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Deanne Adams
October 23, 2014

Interview conducted by Brenna Lissoway
Transcribed by Teresa Bergen
Digitized by Marissa Lindsey

NPS History Collection
Harpers Ferry Center
PO Box 50
Harpers Ferry, WV 25425
HFC_Archivist@nps.gov

ANPR Oral History Project

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The narrator has reviewed and corrected the transcript.

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[START OF TRACK 1]

Brenna Lissoway: Okay, so this is Brenna Lissoway, and I'm interviewing Deanne Adams. Today is October the twenty-third, 2014, and we are sitting at the YMCA of the Rockies. It's a lovely morning. This is our first interview for the Association of National Park Rangers Oral History Project. Thank you for agreeing to join us.

Deanne Adams: Thank you. I'm glad to have the invitation.

Brenna Lissoway: So, could you just start by telling me where you were born, and the year, if you're okay with that.

Deanne Adams: Sure. Yeah. I was born in Whitefish, Montana, in 1951.

Brenna Lissoway: Okay. Great. And can you just tell me a little bit about your family?

Deanne Adams: Okay. So, the reason I was in Whitefish, that I was born there, was that my dad was a seasonal park ranger with Glacier National Park. He and my mom were both raised in Montana. They met sometime when they were going through college. I don't know the dates there. But shortly after I was born, then my dad got a permanent job offer with the Park Service, and we moved down to Natchez Trace Parkway in Mississippi. So that was a big change for two Montana kids, you know. So, I was just an infant. They drove from Montana to Mississippi, and Dad worked there for a couple of years.

Deanne Adams: Then my sister was born, and when she was infant in 1954, my dad got an offer with the Bureau of Land Management in Alaska. So, 1954 they drove from Mississippi to Alaska. (laughs) Yeah, it sounded like quite an adventure, because that road was pretty new. It was just built during World War Two, so it was not in very good condition. So, but they were big adventurers, Mom and Dad. They liked outdoor, camping. So, I'm sure going to Alaska was just perfect for them.

Deanne Adams: So then, once in Alaska, they had four more kids. So, my four youngest siblings were all born out there, and they all still live there, except for one.

Brenna Lissoway: So really all you remember is Alaska, growing up.

Deanne Adams: That's right. Yeah. Yeah. I don't remember any of that younger time. Plus, I was about two and a half when we moved out there. And that's where I stayed. Didn't live anyplace else until I started working for the Park Service.

Brenna Lissoway: So, what was it like growing up in Alaska? Where were you in Alaska?

Deanne Adams: So that's something I'd like to get clear in my history, too, the early years. Basically, the bulk of the time that I know is in a little town called Tanacross. I think we might have lived some in Fairbanks at first. But Tanacross was right near Tok, which more people know, because when you drive up the AlCan, Tok is one of the first towns you hit. Then you

have to make a decision if you're going north or south. But Tanacross was up the road from there and our house was the only house on this river. Across the river then was the native village of Tanacross.

Deanne Adams: So, we were by ourselves. I don't know how long we lived there. But the big event in our lives there was there were five of us at that point and two dogs. My dad was gone on a business trip and our house caught on fire.

Deanne Adams: So here we are. It was Christmastime. It was like the second week in December. So, it was cold. Nobody else was around. My mom's there with five kids and two dogs. I just can't imagine. I was first grade, or five years old. I must have been older than that, if there were five of us. But real young.

Deanne Adams: So, she got us all in the car. She kept asking me, "Count the kids. How many kids are in the car?" You know, making sure. The thing I do remember is pulling out of that house and looking back and it was totally engulfed in flames. They figure that the basement had caught on fire. And before she knew how bad it was. And they saved nothing. So, all our Christmas gifts, everything was gone. And all their wedding pictures, all the kid pictures. It was a big drama. Not so bad for the kids, you know. It was exciting. We all got to stay in new places. We were sleeping all in the same bed. And then after, you know, I can imagine this family of five kids at Christmastime. We got barrels of clothes from people, and I remember stacks of games on the side of the walls. My mom was terrified of fires from then on. Every time she smelled smoke; she was on alert.

Brenna Lissoway: So where did you go from there?

Deanne Adams: So, then we lived in Fairbanks for a short time, kind of a transition, I think, while figuring out what to do with my dad as a job. Then he moved to McGrath, which is in interior Alaska. It's right along the Iditarod Trail, which a lot of people know now because of the race being so popular. That wasn't a race when we lived there. But that was – I [have copied down?] what my dates were. While I was in first grade. And then we left in '69, when I was a senior in high school. So, I'd have to back up and think what the dates are for that.

Brenna Lissoway: Sure. So, what was it like living in Grath?

Deanne Adams: It's McGrath, MC

Brenna Lissoway: Oh, McGrath. Okay.

Deanne Adams: It was, for a kid, it was great. I think my parents loved it because it was only a town of 300 people. There were a few FAA, Federal Aviation Agency families, maybe ten, and then us. So, we were the only kind of, you know, paid families that had steady jobs. Everybody else was gold miners or trappers. The village was a real mix of Native Alaskans mixed with white. Russian backgrounds, that sort of thing. So, my high school graduating class was seven. (BL laughs) And it was a great place for a kid to grow up, because my parents knew where we were. We lived out of

town, so we were a little isolated, but we had a shortcut through the woods to the school. You know, I think of all these influences on why I like the Park Service so much. Living in that kind of environment. I was the oldest, and I was not an outdoor kid, really. I liked being inside reading and helping my mom. All my younger siblings, we were just talking about this the other day. But all of them were more outdoorsy than I was, and it's funny that I'm the one that gets in the Park Service. (laughter) But my brother's the hunting guide, and my younger brother and sister both work for him in the fall. So, they definitely are the big, more outdoorsy than I am.

Deanne Adams: But anyway, living there in McGrath, that's a little shortcut we had through the woods to the school. Those are the big visuals I have in my head, and what really has me so centered on Alaska as my home. So, we would walk through the woods in winter. The snow would have all the branches bowing over the trail, and we just thought that was the coolest thing. We'd try hard not to knock the snow off, so we'd have these little secret tunnels that we'd go through.

Deanne Adams: I remember one year my youngest sister was coming to school, she came later than me because first grade or whatever, different. The principal came in to get me and said Sherry was walking to school and there was a moose on the trail. Oh, walking home, she was trying to go home, and there was a moose on the trail. And I said, "Okay, I'll walk her home." I took her home. Dad said to me, "Well, what were you going to do when you saw a moose?" I said, oh, well, I guess I assumed the moose was gone by then. (laughs) The moose, you know, just like here with the elk thing, we had moose all over the place.

Brenna Lissoway: Right. So how often, if ever, did you leave McGrath? Go out other places?

Deanne Adams: Because my dad was BLM, in those days, when they hired for the federal government, hired out of state, then you got, I forget what they call it now, but part of the deal was, home leave. You could go back to your home state every two years, and they would pay for that. The government would pay for you and your family to go out. But my folks still couldn't afford to do that, having all the expenses of once you're outside. So, we probably went out every four years or so, and we'd go to Montana, because that's where all the relatives were. We mostly stayed with my mom's mom, in Plains, Montana, and our cousins and my mom's sister in Missoula.

Deanne Adams: So, we got pretty familiar with Glacier National Park, which is still funny to me that I never remembered that Dad worked there, even though we went there with him. And he obviously knew it well.

Brenna Lissoway: Right. (laughs)

Deanne Adams: So, we mostly didn't leave McGrath. I would say as kids we probably would only leave the town every couple of years at the most, and that would only be if there was an emergency kind of thing. Like I wore

glasses since I was a little kid, and eventually I'd have to go into town to get those upgraded. Rural living, or bush living, as it actually is – because there's no road access to McGrath, you could only fly in – and in the summer, well, anytime you could use the river. People used the river a lot in the winter as transportation. In the summer, that's where a lot of the big stuff got shipped up to McGrath. Fuel oil, all that really expensive, heavy things. So, it was expensive for my parents to try to get us out. Just out of there to Anchorage.

Deanne Adams: But in that time, my brother and my sister both had appendicitis. My mom and dad were both trained advanced first aid, but that was it. We had no medical in the town for a while. At some point, we did have a nurse. So, they had to talk to the doctor on the phone and talk about the symptoms and make the decision whether we spend money to send the kids into Anchorage. So, they procrastinated a while on my brother, Bob. He was the first one. And when he got to the doctor's office, his appendix ruptured in the doctor's office.

Deanne Adams: So, the next one, when my sister started having symptoms, they took her in right away. Yes? (laughs) Plus he had to end up in the hospital a long time. It was a mess.

Brenna Lissoway: So, did you all do a lot of your own food gathering, hunting, gardening, those sort of things—

Deanne Adams: Yeah, yeah.

Brenna Lissoway: Or did you rely on incoming—

Deanne Adams: It was both. The incoming stuff, what was nice was that, since my dad was BLM, he was in charge of like a third of the state for land management responsibilities. We were the headquarters for fire in those years. So, there was a barracks there for emergency firefighters and smoke jumpers. So, planes would come in empty to McGrath. When they're first setting out for the summer and those planes would be used to fly around the state to ship the firefighters out. So, we could order groceries, and they'd be coming that way. We could stock up for the winter. So, our basement was full of cases of cereal and canned tomatoes and all that stuff. So, the kids decided we liked Kix in September, and by December we didn't like them anymore. Too bad! That's what we were eating. (laughs)

Deanne Adams: I've been away from Alaska for about 20 years or so, maybe longer, and we just moved back a couple of years ago. And really miss some of that subsistence gathering you're referring to. Blueberry picking was a really big thing for our family. It seemed like it's just in my blood. You know, I'm sure it's like an evolutionary thing for all of us, but we just got it reinforced by always picking as many berries as we could for the winter. And mushrooms were another big one.

Deanne Adams: My parents were both hunters. So that's another thing, we were talking recently, my younger brothers and sisters are all hunters, but I never was. I

shot a gun a little bit, but I just didn't have an interest in hunting. But I was happy to eat the meat, so, I would help. I would always go out when my parents would go hunting. We'd all have to help clean the animal. Gut it.

Brenna Lissoway: So, what were your interests growing up?

Deanne Adams: Reading. I was a real avid reader. And my mom was, too. Both my parents were college-educated. Before we started the interview, I had referred to them, that they were alcoholics. So that was a big influence. When we were in McGrath, it wasn't as severe as later, when we left McGrath. But it's still, when you're in a dysfunctional family, it's interesting what things don't happen.

Deanne Adams: So, my parents were both college-educated. They always assumed I was going to college, but we didn't really talk about it. But I think the things like reading, you know, I was influenced by just what they did. With my mom reading a lot, that was okay for me to do. I'd rather do that than go outside. (laughs) And cooking. As the oldest of six, I did a lot of cooking for the family. My mom worked in the summertime. When it was busy, she worked for BLM as a seasonal, and did dispatch. That was the job available.

Brenna Lissoway: What about you? Any high school jobs or anything like that?

Deanne Adams: A little bit. I'd worked as a waitress in a local roadhouse. It was a burgers and French fries kind of place, with the bar next door. That's another real clear memory that we could not go into the bar side. High school kids. It's a real strong [memory]; I mean I never considered crossing that line. (laughs) I think my boss must have made it clear.

Deanne Adams: Then I guess it was in college that I met a guy in Dillingham. I worked at his family's ice cream shop for one summer. That's a big fishing village. That was my big excursion in Alaska once I left McGrath. But high school, you know, otherwise, I did babysitting some, that sort of thing.

Brenna Lissoway: Right. So, your father was a federal employee and your mother, too, in the summers.

Deanne Adams: Right.

Brenna Lissoway: What was the attitude towards federal presence for you?

Deanne Adams: It was fine in McGrath. I don't think people really, at least my friends, it was not even an issue. The big difference between me and my friends was that our house, you know, this was a typical village in those days. Today they have pretty good housing. But you know, I'd spend the night at a girlfriend's house, and it was a honey bucket in the house, and the outhouse outside. You had to pump the water; you had the pump inside, which was upscale. It smelled in the house, because that's the way it is when you don't have you know, a modern house.

Brenna Lissoway: And you had indoor plumbing?

Deanne Adams: We had, yeah, we had the works. It was just a, you know, a house like in the Lower 48.

Brenna Lissoway: And it was a government house?

Deanne Adams: It was. So, my dad's office was downstairs in one section. Then the other bottom part was the living room, kitchen, and then our bedrooms were upstairs. So, yeah. My friends loved to come and sleep over at my house because they got a shower. (laughs) There was a furnace, you didn't have to have a stove, woodstove. It was a big contrast. Which at the time, you know, didn't really mean much to us. I mean, we knew it was a difference, but there was no social stigma there. It's just, that's the way it was.

Brenna Lissoway: Interesting.

Deanne Adams: And I did like it better when they came to stay with me, because I didn't like the honey bucket so much. (laughs)

Brenna Lissoway: So, you decided to attend college?

Deanne Adams: Yup. Yup.

Brenna Lissoway: And how did you decide where to go?

Deanne Adams: Well, I had some scholarships, little ones, some of them that were good just in Alaska. But I really wanted to try another state. Now we know a lot more about how families do this college decision stuff. There was really not much discussion with my parents. My mom's sister lived in Missoula and they thought well, that would be good for me to try out the University of Montana in Missoula. But we had no discussion about money and how this was all going to work. I mean, I knew how I was going to pay for college; I'd been working to save money for that.

Deanne Adams: But as far as staying with my aunt, I just had thought she and my mom worked it out. But it wasn't so. I'm the oldest, so I always do everything. So, I had to help my aunt with her kids and cooking and cleaning. But they needed money, too, and she said they couldn't afford to keep me there without me having a job and paying something. And I was shocked. Really, it was a trauma for me, because I felt embarrassed with thinking she and my mom had talked.

Deanne Adams: So, I went back to Alaska. And I didn't go back to college for a while. I wanted to get a job so I could pay for everything. I moved out of my parents' house. I worked at the library for a while. I'm a really, really good typist because I typed catalog cards. So, I know my numbers really well. (laughs) So that was a good job. But that was, you know, a year and a half or two. Then when I got the job with the Park Service, somewhere in there I went back to school. I went back to college. It took me seven years to graduate because I just was working, going to school part time and working full time.

Brenna Lissoway: So, the Park Service position came before you entered university?

Deanne Adams: I'm trying to remember, because I started with the Park Service late in '72. I think that's right. It was right in there that I knew I wanted to go back to college, but I knew I needed some money first. My scholarships paid for the tuition, in-state tuition. Anchorage, it was pretty easy. But I needed living money for an apartment. So, I can't remember, I'd have to go back and look.

Brenna Lissoway: So how did you get that first Park Service job?

Deanne Adams: Well, it was because of my dad in the government. So, I actually worked one summer for BLM [Bureau of Land Management] as a seasonal. So, yeah, this is a good story. Embarrassing story to me. Is my dad had a really strong work ethic, and I did, too. But you know, you're young and stupid. So here I was, I don't know, 18, 19. I had this summer job. I'm working at the office, and there was nothing to do. I'd done everything I was supposed to do. I'm reading a book at the desk. (laughter) My dad comes in. Oh, my goodness! He said, "If you don't have something to do, you wash the windows. You do something. You don't sit here and read a book when the taxpayers are paying your salary." So that's my basis of my work ethic. (laughs) It was a good lesson. I mean, it really totally embarrassed me. I don't ever embarrass other young employees that way. But they've got to know that that's not acceptable behavior.

Deanne Adams: So anyway, I got the BLM job and it was a good one. You know, I was kind of a clerk/typist/receptionist. Then I learned a little bit about what was systems available, and I knew I wanted a permanent job. I had no idea about the National Park Service. I just applied for a federal government clerk/typist job. The interview I had was with the Park Service.

Deanne Adams: At the time, this is right after – the history of parks up there was that Denali National Park had been established quite a while back. The only way to get there was quite an onerous journey. You'd have to take one highway, paved highway, up, and then there was a dirt road, a gravel road, across to Denali. So, they didn't have very much visitation while the new highway was being built. Named after George Parks, but it's called the Parks Highway and it goes right by Denali. So that got finished, I think, in '71. That meant that people could get to the park much more easily. The park looked ahead, working with the administration, and decided that they would restrict road access from the very beginning. So, before that highway went through, people could drive their cars all the way into the park. After that, Parks Highway was completed, then the road restrictions started that are still there today, where you can only drive up to Savage River and then you take a bus. I need to read more of that administrative history.

