nice stuff, but you look at the whole picture and I think it's been a good career. Our external families, you know, basically grew up and lived in the areas that they died in. Makes it tough for them to look at and see what we're doing around the country when their lifestyles are so much different. But they grew up in the depression area, our families, and they different things. We've still got a little bit of that hoarding stuff that they did for depression that we've still gotta get rid of. Unload junk-type things, but, you know, we just when I left home in Oregon, didn't have desire to go back. I got into the Tetons and got out into the west, the open west, the Rocky Mountain West, the high desert west, and that was pretty much it. We came back through when we went to Albright and I got into New Mexico and I just had this kink and my twist in my neck, hair was standing up, 'What's goin' on?' Light comes on: damn, you're back home, back where you wanta be. I was at Isle Royale, flew, couldn't get a Park Service fire so I hooked onto a Forest Service fire crew and we went out, we were in Montana, and we plunked down in Missoula and I got that same feeling. I knew what it was. Just back in the country where I can look, I can see, you know, just kinda open again. I had lived in timbered cover. You go back east, and people talk about trees, well, they're short and you know not real round but they kind of cover. Where we grew up trees were, you know, eight to ten-foot diameter, two - three hundred feet tall, and so talk about real trees or not real trees.

But it's, I don't know, I've enjoyed it, I'm hopin' Nance has enjoyed it. The kids, you know, they – when you get 'em to sit down and talk, where they've been and what they've done – they can come up with things it may not relate as much to the park as mine do, and hers is gonna relate to where she worked and the kids' is gonna relate to where they went to school, but it's a different piece of the country. I think the kids are better tuned into the different cultures around them than some of the folks who have stayed in their same town all the years and, you know, we drift in and drift out, and somebody else drifts in and drifts out, and all those drifty people drift in and drift out. I don't know, it's that kinda an idea of what you're lookin' for in a close?

Alison Steiner: Yeah. That was great. Yeah.

Bruce Reed: I retired from the BLM in Malta, Montana. The guy that retired me, I went to school with, graduated the same day in the same program. Park Service brat. Grew up in the Park Service, his whole career in the Park Service, went to Utah as the Park Service State Coordinator, worked with a lady by the name of Kathleen Clark, who was the director of the BLM. We graduated from the same school the same day, all three of us. When she became the director, she sucked him out of the Park Service to the BLM State Director Office, and thirty-some years later, my classmate is my retiring officer. Well, that I went to school with. The only one that's cooler than that is I retired from the Navy in 1999 on the U.S. Constitution in Boston Harbor, Old Ironsides. [Makes sound of amazement.] Just. It was a November day, probably been close to freezing that night, by the time we got in it was probably about 8, 8:15, clear. The sun comes up over the yardarms, we got the ship at 8 o'clock colors, "It's yours at 8:30, you got an hour." Gee, just sitting there on that ship, the hair goes up – now there's one of those that wasn't wide open spaces, but it was really neat. So, I was able to close out basically both of my careers in real neat ways. So.

Alison Steiner: Like I said, you've had a very interesting career, really fascinating to listen to all of your stories.

Nancy Reed: And we didn't kill each other!

Alison Steiner: Thank you very much for taking the time to talk to us.

Bruce Reed: You're welcome.

[END OF TRACK 6]

[END OF INTERVIEW]