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Richard Martin
October 31, 2012

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

Richard ("Dick") Martin

31 October 2012

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Audio File: MARTIN Richard 31 Oct 2012

[START OF TRACK 1]

Alison Steiner: I always start out by saying this is Alison Steiner, and I'm here with Dick Martin, and we're in Indian Wells, California at the Rendezvous of the Association of National Park Rangers. It's October 31st, 2012, and this is our interview for the Oral History Project. So, thank you very much. And do I have your permission to record this interview?

Richard Martin: You do.

Alison Steiner: Okay. So, I always feel like the origin stories, where people begin, are important to their ultimate career in the Park Service, so can you tell me a little bit about where you grew up and what your family did?

Richard Martin: I was born and raised in Minnesota. My dad was an accountant; my mother was a stay-at-home mom. It was, you know, that era – '40s, '50s – and my interests were always in outdoor sports. Unlike so many people whose family took 'em on tours of national parks and they fell in love with 'em and decided they wanted to become rangers at age six or eight or ten or something? I never visited a national park until I was in college, which was 18, and some friends of mine from college and I went on the way to Great Smokies and stopped at Mammoth Cave. Mammoth Cave was the first national park I visited. But I didn't really, you know, decide I wanted to follow that as a career. I knew I wanted an outdoor occupation. I had enrolled in Forestry School at the University of Minnesota and I knew I wanted to do something like that but being a park ranger didn't really occur to me, really for ah, another few years.

Richard Martin: Seasonally I worked as a firefighter for the Forest Service around the west, and then my first permanent was with the Bureau of Land Management. I was a forester in Idaho – all those type of work I enjoyed, but I wasn't too enamored with the mission of either agency. And I was actually offered several jobs in the Park Service while I was working, after I graduated. I took the FSEE [laughs] and got a decent score. In those days you didn't have to score a hundred [laughs] or a hundred plus, to get a job offer. And it was right during President Kennedy's, you know, call to service, in '61 and '62, so I was basically just trying different jobs to see what, you know, what kind of work for me and my family. I had a son at the time, a young son, and I got a job offer finally from a park I was interested in – which was Olympic – and I drove up there on a long weekend and looked at it, and it looked pretty darn good actually. Stopped in and talked to some people at the Visitor Center, asked them how they liked working there, and they all had these glowing stories about how much they loved it. So, I went to work in Olympic, and that's how I got kind of started in this business.

Alison Steiner: So, I have a couple questions about what you just said. First you mentioned that – FSEE? And I'm wondering if you can describe what that is – I'm unfamiliar with it.

Richard Martin: Yeah, they don't have it anymore, but for a long time, for many occupations – not all occupations – in the federal government, there was the Federal System, I think it was, Federal System Entrance Examination? FSEE. And what – it was a test, administered by the Office of Personnel Management. Oh, before that it was called the Civil Service Commission, but it became ultimately the Office of Personnel Management, and they'd have these tests they'd administer on college campuses and in cities for graduating college students. And then you'd get a score, and you would or would not be offered jobs by the federal government, you know, based on your score and your academic achievement. And a tremendous number of rangers in those days were hired from the FSEE. It was almost essential in those days. A few rangers, I believe, were hired because of their experience in parks, were hired into the – it was a different classification series then – but were hired as rangers because of their experience, but most rangers in those days came into the National Park Service after taking the FSEE and getting a respectable score.

Alison Steiner: And you mentioned that you were interested in an outdoor occupation, although not – you hadn't focused on the Park Service being kind of your method or way to achieve that. Can you talk a little bit about where you went to college and what you studied and how that related to – you said you worked for the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management?

Richard Martin: Ah, sure. I studied forestry, although I studied other things as well, but my major field of study was forestry – which is, you know, it's the professional focus of the management of forests as forests. For all uses, whether those uses are utilitarian for wood and lumber or for wildlife habitat or recreation, watershed – whatever the purpose. It's a highly technical field, both scientifically and experience-wise, particularly related, you know, to the study of individual tree species and environments, and different tree habitats, so to speak, where there – and like in North America and the U.S. there are eastern forests, western forests, northern forests, southern forests, swamp forests, [chuckles] dryland forests – and they're all, they all have commonalities, but they also are tremendously technical and complex, you know, within their own environments. And I fell in love with the western forests, even though I was from Minnesota. I really liked the West.

Richard Martin: The first time I went west for a Forest Service job in northern California, I decided I wanted to work and live in the west. I just really, really loved the mountains, the western mountains, the forests, the streams, the drier air really appealed to me. My occupation however, seasonally, was as a firefighter primarily, although I also worked on trail crews and, you know, did building projects and stuff like that, but primarily Forest Service firefighting – which in those days was less fire management – today's fire

occupations are much more focused on the management of a fire in a forest environment. When I was working as a firefighter for the Forest Service, the occupation was almost entirely focused on the control of wildland fires. So the technical part of the work that we learned and studied was how to put fires out quicker, cheaper [laughs], and faster, rather than – and this of course is before there was much knowledge – there was some, but before there was much knowledge about the benefits of fire to forests. That came along kind of in the late '60s, early '70s, it became more broadly known that in the western forests there was a benefit to many forest environments to having fires periodically. But prior to that, they always thought that fire was the enemy – my gosh, that fire might burn down some valuable timber that some timber company might want to cut down and turn into lumber for houses! So, it was a, really a narrow focus occupation at that time.