Deanne Adams: But the reason I got hired was because I was an Alaskan. It was a regional office Park Service job, and they wanted the person on the phone in the regional office to be able to talk to other Alaskans about this road change and why it was good for us to not be driving all the way in. Yeah, they

knew what they were doing when they hired an Alaskan girl to talk to all these irate Alaskans. (laughs)

Deanne Adams: I remember one phone call where the guy called in and he ranted and raved for quite a while. I just listened and I'd say oh, you know, give him little comments. But didn't try to argue with him. Then when he calmed down, I could give him a little bit of information. Finally, at the end he said, "You're pretty good." (laughs) That was such a nice reinforcement to me, the value of that. Just listening and letting them vent and not trying to convince them otherwise. Because that's what my boss had told me – a people are going to be angry, and you just need to let them talk to you. Don't argue with them, you know, if you can, give them some information to help them understand.

Deanne Adams: Of course, today, there's no one who questions whether a car should drive into the park it's so busy. But even, I think, within 10 years, it was pretty well-accepted, because that's such a limited road.

Brenna Lissoway: Mm hmm. Mm hmm. So, what were your first impressions of working for the National Park Service?

Deanne Adams: I liked it a lot. I had good supervisors. Stan Albright was a state director. Tom Ritter was the person who hired me. I'm not sure exactly what his job was. As a young person, I had no idea what I was getting into, what the structure was. But he was sort of like, I think, you know, a director of operations or something like that. It wasn't a state office then. It wasn't a regional office, actually, it was under the Pacific, out of Seattle. So, it's changed structure over the year.

Deanne Adams: But my impressions. I felt very welcome. I enjoyed learning about the parks. Because again, I didn't even know anything about national parks at that point. It's kind of embarrassing as I got older, you know, worked with all these people who would have died to work for the Park Service, and here I got in, I didn't even know about the Park Service. (laughs) I knew about federal government, but I didn't know about that particular agency. So, I feel so lucky that I got that first job. They were very supportive of me getting some training, and encouraging me to stay in the service, and working with my school schedule to some extent. By the time of my last year when I was close to graduation, I actually ended up working a few less hours with the Park Service so I could just get that thing done.

Brenna Lissoway: So, this was a permanent job?

Deanne Adams: It was a permanent job. Yeah. So, it was a clerk/typist job, like a GS-4. Eventually I was a park tech. Those were in the days when we had the tech and the ranger both. What they did was, I think it was 1975, they sent me to Albright [Training Center] for ranger skills. So, it was a huge investment, you know, in my future at that time. You know, just the power of a supervisor who can change your career is incredible. I was a clerk/typist, and they got me in that park tech so that I could go to ranger

skills training. Then when I came back, they put me into this regional intake program so I could go work at Denali, as a ranger, and that really launched my career after that.

Brenna Lissoway: What was the Albright ranger skills training like for you?

Deanne Adams: Oh, that was fabulous. If I could have a pause.

Brenna Lissoway: Sure. Hold on. [pause] Okay, we're continuing. Tell me about Albright.

Deanne Adams: It was a huge impact on me, going to Albright. First of all, I'm an Alaskan girl that had not really been out of the state much. I never lived out of the state. I didn't know many people, growing up in that little town, when we moved to Anchorage in 1969, I was a senior in high school, and it was a big shock for our whole family. So, going to Albright, you know, it wasn't too much longer after moving from this tiny little town in some recent time. I was used to Anchorage and everything by then. But just that exposure to people from all over the country was an eye opener.

Deanne Adams: And then the training; I'm so sad that we've had a big long gap where we didn't do that training. I think the Fundamentals stuff has been successful in catching up in the recent years, but I had such a great foundation on what the Park Service was about and what conservation was about. In fact, I'm so naïve in some ways that I was greatly influenced by all this idealism. I remember after we'd been there just a couple of weeks, some of my co-students suggested we go into the Grand Canyon Village along the rim and go to the bar. (laughs) I was shocked! There's a bar in a national park? That just didn't seem right. (laughs) Of course, I know a lot more now. But I really was greatly influenced by that training. I was a clean slate for them to write on about getting me to feel very strongly about conservation and what we can do in the agency.

Deanne Adams: I was thinking in our little break there, I felt like Park Service was a family right away partly because of my dad being BLM, because BLM definitely felt like a family. We didn't know that many people where we were, but in the summer, my dad had a real strong team of smoke jumpers that we got to know well that came through every year. So, they were like our big brothers. Then his bosses would come out enough that Mom and Dad were both real comfortable with them and they treated us like a family. When we got into Anchorage, we still had those connections. So, I think I was primed for of course the Park Service would be like a family, too.

Brenna Lissoway: That's interesting.

Deanne Adams: Yeah. Yeah.

Brenna Lissoway: Is there any particular course or experience or instructor that sticks out in your mind from your—

Deanne Adams: Well, Bill Wade was there. Bill and Karen Wade, and they were wonderful, both of them. I think Karen was a bigger influence on me than Bill in a lot of ways. But they both were just so kind and very nurturing.

So many of us were pretty young and new to the Park Service. Some people were much more experienced. Stu Croll was my advisor. He was helpful. He paid attention to each of us that were in his group. So, it was a nice combination of people. Oh, Boyd Evison was the superintendent, and he's another, just a wonderful mentor, in a distant way. I met him again when we were in Alaska, when he was up there, and knew him a little bit over the year, but he wasn't an immediate mentor. Even Bill and Karen Wade, I didn't stay in touch with them. You know, hooked up with them again later. But the early influences that stayed with me, and lessons that, I think just the way they acted with the students was as much an influence as the information that we were getting. Those were the days when we read Edward Abbey some and had speakers who challenged us about wilderness, the ethics, and had us think about these different situations.

Deanne Adams: I don't feel like I was ever as educated in all that as some others who were really passionate about conservation. I was more moderate in my beliefs and my advocacy. But, in my own way.

Brenna Lissoway: Uh huh. Sure. Sure. So, during this period, did you kind of get a sense of how your Park Service career might progress? Or what you were interested in doing with the Park Service?

Deanne Adams: You know, yeah, I did. That's where I really got exposed to interpretation. Before I went to that training, my boss had had me doing some education things with other agencies. It was a cooperative thing in Anchorage, so it was working with the school kids. I'd never done anything like that, so I just was kind of learning when I was out there with other people. So, you know in hindsight, I'm sure our techniques and things were pretty rough. But it was an outdoor experience thing for the kids. So, we would take them, show them how to rappel, different things, just to get them outside and know what outdoor recreation could do for them. So, I had that little vague beginning there.

Deanne Adams: I'm sure through my boss Tom Ritter, he was in interpretation, that he encouraged me to look at that professions. Because when I went down, you know, it's a long way to go to Grand Canyon from Anchorage and very expensive for the agency. So, I went to ranger skills and then I had a week that I worked at Albright and just stayed there, and then a three-week interpretation class, interpretive skills. So, it definitely was strongly influenced by that point. I knew that that's what I wanted to do was interpretation and education. It was some great folks that were in that class that had more experience than I did and got me thinking about what interpretation could do.

Brenna Lissoway: And what was the composition of your class?

Deanne Adams: You know, percentage of women/men I can't remember now, but there were a fair number of women. I don't know if it was as much as half, but it could have been. I didn't feel special, you know, that I was there as a woman and in those other circumstances – like being a first woman chief

of interpretation at Shenandoah, that sticks in my mind for being a female. But I don't remember that at all for Albright, so I think there were enough women coming along by then. Age-wise, I think mostly, I have the impression that most of them were a little bit older than me, but not a lot. And there were some people that had a lot more experience that was kind of intimidating to me because I just didn't know what they knew.

Deanne Adams: One person I remember was Tim Setnicka, who was, I think he was in the Tetons at that point. He [was] just one of those guys who had lots of confidence. He had lots of ranger skills. And I was thinking that Ralph Tingey was in that class, too. So, he and [Tim?] were the same. I've known Ralph since then, but I'm pretty sure he was in my ranger skills class.

Deanne Adams: And then Corky Mayo, who was the national chief of interpretation, was in there. So, they are all older than me, but not by a lot. Corky's probably five or ten years at the most older than me. But that's enough when you're young for experience. Five years more experience than me was a lot of experience.

Brenna Lissoway: So, you worked with the regional office for another couple of years after you completed Albright. Is that right?

Deanne Adams: Yeah. That's right.

Brenna Lissoway: And then how did you transition into your next Park Service position?

Deanne Adams: So that was where my boss--I came in from Albright. I had these new skills. They got me this regional intake program. So, I was a park tech when I came back from Albright, and they got me a park ranger job in this intake program. They had to do a special effort to do that. So again, I just go back to the power of a supervisor, in the right environment. There are sometimes in the Park Service where they wouldn't have been able to do that, but at that point, those were tools that they had. They felt that I would be a good Park Service person, and they wanted me to continue in that career.

Deanne Adams: So, they set up with Denali. I'm not sure anymore, really, what the arrangements were, because I know so much more now about what could have been. I don't think I was permanently transferred at first. I think that later that was a permanent transfer to Denali.

Brenna Lissoway: So, it was more of a detail?

Deanne Adams: I think so. But as it turns out, so I went there in '77, the summer of '77, to Denali. GS-5, park ranger. That was a life-changing experience for me. Because I was away from home for the first time, even though Anchorage was just five hours away, and a whole bunch of people I didn't know. It was one of those special times that some of us have in our careers where the right set of people were there. My supervisor was Bill Truesdale who's retired out of Joshua Tree. He was a little motherly with this young girl coming in who didn't have a lot of park experience. So he was trying to

figure out how much he could delegate to me, and how much he could let me do. He did pretty good. I was a district interpreter and there was another district interpreter, so we worked together in the winter and in the summer we kind of alternated between east and west districts. Great seasonals that came in, and more experienced than me in interpretation. So again, one of those kind of intimidating things where I'm supposed to know enough to supervise. I had my three-week training at Albright, so at least I had the structure for what interpretation does. But if I knew at the end of my career, the new ways we taught interpretation, if I'd known that when I was at Denali, it would have been a way different experience. But it was still fun. I just kind of learned by the seat of my pants again. I didn't take any biology in college. I was an anthropology major, and a lot of social science kind of classes. So, going to Denali, even though I was raised in Alaska, I didn't know the names of all those plants. So, some of the long-term seasonals were teaching me that. So, I actually, the first year, the first summer, I did a lot of programs and a lot of studying. Going back to Denali right after we moved back here, it's amazing what came back from that, 40 years ago. It's incredible how your brain can hold that stuff. (laughs)

Brenna Lissoway: So, what were some of the challenges that you had in that position?

Deanne Adams: I think the biggest challenge was being a supervisor. I was a GS-5 and I was supervising seasonals, so I was a permanent. But the seasonals almost all had more experience than me. Most of them were okay with that, but there were a couple that were much more experienced, and they really weren't happy about me telling them anything about their programs. (laughs)

Deanne Adams: But I tell you, one of the best things that helped me was the superintendent when I got there was Dan Kuehn. He and his wife are really just good people, good to all the staff. It was a somewhat small staff in those days. I remember I had to evaluate this one long-term interpreter. He would go between Denali – it was McKinley in those days, Mount McKinley—between McKinley and Yosemite. He had this good bear program put together, but it was really Yosemite-focused. Then he adapted it some for Denali. So, I had done an audit and tried to give him some feedback. He wasn't interested in my feedback. So, I was a little questioning myself.

Deanne Adams: I just happened to be having a social night at the superintendent's house. It was just me; he and his wife had had me over for dinner. He was asking me, you know, how's it going? So, I told him this experience. There was nothing the interpreter had done wrong to me. You know, he didn't mistreat me, but I could tell he's not receptive to what I was saying, and I wasn't confident about what I was saying.

Deanne Adams: So when I told Dan, he didn't talk about any particulars, but he just said, "If your instinct, if you are feeling like this was not a good program, there's something to that feeling and you need to pay attention to it and

figure out what were the pieces that are not working in the program. So, pay attention to your feelings, to your reactions, because there's something to them."

Deanne Adams: That really helped me a lot in all of my supervisory stuff, to not disregard that feeling, because I would tend to disregard it because I didn't understand where it was coming from. Why do I feel this way? But once he said that to me, then I would start exploring that a little more, and see if I could pin down something, and it really did work. Especially for interpretation. If I would say to myself, I can't even think of an example. But when I would hit on the right scenario or words that would feel right to me then, then I knew that's where I needed to explore more.

Deanne Adams: But skipping forward to the way future, right before I left the Park Service, I was way involved with that interpretation competencies. I could have been such a better supervisor for interpreters if I had those tools; the feedback would have been way different. So, you know, it wasn't harmful to me or the interpreters, but it was part of the evolution of our interpretation program. Our profession.

Brenna Lissoway: Right. What was it like to live at Denali?

Deanne Adams: Man, that's a big story there. My life and my husband. That's where I met my husband, Tony Sisto. He was also an intake, but at the national level. He came in the fall of '77. So, I had a summer there first before he came. It was a real two-year detail; we only had money for that long, so we knew he would have to leave in two years. Anyway, that community at that time, it's way different today. We had, we talk about the typical things, obviously no cell phones. But even the phones we had at our houses were party line. We took turns answering the phone at night for the park. Yeah, I can't think now if I had my own phone or if it was just the park phone. The phone would ring at, oh, let me see, I have to think this through. So, if it was eight o'clock on the east coast, the phone would ring at four o'clock in the morning, and it would be my turn to answer. I'd tell this person from the east coast, uh, it's only four o'clock here and there's nobody here to answer your questions. And then they'd call back at six o'clock. (laughs)

Deanne Adams: So, it was a small, small staff. Small community in the whole area. There were people who lived along the road right outside the park, and it was very much integrated then. So, in the park, we had our park housing and a community center. In the wintertime, this is what I just loved so much about those days, is that we would show movies in that community center and we had a club where we took turns selecting the movies that we would order. You know, 16 millimeters. I'm pretty sure that the community, the people that weren't working for the Park Service were also part of that club. They certainly would come to the movies, and I think they could pick out movies, too. I don't remember all the details anymore. But what a

great way in the winter, we would get together and have popcorn and stuff and socialize once a week. A big deal in the wintertime.

Deanne Adams: By the time I left, the VCRs were starting to come in already, so that was changing. Eventually the Park Service didn't use that building anymore for community things, and there was a community center built outside the park. But it really changed the dynamics of that park people and non-park people interaction.

Deanne Adams: But the other thing that was a big impact there was it used to be that the train would come through daily in the summer, but in the winter, it would only come twice a week, and that's how we got our mail was by train so it was a huge social event. Every Sunday and every Tuesday, I think, we would gather at the train depot and wait for the mail to be sorted. The lobby would just be full of people, just come in, sit around, talk to each other, and wait for the mail to be sorted. That doesn't happen anymore. The mail gets delivered daily, I think, by truck or something. I'm not sure how it works. I think a lot of people still mourn that, that that was such a good winter ritual as far as getting people together, because, you know, you're spread out. Within the park housing, we were all pretty close together, but then the people who live outside the park, it's not that far, but still, you can't walk to each house very easily. So, meeting at the train depot and post office was a good thing to do.

Brenna Lissoway: Huh.

Deanne Adams: Oh.

Brenna Lissoway: No. Go ahead.

Deanne Adams: So, the other huge impact on [me], my husband Tony and I met there. Romanced through till he had to leave. We knew he was going to have to leave, and we decided yeah, we'd get married. So, he left for Yellowstone and I stayed for another summer, and then we got married. He came back up and we got married. But so anyway, we had two years together there. And besides the people, which was a big influence on us – I mean, we're still friends with a lot of those people from that time – was dogsledding. So here I grew up in McGrath, and those were the days when dogsledding was kind of out of favor. In Alaska history, just slowly people weren't using dogs as much. They were using snow machines.

