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Association of National Park Rangers Oral History Project, 2012-2016



Barry T Sullivan  
October 30, 2012

Interview conducted by Hannah Nyala West  
Transcribed by West Transcript Services  
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ANPR Oral History Project

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Audio File: SULLIVAN Barry 30 Oct 2012

[START OF TRACK 1]

Hannah Nyala West: This interview is being conducted on the 30<sup>th</sup> of October 2012 at Indian Wells, California during the annual gathering of the Association of National Park Rangers. The person being interviewed is Barry Sullivan, and the interviewer is Hannah Nyala West. So, would you start with your legal name and date of birth.

Barry T. Sullivan: Sure, it's Barry T. Sullivan, and my date of birth is March 24, 1954.

Hannah Nyala West: And where were you born?

Barry T. Sullivan: I was born in a community just outside of Clinton, New Jersey called White House Station, Somerset Hospital in New Jersey, sorta northwest New Jersey.

Hannah Nyala West: Any information that you'd like to share about your early life or your early influences that you think would be really relevant here?

Barry T. Sullivan: Um, just that in my early years I grew up on a small farm we had about a thirty-six acre farm – that's probably relative big for New Jersey but by national standards it's not, and grew up, we had a couple acres of plantings of corn tomato plants, a little bit of livestock, spent a fair amount of time – we had a little, about a six-acre pond – a fair amount of time both fishing, a little bit of hunting and a little bit of trapping, and so that connection with the outdoors was very influential to me I think in my early, my early years.

Hannah Nyala West: What kind of work did your parents do?

Barry T. Sullivan: My father was a machinist. He worked sort of as a tool and die maker. My mom did mostly working as a waitress in a café and then in the last probably ten years or so of her career, she ended up joining my father at the machine shop and helping out there.

Hannah Nyala West: Mmhm. Where did you attend school?

Barry T. Sullivan: In Warren and Watchung Hills, New Jersey. High school I went to Watchung Hills Regional High School, I went to undergraduate at Kean College now Kean University in Union, New Jersey, and got a masters' in graduate school at Southern Connecticut State University in New Haven, Connecticut.

Hannah Nyala West: Okay. What was your degree in?

Barry T. Sullivan: Undergraduate was biology, but it was really wildlife biology, and my masters – both of those were science degrees, bachelors and masters – and my Masters' of Science was in Environmental Education.

Hannah Nyala West: Mmhm. Who were some of the influential adults in your early life?

Barry T. Sullivan: I had a couple college professors that I think, you know, a little bit of a seventh eighth grade science teacher that sort of – still remember her name – Mrs. Coppola sort of started my interest in science.

Hannah Nyala West: How do you spell that?

Barry T. Sullivan: C-O-P-P-O-L-A.

Hannah Nyala West: Okay.

Barry T. Sullivan: Ah, and, you know, I think that just started things. Got into high school was in the Ecology Club in high school, and then in undergraduate school there was a Dr. Mahoney that I worked with pretty regularly, and in graduate school a couple of my graduate advisers were really sort of setting, I think, the standard at which I felt like I had to maintain my professional life along the way.

Hannah Nyala West: Mmhm. Did they influence your ultimate career choice?

Barry T. Sullivan: When I was in undergraduate program, about my second year of undergraduate, sophomore year – I graduated undergraduate in three years so the years sort of blend together a little bit – second year of undergraduate, I started working for an environmental education center called Sommerset County Environmental Education Center, Sommerset County, New Jersey, and it was really that opportunity to sort of you know talk a little bit about you know influences in the natural world and work with kids that I think really started me a little bit down a path of looking to become a park ranger in some capacity. Really at least at that early stage in environmental education and that certainly influenced my choice of a graduate degree program.

Hannah Nyala West: Mmhm. Did you find mentors early on in your employment?

Barry T. Sullivan: Not career mentors, mentors for a short one-year period of my employment, early employment. Robert Shay, Bob Shay, was a chief naturalist when I was at the county environmental education center and, you know, the, again I think the commitment and the standard that I saw that they exhibited in trying to really, you know, work with kids, really feeling that it was God's work, it was really a mission that influenced me significantly.

Hannah Nyala West: Mmhm. So, children were a key part of your move ultimately toward thinking about becoming a ranger?

Barry T. Sullivan: I would say yes, but more specifically connecting children to the out-of-doors, to the natural world – not just so much kids in a general sense but having them make that connection.

Hannah Nyala West: Mmhm. When did you first start working for the National Park Service or become aware of it as a career?

Barry T. Sullivan: You know, I was aware of the park ranger profession. I was working as a county park ranger in a sense, so when I when I finished graduate school, I started, decided to apply to a couple positions, and I applied to the NIMS [NMFS], National Marine Fisheries Service, and they had a program – it was a federal program – at which you were sort of monitoring fish takes, and I also applied to what was then called the Park Technician Series through what was then Civil Service. And I did that about the time I was graduating, maybe a few months before I graduated undergrad or graduate school, and that would have been 1975, I guess. So, we – I'm sorry, it was '76 – we, my then-girlfriend, later to become my wife, Patti and I decided to take a trip across the country. She was teaching school at the time, and we decided this would be one of our few opportunities to have really the summer off in the future. So it was during the bicentennial year, we travelled around, stopping at a lot of national parks along the way, and when I – about every three or four days I would call home from a pay phone back then of course and just to see if any we had heard anything about any of the applications that I had out – and when I got to Mount Rainier, which I would say was about the first of August, I had called home from Mount Rainier, and my mom said that I had gotten a call from both of the federal agencies that wanted to do an interview with me. And so I followed up with that and about the time we got back to Chicago – we were staying at my sister's house – I set up an interview at Edison National Historic Site in West Orange, New Jersey with the chief ranger for an interview. And through that interview process they offered me a seasonal position, but it was a civil service position so it was a not-to-exceed one year so I could work a full year, and I worked for them a full year as a GS-3 park technician, which was \$7,900 a year. My mother, who was working without any kind of a high school education, was making much more than that, and she was a little surprised about the salary range. But I worked as an interpreter in a historic site which, you know, was something a little bit new to me. The interpretive skills and that component were consistent, but the materials were significantly different.

Hannah Nyala West: Mmhm. Did you develop mentors in the Park Service early on or is that something that came later?

Barry T. Sullivan: I had a couple of supervisors early on that were again influential, but mostly during that early career time when I was in that particular job. I also had a couple supervisors that weren't very influential, but the ones that were, were, you know, clearly those individuals that were unit managers, chief rangers clearly had a

commitment to the National Park Service, to the job, to trying to protect a resource, to, you know, working with visitors, and those were people that I connected to. I developed a real appreciation for their work ethic, for their commitment to not only to that particular park but to the Service in a general sense. But then I worked at Edison for a couple years and eventually got on permanent there. I got on permanent there – interesting story – probably as a result of the first or second, I don't recall, gas crisis. There was a – Edison was dependent upon school groups coming in most of the fall and spring – and when the gas crisis hit, all of the school trips were cancelled because the school buses couldn't get gas, and so I developed an off-site program. I had some, I got a grant from what was then Eastern National Park and Monument Association, had some replica of Edison's inventions fabricated, I had some, I had worked a couple summers in a machine shop working with my parents, so I knew a little bit about that, and took those replicas on the road. Started going to schools and in a very short period of time that program became very popular, had a lot of support and they were able to get funding for a full-time position as an outreach ranger, and I was offered that position. Worked there about a year or so, and then the AO of Morristown, it was a Morristown/Edison group at the time so there was one AO, Alberta Applebee, called me up one day and said that there was a new vacancy that had just come out and it was at Gateway National Recreation Area in New York, and it was called the mid-level entrance exam, and if you had a graduate degree you would qualify to get on the register. And she sent me the information, and it looked pretty interesting, so I filled out an application. Applied through that program and was offered a district ranger position at Gateway National Recreation Area. So about three years, at two and a half or three years at Edison, I went over to Gateway National Recreation Area and worked in New York.