Deanne Adams: So, in Denali, they've kept that dog kennel alive all these years. I guess we were reading the admin history this summer of Denali. I got there the summer of '77, and Tony that fall, and I think it was just like two years before that the superintendent had hired dog handler Sandy Kogl and they were making a deliberate push to strengthen the dog kennels and start using them very seriously in the back country in the winter. They'd always had an interpretive program. Well, we showed up there and we just thought that's the way it always was. I didn't even know that until just this

year, that it was a big change for the park. That we just happened in at the same time.

Deanne Adams: So, we got to go take the dogs out in the wintertime. It was labeled a patrol. It was partly that, just checking to see what's going on, but the way we used the dogs a lot was picking up piles of garbage that the backcountry rangers had accumulated in the summer. So, they'd be out, and they'd find oil barrel drums or whatever, and bring them to the river edge. Then we'd go out, and of course the rivers are frozen in winter. We'd take the dogs out on the river and load up the sled with all the garbage and get it out to a more accessible place that it could be picked up in the summer, along the roads or something. A very exciting job. (laughs)

Brenna Lissoway: Yeah, no, it's a unique job, for sure.

Deanne Adams: Yes. Yes.

Brenna Lissoway: How did the visitation change while you were there? What was the visitation like? Who was coming?

Deanne Adams: You know, I think today there's probably a lot more international visitors. But the visitation to us seemed really busy in the summer. The structures were not adequate even then. So, at the entrance area by the creek is the campground, and that's where we have our visitor center, was a double wide trailer. I'm trying, you know, thinking of what kind of visitors we had. Because I worked at that trailer for two summers, part of the time and part of the schedule. A lot of people drove up from the lower 48, so there were a lot of non-Alaskans. I don't know if even then if, what percentage of people were Alaskans. But I guess my impression is that a lot of them were. Because I do remember talking a lot to people about their safety, and trails.

Deanne Adams: So, this is something, I love this for thinking of how you're influenced by your environment. I was so perplexed by people who would want to know where the trails were. I would explain we don't really have trails. You know, it's tundra. We don't need trails. People were so uncomfortable with that. So then when I finally started working at other parks, I understood, because if you don't have a trail in Yosemite some places, you couldn't even walk anywhere. You could, you know, up in the Tuolumne Meadows. So that made sense to me later. But I just couldn't get it. (laughs) As an Alaskan trying to explain to people, why are you so nervous that there's no trails? That's okay.

Brenna Lissoway: That's interesting.

Deanne Adams: Yeah. Yeah. And then the bear safety thing was a big one. I think that's one thing that has, well, it's changed a little bit now. But it was nice to be able to say to people we've never had a bear fatality, a bear killing a human in the park. The injuries that we've had have all been photographers getting too close. Or, in one circumstance, it was just some poor soul who got between a sow and a cub not knowing it. But it was all

warning whacks by the bears and didn't kill them. So that was nice to--if you just follow some rules, simple rules -- Don't get close to bears; if you see bears, get out of the way – and you'll be okay. But people are very nervous about bears. So, yeah, you're asking about what visitation was like.

Brenna Lissoway: Mm hmm. What about mountaineering and that scene?

Deanne Adams: Oh, yeah. So, I wasn't too involved with mountaineering stuff. I was only involved in giving information. That was in a time when the park was, I think, slowly moving towards having the real presence of the mountaineering staff in Talkeetna, which is way south of park headquarters. The things that I do remember that were kind of fascinating is we had a radio in headquarters that was used for communicating with the mountaineers. It's pretty amazing to think of. No cell phones, of course, and no satellite phones. So if there was a rescue needed, then all around headquarters there would be a lot of activity, because trying to get that communication going between the mountaineers, the mountain climbers that were up there and us, and then our mountaineering staff trying to communicate with whoever was going to perform a rescue, National Guard or the Army or whoever. So, I don't know, I don't know too much about it. Because that activity would be right at headquarters. For two summers I was out in the west end of the park, so I wasn't even in that building to hear that activity. It was all kind of secondhand information of what was going on with rescues.

Deanne Adams: At the visitors center we usually wouldn't have people coming in there to ask about mountaineering, because Talkeetna is the place you fly out of to get to, the base to start your climb. So, we didn't see many mountaineers where we were. That's why the Park Service had I think a seasonal ranger in those days that would be down at Talkeetna, or probably a couple, at least. Then they were supervised from headquarters. But now there's a whole visitors' center there, and the district is based there, and it's a huge support area. It makes a lot of sense that they're there.

Brenna Lissoway: Do you have a favorite place in the park?

Deanne Adams: Oh, I don't know. Not a place that I went back and hiked all the time. I guess in some ways, there's a place that's just beyond the Savage River checkpoint, which is where the cars have to stop, so you take a bus. And Primrose Ridge was a nice hiking area just past there, and that's probably where I hiked the most, because it was pretty accessible. You didn't have to drive too far. You get on the bus it takes forever to get there. (laughs) When you have two days off, you can suck up a whole bunch of one day just being on the bus, and then have to take the bus back. So that's probably why I did Primrose more often, because it wasn't too far out.

Deanne Adams: When I lived out in the west end in the summer, we lived in Toklat and hiked around Toklat. Those were the, and then Eielson visitors center, that was a wonderful place to hike, because it was all tundra and you could get

up high. If it was a clear day, the mountains are right there. You could see it in its full glory, and you'd be totally blown away by it. (laughs)

Brenna Lissoway: Do you have any wildlife stories from your time in Denali?

Deanne Adams: It's amazing that I have not had any wildlife encounters in parks. The only one that I think of, it wasn't much of an encounter, but just shows how big those bears are. I was driving really slow in my own car, and this bear, this grizzly, poked his head out of the bushes. I about died of fright. I mean, I'm in the car, I'm okay. But those things are so huge, and the ones in Denali are not as big as the ones on the coast. I never had a problem with a bear. I could see them far enough away. I would stay away.

Deanne Adams: Growing up at McGrath, I'd had an experience, not close, with a moose. I was walking home and saw this moose in our front yard in the winter, and went around the other side of the house to get in. She had moved by then, so she was on the other side. We had a detached garage, and I went inside and waited for my folks to miss me. So, they finally called where I was, and I had left an hour ago. So, Dad came out to the garage to get the car, and there I was! (laughs) That's my moose encounter.

Brenna Lissoway: Yeah. Yeah.

Deanne Adams: Otherwise, I had one small wildlife encounter. We had a great cat. He was a part Maine coon cat, had been left at the campground. Tony and I shared him before we got married, and his name was Herbie. So, all of my park friends know Herbie. He was in my kitchen, and I had some friends there. I was at work. My friends were in the kitchen. There's this little crack in the window. A squirrel came up on the other side, and Herbie could smell him, because there's a crack in the window. And he just plunged through the glass, broke it, grabbed the squirrel, brought him inside. (laughs)

Brenna Lissoway: That's a tough cat.

Deanne Adams: And the squirrel got away. But he was not happy. He didn't have that squirrel that he wanted. That's my wildlife experience. (laughs)

Brenna Lissoway: Anything else about your Denali years that you want to talk about?

Deanne Adams: They were such great years. They formed what I – that's my touchstone in the Park Service. I worked in regional offices for a big chunk of my career. My Denali time and my Shenandoah time, to some extent, is what kept me grounded on what parks need. You know, it was a powerful time for me to be in that park. I don't think of anything offhand to add.

Brenna Lissoway: So why did you leave? And where did you go?

Deanne Adams: I got married. (laughs) That was 1980, and those were the days when people—

[END OF TRACK 1]

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Deanne Adams: —were living together pretty easily. But I'd never lived outside the state, and I was going to leave my family. So, Tony and I talked about, he got transferred to Yellowstone. I just couldn't imagine going down there and not knowing anybody and being the ranger's girlfriend. So, he didn't propose, and I didn't propose, but we just talked about it and decided yeah, we should get married. So, I had my summer of 1980 in the park while he was in Yellowstone. In that winter, February or so of '80, I went down to Yellowstone, and just kind of re-checking with each other if this is really what we want to do. I loved Yellowstone.

Deanne Adams: So, came back, and he flew up, and in September we got married. I drove down with a friend of mine, and he flew back to go to work.

Deanne Adams: So, you know, Park Service career things, this was a big learning time for us, because what I did was, I quit the Park Service. Took my retirement money out, put it in an IRA. I wasn't sure I'd ever be able to work for the Park Service again, but I wanted to. So, we just thought that was the way to do it. So, I quit my job and—

Brenna Lissoway: Were there no opportunities for you at Yellowstone?

Deanne Adams: When I got down there, then I tried. But these were the traditional Yellowstone years of if you wanted to be in interpretation, you should have a degree in geology to talk about interpretation about geysers. I didn't have that. So, no. Tony was based at Old Faithful, so that was my choice to work would be at Old Faithful. I didn't ever get a Park Service job. But the lesson for me –Tony and I, I feel like we were mentors to a lot of dual-career couples for the rest of our lives, because we learned so much. What we learned, because in our whole career, then we would take turns getting jobs. So, I followed him to Yellowstone, and then the next time was, he followed me back to Fairbanks. Then he had to go through the same thing I did, looking for a job. But what we had learned by then was don't quit. He was able to work a deal with Yellowstone to go on intermittent, and they kept him on the rolls. So, it was a lot easier, then, for him to get picked up by the Park Service at a new place. And that's what I did, the next time was my turn. So that's the way we did it for the rest of our career.

Deanne Adams: So not working for the park, not having a connection was one problem. But also, I didn't know anybody outside of Alaska. So not even having a connection with a Park Service person that might help pave the way for me to get some kind of job with the Park Service was a disadvantage in that.

Brenna Lissoway: Was dual careers, that was not a formal kind of program or talked about in the Park Service at that point, right?

Deanne Adams: At that point, it was not. It's something that ANPR got involved in quite a bit later. And that was a nice term to have, because it helped us help dual

career couples. Yeah, yeah. There's more around that. So, I forget what the question was.

Brenna Lissoway: So what did you end up doing in Yellowstone? (laughter)

Deanne Adams: Oh, yes. Okay. What did I end up doing? I ended up working for the concessioner. So, here's another nice little link with Albright is that when I was with all these idealistic rangers, there was a real bias against the businesses that were in parks. I had no opinion of that before Albright, but I was developing that bias, too, of people who, you're making money off the park – this is perception – that the decisions you're making are based on money, not based on the good of the park, while the Park Service is there for the good of the park.

Deanne Adams: So, I was a little nervous about working for a concessioner. I did luck out because my job was with TW Services, and they'd just taken over from the old YP Company just the year before. And YP, at the end of their time, they were pretty bad. So, it was poor service, and the stories I heard from my concessions friends later was oh, I would have been very disillusioned if I'd been hired by them, you know.

Brenna Lissoway: This was the Yosemite Park Company?

Deanne Adams: Yellowstone.

Brenna Lissoway: I'm sorry, Yellowstone Park Company.

Deanne Adams: The Yellowstone Park Company. So, TW Service was new to the park, and they were very customer service oriented. The upper level people were very much corporate people, and not necessarily very nice people. But, man, the people that I worked with were there because of the park. They loved the park. They were just as committed as the Park Service people. That was another big change for me to. I mean, it was a recent bias I'd developed, so it wasn't like this deep bias I had. But I totally changed my perception of businesses and parks, and they liked having me because I could explain to them some of why the Park Service did things in some way. Because, you know, it could be very onerous to them: Why do we have to follow the Park Service rules? So, I played this intermediate role which I really liked.

Deanne Adams: I started out – I think the first winter, it was very hard to get a job in the winter – but there is a lodge open, Old Faithful Lodge, in the wintertime. I was a hostess and a cashier. Then the next summer I got hired as a front desk clerk at Old Faithful Inn. What a just a fun, fun place. But I had a lot of other experience. So, I got promoted after just a few weeks to a front desk manager at the Snow Lodge for the summer. From there, the same summer, then I went to be the first location manager of Grant Village Hotel, which had just opened, just the two buildings. So, big changes for me and a way different career. But still, supervision was a big part of it, and I'd learned a lot by then from my Denali experiences. But I learned a lot more with TW Services and had some wonderful mentors, one of

whom was Bill Almond, who's the marketing director here at the YMCA of the Rockies. (laughs) All these connections.

Brenna Lissoway: Yeah.

Deanne Adams: It turns out I was there for about five years. I managed Grant Village one summer, and then worked as an assistant manager at Old Faithful Snow Lodge in the wintertime. For Bill. Bill was the manager. I think I did that two winters, and then I was the manager for one winter. Tony got transferred up to Tower Ranger Station, so I moved up there with him and managed the Roosevelt Lodge, which is just a little small lodge right next to Tower and it was so fun. It's a cool little place, and it had a horse operation. Horses have never been my thing. The wranglers and I came to a quick agreement that yeah, I didn't know anything, that their boss was in Mammoth, and that's okay. (laughter)

Deanne Adams: And then our last summer, I got a job managing the Mammoth Hotel. But then got a job, a Park Service job that took me back to Alaska.

Brenna Lissoway: So, you lived all over Yellowstone.

Deanne Adams: We did, yeah. It's funny, in our married life together, until we moved to the regional office in San Francisco, we figured that we lived together about half of our married time. So even though we were in Yellowstone together for six years, we didn't live together a lot of times. So, when I was managing Old Faithful Snow Lodge in the winter, Tony was at Mammoth, and it's a big old long snowmobile ride to get there. I think it was an hour and a half. So, I'd see him on the weekends, because I worked six days a week. So, I didn't go anywhere. Yeah, we, and then when I lived at Grant Village, Tony still was at Old Faithful. Then we lived at Tower and Mammoth, because Tony at the end worked for the chief ranger's office in Mammoth. We actually lived in two places at Mammoth. We moved all these places.

Deanne Adams: I have a good story to tell you, too, of after we left Old Faithful. But at Mammoth, we lived in a little house, Lower Mammoth, and then we also lived in one of the officers' quarters up in the main level of Mammoth. They'd taken these officers' houses and divided them in four, kind of like apartments. They're beautiful houses. The superintendent has one all to himself or herself. They're huge.

Deanne Adams: We're a legend in the Park Service for this story. When Tony left Alaska to move to Yellowstone, he went to Old Faithful and he was just in a trailer, and there was no room. He got there in the winter, so they couldn't move his stuff into the trailer. So, they paid for storage in Bozeman. And then summer came and [we] realized well, this stuff is not going to fit in this little trailer anyway, so the Park Service authorized he could store it until he got to a bigger place. Well, that didn't happen until we were moving to Tower, which was a couple years later.

Deanne Adams: So, he called up the storage company and said, you know, I have a place now, can we set up a time where you can move my stuff? They said, "Oh, Mr. Sisto, we've tried to get a hold of you for several months. All the letters come back to us, so we auctioned off all your stuff." (laughter)

Brenna Lissoway: The perils of a transient living situation.

Deanne Adams: It turned out that the regional office wasn't paying the bills. Just a real bad slip-up that they just returned these letters, or actually some of them accepted and just didn't do anything with it. They just didn't follow up. So, you know, we filed a tort claim and Tony got some money out of it. Most of the stuff, it didn't matter. We were young enough in our careers we didn't have a lot of stuff. It was his stuff – he had moved – and my stuff came down at another time. But you know, he had his grandmother's afghan and those kind of things, photos.

Deanne Adams: Then the follow-up story was the next year he was in Bozeman at a movie theater and saw a friend. At the intermission, his friend came up to him and said, "I'm at this movie with a friend who thinks he has some of your stuff." (laughs) This guy had gone to the silent auction, bought a box of books, got a ranger hat. I forget what else. It says Tony Sisto inside these books. And so, when she'd said to him, "This is my friend Tony Sisto," he said, "Tony Sisto? I have books. I thought the guy had died." (laughs)

Brenna Lissoway: Wow. Wow.

Deanne Adams: Yes.

Brenna Lissoway: Any other bureaucratic stories like that that you have in your career? I mean, things that were difficulties or challenges or, because of working for a federal agency or bureaucracy? Maybe something will come to you as we're going along.

Deanne Adams: Yes, right. Yeah.

Brenna Lissoway: So, what was the community like at Yellowstone?

Deanne Adams: Yeah.

Brenna Lissoway: Similar? Different?

Deanne Adams: Another big change for us, Actually Denali and Yellowstone were the only two parks that Tony and I worked at together. So, for the rest of our careers, we were in different things. At the end, we worked at the regional office together. So that was our last time for building that really strong community. It [Yellowstone] was different from Denali because it was mixed. Because the people I knew were concession employees. The people Tony knew were park employees. We ended up developing really good friendships with some of the concession folks, and that's who Tony socialized with, too, so it was a different setup. It was, and for me, my feeling of family there was the concession employees. And a lot of Tony, too. But he, because he was working Park Service, he had really good relationships with the people he worked with. And I knew them to less

extent. I worked six days a week when I was working, so I didn't get to socialize with his staff as much as he could with mine.

Brenna Lissoway: Was the relationship between the concessioner and the Park Service generally good? Bad? Indifferent?

Deanne Adams: I think generally good. I mean, especially with TW Services, the change was such a stark contrast with the Yellowstone Park Company having gone downhill so much. Tony was in concessions later, so he could speak to this better than I could. But my understanding is that the Park Service hadn't done a good job with enforcing the contract with YP Company. So, you know, facilities were going downhill. The story that really stuck in my mind with one of my colleagues who'd worked for YP Company was he'd worked as a waiter in those last years. He said, you know, the last year in particular, we had nothing for food; it was just like TV dinners. He said you'd take the food out and you'd give it to the visitor and you'd never go back and say, "How's your meal?" Because they'd look at you like, what do you mean? This is horrible!

Deanne Adams: So, for the Park Service, I think, the contrast was just so huge. Here's this new company coming in, really focused and talking to the Park Service. And the Park Service was doing a better job of auditing and doing the concession work that they should have been doing all the time for keeping on top of the contract. So brand new contract. You know, it's just a different relationship.

Deanne Adams: I actually ended up being friends with one of the concession specialists. Being somewhat, not friends with her so much there at Yellowstone, but acquaintances. And liked her when she was doing the inspections, and then we became good friends because she was at Shenandoah when I was at Shenandoah, [with the] Park Service. So, I learned a lot more about concessions at Shenandoah. So, I think I felt like the relationship was pretty good. I think there definitely was the bias on many field staff, the park rangers' part, that concessioners were not as good as Park Service morally. (laughs) You know, that really is the way that it would come across. Concession staff knew that and resented it because they loved the park just as much as anybody, and they wanted to see it taken care of, too. All of us who were working for the concession weren't the ones making the big bucks. It's corporations that do that.

Deanne Adams: So, at the ground level, we could make sure that things were done well so it wasn't impacting the park visitors' experience. I had a lot of authority as a manager to be able to right a wrong. If someone had a bad experience with a room or a meal or something, I did have the authority to take care of that, and that helped a lot for feeling like we were providing good visitor services.

Brenna Lissoway: Were there any efforts by the concessioner at that point to engage in interpretative activities?

Deanne Adams: Not at that point, yeah. I think that came later. Well, that's not entirely true. Because when I was at Roosevelt, that's what the wranglers did. And that was the part I got involved with them, I didn't get involved with the horse part. But they were supposed to talk to visitors. When they're taking them out in the wagons, we would have a barbecue thing so you could take this wagon ride out to this little place and have a table set up. So the wranglers were supposed to talk to people and they were supposed to sit at the table with them and talk to them. It was pretty entertaining. (laughs) Most of them were there because of the horses, not the people. Some of them were good storytellers. You know, they were a good match. So that was the closest at that point. The concessioner was providing those kind of supposedly interpretive experiences. A lot different today.

Brenna Lissoway: Any other experiences from your Yellowstone time, or people that really influenced you in your career going forward?

Deanne Adams: Well, you know, I had referenced Bill Almond before. He wasn't my supervisor; he was another location manager. But he had more experience than I did, and he was a mentor to me for supervision. The one incident that really sticks in my mind was I had, still pretty young and naïve. I'm one of those people that likes to believe in the best in people, and the downside to that is I don't anticipate poor behavior. (laughs) So I had one guy that I, employee, that I had to talk to about poor behavior. He was older than me by quite a bit. His wife came with him. And dummy that I was, I let her come in with him. You know, just basic, you know, supervisory things you learn. She should have never come in. She was not the employee, he was. I even forget what the situation was, but I had to be really firm with him and it was very stressful, and I did fine. He left. Bill called me, just called me to see how things were going, and I burst into tears on the phone. (laughs) And oh, he didn't know what to do about it. But he talked to me, listened to me. And then when I saw him in person we could talk more. And he gave me some little advice. First of all, don't let the wife come in with the employee. Oh, okay. (laughs)

Brenna Lissoway: Yeah. What else did he tell you? Do you recall?

Deanne Adams: I don't. I think he was just kind of a sounding board for me. So, when I could give examples of something that happened, that he could help me through it. I tell you; those jobs were so intense. One of the biggest memories I have, at Mammoth, which is a big property, that I had a notebook with me. When I would walk around, I would go to food and beverage, and I would walk across the street, go into the lodging. And people would stop me all the time, my staff, ask questions or tell me concerns. I had to stop and write that down. When they would talk to me it would be something very urgent, something I needed to take care of that day. Then 10 minutes later, somebody else would grab me, and that first thing would go right out of my head. You know, looking back on it, it was so intense. But I learned some organizational skills, because otherwise, I would have been dropping the ball all over the place. So, all that

experience at Yellowstone was what got me my job at Shenandoah, as the chief of interpretation.

Brenna Lissoway: So that's where you went next?

Deanna Adams: So actually, we went back to Fairbanks.

Brenna Lissoway: Okay. So maybe talk to me a little bit about the decision to go—

Deanne Adams: To Fairbanks.

Brenna Lissoway: —to Fairbanks.

Deanne Adams: Okay. So, Tony and I had agreed, this is the whole dual-career couple thing. He was a good guy for me to marry, because I was a real, and I'm still a very strong feminist, and just very clear about wanting things equal. He's just fine with that. His mom was a feminist. (laughs) So we agreed, okay, let's take turns on who's going to get the next job.

Deanne Adams: I wanted to get back in the Park Service if I could. So, I had some connections in Alaska. They had built this brand-new interagency visitors' center in Fairbanks. It was a legislative thing that was cooperative between the state and the federal government. I applied and I got the job.

Deanne Adams: So, it was a little promotion for me from what I'd had at Denali. I was, ended that as a GS-9 in Denali and got hired as a GS-11. How do I remember these things? It's amazing. I moved up to Fairbanks first, and Tony stayed in Yellowstone for a few months. And then like I said, he just went on intermittent and came up. He had several months there where he didn't have a job. I mean, the reason he waited to get up was trying to get a job, so that it would be lined up before he moved up, and that didn't work. So, he ended up working for the regional office in Anchorage. But they let him work at the Gates [of the Arctic] office in Fairbanks. So, all these little things that the agency can do, that doesn't cost the agency anything, but allows both partners to still work for the Park Service. It just, you know, takes understanding supervisors who are willing to bend a little bit to accommodate. So, his boss had hired him in Anchorage, was fine with him working in Fairbanks and having an office space there, and then he ended up working for Gates, too.

Brenna Lissoway: Gates of the Arctic?

Deanne Adams: Yeah. So, his actual supervisor was there. His was a little more complicated than mine. I don't remember all the details. (laughs) So my job at the interagency visitors center was really fun. I was very independent. My boss was in Anchorage. I had to put together; the visitors center was built when I got there. All the exhibits were in. Some staff had been hired. Seasonal staff. But I had to do all the building of relationships with the community. So that was a new thing for me. I was going to Rotary Club meetings and got active with the chamber of commerce and convention and visitors' center's bureau, so it was a very different kind of job. I was a Park Service employee, but I had to represent eight different

agencies – five federal and three state. So, it was kind of like reporting to a board of directors. Though in reality my boss was the one who did that more than me. That was his job to keep the upper management, finance liaisons going. My job was more local, to work with the local representatives of those agencies and the information that we were providing the public about their lands.

Brenna Lissoway: And what were those relationships like between the agencies?

Deanne Adams: At the big level, everything was pretty good initially. Over time, the relationship with the state was harder because the state didn't have the money to contribute. So, the Park Service was the one that was forking out most of the money. The Park Service paid for the visitors' center and paid for my salary, and I think paid for all the salaries. I can't remember if we ever had any other agencies, because I was involved with another thing like that in Seattle. But I don't think, there were three, it ended up I think four, eventually, visitors centers in the state. The one in Tok was run by the state. But it was very different from the two Park Service ones in Anchorage and Fairbanks. Then there was one in Southeast built later, and the Forest Service did that one.

Deanne Adams: So, the relationships I had were good, because it was all local-based, and all the agencies were happy to have some central place where there was information for people to learn about their lands. We had little short videos of different places. We had an auditorium that the community could use to some extent. But you know, what was so different for me was that whole community relationship, that my job wasn't to just talk about the Park Service or to be in a park with people coming to me. I had to go out to people and tell them what we were doing and what we were offering.

Brenna Lissoway: And how did you do that? What were some of your strategies?

Deanne Adams: My biggest one was to actually get involved with, like be on a committee for the chamber of commerce. So, there was one around recycling. Just to be able to make those contacts. Then be invited to speak at different events, so that people would know we were there. Working with the media to some extent, try to get some stories. You know, there's only so far you can go with a story. It was a big story when the visitors center opened. But then, you know, you're just providing basic services. We weren't doing anything new and exciting to write about, just wanting to make sure people came to see us.

Brenna Lissoway: Was the community relationship good? Or—

Deanne Adams: Yeah. They were happy to have us there, and in downtown. They needed, you know, Fairbanks wasn't a real strong, wasn't real established with tourism then. They were just as good as anybody else in the state, but tourism was growing, so the convention and visitors' services bureau was the one I worked with a lot, to make sure we got our information to them.

They ended up directing a lot of buses to us, for example, in summer, so we'd have people coming in there to just get a nice orientation to what they were going to see in the area.

Brenna Lissoway: So, going back up to Alaska after having been there, having been at Denali, in the interim was the big push for new national parks and monuments in Alaska.

Deanne Adams: Right. Right.

Brenna Lissoway: So, all of a sudden, there's all of these new National Park Service areas.

Deanne Adams: Right. Right.

Brenna Lissoway: What was that like? Coming back to that.

Deanne Adams: There's definitely a different feeling in the state. In fact, what I forgot to say, when I was at Denali, right when all that, my last summer, was when all that happened, [January 1979]. So, there was the great Denali Trespass in Cantwell, just south of the park. These organizers, I'm trying to think if that was, because Tony was involved in that some, he was gone then, so I'd have to figure out the real date of that. Anyway, this was a group that were just protesting the expansion of Mount McKinley National Park, and it was going to take away their hunting rights, so they were going to do all of the things that they weren't going to be able to do in the new lands. This might have been for all the proposals. Because I think that all happened in 1980. So, this was probably the lead-up to that, just knowing that that was going to happen. [During transcript review, DA confirmed, "Yes, it was before the new park areas were established. The Trespass was in January 1979.]

Deanne Adams: Because the big trespass was planned, the park worked with the organizers. And said, "We don't want any fatalities or injuries around this, so let's work together and see how we can make this all happen." And so, the park wasn't going to enforce, if these guys wanted to go out and hunt in the, next to the park boundary, whatever, the park wasn't going to deal with that.

Deanne Adams: So Tony and other rangers were out there hiding in the woods, this is how we like to tell the story, they're in there in disguise, hiding in the woods, just making sure things were copacetic. And me and two other interpreters were in uniform talking, you know, walking around with these big trespass people. (laughs) And of course we didn't carry guns, which was good. But the three of us, you know, obviously I'm from Alaska and then the other two had lived in Alaska a number of years.

Deanne Adams: So, we'd go around and talk to people, and they would say, "How long have you been in Alaska?" As soon as I'd say, "Hmm, must be 25, 30 years now," and they'd say, oh. [I'd say] "How long have you been in Alaska?" No answer. (laughs) But it's a big deal in Alaska, you know, how long have you been here? Where did you grow up and when did you first come up? So, I could shut those people up real fast then. Can't now,

because I've been out of the state for 20 years. But I can still say I grew up there.

Brenna Lissoway: Yeah.

Deanne Adams: So anyway, we knew there were those big tensions. Obviously, in the Park Service, that time period, it was really tough on other communities. Around the entrance to Denali, there's a strong support for the park. There's some real conservation-minded people there, and they've got a Denali Conservation Council. Real strong support for the park.

Deanne Adams: But south, in Cantwell, when Tony, waiting for coffee around that time period, he and another ranger. And the waitress said, "Oh, where you boys from?" They said, "Oh, we're from the park. We're rangers." She said, "I'm sorry. I can't serve you." And that was a common thing. For not only Denali, well, mostly in the new areas, like Wrangells, that was a real bad place. The superintendent here, Vaughn Baker, was at Wrangells right after a lot of that hot stuff. People were mean. It was not a pleasant time.

Brenna Lissoway: Did you ever feel threatened as a Park Service employee?

Deanne Adams: I didn't. I think because Denali was an established park, so there was a huge support for it. And the people who were against the expansion, weren't people that were in the local community or that I would have been faced with. So, it was different for me. My general personal world, there was some tension. That trespass, I saw somebody from high school, and he said, "Deanne, what are you doing here?" And I'm like, "Kenny, what are you doing here?" (laughs) So, yeah, I definitely did not have the negative experience that some other people had for that time period.

Brenna Lissoway: Did the Park Service do anything in particular to prepare staff for what happened? You know, how to deal with the public, how to deal with the negative?

Deanne Adams: Hmm. That's a good question. Because I think we had some things there at Denali, but I can't remember those conversations, because I wasn't law enforcement, that was probably part of it. I think they got a lot more information than the interpreters did. Yeah, I can't remember how, if we had any help for dealing with that on the interpretation side of talking to people. Same with the Fairbanks center. We really didn't have any, you know, whatever information, whatever techniques we were using, I had kind of figured that out with my staff. This is kind of getting off the D2 lands thing. [D2 lands were the shortcut name given the newly established park areas by President Carter under Executive Order.] But in the Fairbanks visitors center, it wasn't so much people coming in and being antagonistic about the federal government. It was, we had local drunks right there. So, a whole different thing they had to deal with. You know, it was not a big picture thing; it was very small. Me trying to figure out safety for my staff. What is it that we can do and be compassionate, but also keep the staff from having to deal with some obnoxious drunk.

Deanne Adams: But the drunks were, they wanted a warm place, and they didn't want to screw it up. So, it was really interesting, my relationship with them. I'd say, "You really need to leave and take a shower. You smell so bad. And you can come back then." And they would. They would leave. They wouldn't argue. Because I'm sure they'd been arrested, you know, in other businesses. They'd come in and make the rounds and watch the videos and get warm, and then they'd go back out again. So, a whole different something having to deal with in a Park Service unit.

Brenna Lissoway: Right. Right. I'm going to pause for just a minute.

Deanne Adams: Yeah.

[END OF TRACK 2]

[START OF TRACK 3]

Brenna Lissoway: Okay. This is Brenna Lissoway interviewing Deanne Adams. This is the second segment of our interview. It's still October the 23rd, 2014. Okay, so I think we left off, you were talking about your work at the Fairbanks Interagency Visitors Center.

Deanne Adams: Right.

Brenna Lissoway: Maybe if you want to just talk about some of the accomplishments there that you're most proud of? Some of the big things that you felt like you were able to do there?

Deanne Adams: Okay. I think it was most rewarding to be able to work with those five federal agencies and three state agencies. It was a different experience for me. Even though I was fairly young in the Park Service still, I think because of my Albright training, I had that kind of a purist view of what a park was about, what Park Service work was. And that was in a park, serving visitors, and taking care of the park and people. So, to be outside a park, I had to change my mind again. Just like working for the concessioner, I'm learning about many aspects of a park experience. I think for me personally, it was another good development stage where I expanded the way I looked at parks. I think that set me up well for the international stuff later, where I saw the value of working with a community. So, it was not directly related to one particular park, but I definitely felt like an ambassador for the National Park Service.