Hannah Nyala West: Okay. And how long were you there?

Barry T. Sullivan: I was there about three years, and then in 19 – two, two and a half years – about 1980, I transferred from Brooklyn, New York to Medora, North Dakota. Went out to Theodore Roosevelt National Park, and I used to joke with the folks out at Medora that I wasn't quite sure what the population of Brooklyn, New York was, but I was guessing that it was a little higher than 96, which is the population of Medora, North Dakota. I worked at TR for four years. It really connected me to the National Park Service, particularly the western parks, and I was looking for a western park experience. Not that I necessarily believed I'd spend most of my career in the west, but I, you know, was pretty committed to the National Park Service at that point, and I felt in order to really understand the totality of the Service, I needed to spend some time

out in a western park. And, you know, TR gave me that opportunity plus the position was unique by today's standards, little less so back then but, when I was at Gateway, my supervisor Bob Cunningham, the chief ranger, I think, recognized that I had some perhaps talents or skills in a lot of areas. And so, he encouraged me and was able to get me into a position, a law enforcement training class down at FLETC. And so, I went to FLETC, got certified as a law enforcement commissioned officer. And the position at Theodore Roosevelt had all duties. I was the district ranger, I was the district naturalist, and I also was the collateral duty resource management specialist for the first couple years there. So, I really got to dabble. It was a very small staff so everybody sorta had to do everything. I was really able to dabble in a pretty broad breadth of responsibilities.

Barry T. Sullivan: I first got connected with the Association of National Park Rangers in 1979. Again, that same supervisor, Bob Cunningham, encouraged me to attend a Ranger Rendezvous. And the first Ranger Rendezvous that was back east was held at Shenandoah National Park in 1979. And so, I went down to that rendezvous. The organization was very small at that time. Only a few hundred members, and probably 60 or 70 members attended the rendezvous. It was held in an apple orchard, an apple farm called Graves Mountain Lodge. And uh—

Hannah Nyala West: Graves?

Barry T. Sullivan: Graves Mountain Lodge. I slept in the back of my van, still relatively poor at the time. But it was a great experience. Even just the camping was, you connected with the other rangers who were out there. Some of the staff stayed in the lodge itself, others of us camped. The forum of that particular rendezvous was they had apple carts that were basically flat level trailers that they used in the field to haul the apple boxes on. They had thrown some hay bales up and around that you sat on, and it was just an old barn. And so, it was really an interesting connection. At the time, the issue was how do we deal with the professionalization of the National Park Ranger. All of us at that time were virtually Park Technicians, and that had a glass ceiling because of the series. And so the issue that the Association was trying to deal with is how do we get the National Park Ranger, the Park Technicians that were really doing Ranger work, much higher level Ranger work, recognized as professionals and transitioned over to a National Park Ranger from an 026, series which was a Technician to an 025 Ranger series. And so that was the focus I think of that of that early couple years with ANPR. I, you know, it was really the commitment of the individuals in that organization, you know, they had a commitment level that was, that interests me and interesting

folks, good times, and so it sort of started me with a lifetime commitment with this with ANPR throughout my other job assignments and such.

Hannah Nyala West: What were they specifically trying to do? Were they having meetings and presentations on this? Work groups? How did you all approach the—

Barry T. Sullivan: All, all of that. There, you know, that was the focus of the discussions that we were having. Most of the forum was round meetings, we weren't – we weren't nearly as sophisticated back then as we are today. So, there weren't break-out sessions and those kinds of things of a, the types of conferences we have today. There it was really bringing in some specialists that were individuals that were really well-versed in classification standards and individuals that understood what a professional occupation really meant. And discussion about what would be the process of getting the classification looked at, how would we go about doing that. So, there was a lot of discussion – there were other issues, I don't mean to say it was a one-issue conference, but it was certainly the dominant issue that was there. So, it was really, I think, two things: one, we understood the magnitude of what we were going to have to accomplish if we were going to be successful in this. The task groups were set up to work on different components. We were going to voluntarily try to start writing new position descriptions and see where that went. Groups were assembled to go to the Washington office and meet with the Director's Office and also with the Office of Personnel Management to try to figure out, you know, could we get anyone to sort of understand what we were trying to talk about, give us any advice, help us along. Again, the organization was only three years old at the time, we were pretty young. I was pretty young in my career – a I was 25, 26 years old, but was really the energy of the meeting, and then I did volunteer to help out in a couple little writing PDs and those kinds of things, task force. But it was, it was, it was nice. I mean, it was just a lot of energy. We had fun. We had a dance one evening, there was a fun run and just a lot of events that really, everybody was there on their own nickels, everybody, it continues to be, you know, the issues today, everybody goes to Rendezvous on their own dime but you, you realize that these were a group of individuals that were really committed to making positive changes in the Park Service and in the profession, and it was clear to me that this was a type of individual, the group itself, that I wanted to really try to get more involved with and support.

Hannah Nyala West: What was the relationship between ANPR and the Agency per se in those early years?



Barry T. Sullivan: It was generally positive. I think when ANPR started to really pursue the 026/025 issue, there was some resistance from the Washington Office, thinking that this was really a little bit of a union organization, and it was never meant to be that way. I think everybody believed that the professionalization of the National Park Ranger would be as equally good to the organization as it would be to the individual ranger. It was not in any way a one-sided situation. We figured that getting these positions professionalized, recognized for the level work, was also going to allow us to recruit at a much higher level. We were actually, at that point, looking for a professional standard, which meant there would be a minimum of a bachelor's required to even apply for the position. In the early years we believed it would raise the bar a little bit, not that we ever've had a lot of difficulty recruiting superb individuals. But we did believe that that would ultimately, you know, create a higher-level employee than maintaining people in the 026 Park Technician series. So, generally the relationship was good, and – but there were, I will say there were some individuals, and I couldn't even tell you names cause, you know, I was pretty young in my career – you know, there was some resistance at the Washington office. Mostly I think the budgetary ramifications, of, you know, a whole class of park employees getting some kind of upgrade. And we understood that. I mean, I don't think anybody understood that this would not be something that somehow would have to be tied to, uh, you know, Congressional needs. You know, there'd have to be an increase in the budget for this to happen because it was never the intent of ANPR to have the Service suffer any of that nature. We really believed that, and we also believed that it was, would come. And there was a small group that was actually starting to work on some of that, working with some of the local congressional folks on the whole concept of professionalization, recognizing that as that went forward there would be a need for budget increases to cover those extra costs.

Hannah Nyala West: So, these were collateral duties that you were doing at the same time you were at your parks, everybody was doing this sort of thing. Did you have—

Barry T. Sullivan: Collateral duties I don't think is the right term, 'cause it almost implies that it was associated with the job. These, any of these tasks that we were doing, we were doing completely independent on our own time.

Hannah Nyala West: Okay.

Barry T. Sullivan: And using our own resources. And we were, this organization's always been pretty adamant about that because we want to maintain the independency and advocate for issues that we believe

is important to the National Park Service. And, so, you know, you work your job, your 40 – 50 hours a week, whatever, you worked at and then, you know, when we were writing these things they were being done at night, weekends, or whatever and the phone calls and all that stuff were all going on independently of the worksite and the work location.

Hannah Nyala West: And you were at TR for four years?

Barry T. Sullivan: For four years and then I went from there to the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Hannah Nyala West: What were your grade levels actually when you became a district ranger at Gateway?