Deanne Adams: Like we were talking about earlier, all the changes with the D2 lands, whatever, President Carter changed the law of the land, and created a lot of monuments without Congress' having to be involved was a tense time for many Alaskans. So, some of my job – I was young and I was a girl and a sweet thing, so people weren't mean to me. But there were definitely older men in the Fairbanks area who weren't too hot on the federal government. I mean, that's definitely the case today. There's a real anti-government, federal government feeling in the state. Always has been. You know, last frontier. So, I didn't have to deal with that much.

Deanne Adams: But I felt like I was a good ambassador in that I did make a difference in that community understanding more of what the National Park Service was about, and what protected areas in general were about. Because I was representing BLM and Forest Service and state parks and rec. so it was a growing experience for the community, too, I think, to know what their resources were, and being able to see the differences in management, land management philosophies and how that translated to them. A lot of times it didn't matter to them if it was Forest Service or Park Service for the things they wanted to do on that land, and sometimes it did.

Brenna Lissoway: Hmm. Interesting. Did you work at all with any native groups while you were there?

Deanne Adams: Um, not really. I'm trying to think of, no. That time period was all a big change with native groups. When I grew up, my friends were probably all Athabaskan or part Eskimo. We were taught nothing about those cultures in my high school. Here we were in a village with a true Athabaskan village not far away, Nikolai, but we didn't know anything about the culture. And then, I majored in anthropology and I learned quite a bit about native cultures and really appreciated them. So, then it's so fun to come back and there's very strong native presence now with the corporations and all. But when I was in Fairbanks, we just hadn't gotten those relationships going yet. I would be interested today to know if that same visitors center does anything with native groups that define them or whatever. But I never had too much experience besides my childhood with the native groups – and not formally as the Park Service, didn't ever have those opportunities.

Brenna Lissoway: So, from there, where did you go next?

Deanne Adams: From Fairbanks?

Brenna Lissoway: From Fairbanks.

Deanne Adams: Well, just three years in Fairbanks. Tony was working in the Gates of The Arctic office in downtown Fairbanks. He was working for Roger Siglin, and he got offered a job with the National Capitol Region in Washington, DC. He was interviewing in the office, on the phone, had the door shut, and this piece of paper came sliding underneath the door. It said, "Just say no." (laughs) Because Roger Siglin was a big wilderness guy, and he could not imagine leaving Alaska for Washington, D.C. (laughs)

Deanne Adams: So, it was a big decision for us, you know, to go to someplace like that. I mean, Tony grew up in Austin, and he was used to kind of a city environment, but I wasn't. I mean, Anchorage hardly counts as a city that way. So, I was pretty nervous about what that would be like. But I also was really curious and excited about new things that we could do. And we'd be doing it together.

Deanne Adams: So, he accepted the job. Like he did, I stayed behind in Fairbanks for a while, and he went he started the job. I came down, I forget, probably just

a couple months later. But it took me quite a while to get a job with the Park Service. You know, we'd learned our lesson. I was on intermittent employment. My supervisor in Anchorage was fine with me just staying on the rolls while I tried to find a Park Service job.

Deanne Adams: So, another interesting transition for me was that I started working for temp agencies. Boy, I'll tell you, did I have appreciation for the good jobs I had in the Park Service, and the value of being part of an organization that really has a good mission. I worked one place just for a short time for a bank. I was a really good typist, so that was the kind of job I had as like a secretary. That was so awkward and odd. Being a temp, you know, is not very rewarding. So, I didn't last there very long.

Deanne Adams: The next job was also a temp one, but it was working with software. So, I'm trying to think, I'm hesitating because I was going to back up a little bit, talk about the technology stuff. So, when Tony was in, I was unemployed, so it must be the first year I was in Yellowstone, Tony got a detail assignment back to Alaska for a few months. I went with him, and I had nothing to do because I didn't have a job.

Deanne Adams: So, we bought a Kaypro computer, and I taught myself what I could about computers. So that's what I took to my Fairbanks job was this Kaypro. It was actually at the job. So that's always been an interest, is that technology piece – and seeing I had to push myself because the agency wasn't going to be [a leader], I was ahead of the agency, you know. It was people like me that were pushing the agency that we need to get involved in this stuff.

Deanne Adams: So anyway, I loved WordPerfect. I got really good at that. And here I am in D.C. and this company that had their own database management system was looking for somebody to teach WordPerfect to staffers on the Hill. So, I, that's what I did. I taught WordPerfect classes. I also started teaching their database system. And I loved it! It was really fun. So, I got to know the Hill a little bit, through the back door.

Deanne Adams: But while I was with them, then I kept applying for Park Service jobs. I applied for Shenandoah, chief of interpretation, and got it. So, I left the temp agency.

Deanne Adams: So, the reason I got the job in Shenandoah, Paul Anderson, who was here this week, too, was the assistant superintendent. He had talked with the staff about what they wanted in a chief of interpretation. If they had someone who was a good interpreter, fine, but that was not a quality the staff was looking for. They wanted a manager who could be at the table with the other division chiefs and fully represent interpretation and get the resources that interpretation needed.

Deanne Adams: Paul interviewed me, did all the research. Here I'd had five years managing hotels in Yellowstone. That's why I got the job. It wasn't because of my interpretation background. It was because of my

management experience. It was a really good feeling to go into that park knowing that the staff supported that, because I knew I wasn't a great interpreter. You know, I had had just my three or four summers at Denali, and the last two summers, I didn't do much interpretation. I really was focused on supervision and management. So, I'd never had much field interpretation. You know, went to Yellowstone, and I didn't do it anymore. So, I knew the principles and all that, and I certainly got better with all that in my next career move. But at Shenandoah, I could audit programs and give good feedback, but I wasn't going to give programs. I was way too busy to give programs.

Deanne Adams: They wanted me to, after I got there. The staff. "Oh, yeah, it would be nice if you'd give a program every once in a while." That's not, you're not talking about a two-hour commitment. You're talking about a week commitment to be able to do the research, prep, practice, and I didn't have it as the chief of interpret—you want me to manage the program. That's my job.

Deanne Adams: So that was, on a personal level, some challenges. Because Tony started out at NCR, and then he worked for ranger activities.

Brenna Lissoway: NCR?

Deanne Adams: National Capitol Region.

Brenna Lissoway: Okay.

Deanne Adams: (laughs) So he was – what was he? I guess he was in regs with the National Capitol Region, and then got the regs job in the Washington office, in the Department of Interior building. So, he worked there in D.C., and I worked in Shenandoah.

Brenna Lissoway: And where did you live?

Deanne Adams: So, we lived in northern Virginia. We lived in Annandale, and he commuted mostly by the Metro, sometimes with his motorcycle. I used the car and commuted, drove an hour and a half to Luray for my job. But that's where my friend Robbie Brockwehl was the concessions specialist there, and she's the one that used to inspect my properties in Yellowstone. So, I worked out a deal with her that I rented a room from her. I would stay with her a couple of nights a week. So, I'd go down Monday, stay with her Monday. Go home Tuesday. So, I would have to stay with her two nights in a row sometimes, so I wasn't going back and forth. Or, only go one way a day.

Brenna Lissoway: Yeah. Yeah.

Deanne Adams: The side benefit of that was here she was a concessions specialist and we became good friends. And interpretation and concessions worked really closely together in a lot of ways.

Brenna Lissoway: How so?

Deanne Adams: A lot of it was around publication stuff. They had brochures or publications that was information about the park that they would give their visitors, so they would have us reviewing that. We were trying to establish a relationship with the concessioner, what we could plan far ahead and have time to give adequate review. Make sure the information was accurate. Then, I'm trying to think of oh, like well, special events. They would want some things where they would have park interpretive programs. So, most of it was about looking ahead, and being respectful of each other's needs. The same for the Park Service, if we had things that we would want some help from the concessioner on being able to plan ahead with them.

Deanne Adams: She would even have me do things like review the menus. Or just anything that they were printing to see if there was anything, make sure the info was accurate. But also, just that feedback from the interpretation viewpoint. You know, if there was something else that could help the concessioner do a little different job, or hook into the themes that we were trying to have. We were just starting that, you know, the concessioners weren't being required to do thematic things at that point. But we were seeing the value of that, and they were seeing the value, the concessioner was, of oh, so this is the park theme, saying that you guys are working with, what can we do with our sales items and our marketing materials that will kind of match up to what you're doing?

Brenna Lissoway: So, there was a dialog from the beginning?

Deanne Adams: There was, yeah. With so much personal related, because Robbie had good relationships with the concession managers, and I had a good relationship with her, so then we'd make that connection. I ended up being a little bit more involved with the community there, some of the chamber things. Not as much as if I would have lived there. I saw that as a real disadvantage. I would have done a lot more with the park and the community if we lived there.

Brenna Lissoway: You had mentioned earlier that you were the first female chief of interp. at Shenandoah.

Deanne Adams: First female chief. First female division chief.

Brenna Lissoway: First female division chief.

Deanne Adams: Yeah. Yeah.

Brenna Lissoway: What was that like?

Deanne Adams: It was strange. It was definitely a paternalistic feeling. You know, Bill Wade was the superintendent, and he was great. It was nice that I knew him before. You know, he and Paul were definitely totally supportive of women doing whatever. But there were, the bulk of the staff has been there a long time, including the women. So, the first thing for me was I had to, for the first time ever, only time, I had a secretary. I had one in the

regional office for a short time until we didn't need secretaries anymore. (laughs)

Deanne Adams: So, I had this secretary who could have been my mother, and she didn't know what to call me, because all the men were "mister." None of the division chiefs were called by their first name because Shenandoah is pretty Southern, and I wanted to be sensitive to that. I didn't want to be pushing my values on the women, the support staff, but I really was uncomfortable with that. I mean, my name is not "Mrs. Adams." I'm married, but that's my maiden name, you know, so I never go by that. It's "Ms. Adams." Well, they weren't sure what to do with Ms. So, ended up calling me Deanne. And they were uncomfortable with that at first. But that's—

Deanne Adams: We had a second division chief came shortly after that, Marcia Blaszak, who was the administrative officer. She ended up the regional director in Alaska. Retired up there. So that, fun time for Shenandoah to have two women division chiefs, after me being the first one.

Deanne Adams: Really, the main uncomfortableness was with the support staff, who were all women, trying to figure out what to do with me as another woman, but the boss, you know. The other men staff, my staff, they were kind of a mix from around the country. You know, typical Park Service people. It was no big deal to them that I was a woman. But the other division chiefs, that was definitely, I felt like a baby around them. The chief of maintenance had been there a long time. He was very powerful. He and Bill Wade had big power struggles, and it was around money. Bill actually ended up just finally saying, you know, taking money away from the division of maintenance and interp. got a little bit more. We didn't need a whole lot more to have a huge increase in percentage of our budget. (laughs)

Deanne Adams: Yeah, there are interesting politics. I felt very naïve about a lot of that. I'm a good relationship person, and so I worked hard at that.

Brenna Lissoway: Building personal relationships with the division chiefs?

Deanne Adams: Yes. Yes, exactly. And trying to figure out where was the common ground, and what did I need to do to work with the other divisions. Working with resource management was a big new challenge for me, because Denali wasn't in a position to do that much, and they didn't know much about what we could be doing with resource management, while in Shenandoah, cultural resources was under me at that time. Yeah. So, it shows how much priority was put on cultural resources. Not much, at that point. But by the time we left, I think cultural resources was moved over to just resources. I think before I left, it happened shortly after that.

Deanne Adams: But we really built up the [cultural resources]; that's one thing I was really proud of at Shenandoah. This was with the staff instigating this. But we put a lot more priority on the cultural resources that we had and used that as a way to strengthen our relationships with the community. Because

Shenandoah was one of those parks that was established by booting people off the land, and man, oh, man, did those resentments run deep. And there's hurtful stories, you know, of what happened to those people that lost their land.

Deanne Adams: So, we had this incredible archive of photos, and we had some amazing volunteers that continued after I left for years that catalogued those, made them accessible. We started a program, we had to kind of figure out how to do this where people could get reprints made without them having the negatives. So, having an arrangement where we could take them to a local photo shop. This was days before digital photography, of course, and scanning or anything. Talk about making friends by just letting people have copies of their family homes, and pictures of their families, even. So, they could come in and look through those photos. Because we had the negatives where we had the photos, too, so they didn't have to try to figure out the negatives.

Deanne Adams: Since I left, last time I went back there we had a really cool display, exhibit about that whole time period when people were being kicked off, and great interpretation to be able to get those stories back, and understand how the agency has changed, how we try to work with communities now compared to what we did then.

Brenna Lissoway: When did that transition happen? Did you see it happening? Where the Park Service was reaching out more?

Deanne Adams: Yeah. Right. Good question. Because I feel like, you know, just for myself, I don't know how much my changes, my evolution paralleled the agency's. I assume fairly close, but I don't know. Because I didn't have enough of that big picture for a long time, to ask those kind of questions of what other people were doing. But I remember when I was in Fairbanks that I was sent to an urban parks conference in New York City, of all things. (laughs) And that really opened my eyes there, because the urban parks work with community so much more than the traditional parks. I'm trying to remember what year I went to my first international ranger conference (I'll have to look that up. I can't remember off the top of my head here. [1997 in Costa Rica]), but that's when I started hearing other parks talk about their park has communities in it. So, they have to work with communities. And then the kinds of things that they would do with their communities.

Deanne Adams: I remember that the time period, Bill Brown wrote that book [Islands of Hope: Parks and Recreation in Environmental Crises] ages ago about, something about islands, parks and islands. So, there was that whole time where we felt like we had to hold the line and take care of the parks and really didn't involve the community much, the local opinion didn't matter, because this was a national park. There's still some of that, and there's some validity to that, too, because a national resource belongs to everybody, not just the local community. But what a difference when you

can actually work with a community and you don't need to antagonize over that. You can make a lot more friends. I mean, Rocky Mountain is a great example where the community loves this park and it's not an antagonistic relationship.

Deanne Adams: So, your question when did that stuff start happening, I see that in my time in Fairbanks. Going to that urban parks conference, to me, that was a big change, and there was a change for the Park Service to recognize the validity of urban parks, the value of them. Which, again, I hadn't really considered. I'd [unclear] worked at the regional office in San Francisco, and we did spend a lot of time at Golden Gate. I am a total convert to the value of those urban parks. No, they're not the same as a Denali or Yosemite or Yellowstone. But millions of people get a taste of a national park and what a park can do for them, and that's going to help all our parks. So, for me, that time period in Fairbanks, which we left in '85, it's when I think I see the Park Service changing more, that there was more emphasis on [unclear].

Brenna Lissoway: Interesting. Yeah. What other projects or work consumed your time at Shenandoah?

Deanne Adams: We had a lot of new exhibits coming in. But that had already started before I got there. So, one of the district interpreters was a big one who took care of that. But, because of that, I learned a lot more about Harpers Ferry Center, what they could do and that whole world of exhibits which I hadn't had much experience with before. You know, when I got to Fairbanks, exhibits were all in place. I did deal with Harpers Ferry for some AV stuff. So, each job was learning more about the resources that the Park Service had to offer.

Deanne Adams: Just the personal development piece, I felt inadequate sometimes about the exhibit world, because I hadn't dealt with that. But what I always had been good at is not being the boss who thinks they're supposed to know everything. So, knowing that I have good staff. Terry Lindsay was the guy who was doing the exhibits. He was a fantastic interpreter. We talked about them, whatever progress there was. I did what he needed me to for help. But there was no need for me to insert myself in the process and tell him what to do, pretend like I knew something about exhibits. (laughs) You know, I would feel inadequate in some ways. But also, things got done well, and my staff was very happy that I didn't get in the middle of their business when they knew what they were doing. (laughs)

Deanne Adams: So, you know, other things at Shenandoah. Actually, that is another place on the community stuff, because of my relationship with Robbie, we did more, we went to chamber of commerce meetings – and did that as a team. Because we had different interests that we were representing, both from the park viewpoint. So, when there were special events coming up, or even like fall colors was a big deal in Shenandoah. How the park communicated that, that's a big deal. They wanted to know when are the fall colors

happening? So, getting our messages together and doing that in a way that was helpful to the community, but also helpful to us. Just a lot of little things like that that I ended up working with the community a lot more than I had expected that I would, in a big park like Shenandoah. Just learning that that was necessary to do.

Deanne Adams: The big thing that happened for me at Shenandoah was that we established an education program that was separate from the interpretation program. We hired, it was all part of Division of Interpretation and Education, but we hired a manager just for, who was, who had a degree in education. That was really the start of my understanding of the differences between formal education and the informal interpretation world. Different audiences. So different techniques and where you could, with education programs, gosh, you knew the school that was coming, you knew what goals they had, and you could really have a structured program that matched up to the needs of the teachers and the students. With interpretation, you don't know who you're going to get in your program. So, it's a way different way of preparing your program to be ready for those diverse audiences.

Brenna Lissoway: And was that something that Shenandoah kind of did on its own? Or was there sort of an emphasis within the Park Service to kind of start looking at more formal education opportunities in parks?

Deanne Adams: A little bit of the latter, but mostly it was Shenandoah. I'm trying to think, since I wasn't the big expert on that, I can't think if it was Bill Wade pushing that or Paul. I can't remember now where that came from that we decided that was a priority to do that. I mean, we'd been doing school programs, and there was a big demand for that. So, we knew that we needed to get a more formal structure arranged for that. That we had interpreters trying to do that. So that's funny. I don't know if maybe the chief before me had started, you know, writing proposals or something. That might be what it was. I can't remember at this point. But it was also in the context that yes, there was more, especially since we were in the Northeast region, Northeast was kind of a leader for the formal education programs for the Park Service. So there, you know, maybe it came from that, from a regional push. Because even when I went to San Francisco then, we would use people from the Northeast region to come out and help us a little with thinking through the structures for what we needed to do for education that was different from interpretation or in parallel.

Brenna Lissoway: What was your biggest challenge there?

Deanne Adams: Hmm. You know, I started to talk about working with resource management. I think that was one of them, actually, because that was another one of those having to change your expectations and understanding of relationships, and also trying to figure out what was possible.

Deanne Adams: To back up a little bit more, I think the biggest challenge for me in Shenandoah was they had high expectations for what interpretation could do, and we didn't have the resources to meet them. And the expectations were not expressed in positive ways. It was more like, "Why aren't you doing this?" Resource management was a big one. Why weren't we at the meetings or whatever? I'm just all remembering this now. So, I had a more feeling of being imposed on and feeling resistant to cooperating because I felt so strapped for resources. Now again, later in my career, I started figuring out more ways to make that work. To be able to express. You know, here's why we see these are priorities. With any of our divisions, it's the same thing. You feel like if I have to do this, then that's taking away from this park.

Deanne Adams: The web was a big example. When we started having to deal with the web, that meant somebody had to do it. So eventually the people that came into the park weren't getting the same personal service. Because we had to take those interpreters and work on the web. So, the distance visitors could have some park ranger time as well as the in-person. Oh, my gosh, it was a constant struggle with staff over that kind of stuff. Just a fight about, looking at myself as well as the staff, what are the priorities, and why do we have to give up this part, and why can't some other division give up some, you know, like for the web, why can't we all give up a little bit because it's for the whole park, it's not just out of interpretation. So that, I think that, I'm trying to remember what all I had to do for web stuff at Shenandoah. But that was an increasing stress at that time, a strain on the resources. And it's the same with the education program, that we set that as a priority. But I think that some of [our way was giving up some of that money from maintenance so that we could have an education program. [During transcript review, DA noted, "The park management team was supportive of moving some maintenance division funds over to interpretation for a formal education program.] And you know, have real formal relationships with the schools. It was a big, big change to have that.

Deanne Adams: And you know, within the staff, there was those resentments of we have an education program now, so what about the visitors that are coming in? They're not getting the same services they used to, because we have had to take some of our resources for education. All these competing—

Brenna Lissoway: Priorities.

Deanne Adams: Yeah. Yeah.

Brenna Lissoway: Interesting. So maybe then walk me through to your next assignment.

Deanne Adams: Okay. Yes. So, what did I do after? (laughter) Yes, okay, so you know, it was Tony's turn. He got the job in D.C., and while we were there, I got the job in Shenandoah. So, it was my turn to find another job if we wanted to. I don't know really why, I think if the opportunity came up, that's what it was. So, the regional chief of interpretation in Seattle, the Pacific Northwest Regional Office came open. The person hiring was somebody I

knew. Mike Tollefson. He had been the district ranger at Denali when we were there, and we'd stayed in touch. So, we weren't like fast friends, but he knew what I could do. He knew my background, and I knew his, and knew I could work for him. So that was in '94. He hired me in Seattle. Very interesting doing this interview, because man, I forget all these things. These big things that happened to me.

Deanne Adams: So, I get hired in '94. Tony stayed behind in D.C. for a while. This was right at the time of combining regions. And downsizing regions.

Brenna Lissoway: Reorganization.

Deanne Adams: Reorganization. Oh! What a time to go to a regional office. So it was, and I can't even remember at this point how, let's see, if I moved there in '94, gosh, why, so I was six years in Seattle. So that was just the beginning of all that. We didn't combine regions till I'd been there for a while.

Deanne Adams: So regional chief of interpretation. It was a huge shock to me. It's way different than being in a park! (laughs)

Brenna Lissoway: How? How so?

Deanne Adams: For one thing, to me, what you do in a job is not really set. It kind of depends on what you want to do. In a park, there's things you have to do. You have interpretive programs. You have a visitors center. You get staff to supervise. There's not much flexibility. At the regional level, for interpretation, anyway, there's a lot of ways you could go.

Deanne Adams: So, for example, when I got there, the chief before me was Corky Mayo, who went on to be the national chief. And you know, he had a lot more of the media expertise, and he had a staffer who had tons of experience with exhibits. So, they had helped parks a lot. Really did a lot of contracting. Worked with Harpers Ferry. I didn't know any of that. Like I said, for Shenandoah, I had the district interpreter who did it. So that was not my expertise. And that was a lot to have to learn, those relationships. It was at a time when we were having less staff, so less ability to help parks. So, the job was just very open.

Deanne Adams: And especially going through – I mean, literally within two months after I got there was when all this downsizing stuff was starting, and huge trauma for regional staff. People were going out to parks and we were losing a lot of expertise. And sorting out, so what do we do for parks now, when we have less people to do what we traditionally did?

Deanne Adams: You know, the upshot was over all that time of transition, when I ended up in the regional office in San Francisco, we'd combined [the two old regions—Pacific Northwest and Western, into the new Pacific West Region], and you know, we really focused down on we weren't going to provide those direct services anymore of helping parks directly with exhibits. But that was a long transition. So, I struggled through that for six years in Seattle, figuring out well, what can I do? There were just two of

us at that point in the office. What's the best use of my time? And it was not in exhibits. So, we stopped doing that.

Deanne Adams: And I think some parks thought that was okay, the bigger parks. Because I mean, it's a whole different relationship now to be working with park chiefs. And they liked it that I had been a park chief.

Brenna Lissoway: How much interpretation had you had as a chief yourself with your regional office?

Deanne Adams: Pretty good, actually. So, for me, that was another great kind of mentoring opportunity. Russ Smith was the regional chief of interpretation. And for me, he was fantastic. Because I never lived on the East Coast, and I didn't know anybody on the East Coast. It was a whole different world to me. It was kind of scary. Who are my resources? And who can help me? And who can I ask questions of? So, he was a good one for me. I felt he was very accessible, and it was okay that I didn't know things. And you know, the value of those regional chiefs of interp., the meetings of chiefs of interpretation in a region helped me a lot when I was at Shenandoah. So, I got to meet other chiefs and expand in my knowledge of what parks were dealing with and what resources we had.

Deanne Adams: So then when I was a regional chief, that was nice to already know Russ Smith, have some more mentoring from him long distance at the regional level. Even though I believe, like I said earlier, that a supervisor doesn't have to know everything and rely on your staff, well, gosh, when you have a situation where the resources aren't there, and I have the expectation on myself that I should know more about like media exhibits, and I felt that was a real shortcoming. But all I could do was tell park chiefs that that was not my expertise and try to get them the help with Harpers Ferry. It was a very challenging job for me.

Brenna Lissoway: What did you feel like you did bring to the job? What were your strengths?

Deanne Adams: I think my big, my big strength, it goes back to being good with relationships. And I was really good with communicating with them, talking to them. Not necessarily always getting out to parks. I loved to do that, but it cost money and time. They wanted me to come out more often than I did. But being able to listen to what their needs were and then doing formal things like meetings. You know, really a lot of energy got put into putting together gatherings and training gatherings so those park chiefs could get together and share information. And I felt like by the end of my career – the rest of my career was in regional offices – you know, Seattle and then we'd combine regions. And I actually moved to San Francisco. I felt like that was one of my biggest contributions was tying those parks together in a network. And that's what was so rewarding.

Deanne Adams: An example is, just this week, one of the Rocky Mountains staff saw me and said, "Deanne, I just want to reintroduce myself. My name's Barbara

and I was in one of your training classes when you were in San Francisco." She said, "You know, the networking you did for us was the most important thing you did for me as a field ranger." What I ended up doing at the end was just keep going with that technology. You know, from my early Kaypro days, and loving WordPerfect. I got AOL when we were in Seattle. Just trying to keep up with it. I'm not a techno-geek, but I just wanted to use the power of those things as much as I could. This gets quite overwhelming now, just too much new stuff coming all the time. But I used, you know, in the office I learned to use all the basically the Google Docs, but it was something else. I forget what our system was in the Park Service that I was using?

Deanne Adams: I put out a weekly newsletter, but it was very brief. I just would ask people, "Send me a couple sentences about something new." I just compiled those. Sometimes they were organized by subject matter, like training. Sometimes it was just about the parks, and it was very brief. But it was news about what training opportunities are coming up, what park is doing a new media thing. So, they knew who was doing what in those regions, and they could go to those people. It wasn't an onerous task for me. It took time, definitely, but I have gotten the most feedback just on that newsletter. Some of it was also people news, which is always of interest, where people have gone or what park they're in now. That was a nice little hook. (laughs)

Deanne Adams: But the power of that always surprised me. How many comments I got from field staff. Because I communicated all the time with the park chiefs. But that was not getting down to all the field rangers. By the time I moved to San Francisco, all the field rangers pretty much had an email address. So that was one of the jobs that I tasked the park chiefs was get me your staff names and emails.

Deanne Adams: There was a bit of a workload to keep that up to date. And they appreciated it so much. They felt like they were part of a group. They knew people's names before they met them. And the workshops that we did for park chiefs, I say "we" because it was my limited staff and I that did all this stuff with the parks. We had advisory committees. That was another big thing, big change when we had this reorganization. The parks wanted to have more say in how region made its decisions. Talk about culture change! For me, it was no big deal. Because I'd come from a park, it made sense to me. But some of these people, including some on my staff, had always worked in a regional office, and it was a power struggle. Why should parks have this say over what regions have always decided – money, whatever? It was a stressful time. (laughs) It was big changes for, big changes, societal changes for our agency. And not done in a nice way sometimes.

Brenna Lissoway: Can you give some specific examples of how it played out?

Deanne Adams: So, money, as you would imagine, that's a big one. So, it used to be the regional chief would decide for like a little funding pot Parks as Classrooms [a special grant with funding coming from WASO]. So, I could do, I never did do this, because I got there as all the changes were happening. But if I had been regional chief before, a park would send in the application and I'd make the decisions and the money would go out.

Deanne Adams: So, the new system was that we had advisory committees for interpretation and education that were representatives of the parks. It was like six or so. In our region we divided into what we used to start calling them clusters, and then they changed to some other word, but smaller units. There was a group of parks, so they would elect a representative. You'd have to figure out all those processes. So how are each of those little groups, how are the superintendents deciding which superintendent is being their representative on the superintendent council? And then is that the same that the interps have to do and cultural resources has to do? And natural and maintenance? So it was, you know, continuous. And this was just our region. Every region was doing their own thing. So, this was what our region did.

Deanne Adams: I had an advisory committee that I'd work with and I really liked it. It just made so much more sense to me that we would have this input from the parks. It was administratively frustrating sometimes on all levels. You were trying to get the communication with the superintendents so that they didn't feel like we were stepping on their management and decision-making roles. Figuring out the technology that would let us do all this communication – the conference line stuff, or tools to set up common meeting times. I'm a great fan of Doodle [polls]. (laughs) Who's going to take minutes, how are we going to get the minutes out to people, so they know what the decisions were from these advisory committee meetings? Then the logistics when we actually got together physically. The money for all that. Who's going to pay for that? Yeah, it was a huge part of my job. Once we did that, combined regions and we had the advisory committee, I would say, easily, 30, 40 percent of my time was dealing with advisory committee stuff. So, it was just a new way of making decisions, and was not my decision alone.

Deanne Adams: Interesting, you know, with the park chiefs, they are willing to give me that authority. They were happy for me to make the decisions, for the most part. But this was the new system. I think they were happy to give it to me because they trusted me. I was a park chief. I was a good communicator. But that advisory committee thing, I think, is somewhat to keep – if there's a bad chief of interpretation, then they have some power to keep that chief from totally wrecking, having personal preferences for where the money goes. So, this advisory committee, we really evolved on the money that – we used to spend so much time on how we required relatively small amounts of money. We evolved every year, trying to make it shorter.

Deanne Adams: I have sat in on the superintendents' meeting where they're prioritizing millions of dollars, and saw the processes they used and tried to figure out how much of that we should apply to our processes for these little old pots of money. Big, big growing experience. I just felt like I became a really good collaborator and networker person in that time period for the region. Which is what we should be, I think. In a regional office, that's what our job should be is big time collaboration. Helping parks know what's going on between all the parks so that they can get ideas from each other and boost morale, too. Because a lot of that was a bad time. Money was tight. Parks weren't getting the funds they needed, and just feeling like they were failing the visitors and failing the staff. They had seasonals that they couldn't bring back. They had people on the term appointments, and they couldn't get them permanent jobs. And that still continues today. It's always up and down.

Brenna Lissoway: Right. Yeah. I know that the interpretive competencies program was a really important thing that happened during your tenure.

Deanne Adams: Yeah. Yeah.

Brenna Lissoway: Can you talk to me a little bit about that? And your involvement?

Deanne Adams: Yeah. You know, you'd read me that email just saying what are other accomplishments you want to talk about. And that's, for my whole career, that whole interpreter competency thing is the thing I'm proudest of. I mean, I feel like I learned so much about collaboration networking. I'm really proud of that and very happy with that. It's helped me in so many other ways you know, with my volunteer work.

Deanne Adams: But the competencies, that was a professional evolution that was so exciting to be a part of. It wasn't my idea. I'm not one of those, I don't think that way, I didn't, as far as, you know, changing a profession. But I'm a really good implementer and supporter and questioner. So, Dave Dahlen at Mather Training Center and David Larson really got that going. David Larson was like our inspiration, but he also happened to be a pretty good organizer. So, you know, the training center with Dave Dahlen was the one that did all the organizing initially, until he became head of Mather. But he, just so cool, you know, what logistically you can do when you bring people together. He'd thought ahead about involving universities and helping us understand what we could do. What does competencies mean, and how do you evaluate and measure a competency? It was a huge brain struggle for a lot of us.

Deanne Adams: So, I was part of that from the beginning. And then ended up being one of the certifiers. So that's why I was saying about my time when I was a supervisor at Denali. If I had known, had that same information, if we had that interpretive competencies training in place when I was a supervisor at Denali, man, I was struggling. I'm in a way different place. I would have been so much more effective, and the interpreters would have been. You know, we did a good job. And I think the history of interpretation, the

world, we all do a pretty good job. But I think we do a fantastic job now because we can articulate it better. We know what we're aiming for. That it's not just techniques. That's what we used to focus on so much was the technique and the skill. Are you making eye contact? Your voice is good. Your slides are organized. You have a theme that you're trying to address. All that stuff is very important. But we were able to take it to the next level when we started talking about an intellectual and an emotional connection with that theme.

Deanne Adams: And then the theme is something important. It's not just some little, you know, you want people to have some revelations. It doesn't have to be big, huge things. But you have to know your topic. You need to know what your tangible objects are that you're trying to interpret, and then what intangible meanings are associated with those.