Barry T. Sullivan: Yeah, when I went, because of this mid-level entrance examination program, which – I only know of three people in the Service that came in through this and they were all at Gateway and it was unique to that one time I think and maybe that one park because they were really trying to recruit employees into the New York City area. I went in as a GS-9, so I was working as a, I had actually got promoted at Edison from my GS-3 to a GS-4 and was actually doing some temporary detail work at a GS-5, I believe, at the time. But the mid-level exam position, because you had a graduate degree, you could qualify for at the GS-9 level, and so I was promoted when I went to Gateway. So not only was it a great opportunity, but it was a significant financial increase in, you know, in my salary to go into the GS-9 level. And so, the next level, but I went into the 9 level not really personally feeling like I had the level of experience of the other GS-9s that I worked with. They had spent a lot of years, you know, as a 4 or 5 maybe a 7 as a while and a 9, because of the graduate program I was elevated to a 9. So, the next 4 years, I pretty consciously selected assignments that I felt would really round out my GS-9 experience. They were lateral jobs and I went to ‘em for specific reasons. The TR job was to get, you know, western park experience, to get out there. When I went to the Blue Ridge Parkway, the Blue Ridge Parkway was transitioning from a more traditional or segregated ranger force, which they had a division of interpretation and a protection division. And the protection division on the Blue Ridge Parkway, this was 1984, was being recognized as really a much higher law enforcement profiled organization than the superintendent wanted. And so, they made a decision in 1984 to combine those. And they were looking to bring in district rangers that had both skills in protection, traditional protection skills, and also backgrounds in some skills in interpretation. Because of my work in interpretation and in my work out at TR, where I was doing both of those, you know, I suspect that I was, you know, fit that bill, so I was offered the position. And I was the Bluffs District Ranger, which started at

the Virginia – North Carolina line and went down about 45 miles to almost Blowing Rock, North Carolina. So that was the Bluffs District. They've reorganized it several times, so I'm not sure exactly what it is now, but back in the mid-80s when I was there – and I was there for three years – I had a supervisor there, Tony Bonano.

Hannah Nyala West: How do you spell that?

Barry T. Sullivan: B-O-N-A-N-O, I believe.

Hannah Nyala West: Okay.

Barry T. Sullivan: Tony recently retired. He's, you know, he – Tony had worked at Shenandoah and I think he and I had shared a lot of similar kinds of interests in the Park Service. I continued my association with ANPR, though I couldn't attend all of the rendezvous, most of it was financial stuff. When there was the rendezvous out west, it was hard for me to get out there. When it was back east, I normally went to the rendezvous for the first few years.

Hannah Nyala West: And how does all this work with your family situation?

Barry T. Sullivan: Ah, my wife had an elementary education undergraduate degree, bachelor's degree, and a master's in Social Research. She ended up being a trailing spouse – I don't say that in any kind of condescending way but, you know, she ended up following me through my career. You know, we were, we were very lucky in almost every place we went, of her finding a pretty rewarding job. We had two children along the way. My son was born in North Dakota, Christopher, and my daughter [Katie] was born in North Carolina at the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Hannah Nyala West: Is his name spelled with a 'K' or a 'C'?

Barry T. Sullivan: C. C-H, so traditional. And Katie is Kathryn Sullivan. K-A-T-H-R-Y-N. And so, Patti was able to find pretty rewarding experiences, most of them teaching, some initially substituting that went into a part-time or in some cases a full-time position. In North Carolina, she ended up – the county had started to open up basically a big sister program, and so she was asked to be the part-time director of that. And so she was setting up training programs for volunteers that were gonna be, and in doing the interviews and alignments of girls in the county that needed some mentoring, and assigning all that, and so she had the opportunity to work a little bit with her social background, Social Research background. But most of her career stuff was through the education curriculum. And when the kids were growing up, most of the time she was able to work part-time. She did work for Eastern National Parks and Monument Association back then, and then it transitioned over to Eastern National. But she worked for them in several parks also as the

bookstore manager. Prior to us getting married, she was a Walden bookstore manager for a few years, so she had some good bookstore skills and things, so she ended up being a traveling spouse, uh. We stayed at Blue Ridge Parkway for three and a half years or so, and the bulk of our family is from—

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Barry T. Sullivan: —from New Jersey. She was from Cape May, New Jersey. And the kids were three and one or so. We would go home for sort of the traditional Christmas break. We would drive back and they would know who grandmas and uncles and aunts were, but a couple weeks later, they would get, start to get confused, and we had a sense that we really wanted them to somehow get connected to the family, so we made a decision that we would look for, I'd look for jobs up in the New Jersey – New York, somewhere in that area, so that we could be close enough to connect them to the family for the next period of time. And then, you know, once they were connected, if we decided to move out, we would've felt like they had that connection to family. So, I started looking around and there were two positions that were advertised in New Jersey. One was the Chief Ranger at Gateway at Sandy Hook in New Jersey, and the other one was a Sub-District Ranger in Delaware Water Gap. The Sub-District Ranger was a GS-9 position, another lateral. The Chief Ranger was a GS-11. We went up – Patti and I went up and we interviewed at both, for both of the jobs that were being hired basically within the same week or so, and it was ended up, offered both positions. I ended up deciding on the Delaware Water Gap position, and mostly because at the time Sandy Hook had gone through a horrible situation, where there was an arsonist that was a park employee and had burned down several houses and had really broken down the spirit and the interest of the park, I think, for a period of time. And the challenges there and the resource damage and everything that was done – I really felt like my skills would be – I could really do more at Delaware Water Gap than I could at Sandy Hook.

Barry T. Sullivan: So, we selected the position, even though it wasn't as high a grade a position, I selected the position at Delaware Water Gap. We were at Delaware Water Gap about eleven years. I was promoted a couple times along the way – I went from Sub-District to District Ranger, and in that process, in the late 80s, again, the Association of National Park Rangers was instrumental in getting the Park Ranger series recognized as a professional occupation. We had worked through the Park Technician, Park Ranger series. The Park Technician positions were virtually, I won't say eliminated, but they were really used where they should be at entry-level positions

for very specific tasks that didn't involved putting together curriculums, programs, you know, those kinds of things. But in the mid- to late-80s, ANPR worked on two simultaneous programs. One was the complete professionalization of the Park Ranger series, and the second one was recognition for firefighters and law enforcement officers within the National Park Service to be commensurate with other federal firefighters and law enforcement officers. And that was through a couple programs, one of them was commensurate in grade structure, but the other one was also to be recognized on the federal retirement program, which was called 6C. And ANPR was instrumental in that. At that point in my career, I was more heavily involved in ANPR, and I worked along with a group of other folks on several of those projects. You know, we were able to really get some, I think, get some more professionalization brought to the National Park Service.

Hannah Nyala West: Mhm. So, what—

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Hannah Nyala West: Okay. So, we were at Delaware Water Gap, and you had two promotions in there, so you were starting as a GS-9.

Barry T. Sullivan: Nine, and as a Sub-District Ranger, and then I was promoted to the District Ranger, which was a GS-11 position. And then when Ranger Careers, as it was known, took place in probably 1989 or so, the District Ranger position was reclassified at the GS-12 level.

Hannah Nyala West: Okay.

Barry T. Sullivan: I worked on the New Jersey side, and park headquarters for Delaware Water Gap was on the Pennsylvania side. The then-Superintendent, Dick Ring, had—

Hannah Nyala West: How do you spell Dick's last name?

Barry T. Sullivan: R-I-N-G. Dick had a lot of confidence in my skills and abilities, and so he encouraged me to get heavily involved with community planning, community groups, community outreach. And my position was actually sort of restructured a little bit, in about 25 percent of my duties were working directly with the superintendent – the other 75 percent I worked for the Chief Ranger – but those duties were involved in sort of representing the superintendent in everything from community planning meetings, working with the congressional delegations and the Senators' offices to advocate for the park, to talk about issues, to try to get community support for the park. And that really, that type of work was very challenging but also very rewarding. We were able to really see some significant progress in community support for Delaware Water Gap. When Delaware Water Gap was originally created, it was

created by the Army Corps of Engineers was going to dam the river and make a big lake. And so, they went in in a very hostile way, purchased a lot of land, which alienated a lot of folks. The dam project was stopped. A little interesting sidebar on all of this, I mentioned back to my eighth grade and high-school ecology club. When I was in ninth grade, I actually circulated a petition to stop the Tocks Island Dam, even though I really didn't fully understand that. But we understood that damming up the upper Delaware would really adversely affect the natural environment that was up there. And so in this sense, it had sort of come full circle, cause now I was in managing the New Jersey side of the Delaware Water Gap and there was a pond on the New Jersey side on top of the Kittatinny ridge along the Appalachian Trail called Sunfish Pond. And Sunfish Pond, they were going to create a hydroelectric system there which pumped water up at night and then released water down through a sluiceway through a turbine to produce energy, and what that would've done was created in essence a freshwater tidal pond, which would've really destroyed wetlands that were up there. And we were, you know – not we – but because of this public stance on stopping the Tocks Island Dam, Sunfish Pond was sort of a pull to order. We were able to stop that project also, and I took some personal pride in seeing the wetlands up there at Sunfish Pond being managed part of it. It was a connection to a period of my life which was, you know, it was really – come full circle. It's very – um.

Barry T. Sullivan: There, I mean, I supervised and managed mostly the protection program with these external duties, working with the superintendent. It was a period of time – I also have always had a strong natural resource interest and so we were able to get some funding. I worked with Senator Bradley's office, we were able to get some pretty significant funding for doing some work on the natural resource and cultural resource: doing some viewshed work, getting, working with farmers, creating some open vistas and traditionally farm fields, getting them under an agricultural lease program. There was, it was, there was some pretty tough neighborhoods back then around there. There was a significant amount of wildlife poaching going on, a lot of the communities were, the individuals in the communities were displaced – they were bought out by the Army Corps in a hostile situation – so there was adversity between the local communities and the park. And I was there eleven years, which was the longest point I had ever been at any park in my career. It was a wonderful situation for myself and my family. My kids were in school at the time. Patti had meaningful work. She originally started working for Eastern National as a manager there, and then was offered a teaching job at the local school. All of these things, all of my personal interests in

wildlife management sort of came together and ended up being a very rewarding eleven years I stayed there. And then sort of felt like a little bit of my enthusiasm was starting to wane a little bit, and I personally felt that maybe it was time to start thinkin' about some new challenges.

Barry T. Sullivan: ANPR at the time was growing in its membership and its advocacy role. One of the new issues we had worked through, the transition from the technician to the Park Ranger Series, we were certainly instrumental and certainly the leading role in Ranger Careers, the professionalization of the National Park Ranger, the 6C event, and we were now starting to advocate for better employee housing for the National Park Service. And so I ended up presenting several testimonies representing ANPR – I was on the Board of Directors at the time – in Congress, testifying in Congress on the state of NPS housing, the cost of housing, the costs of the employees, the benefits of the employees, trying to advocate for improvements in NPS housing situations, improvements to the housing itself, and recognition of the value that employees living in park housing really gave back to the park.

Barry T. Sullivan: Ah, 1997, I guess it was, I think I sort of came to the conclusion that it was time for me to consider a different component of my own personal career, and so I again applied for a couple positions. One was the Chief Ranger at Cape Cod. The other was an Assistant Superintendent/Deputy Superintendent at Fire Island National Seashore, and it's interesting 'cause very few times in anyone's career do they actually get accepted for the job they applied for, and in several cases – and this was another one – where I had applied for two jobs sort of simultaneous, and I hadn't applied for a job in eleven years and so these were, and apparently both of my names came up high on their list, and it went to the Regional Director, and the Deputy Regional Director sent somebody down to interview me for both of these positions. And, at the end of the interview, the interviewee [interviewer] was quite candid and said, "If you were offered either of these positions, which one would you accept?" And the position at Cape Cod would've been a traditional Chief Ranger position. I had done a couple actings. I had actually served about a year as the Acting Chief Ranger at Delaware Water Gap when that was vacant, and I'd also done a four-month detail as the Acting Chief Ranger at Independence when that position was vacant, and I really thought that the challenges of community development of a broader park management experience was something I would find more rewarding, and so I told the interviewee [interviewer] that I was actually interested in the Fire Island position.

Barry T. Sullivan: Which caught them by surprise, and I think the Regional director pleasantly by surprise, so they offered me that position, and so '97 I went to Fire Island as the, originally as the Deputy Superintendent. The Superintendent moved on, and I moved into the superintendent position there. The positions were classified, reclassified along the way, and so I went as a 13 Deputy Superintendent. They were reclassified: the Deputy went up to the 14 level, and then when I went to the superintendency, that was a GS-15 position. So, I went into the superintendency as a GS-15 position. I was there about six years. That position had a tremendous amount of community engagement. Within Fire Island – which was a barrier island – there are about 17 little communities, anywhere from 28 houses to 400 or so homes, and they live in essence within the park and are really dependent upon the park, as we are dependent upon them, for a lot of cooperation, and a lot of communication was required. I spent a lot of time working on developing positive relations. And sometimes that was pretty adversarial, you know, history will show that we had a big storm yesterday [Superstorm Sandy] come through there and actually destroyed some of the homes on Fire Island. And so sand replenishment was a big issue. The Park Service was trying to maintain a natural dune system. Barrier islands roll over, and so the whole barrier island as a natural course would migrate north, was migrating towards the mainland. What that meant, as it was migrating, was sand was being deposited on the bay side and eroded away on the beach side. Well, all the big houses were on the beach side, and so they were becoming more and more exposed as that sand was moving out. And so, the communities were advocating for the federal government to come in and build massive dunes in front of these very expensive, and houses owned by very influential people. Where the Park Service was advocating for a natural dune system and a natural system which would allow the dunes to migrate, and so many times we were, there was a lot of conflict with high values and dollars at risk, and [there was] a lot of influence out on the island. So, it was a – trying to maintain and accomplish the Park Service mission out there – was many times a challenge. And that really – the park itself wasn't that big, but the political volatility of the area is what really necessitated the grade increase for the deputy and the superintendent that were up there. Ah, early 2000, mid-2000, 2005, I guess, several vacancies occurred within the regions that combined – this is now the Northeast Region – and the Regional Director, Marie Rust, asked me to come to Philadelphia for an interview. I went down, and she said she wanted me to apply for a couple of those positions. And I talked with her and in the conversation, we were talking, and she said, "Well, would you be interested in applying for the position at



Gateway?” And that caught me by surprise, and I sort of smiled and I said, “Ah, I don’t think Gateway.” And she said, “Well, why not?” And I said, “Well.” I had worked at Gateway previous and, you know, my background was really in natural resources, and you know I really thought that there were a couple other positions, you know, Colonial and Valley Forge, which had some more natural resource components to it, and I thought that that would really be a closer match for, for my skills and interests, and so we talked a little bit about that. I went back and applied for this pool of positions, and then a few months later she called me up and wanted to meet with me in Manhattan. I went into Manhattan and she offered me the position as the General Superintendent at Gateway National Recreation Area. There was some controversy going on in the Northeast Region at that time. Our then new, newly appointed Director of the National Park Service, Fran Mainella, wanted some things being accomplished that I think the Regional Director maybe didn’t agree with. And so, there was some friction that we could observe out in the field going on with that. We weren’t privy to it, but there was clearly some friction goin’ on. Along the way, there were all of these positions somehow being held hostage because of this friction. So the [Regional] Director was not allowing these positions to be filled, and this strung on for months and months and months, and so several of us that were involved in these decisions were left in our Acting roles or in our previous parks, some positions didn't have superintendents, and we sort of all sat tight waiting for some decision to be made, and I guess early on in January or so, December maybe 2000, January of 2005, I believe it was, they came to some sort of agreement on it and the positions were filled. And so, I went to Gateway as the General Superintendent of Gateway National Recreation Area, stayed there about six years until I retired in 2010.