Deanne Adams: So, what I found was the training changed, and I loved that, and I felt like we made a huge difference for field staff. But I also liked that we had this language now we could talk to managers. We were much more effective about selling the case of interpretation and education and getting the resources that we needed. You know, it will be constant learning to do that more. But Jon Jarvis was always a big supporter of interpretation and education. You know, he was my regional director. And we had some good discussions before he was director about, you know, that he felt interpretation and education was not the same priority it should be at the national level. Of course, now we have an associate for interpretation and education. I think all that competency stuff is directly related to that, where we could finally make a better case across the Service. So, it wasn't just Jon hearing that from our interpreters, our park chiefs and me, but all the regional directors were getting better information. A very exciting time.

Brenna Lissoway: Yeah.

Deanne Adams: And I felt so much more effective. Then a piece of that competencies, I mean, there's some technical things that we tried, and they may not continue. But one of the new things that was happening just my last two years was a new emphasis on coaching and mentoring and having some training around that. I thought the training was so good, and it was long overdue. It wasn't just for supervisors. A park could decide who would be nominated to be a coach or a mentor. Sometimes it just might be your peer who was coaching and mentoring you. Most of them were probably supervisors. But gosh, great tools to finally give people about how to be a coach and mentor, directly linked into those competencies of emotional and intellectual connections and how we're looking for that. So, the park, I was saying, had some difficulties that was, we did the certification program. Very onerous. Very time-consuming. So that may eventually kind of fade out. I don't know. I don't know where they're going with that.

Deanne Adams: But I felt like it was necessary go get us to the next stage, because we became very disciplined about what we were looking for for those emotional intellectual connections. Then that allowed us to develop good training for the coaches and mentors. So, in the field, they're not, they're not doing it the same way as a certifier does. They don't have to, they're not going for this common standard, and having to do it in a disciplined way. But man, have some great tools to be able to help that interpreter develop the program even better, or the writing or whatever interpretive technique they're using. It was just a real powerful new tool for us in the profession.

Brenna Lissoway: Were there any tangible, specific impacts that you observed as a result of this new program? Feedback, specific feedback that you got from parks or other places?

Deanne Adams: Yeah. You know, there was, there has been some research done by, Doug Knapp is one that sticks in my mind who's a professor, and he was doing some research specifically about how visitors changed after these programs that demonstrated emotional and intellectual connections. And it's there. I haven't been reading more the last few years about those continuing studies, but it's very clear that we are doing a better job with helping visitors make their own connections. It's not us telling them what to think, but we give them enough tools and context and information and done in a deliberate way that they can come to their own conclusions about the value of this resource that they're in or around.

Deanne Adams: But you know, other evidence is just my personal, and that was as a certifier, the way we certified interpretive products is that an interpreter would be videotaped, and then that videotape would be sent to Mather. Then they would send out to two certifiers. So, you and I would each get the same video. And we'd review it, and we had certain things that we had to look for. And then we'd talk and come to agreement whether this person was demonstrating competency or not. That was the terminology. Then we had to write feedback about where things need to be strengthened for that competency, but we could only talk about the interpretive piece, not the content or anything, because we didn't know. You know, we're not the supervisor.

Deanne Adams: But in those, looking at those videos, I was blown away by some of the just amazing interpretive programs. Some, in the beginning, some of them were pretty sad. But that was as people were learning the new way of doing things. And they were getting their confidence. For a Park Service person, it really—

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Deanne Adams: —made me proud of what we do. And amazed at how strong interpretation is for whatever, whatever agency somebody works for. It

can be very powerful. So that, it was a wonderful way to end my career was with the competencies and the whole network. I wasn't in a hurry to retire and leave. But there were reasons I wanted to go. But it was hard to leave all that. It was a real exciting time to be part of interpretation.

Brenna Lissoway: Yeah. Can you talk a little bit about your decision to retire?

Deanne Adams: Yeah.

Brenna Lissoway: How did you make that?

Deanne Adams: My husband Tony had retired about five years before. Once he retired, that was something that was a discussion about me. Some of it was age, of course, that I didn't want to retire too early. So that wasn't a decision I had to deal with for a while. During this time, I was really active with ANPR [Association of National Park Rangers]. I was a president of ANPR when I was in Seattle. Huge workload. After I got off the board, I started getting active with the International Ranger Federation. When I was in the San Francisco office, I ended up three years volunteering as a regional representative, and three years as a vice president, and then the last three years as the president.

Deanne Adams: So, in 2009, I was up for election as president. I had made the decision I was going to run for president. I knew that that was going to be a huge workload, and I just didn't think I could do it well if I was also working for the Park Service. And you know, other things in place. I was ready to go back to Alaska. I'd been 12 years, 13 years in that job between Seattle and San Francisco. Loved it and could easily have worked another ten years at it, probably, but just those combination of factors. Being ready to be closer to my family in Alaska and wanting to focus on IRF. And then, you know, having 32 years in the Park Service. (laughs)

Brenna Lissoway: Yeah. Yeah. Before we start talking a little bit about your involvement with some of these other organizations, I'm curious if there was ever a time in your career with the Park Service that you were asked to do something you did not agree with.

Deanne Adams: Oh, funny. Funny that this one thing popped into my mind. There might have been something else. But this is the only one I felt strongly about. When I was at Shenandoah, Paul Anderson asked me to take on the Christian Ministry in the Parks. I was not raised in a religious family. In fact, my father was a very anti-religion. Not an atheist, but he'd just seen the bad things that religion had done in the world, and I agreed with him. So, I'd never been a religious person. And Paul probably doesn't even remember much of this. But some of what he asked me to do was, I can't remember specifics, but I felt crossed the line, that I shouldn't be doing that as a government employee. And he didn't intend any, it was just Christian Ministry in Parks was a tradition, and we worked with them. So that was when I had to do some research on and be able to present a case to him of why I wasn't going to do this part, whatever it was that I can't

even remember now. It's something like, you know, going to the program. I just don't remember now. So, I had to draw a line there on what what I was going to spend my government time doing. And that anything else, if I was interested in it as an individual, my personal time, I could do that. But I wasn't interested, and I wasn't going to do that. He accepted that. I made the argument and he understood. Once he was given that information. He just hadn't thought about it beforehand, thought it through. And I think that's the way it is with a lot, used to be, anyway, with a lot of parks, that the Christian ministries, that we just had this tradition. For somebody who is a Christian and is involved with a church, then it seems fine for them to be helping a Christian ministry in the park. But I just questioned it. (laughs) I know that it's been questioned in other places, too. It just hadn't been sorted out, that separation of church and state. Basic, basic pieces.

Brenna Lissoway: Do you think it has been at this point?

Deanne Adams: I think so. Yeah. I don't think it's really an issue.

Brenna Lissoway: With Park Service and—

Deanne Adams: Yeah. Yeah, I think they got more clear over time. Just our culture's changed, especially with more religions, more cultures. That was the example I would give is if you're going to give Christian ministry in the parks, the amphitheater, at this time, if a Buddhist group wanted to come in or a Muslim group, we've got to have a system that we're going to give them equal access. And they don't get first priority for our amphitheater. I think that some of it was divvying up, bumping our interpretive programs. Talking, I think, bumping out our interpretive programs so there could be a Sunday service or whatever. I really disagree with that.

Brenna Lissoway: That's interesting. Yeah. Yeah. Earlier we were talking off the record just about the evolution of, just of the park ranger duties and that sort of thing. And I think it's really interesting you know, you talking about this professionalization, if you will, of interpretation and that sort of thing. Can you just talk a little bit about your observations about how rangering has changed during your career?

Deanne Adams: As we were talking off the recorder, too, that my international experience, too, has really influenced me on the view of what rangers do. So, for me, I always, I never was a generalist ranger. I mean, I started my career clerk/typist, and then you know, right into interpretation. But working in a small park like Denali, I didn't ever do law enforcement, but I felt responsible for whatever I observed. And you know, I was trained on medical stuff and first responder, and even took EMT training and realized that wasn't really for me. We had to be trained up on some fire stuff. Small Park, everybody's got to do something.

Deanne Adams: Then being involved with ANPR, that happened when we moved to DC. I started understanding more of what other specialties in the ranger

profession did. I mean, I was married to Tony, he was on the protection side of things, but he had done interpretive programs in the Everglades. So, we both saw the value of what each other was doing and didn't feel too specialized at that point.

Deanne Adams: One of the other big things that happened when I first got to Seattle was ranger careers. (laughs) And so I was part of the implementation team for our region – had to provide information to parks on how this was going to happen, and which rangers were going to, because we had personnel specialists on the team. Anyway, that was the start of the serious specializations, separation of rangers.

Deanne Adams: To me, the really good part of ranger careers is that now all the rangers had a career level 5, 7, 9. Made total a lot of sense. And ANPR was a huge part of that happening. It was something that we're very proud of that we got rangers to be able to have a living salary at GS-9.

Deanne Adams: [It was good to have the resource education component; the "bad part" was that it was not implemented.] The bad part of it was that the protection ranger PD [position description] has in there a key component as resource education. The way that's been implemented is that the rangers have gone, the protection rangers have gone down the path of really focusing on the law enforcement part, and less on resource protection. Certainly not education. And supposedly, and the Fish and Wildlife Service went down that route and they were downgraded. They lost their GS-9 because they didn't have the education portion in there.

Deanne Adams: At the field level, I find it very discouraging to see that we have rangers who want to be cops in parks and not taken the time for the bigger picture. I don't expect a protection agent to be an interpreter, and to go through the same stuff that we're going through in the professionalization of our profession. And I don't want to be a cop that's carrying a gun. I don't want to have to go through that. I see we need those people; they need to have that specialized training. But they need to have the whole mission of the Park Service in there, too, in that, you know, that includes dealing with visitors in a positive way and protecting the resource. Not just protecting people from each other. I think we've lost some real critical value there. I hope that it will continue to evolve and see that value and be able to get it back in there, that having some education, interpretation responsibilities is key to being a ranger.

Deanne Adams: But then the opposite is true, too. I was telling you the story of being in Shenandoah and finding out that one of our interpreters had gone by a resource management issue, you know, there was some damage to a resource, and hadn't told anybody about it! You know, somebody else found out about it later. So, I had to talk to the whole staff about this is all <u>our</u> responsibility! You know, just because you're an interpreter doesn't mean you're going to stop paying attention to what's going on in the park.

So, interpreters get the same kind of bias of getting specialized and thinking my job is this part.

Deanne Adams: Same with picking up litter. That was the other example we always give to our staff. You come across litter; you pick it up. You're a park staff. That's it. It doesn't matter what your job is.

Brenna Lissoway: It's not facilities.

Deanne Adams: That's right. Exactly. That's right. And just being respectful to each other, all of our professions. That's taking me way off track but thinking of my networking stuff and all that. I started out as a clerk/typist so my whole life, I've always been very respectful of the support staff. I understand, you know, what that job is like, and what you need. It's a stressful job, because you don't have much control over your job. You're low-graded and have restrictive job description. It's helped me so much in my career, because then those folks, if I work with them and treat them with respect, then they're happy to help me when I need something. That's not why I do it, but that's how it works out.

Brenna Lissoway: Right.

Deanne Adams: All that field experience, I just kept using as I went along in my career, helped me with building good relationships and meeting the park mission.

Brenna Lissoway: In your estimation, what do you think has been, and I think you've been talking about one just now. But are there other challenges that you saw the agency facing as a whole? Or, yeah. Challenges in your career. And how do you think that the agency approached that? And did you contribute to it?

Deanne Adams: Some people in the agency wouldn't say this was so much a challenge, but you know for me, it was, from where I was sitting, and that is the value of interpretation and education. And that's not a Park Service thing; that's a society thing. So again, we're just part of a society that undervalues education and has a hard time looking long-term. Why should we invest in interpretation and education? So, to me that was a, it is a big challenge for the service. And someone like Jon Jarvis, I think that's why he had developed an associate, because he agrees. He sees that long-term need. And we need to have studies. We need some empirical evidence of the value, and we've been getting that more through the National Association for Interpretation, more universities. So, we're getting more data that helps us, which is true in the general society, too, for education. That the more evidence we have that music and art helps kids learn so that they're better processors of their education, the more that was can show that scientifically, the more we can influence our legislators. So, I see that as a continuing, going to be issue for the service now that we think long-term.

Deanne Adams: I think one of the good things is that resource management, in my career, has totally bought into education. The basic value, and they want to go together more with interp. and ed that they – because resource people

monitor and they have to look long-term, and that is a direct link there between those two disciplines. We need to work together a lot more. I guess for me that's the big one besides the ranger specialization. The other big, obvious things are climate change and those huge things that impact the parks, and so then they impact the professions and interpretation. Talk about climate change, and we were for a while there not sure we could even talk about it because, what was it called, global warming, yeah. We used to talk about global warming. Now it's climate change because it doesn't have to be warming in some place. We'll be living with that for a long time and how we are mitigating climate change and how do we talk to the public about Glacier National Park that has no glaciers, and Alaska that has polar bears that are now going into villages. Yeah.

Brenna Lissoway: So, you've been extremely involved, as you've mentioned, over the years, with the Association of National Park Rangers. Can you talk to me about how you first got involved, and why?

Deanne Adams: Yeah. When Tony and I were in Yellowstone, we went to one Ranger Rendezvous [at Squaw Valley Lodge, California, 1981. It was just some friends. We knew nothing. It was in [unclear], I think. It was a road trip and it was fun; you know. But I don't think we joined right then and hadn't really talked about what that meant or why we should be involved. That's my recollection. Tony's recollection might be more. It didn't impress me. I mean, it didn't impress me as far as thinking here's an organization that I should be part of as a ranger. Of course, in Yellowstone, I wasn't a ranger then [didn't know if I would ever be again. AND I'd not been involved with any organizations yet. My first experience with that was in Fairbanks, being involved with NOW]. So that might be part of what happened. Anyway, that was our first introduction. Didn't stick with me, which should help me think about trying to get new young rangers into ANPR. (laughs)

Deanne Adams: So then move on to when we got to Washington, D.C. Tony was in ranger activities. One of the people there was Bill Halainen who has been the editor of the *Morning Report* for his whole life. We ended up being good friends with Bill and Cathy, socialized with them. Bill was very active with the ANPR. He did the newsletter. Surprising, you know, the editor of *Morning Report* was editor of *Ranger Magazine.*

Deanne Adams: We ended up helping him. We'd go over to their house and help them stuff the envelopes that got mailed out to everybody. Those were the days. And then talk to him about you know, what the organization did. It just, you know, hooked us, was that personal connection with Bill that got us seriously thinking about it and we wanted to contribute. I mean, that's what happens to me is that I want to be part of an organization that's you know, trying to make a difference. When I was in Fairbanks, I was the president of the National Organization for Women chapter. So, in D.C. I get involved with ANPR. (laughs) So I helped with stuff, helped with rendezvouses [Bill] Wade organized. And then I decided to run for

regional representative and do my part there. And then a few years later – that's the gap I was trying to look for. There's a gap in there somewhere. I can't remember if it was two terms as a regional rep before I ran for president. I have to keep researching. [Mid-Atlantic Regional representative 1992-93. Moved to Seattle 1994. President 1995-98.]

Deanne Adams: So yeah, I decided to run for president. That was a big step for me. But I talked about my networking collaboration stuff. So, all of that stuff comes together both ways. What I was learning in the Park Service really helped me with ANPR, but ANPR helped me with my job, too. I mean, it definitely helped me making connections with people I would have never connected with otherwise. I think that is, for me that is the biggest thing about ANPR is that I was in interpretation. I was a lower-graded employee; I guess by the time I got active with ANPR, I was the chief in Shenandoah. But you know, I probably never met the director of the Park Service doing those jobs. But I met every director that came to the rendezvous. I was able to talk to every director and anybody who was at those rendezvouses could have talked to the director. It was pretty amazing. There were a lot of mid-level supervisors at the rendezvouses, so if I was shopping for a job, they were good people to talk to.

Deanne Adams: And then working across disciplines, because we have resource management people, we have maintenance folks, we have admin folks that are all members of ANPR. So, it's a cross-section of professions and in geography; there's a lot of parks I've never been to. I don't know a lot of parks. Then there was another piece I was thinking in there.