Hannah Nyala West: How did you see, as an acting or as a superintendent, things shift after 9/11? Did you see anything shift in your—

Barry T. Sullivan: 9/11 was a very interesting day for me. I was in New York, managing Fire Island National Seashore, and the plane struck the World Trade Center around a quarter to ten, if I recall correctly. And we could see a slight cloud of smoke from Manhattan from where we were – it was a clear day. I had worked at Gateway and I was very familiar with New York City, I knew the layouts, I knew what the park police and the park ranger staff had at Gateway and at the Statue of Liberty. I knew what their resources were. I was still in protection at the time, and I knew, because I had been an Incident Commander in several large events, what they would be going through in those first couple hours. We had two 41-foot patrol boats – oceangoing patrol boats, they were actually converted Coast Guard patrol boats – at Fire Island, and so I called

the commander of the U.S. Park Police, who I knew pretty closely and I talked with him and I said, “Major, I’m sure you don’t even know, no one knows what’s going on, but I would voluntarily send our two 41-foot patrol boats down with a full ranger staff to help protect the Statue of Liberty, if you felt that they would be of benefit.” And he thanked me profusely, said he wasn’t sure what they would do with them, but it would take about an hour and a half for the boats to get there. So by noon that day, I had ordered our two 41-foot patrol boats with a staff of about six on each to New York City, and they were immediately sent to the statue, to secure the Statue of Liberty, perimeter of Statue of Liberty. So, it was a very interesting day. No one, no one really knew what was gonna happen. My [long pause]. Several of the folks that worked at the World Trade Center down in Long Island had [exhale] ah— think we’re going—

Hannah Nyala West: And you can make another sign and we’ll go off again. [Refers to recorder being paused.]

Barry T. Sullivan: Ah it, when, several of the folks from the Long Island area lost their lives that day, they – around where we lived in Port Jefferson, it was a, there was a railroad link from the Long Island Railroad, and it went directly from Long Island to Manhattan. My son went to the little high school, as my daughter did, and several of their friends lost parents that day. It was a very emotional day for Long Island. In the coming weeks and months, we were sending all of our rangers in uniforms to funerals of firefighters and law enforcement. There were so many funerals out there, that there were literally weren’t enough uniformed people to properly pay respect, ‘cause there were so many funerals on the same day. Ah, our boats came back in a couple weeks. We had shifted staff, I mean, we were putting a lot of energy into making sure that they were okay, they were getting the kind of rest that they needed. About a month or so after everything sort of settled down a bit, I brought a critical incident stress debriefing team in, a CISD team, in there, and we worked with all the people that were involved with it to try to go through that, that debriefing and all those things. And really then we started to see changes in the service in terms of security awareness and security heightenedness, at a different level than we had ever seen before.

Barry T. Sullivan: You know, prior to that event our protection program was focused on protecting the resource from fire or poaching. We were looking at protecting visitors from, you know, a critical, a criminal element that may come in. We never looked at the National Park Service as being the potential object of a terrorist attack. And shortly thereafter, when we started to look at the resources of our nation, I don't recall exactly but I believe the number was six of the top ten

targets in the United States were national parks. And we, you know, we as managers – I had come from a protection background – started to realize that things had to change particularly quickly. Some of our assets like the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia and such like that, you know, our protection program there was, you know, if someone was smoking marijuana out in front, we dealt with it. We weren't thinking about a terrorist car bomb coming into the Liberty Bell and trying to blow the Liberty Bell up. We weren't prepared for it, and so we started to look at ways to defend these – the Statue of Liberty was shut down – these iconic situations, till we could figure out a strategy. A lot of it was going to require physical improvements to the facilities. We went to things like screening all passengers that got on boats going to the Statue of Liberty. The Gateway itself, became, we started to look at planning – we started to look at New York City, how would we use some of the park resources for emergency response. Floyd Bennett Field was used as a Red Cross shelter and for helicopters, all those kinds of things. We started to work with the New York City Office of Emergency Management, and how could park assets – and we had a lot of assets in Gateway that could really augment New York City in the event of any future attacks. So, it really did have a profound look – we started to look at those features in terms of long-range planning, and that was just that park. I think any of the iconic parks were really starting to look at the protection responsibility of the Park Service in a much broader, much bigger way than we had prior to that day.

Barry T. Sullivan: When I was at Gateway, one of the interesting aspects of my career that – Gateway had a wetlands called Jamaica Bay. Jamaica Bay is just sort of south of Kennedy Airport, about a 10,000-acre bay that is a really critical estuary habitat along the Atlantic flyway. About 331 species of birds migrated through Jamaica Bay, and there are about 750 species of birds on the North American continent. So roughly, almost half of the bird species on the North American continent use the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge. Ah, you know, we always, in the Park Service we always get into these silly competition games, but I would say there were more bird species at Gateway than at Yellowstone, Yosemite, and Grand Canyon combined, you know? And, you know, it was one of those things that in New York City you don't think of it as a wildlife place, and yet there's critical wildlife, because surrounded was the urban mass, you know, structure and concrete all around Jamaica Bay. We were losing Jamaica Bay. We were losing island by island, and that was mostly due to climate change and sea level rise, but there were also some drainage of effluent through there – their systems, water treatment systems, into the bay. And there had been movement before my tenure there as General Superintendent to try

to improve that. I was able to capitalize on some of that previous movement and, with the help of the Army Corps and city and state, and some of those good developments that had been made before I got there. We were able to make some really significant improvements in Jamaica Bay. We were able to restore about 44 acres of islands and wetlands, very little cost to the Park Service – we really didn't have money to put into it other than some technical staff support. Most of the money was coming from the Army Corps. They were doing some dredging in New York Harbor, they had mitigation dollars that we could use and then cooperation matching dollars from the city and state. We were also working at the other end, and that was trying to clean up the treatment centers – get the nitrogen out of the discharge waters and looked at different options. And that actually started to broaden out even beyond just Gateway.

Barry T. Sullivan: I was working on the Mayor of New York City, Mayor Bloomberg's Task Force to look at what was called the 2030 Plan, and that was a long-range plan to deal with a lot of issues in New York. And the one issue that the task force I was working on was dealing with was climate change – the effects of climate change – and, interestingly enough, it was storm damage. What was going to happen in storms and how do we buffer some of those storms, and one of the critical things of buffering of storms is having a healthy estuary around a city. And so, there was a lot of interest in that. I had an excellent GIS specialist that worked for us there, Mark Christiano, and Mark and I working with some geomorphologists were able to put together some models of what would happen to the wetlands over a period of years based on sea level rise predictions. The International Panel on Climate Change came out with about seven or eight models, and we took three of those models – not the extremes, but one in the middle and one closer to the two ends – and did some modeling of what sea level rise would've occurred in time throughout this century based on previous storms. So, we took a previous storm and said, if that storm, which hit in say '72, had hit, hits in 2012, what would happen? If it hits in 2050, what would happen? If it hit in 2077, you know. So, we did that kind of modeling to show – it was a bathtub model, admittedly, it wasn't incredibly sophisticated model, but it was graphic enough to show what would happen.

Barry T. Sullivan: And I did that, really it was initially started as a – we were going through a General Management Planning process, a GMP process, and – not to discredit my predecessors, but a lot of money had been invested in a bath house, Jacob Riis Bathhouse, that I didn't believe was sustainable into the future. And millions of dollars had gone into this bath house – it was a historic structure – and so my, I wanted to make sure that in this new planning document, which

was going to look forward, that we were making wise investments in our facilities. And so, we started out innocently enough to see if we could predict what structures would be more vulnerable, and the opposite, what structures would be more sustainable, so that we could invest the dollars into those structures that were more sustainable. And it really started, that program started to take on a life of itself, because the city was looking to do something similar, we had started a model, we were able to work with some Rutgers University and do some modeling. We also did some modeling of other Gateway, other Park Service facilities, Governor Island, Statue, Ellis Island, other facilities, to sort of show what would happen, you know, if some of those storms were to hit over time. And the idea again wasn't so much about the damage, but to really figure out what buildings do we want to invest in, where do we want to put our dollars so we're going to get the most investment out of it. That was pretty early on for the Park Service – that was probably around 2006, 2007 we were starting that. I was asked to be on Secretary of the Interior's Panel on Climate Change, and I chaired the Land and Manager's Sub-Committee on that, which, that was department-wide, so it included Fish and Wildlife Service and many other agencies within the department. And we wrote reports. And part of it was that climate change should be evaluated in every future GMP and such, and so it was really based on some of the work we had done, we were sort of rolling into the Secretary of the Interior reports that came out of the – so there were some real good things, I think, that came out of again a very small project, which was initially to look at how can we restore Jamaica Bay, and then as we start this GMP process, how do we make good, sound decisions, and it continued to go. And so when I retired, in 2010, the Secretary asked me to actually continue some work to try to figure out how we can put together a bigger coalition and what, how we continue to work in New York City, and so I worked on that project for about six months – money eventually ran out – but it was again pretty rewarding, and that was a coalition. We had about 28 partners—

[END OF TRACK 3]

[START OF TRACK 4]

Barry T. Sullivan: —all working on some of those projects. So, you know, I mean, I've always found my career to be incredibly rewarding. Along the way I've made some mistakes, but I always felt like, you know, there's the old axiom, When you leave a place, 1) you do no harm, and 2) you like to feel like you left it better than when you first got there. And I've always, you know, sort of felt that I did some good in some of the places that I have been. Family grew up along the way. We had spent the first, you know, eleven years when the kids

were really growing up, in north Jersey, up at Delaware Water Gap. We moved to Long Island. They went to high school there, my kids went to high school there, and by the time we had moved on to Gateway, they were off in college. So, it was probably a little better than a lot of Park Service families that move around and the kids might move pretty regularly. In my situation, my two children really only moved once, and that was just about the time they were going from seventh to eighth grade, you know, into high school, and it's probably a decent time for them to transition. But I also was considering that when I was looking at moving, you know. I had mentioned when I was at Delaware Water Gap, you know, it was about time to move on. One of those factors was that the kids were about the right age, if we were going to move, we should move, because I didn't want to move, pull 'em out when they were juniors or seniors in high school. That was about the right time, so that was another factor that was involved in it.

Hannah Nyala West: Just very quickly, 'cause I know we're getting toward the end of the time that we can talk here, I know that some of the North Carolina scientists have gotten pushback in their climate change work and their models and trying to figure out how to stabilize and deal with oceanfront properties. Did you run into any of that in New York? Or were you able to navigate that differently?

Barry T. Sullivan: What I did in New Jersey and New York, because we also had Sandy Hook in New Jersey. We also did some seminars that were open to the public. I always focused our data on what was going to happen to the park. I never said, "Your house is going to go under water." I always said, "Our modeling shows that if this 1962 storm were to hit in 2050, this is what the park would look like." And we had graphic illustration that would show the amount of blue around some of the structures underwater and those kinds of things. As a result of that, we're in our General Management Plan, we're considering doing these things, you know, we can't sustain these buildings, we're going to invest in these, we're going to elevate this road in the GMP so that when that happens this, we can evacuate people. I made our examples all on what was going to happen to the park and such. I was not in any way threatening the communities directly. Now the community members walked out of there realizing, "Well, if that's going to happen to the park, I live right next to the park – it's going to happen to me." But I never pointed the finger to them. I never tried to say, you know, "You guys need to do something," cause I always said, "This is what we see as happening to the park, and these are the plans we're making in our long-range management plan." That was, I think, a particularly successful technique, because the community planners and mayors that attended some of those seminars came up to me afterwards and said, "You know, I never realized it could

potentially be this serious. We need to establish our own planning group, and could you come down and make this presentation to our Executive Board?” or something of that nature. So, instead of it, I think, being looked at as a threat, you know, I wasn’t attacking their property values or anything, they were looking at it as a call to action and asking us to help them, and so it was a very well received thing. One of the interesting aspects that I, examples that I used to use, you know, when I was presenting these programs, was I would say, “You know, about 15 years ago, before we really understood climate change and sea level rise at the level we do today, we in the National Park Service made a very expensive decision that at that time was believed to be the right decision, and that decision was to move the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse. And we moved it back on the beach to a location which we believe would be the right location.” I said, “I’m not sure with the modeling and the data that we have today that we would’ve made the same decision today,” you know. Again I wasn’t pointing, I was trying to point the finger at us, the National Park Service, when I was using this illustration, but at the same time, using an example from North Carolina, that said – and I truly believe this – but we as park managers, particularly in coastal areas, but even with the species shift and all those things, need to really be looking at climate change and the impacts in a much more serious way than we have in the past. And, you know, I’ve talked to Director Jarvis about this several times, he knows my passion about it, and I think he’s taken some, several proactive steps. One of the things I was particularly proud of when I was at Gateway is, is the Northeast Region and in fact Gateway National Recreation Area was really looked as a leader in climate change planning in the National Park Service. I did receive the National Park Service’s Resource Stewardship Award for Superintendents for the year, and that – I was pretty proud of that, that award, because I felt like it was being recognized service-wide as really starting to move the Park Service in a positive direction to look at, at least, climate change issues so that, for the future in terms of park planning.

Hannah Nyala West: Well, 9/11 was right there, and clearly made, created the impetus for some shifts in protection and security, etcetera, across the whole service. Katrina was a long ways away, but – coastal city, hurricane, question of warming ocean temperatures and the size of the storms, etcetera, came up really strongly after Katrina, as well as environmental justice issues of who’s in the path of these storms and how we deal with them. Did Katrina have that type of an impact on the sorts of modeling and work that you all were doing? Is Katrina a part of that conversation?

Barry T. Sullivan: I don’t, ah, Katrina occurred before we really understood how much of an impact climate change really maybe had on the damage

that was done by Katrina. We, I think generally, most folks, myself included, looked at Katrina but as an epic hurricane that hit a very vulnerable area. I think we looked at, you know, questioned about whether development on coastal sites and low sea level was a good thing to do, but we didn't necessarily – at least I didn't, and I think the majority of the, certainly the Park Service, if not the world – look at it as closely connected to climate change as we now believe it was – with frequency of storms and density of storms and sea level rise and modification of the damage associated with coastal storms. What Katrina did on a nationwide basis, if not worldwide, probably a worldwide basis, was brought to the forefront the power of a coastal storm on coastal communities and, so even – there had been major hurricanes, you know, Florida hurricanes and things of that nature before, but while the numbers were staggering, for some reason they were so – I don't know whether it was the press, I don't know whether it was the rescues, I don't know whether it was the duration of the storm, I don't know whether it was the politics of the storm, whatever. Katrina was at a different level than the previous storms, and it, and, you know, it may've just been the Weather Channel, it may've been all these factors – probably was all of these factors combined – but it really brought to the forefront the power of a storm, a coastal storm, and the vulnerability of the coast. So, we didn't have to, when we were making presentations and we were talking about that, we didn't have to cover that. That was etched in everyone's mind. What we were focusing on is now the connection to climate change and, with sea level rise, how that storm – if it were to hit 50 years later – could be potentially more devastating. And how we in New York had to start making plans today and change the way we were managing the park and, you know, similar thing to the city and all coastal communities. Because we saw very vividly the devastation of a coastal storm, if we were able to, through graphic program modeling, show the vulnerability of this particular location, we didn't have to go through a storm of this magnitude it's going to tear down all these homes – they saw it. People there died. They saw it. We didn't have to cover that. We would just focus that, if that storm were to hit today, this is the amount of damage that would occur in a graphic way. It was, it really hit home very quickly, so I think – and then the whole idea of storm intensity and storm frequency increasing with climate change, you know, we could talk about that, but we didn't have to go into the damage associated with the power of a hurricane. Katrina really solidified that across America, like I said, if not on a worldwide basis.