Deanne Adams: Oh! So, yeah, so this is the other key thing, I think, really key benefit to being a part of an association like ANPR is there's a direct translation to the job. I could do something for ANPR and I would learn new skills. Organizing skills, networking, sometimes technical skills, computer skills, that I didn't have opportunity to do that on the job. But once I had that through ANPR, then I could apply it to something in the job. And if I did a good job with ANPR – and unfortunately in some ways the opposite is true, if I didn't do a good job with ANPR – people in the Park Service would know that. If I did a good job organizing the Rendezvous, you know, people know that I did that and they know what that takes in general terms, so they have confidence that I could do that and something else in the Park Service. If I totally flubbed it, then that's, you know, people know that, too.

Brenna Lissoway: So what were some of the big issues that ANPR addressed during your involvement with the organization?

Deanne Adams: One of the big ones was housing. That was mostly done by the time I was president, though we did still write some letters about employee housing when I was president. A lot of stuff was around budget for the Park Service. I did testify before Congress about that Park Service of the 21st century. And we had a list of things. And we didn't label one of them

budget, that was the idea, that the agency has these needs and here's some ways to look at it. And then ranger careers. So again, that wasn't when I was president. It was while I was on the board. And the ranger careers thing, a lot of that was Jim Brady, who was real active with ANPR and using the ANPR systems to get support and get information and feed that in so that we ended up with an actual formal program. You know, amazing. It took an incredible amount of energy to make that happen.

Brenna Lissoway: Yeah.

Deanne Adams: So, for me, the ANPR part was, a big piece was advocacy for rangers, but also for the park system and parks in general. We wouldn't advocate for one specific park.

Brenna Lissoway: And can you talk to me just a little bit about how Rendezvouses have changed over the years?

Deanne Adams: Yeah. When I was president, when I was on the board, we would have a lot of angst about our declining membership. We did have a big boost for a while. But in the research, I was doing while I was president, I realized we weren't alone in that and that all organizations across the country were declining in membership. The numbers may be up a little bit, but as a percentage of the population, we were really declining. All member organizations were declining, and declining in activity, too. So, numbers of members, percentage of the workforce, whatever. So, we realized we were battling a societal thing. Lots of competition. Dual career couples, a big one, I think, a big change from when ANPR was first established, when mostly the wives were not working, and were home with the kids. The rangers could get together, and it was not a big workload. Now it's so much harder, when both parents, when you've got a family with kids, and both parents are trying to meet their obligations. What do you do with the kids? They're bored to death going to a Rendezvous. (laughs) So we struggled with all those things.

Deanne Adams: So, the Rendezvouses have, I think, changed some as a reflection of that. And they, we're in a, I hope, a big transition period where a few years ago we, some of those of us who've been active for a long time made a proposal to the board that we ask a group of young employees to look at what needed to be changed with ANPR and start to implement that. I haven't tracked that the last couple of years to see how it's going, but right now what I see is a board that's got a lot of younger people on it.

Deanne Adams: And the Rendezvous changes, I mean like this Rendezvous it's kind of a kick to me that the, one of the things that they did was no more fines. So, I don't know how familiar you are with that cultural thing—

Brenna Lissoway: Can you talk about that a little bit?

Deanne Adams: Yeah. I think from almost the beginning of Ranger Rendezvous, it was a very small group of people that formed it, formed the ANPR. So, it was a way to raise money, but also to kind of harass each other in the friendly

buds way. They started this fine system. So, you do something at a Rendezvous that someone observes, so then I've seen you do something silly, you've lost your badge, there's a big fine, so you lost your badge someplace. So, I'd write it out, and it's announced from the floor that you've lost your badge. Oh, here it is. If you want it, it's going to cost you a buck. And the judge goes around, collects the money. Bill Wade was the big judge. The fines could be big. Or if it's somebody who's a chronic violator. So, it's fun. People get a big kick out of it. Some fines are written up really creatively, and the judge can be really creative.

Deanne Adams: But, if you don't set it up right, there's new people coming to the Rendezvous and if you don't have the rules set out so they know what to expect, it's intimidating, and it can be painful. You don't know the people. And even for people who knew the system, some of them just don't like that kind of attention. So, this year at the Rendezvous, there's no fines. And I think that's kind of cool. It's a cultural change for us, but to me, it's a real clear indication that there's some change going on in a, from that last generation, from the founders. I'm not a founder. I came a little bit later. But I can't believe it's been 20 years since I was president. (laughs) I really can't believe that.

Brenna Lissoway: Yeah.

Deanne Adams: So, yeah, these younger people definitely should be establishing their own rules. So, could we pause for a second?

Brenna Lissoway: Sure. [pause] Okay, we're continuing on after a short pause in the interview. Deanne, I wanted to give you an opportunity to talk a little bit about how you became involved in the International Ranger Federation?

Deanne Adams: Okay.

Brenna Lissoway: Is that—

Deanne Adams: That's it.

Brenna Lissoway: That's right? Yeah.

Deanne Adams: That's right.

Brenna Lissoway: Yeah. Can you talk a bit about that?

Deanne Adams: It's, I got involved because of ANPR. The International Ranger Federation is an organization that's comprised of ranger associations around the world. ANPR was one of the founding members. I was very active. I was on the board, I'm pretty sure, when this ranger from England came to one of our Ranger Rendezvouses and wanted ANPR to help with a, well, actually I should back up. Because before that, when Rick Gale was president, they wanted to found this federation so Bill Halainen and Rick Gale were the ones that represented ANPR. And our association was one of the three that founded IRF. This Gordon Miller came to our Rendezvous, which now I can't remember which one it was [Durango,

CO, 1994], and asked us for money, at a low level, to put on the first World Ranger Congress in Poland.

Deanne Adams: And it was quite a discussion. Interesting how insular we can be. ANPR's always been kind of marginal on our financial success. I mean, sometimes much better than others. I think this particular time we were okay. But you know, we don't have a lot in savings or, we really don't have any big income. So, it was a big deal to fork out a bunch of money to a new organization, international. How much does that have to do with us, even though we're a founding member? We have our own needs, our own rangers. But, ANPR voted to do that.

Deanne Adams: And so then, since that time, because of Bill Halainen was real involved, so he's the one that got us into ANPR, really. And then got us interested in IRF. And we were going to go to the first congress in Poland, but my mom was dying of cancer at that time, so we didn't go. And I'm glad we didn't, because she would have died when we were there. So that would not have been good.

Deanne Adams: There's a World Ranger Congress about every three years. So, we went to the next one, which was in Costa Rica [in 1997]. I'd been involved in ANPR so started looking at ways to help IRF and ended up being elected as a representative for North America, and then three years later the vice president, and then the last few years as president.

Brenna Lissoway: What was it about the international aspect that attracted you? Why did you want to help that organization?

Deanne Adams: This week we're talking about, ANPR is going to host the 2016 congress. A lot of people have been reflecting on what a congress does to them, and what they are saying is what I say, too. That is we grumble in our parks about the resources we don't have, and we do need more. This is a rich country and we should invest more in our parks. But when you go to a World Ranger Congress and you meet people who are – I get emotional here – sorry. I mean, literally put their lives on the lines some of those people. (crying) I mean, the people, they're just incredible people. We have incredible people in this country and a group of rangers who do wonderful things throughout the service, for people and for the planet. Can I make it through this? (crying and laughing) So you know, we don't think of that so much in this country. I mean, we've had rangers murdered in this country. But in other countries, it's incredible what they go through. Because they believe, how can they think of this, that the health of their country, the health of the world, is so dependent on what they do in their jobs. And that they'll go back every day and do it again. Their families lose them. And, you know, the Congo's a big example. But it's, to a lesser extent, so many other countries.

Deanne Adams: So, you know, come to this congress and you learn about those kind of people. And it's hard not to be inspired. But you also see this huge bond that we have. When I went to Costa Rica, my first congress, I know it

happens, but I don't speak Spanish. And there's a guy there from Colombia, not a young ranger, probably my age at that point, and he starts talking to me in Spanish. I didn't know what he was saying. So, I grabbed Yvette Ruanso she translated. What he was saying was, "I had no idea there were other rangers in other countries. I had no idea that there were people doing this work that I'm doing, and that they understand what I'm dealing with. They understand the challenges that I have." It was just a revelation. And that happens at every congress. We have new rangers coming, and it is so strengthening for them, to know that they're not alone. They can be one ranger got real active with IRF. He was the only ranger [Juan Carlos Gambarotta] in Uruguay when he first learned about IRF. And they've got more rangers there now. So, there's that very basic thing, really, the family, that we share the same values across languages, across cultures. You know, these immensely different cultures. But we're all bonded by this basic knowledge that our earth is limited. And—(crying) It's hard to talk about this all of a sudden. Just how important our work is for our planet. And for the future of our kids, you know, our grandkids. So that's why I'm so in love with the IRF, I guess. I was going another direction there with it. Got totally distracted.

Brenna Lissoway: That's okay. Can I ask, what do you see is the major contribution that the United States National Park Service or system can give other countries?

Deanne Adams: Yeah. That's a great question, because you know, the U.S. is perceived so poorly a lot of places. You know, as a bully, and we've got all the resources and we can do whatever we want in the world. But when it comes to parks, we used to be a real leader internationally. When a bunch of us from IRF went to the World Parks Conference in Durban 10 years ago [in 2003], people would come up to us that represented the U.S. Park Service and said, "Where have you guys been? We miss you. You are our leaders. You have the first national park in the world. You have these great systems. You have all these great examples for us of how things can be done if you have the resources. And you're not here." And its politics, over time, that we stopped going. With Jon Jarvis now we're getting re-engaged internationally to the extent that we can. And of course, resource is always a part of that. I feel like there's a lot we can learn from other countries. You know, we talked about the involvement with communities. And man, oh man, can we learn from other countries about that. They'd have, they'd teach us tons. The other thing we can learn is just being resourceful. So many of those countries that don't have very many resources are very creative in how they still protect their parks for the kind of things, so we can get a lot of good ideas from them.

Deanne Adams: But what they get from us is some real specific support. I mean sister parks, I think, are a great example. Rocky Mountain has a fantastic sister park arrangement with Poland and Slovakia. Slovenia? I'm getting them confused now. Rocky Mountain got a bequest, and they're using that money to be able to fund both ways. So, rangers from there come over

here. Rangers from here go over there, and that's all kinds of rangers. Resource managements really involved with it. Those rangers over there really appreciate what Rocky Mountain is being able to share with them and show them, from technologies to techniques. But it's the same for us, that what they brought over here, Rocky Mountain has used. And things that they've just never thought about doing in a certain way.

Brenna Lissoway: Any examples? Specific?

Deanne Adams: I know there was a little technology thing of counting people. But there's something, new little thing that they were using that we didn't know about yet. That, pretty simple, we eventually would have learned about it. But got a little head start on technology because they already had it in place. I can't think right now what, another example.

Deanne Adams: But so the World Ranger Conferences are terrific sharing grounds for that. And we've been talking about this 2016 one coming up. You know, every congress highlights what their country can do. So, we want to do that, but we have to be careful, too, that it's not overload or bragging. We have all these resources. These are things we can do. So how you package things so that it's usable by another country that doesn't have the same kind of resources.

Brenna Lissoway: Interesting. That is a challenge.

Deanne Adams: Yeah. Yeah. I think a lot of our systems and processes are things that other countries take and adapt. So, they might, you know, they might not have the money for some of the technology we use. But interpretation, for example, that's not necessarily a North American thing, but we all have taken pieces from each other and grown and learned from what's in place. I think that's a lot of what other countries appreciate about our system, too, is that we have things published. So, they have manuals they can use. And our training. I know Department of Interior does a lot of exporting of training, grabbing people from parks and getting them out to other countries.

Brenna Lissoway: Mm hmm. Mm hmm. So I wanted to just give you an opportunity here at the end of our interview to bring up any other events, stories, issues that you think are important that you'd like to discuss about your work and life in the Park Service.

Deanne Adams: I think we've covered most of it. I had a thought of kind of a smaller thing that was kind of an evolution thing.

Brenna Lissoway: Yeah.

Deanne Adams: That was in the partnership arena, which is cooperating associations. So, I'll just give you my example, which is, I think, a reflection of how our relationship has grown and changed over the years. So here I was a GS-5 when I was hired. Well, I was probably a 4 and then became a 5. But my boss left sometime after I was a 5. His job at that point was to be the "executive director," I'm saying it in quotes, of the Alaska Natural History

Association. So that was formed as a non-profit to support parks, being that's the only way we can sell books in parks. That's really how a lot of cooperating associations got started. But here he was the executive director of this nonprofit. But he's a government employee. He left, and here I was, a GS-5 government employee. I was the executive director of this association! (laughs)

Deanne Adams: My whole career, I've always been associated with cooperating associations. When I was at Denali, then I was the coordinator. We had learned, so it wasn't long after I was this executive director that Park Service started learning that oh, government employees can't serve on boards like this. It has to be outside.

Deanne Adams: So, there's been this long evolution of those associations. There's a time where the Park Service told the associations, we don't want you to be fundraisers, so if you're going to do fundraising, you have to have a separate organization. We made them split apart those functions. Now we're telling them yeah, you can pull them all back together because otherwise you're having two boards of directors you have to nurture. A park superintendent has those two things [two boards to work with instead of a combined board for fundraising and bookstore.] So, like Rocky Mountain has fundraising and bookstore responsibilities, Yosemite combined their cooperating association and the fundraisers into new Yosemite Conservancy. Grand Canyon. So, it's been fun to see all of that evolution that parallels the, kind of, I think some of the community things that the Park Service has had to learn to do. Working with communities while we had to learn a whole lot about working with partners. That's a whole new specialty that's cropped up in the Park Service. Especially around fundraising partners.

Deanne Adams: But just partners in general, you know? I think we've learned some of that from the international community as well, that there's ways to nurture those partnerships.

Brenna Lissoway: That's interesting. Yeah. Yeah.

Deanne Adams: So yeah, I don't think—

Brenna Lissoway: Is there anything else?

Deanne Adams: I was looking at my notes here to see.

Brenna Lissoway: What about just a general observation about women in the Park Service? How has that changed during your career?

Deanne Adams: Yeah. Well thank goodness the uniforms finally changed. (laughter) It's been a wonderful evolution. It's been nice to see more women superintendents, just on all the management positions. I really think it makes a big difference in the dialog that happens in an organization. We have just a little different perspective. We have different ways of dealing with information, a little softer, a lot of times, in relationships. Not necessarily, individuals are all different. There's certainly some very hard-

headed women superintendents out there. (laughs) But I think men give us the permission to talk about those softer issues that they don't give themselves. So we've been able to talk more about the value of relationships and collaboration and networking and the destructiveness of the old style of management of I'm the boss and you do what I tell you. Maybe that's society as a whole, too, as women have got more involved, I think we're better. A better society. We make better decisions when we're more inclusive in the way we treat our employees. I think it's better for the health of our whole park system, because we think in bigger ways what our impacts are. It's been very healthy. It's definitely been rewarding for me personally in my career. I was able to be a regional chief of interpretation. That's my, fairly recent that women were able to get that far along. (laughs)

Deanne Adams: It's been a wonderful career. I feel very fortunate that I had even the knowledge that I could apply for a government job, to begin with, and that I had supervisors who supported me and wanted me to stay in the Park Service, and gave me the tools to let that happen, and had confidence in me that I was going to be a good employee and a good government servant. Doing public service, it changes all the time, the perception. And we certainly had horrible times, like during the Reagan years, when government employees were kicked around. That was difficult. You don't feel respected. But having that mission in the Park Service, I think, helped all of us to combat those feelings. But it will always be there. It's, you know, people's tax dollars that are paying for it. So they have every right to be critical and look at what we're doing and expect us to do good. I think in the Park Service we do, for the most part. We definitely have mess-ups. But it's a great organization to work for, because we have such a great mission and one that a lot of people love us for because we do good jobs. They want us here.

Brenna Lissoway: Well thank you so much for your time.

Deanne Adams: You're welcome. Really wonderful to speak with you.

Brenna Lissoway: Thank you.

Deanne Adams: And I think we'll go ahead and stop there.

[END OF TRACK 4]

[END OF INTERVIEW]