Hannah Nyala West: So, I think it's intriguing that today we're just a day past Hurricane Sandy, the quote 'Frankenstorm', a storm that was 900 miles wide when it was coming in, etcetera. Do you feel like the efforts that



you all were undertaking then, during your tenure and afterward in that work you continued, possibly helped them to get somewhat better able to conceive of it and be ready for it?

Barry T. Sullivan: Oh absolutely. The modeling that we did, we actually worked with Columbia University and Hunter College in New York City. Ah, you know, again I was able to get Columbia University signed on as a CESU school, Cooperative Ecosystems Studies Unit school, and Columbia had a lot of resources. They were a pretty heavily endowed university, they were a good partner, ah they brought resources to us. We asked for what we needed, they provided technicians, they provided computer specialists at a very high level that helped us accomplish some of what we, we were able to accomplish. And then that data was available to the city of New York, and through the work that I did with the 2030 committee and some of the work we had done, it was extracted and taken in a much broader sense citywide. I won't say they, you know, exactly used our model, they actually took it to a more sophisticated level, but early on, we were the first one out of the gates doing this kind of modeling, and I think they realized the value of that modeling. And that modeling, in my opinion, specifically led to evacuation zones that were used in both Irene and in Sandy. So I feel in a very connected way to making some positive improvements and, you know, ultimately it may mean, you know, saved lives or something like that, through the work that the Park Service, not me directly, but the Park Service did in trying to plan for some of that event and working with groups to really illustrate the vulnerabilities of that particular zone, that area.

Hannah Nyala West: This illustrates something that comes up over and over in these interviews with Park Service employees is that – how can we story this? How could you get this kind of a story, do you have ideas about ways that we could help people to understand these much more nuanced aspects of federal land managers jobs and contributions to the society that happen with some frequency, particularly for people who are really engaging their local communities and the nation – ah, it doesn't happen with all land managers, but it happens with some – and there are some excellent models for how that has been done. I mean, I've heard several in just the interviews I've done here. Do you have ideas about how these, just your story right there, could actually get out so that both people comin' up in the Park Service for jobs, for careers, you know, younger people in their careers can understand there's a wide palette there upon which you can work.

Barry T. Sullivan: You know, it's interesting cause as park managers, we don't have responsibility for protecting the cities, we have federal agencies for that, we have FEMA.

Hannah Nyala West: Right, exactly.

Barry T. Sullivan: And other agencies, you know, including USGS, which does a lot of that stuff. I remember going to conferences in the northeast, and at those conferences there was U.S. Fish and Wildlife, mostly Department of the Interior and USGS was there, and showing them some of the modeling that we had done, and they were intrigued by it. And so here we were, a small park doing some of these things that one of the agencies that has the direct responsibility of wasn't quite at that level at that particular time. And sometimes, you know, that's, that's not well received by other federal agencies. I was pretty lucky to be working with some pretty enlightened folks at USGS that didn't in any way perceive it as a threat, because I think they realized that I was looking at it, you know, very much at what I could do to protect the park and long range park planning, not necessarily how do I save New York City or something like that issue.

Hannah Nyala West: Right.

Barry T. Sullivan: But those connections, and I think these examples, as you had indicated, you know, it could be talking about wildfire management in other states and with ranchers and cities' and states' governments, and you know you could probably take examples of this and take 'em to different parts of the country – I think a lot of that occurs. I reflect back on some of the work that Bill Wade did when he was superintendent at Shenandoah, and we were all doing – many of the parks were doing some air quality monitoring – but I think Bill was, because of the bully pulpit of being just outside of DC, was able to really talk about air quality and airsheds and the effects outside of the park on park air quality and park environmental stuff. I think some of these things are, you know, significant contributions that the Park Service makes to the nation as a whole, but it's not really our mission per se? It's like collateral – you know, Bill wasn't doing that to talk about airshed in the northeast. He was doing it to protect Shenandoah National Park. I was doing the work I was doing to protect Gateway National Recreation Area. You know, a lot of things came out of those kinds of actions, which have much broader implications and, you know, profound changes in how we do things, but that wasn't our intention. So, I don't, I don't know. I don't know, you know, sometimes it's sort of cool to be recognized for those contributions, but that's really not our mission and, you know, sometimes we have to be a little conscientious about not spending the limited resources of the Park Service on these broader missions. And there were sometimes in my work at Gateway when people were questioning that and, you know, not in an adversarial way, but 'Is too much resources being committed on stuff outside

the park'? And it wasn't, you know, it wasn't negative and it wasn't significant, but you know there was questions going on, and then I just had to bring it back, to say, you know, "Hey, that stuff which is going on here is good stuff, but it affects the park." You know, if the city puts in a housing development and paves that section, that's gonna adversely affect Jamaica Bay, and it's not a good plan, and so I am working with the city and trying to get 'em to understand the value of that stretch of natural resources right there – how important it is, not only to the city, but also how important it is to Gateway National Recreation and to my park, to protect my park. And so that was the kind of work that we ended up doing.

Hannah Nyala West: Okay. I think you make a good point that if you focus too much on these much bigger pictures and the way that you need to contribute, you can lose sight of what it is that you need to be doing there. And yet, I do think there's some benefit, because a lot of times the perception from outside is that it's, you know, they're silos, and there's not a lot that is informing the larger society, and I have seen multiple examples of where it has absolutely just not been the case.

Barry T. Sullivan: Mmhm.

Hannah Nyala West: And there have been some really good models for how you can engage – now the new term is gateway communities – but you can engage the communities around you and the nation in much more thoughtful conversations.

Barry T. Sullivan: And I think I was more successful in engaging those communities by, like I said, focusing on the park, than if I had gone in and said, "Here's a model of what's going to happen to our region or something like that," because that would've been perceived as a threat and, you know, the property owners would've looked at it as adversely affecting their property values or whatever, and I'm, I wasn't, you know, I knew that they could clearly see that if it's blue inside the park [chuckles], that park boundary isn't going to stop that water from comin' into my house, you know! Ah, but I wasn't going to go there. I – this is the park, this is what's going to happen to the park, and this is you know based on our models and our predictions and the work that we've done.

Hannah Nyala West: Mmhm. Excellent. Well, we definitely are going to need to have another interview with you, if you would be willing to do that, because there's so much here that brings up different strands of thematic kind of questions, but I would ask you, just very briefly, what are your thoughts on the future – of the Service, of the ANPR, of where we are now?

Barry T. Sullivan: Yeah, there's another part of ANPR that needs some follow-up on, and I would recommend – I think someone's doing an interview with Rick Smith, but Rick Smith, Jim Brady, Mike Findley, Bill Sanders – probably not one you have on your list—

Hannah Nyala West: Bill Sanders?

Barry T. Sullivan: Bill Sanders, yeah. Those individuals were instrumental in Ranger Careers in 6C and ANPR was behind a lot of those, a lot of that really positive things that have happened to the Park Service, and I was involved peripherally, I mean, I did some writing and some work, and some things, but they are some of the principals that were more involved in that so they could – but that is an important part of ANPR that needs to be pursued.

Hannah Nyala West: Okay.

Barry T. Sullivan: Ah, the future. I think that I'm worried about the budgets, you know, near term, but also long-term. I'm worried about the effects of climate change. I don't think that we're embracing climate change at the level that we need to be embracing climate change right now. I'm particularly disheartened that I've watched every [presidential] debate and the word climate change has not come on up.

Hannah Nyala West: First time since '88.

Barry T. Sullivan: Yeah, I think that, you know, I understand it's a political hot-ticket item and no one wants to lose the election and I think it's perceived maybe as an issue that could lose more votes than it could gain so, I mean, I guess I understand in one aspect, that it's not being addressed, but it also to me indicates that the politicians don't understand how looming a nuclear threat climate change actually is, and so I'm concerned about that. I think the Park Service could be more of a leader in that role. When I was ah, you know, the superintendent at Gateway, I organized a meeting up at a conservation institute in Woodstock, Vermont, and brought in interpreters from all over the nation, in Park Service and also other DOI representatives from Fish and Wildlife Service, USGS, and a few others, and we worked for about a week developing interpretive strategies on how to interpret climate change and using parks refuges and such, with the idea that we would try to start to get this message out one park at a time, one neighborhood at a time, locally, and hopefully there would be a bigger strategy by the USGS and others, but I haven't seen the bigger strategy. And so, it's still important for the Park Service, in my opinion, to focus on that at the local level, you know, we've always said we have the bully pulpit and we do. We have the terra firma or the water to talk about the effect of it – species migration, all the storm impacts, all the fire, all those climate change issues – and, you know, heighten

people's awareness and maybe interest in the effects of climate change, cause I do believe that in this century, climate change will be the preeminent issue that dominates history. Um, and I think I'm a little disappointed that we're not seeing more progress within the Park Service than we are, and I know, you know, I've talked with the Director Jarvis about that specifically, and I recognize he has a lot of challenges ahead of him, particularly with the budget issues and everything, but I think we need to figure out a way of carving out some real serious money to dedicate to that, because I do think that it is going to be the issue that will dominate the future, and that it's more critical now than it's going to be a hundred years from now. Now is when it's critical, so we need to figure out a way of doing that.

Barry T. Sullivan: Ah, you know, I worked – my last couple of assignments were in more urban centers, Fire Island and Gateway. I truly believe that the urban centers, that connecting with them is critical to the future of the National Park Service. I also believe that connecting them – urban centers – to the natural resource was going to be critical to the survival of the United States and of the natural resources. So, we did interesting things. We did kayak training. We went into very urban high-rise project areas, some of the relatively scary neighborhoods and took, got grants from Coca-Cola and others, bought a bunch of kayaks, sit-on-top kayaks, took the kayaks into their pools inside their buildings, got urban kids that had never been in the water, never really anything out there, into kayaks, taught 'em how to kayak and then part of that program was, we then took 'em to Jamaica Bay, they kayaked to, out to an island, there was a ranger-led program and then they helped restore that island.

Hannah Nyala West: Awesome [sotto voce].

Barry T. Sullivan: And the idea was to try to connect this really urban inner-city kid to the natural resource, through something that was a lot of fun – ah we had to get grants and things to make it all happen cause it really wasn't resources within the community some weren't supported – but it was a really neat project. And unfortunately, it was a very small scale, you know, we can reach a hundred kids every month or something of that nature, but there's millions out there. And so, I do believe that the Park Service needs to address that in a real way. I was disheartened, the Park Service for the last six, seven, eight years has talked about, you know, this connecting with the urban environment, inner-city youth connections, all of those things, and there was a, you know, four or five years ago, there was a big initiative, financial initiative to restore the infrastructure of the parks and things like that, and all the parks put in for it. Gateway is a big park, it's fiscally about the third largest

park in the system, you know, Yosemite, Yellowstone, and Gateway were all in the \$25 million-dollar OMPS budget. And they awarded projects. Gateway had submitted a dozen or so projects under that, that were fleshed out shovel-ready, which was the requirement, ah, good projects. And the list came out and Gateway got one small project funded while both Yellowstone and Yosemite got eight major projects funded. And so I sat back and I was disheartened by that, because we were spending a lot of time talking about the need to invest in our urban centers and our urban parks and, you know, connect with urban youth, and that was going to be the future of the National Park Service, and yet here was the first time to really show some commitment to it, and there was no commitment to it. It was – I was disheartened by that. I hope – that was prior to Jon’s administration. I’m hoping that if that were to happen again that it wouldn’t come out that way, but it was disheartening at the time, and I think we really need, the Service needs to really address that, to look at you know taking our urban centers where we can make our – you know, you look at all the demographics, you probably know this more than others, but, you know, you look at the changing face of America – ah, we need to connect with urban Hispanics, you know. If there is going to be a future for the National Park Service, if they don’t see value for national parks, when they’re in Congress and Senate and dominant leaders and such like that, if they don’t see a value in it, there’s not going to be the kind of support there is today.

Hannah Nyala West: And the value needs to be long before they enter those crucial roles.

Barry T. Sullivan: When we started this interview, I talked about when I was, you know, out hunting and fishing on about thirty acres – that was my connection, you know. If these urban groups aren’t connected to the resource and they don’t see value in the resource, it’s going to be hard for them, when they’re makin’ big financial decisions fifty years down the road to say, ‘We need to put money into these natural—

[END OF TRACK 4]

[START OF TRACK 5]

Barry T. Sullivan: —wonders that we have, and so I think it’s critical.

Hannah Nyala West: And also to raise the visibility of all of the urban parks, all of the cultural and the historical sites, etcetera, and there are ways now, we do have some tools that would allow us to reach people in a range of multimedia formats, so it doesn’t necessarily have to increase the crush of visitation. You can do it in a way that can get people there, but also the people who don’t want to come – still reach ‘em, get ‘em to care.

Barry T. Sullivan: Mmhm.

Hannah Nyala West: And these stories, I actually believe, that human stories, oral histories, are a crucial tool for being able to connect human beings with a mission, you know, with a set of efforts. And getting those to people in forms that are entertaining, fun, inspiring, um – oh that’s really, really cool – no, it’s too hot for me, I don’t want to go to Joshua Tree ever!

Barry T. Sullivan: Right.

Hannah Nyala West: But we need ‘em to care about Joshua Tree, when people are talking about mowing the desert down with bulldozers.

Barry T. Sullivan: Right, right. That’s absolutely right.

Hannah Nyala West: So—

Barry t. Sullivan: Yeah, you need people in New York City that have been connected to a national park at Gateway to vote positively on a bill to, you know, to protect the remnants of Joshua Tree that are protected. You need ‘em to vote, yes, we want to protect that, because, you know, my experience with national parks in New York City was very meaningful to me, and we want the L.A. youth to have that connection with a national park, you know, in their neighborhood or in their proximity or something.

Hannah Nyala West: Exactly. And not just in their voting, but in their habits of thought, etcetera, so that they understand that these belong to the world and not just to us, but the next generations.

Barry T. Sullivan: One of the things we did when we took the kids out on the islands, one of the projects I did was a little cleanup, and so they were directly seeing how the Coke bottle they threw over the bulkhead when they were walking along on the bike trail ended up in the islands and how it prohibited grass from growing in that particular area and, you know, there’s no better way, I mean, you could sit with those kids all day and talk about stopping littering, give, write ‘em tickets and all that, it’s not going to change their behavior. But them picking up that one thing and seeing that no grass has grown here because of the bottle that someone threw over that bulkhead is going to make ‘em think and make ‘em change their behavior.

Hannah Nyala West: Right, mmhm, and then when they’re 27 and they have a two-year-old child and they’re going, they have a story—

Barry T. Sullivan: Right, right.

Hannah Nyala West: —for why you don’t litter—

Barry T. Sullivan: Do it! Right, right.

Hannah Nyala West: —that can then make it become generational.

Barry T. Sullivan: Yeah, I agree.

Hannah Nyala West: That's the key piece, the heart. Getting the heart involved. Listen, thank you so much for this opportunity.

Barry T. Sullivan: You're welcome.

[END OF TRACK 5]

[END OF INTERVIEW]