Alison Steiner: And you had mentioned that you didn't, you enjoyed the outdoor work, but you didn't necessarily enjoy the mission of the Forest Service and the BLM. I was wondering if you could kind of elaborate on that and – what did you perceive the mission to be and what, and how did you feel about that?

Richard Martin: Yeah. That was an important thing in my life, and I don't know why. I mean, Minnesota, when I was growing up there, we lived both within the city of Minneapolis for many years – until I was nine – and then we lived in rural Minnesota, but within driving distance of cities. I always enjoyed getting out in the woods and the, there were orchards there, farmland, and I don't know why – course I come at least partly from a farming family. But my parents, you know, except to go outside to get into the car or go to the grocery store, they were not outdoor people at all. So, I don't really know where this interest came from, but it was there. And I always, during my younger years, I liked to go fishing or hiking or cross-country skiing. I was one of the few people in those days where I was growing up that had a pair of cross-country skis in the wintertime, and I went outside and skied when it was, you know, ten below! [Chuckles.] And then my neighbors would see my ski tracks and think, you know – in those days people called me Ricky – 'Oh Ricky's out there and it's cold, the poor boy'll be, his mother's not taking good care of him' [laughs].

Richard Martin: So, for some reason I was always, always since I was young, enamored with outdoor activities. I played sports in high school, of course, but when I graduated from high school, I went and interviewed and applied to the University of Minnesota and was accepted into the Forestry program. Although I considered Wildlife Management and, again I cannot really say factually why I was more drawn towards forestry than wildlife management or – I even dabbled a little bit with animal husbandry and agronomy, farming specialties, but I liked the woods. But I was not enamored with the missions of the Forest Service or the Bureau of Land Management, primarily because – 'cause I actually liked the woods

emotionally and I would – as a firefighter, of course, I felt like I was helping to protect the woods, but you know, we would go out and put out a fire in a stand of what the forestry occupation would call 'merchantable timber' – in other words, a place where you could cut down the trees and make some money – we'd go out there and fight the fire and put the fire out, you know a year later the timber cruisers for the Forest Service would come through there and mark the trees that could be cut down for money, and they'd let a contract and the loggers'd come in there and cut the trees down [laughs] and off they'd go to the sawmill and to be turned into houses. And I'd go like, 'Ah, jeez, you know, this just isn't makin' it for me.'

Richard Martin: And then when I was working for the Bureau of Land Management, my job actually was to go out and find trees to cut. That's what the agency wanted me to do, and I'd go out to this beautiful stand of old-growth Douglas fir and Ponderosa pine and find bear dens and there'd be deer cavorting, you know, in the woods and everything, and we'd run into pine martens and beaver dams and stuff and then it was my job to actually write up a timber sale contract that would be bid on by logging companies and timber companies, and they'd come along with their chain saws and bulldozers and high-lead log yarders and everything, ah cut down the trees, load 'em on trucks, haul 'em to the mill – away they go. I'd go back there to those sites, you know, flattened, clear cut – that was the ethos in those days – and I'd just scratch my head, like, 'This is not what I want to really be doing for my life.'

Richard Martin: So when I got a job offer from Olympic National Park, you know, my real attitude was I didn't necessarily – unlike so many rangers – I didn't necessarily want to work as a ranger and for the Park Service. What I really wanted to do was do something that was good for forests and for the outdoors, rather than what I viewed as destructive, even though foresters, some foresters, would argue a contrary, you know, you cut those old trees down, that gives new trees so that's good for the forests? Now they would have a contrary thought on that, but that was my emotional reaction. So then, when I got working for the Park Service, I, yeah, I enjoyed the mission, but then I really, really liked the work. I liked being a forester, I liked fighting fires, but I really liked being a ranger, because you got to enhance the visits of the public, you got to help educate them, you got to help them if they got in trouble, you got to protect the natural – it was primarily natural resources, it was kind of, in those days. It was before the Historic Preservation Act and some of the other Cultural Resource emphasis that came along a little later, at least in Olympic National Park. It was primarily in those days about natural resources, and so I got to do that, which I enjoyed. I was out there trying to, you know, keep poachers from poachin' elk, and loggers from sneakin' in and cuttin' down a tree [laughs], and people that would – there was a fair amount of illegal vegetation harvesting in those days by people, primarily for ornamental purposes? Picking some of the more attractive flowers and vegetation

species for flower arrangements and also digging up some plants for landscape purposes in urban environments. So, I got to do things like that – which I really felt good about. I really felt like I was doing good things for the long term and good things for the public and living in a beautiful, beautiful place.

Alison Steiner: So just so that I can make sure that we have the details, your first job at Olympic – can you remember what year that was and then what the actual job title was, and was it permanent or was it seasonal?

Richard Martin: It was permanent. My first job with the Park Service was permanent. I'd worked seasonally for the Forest Service, and then my job with BLM, Bureau of Land Management, was actually as a permanent Forester, but professional forester in the – what's that? – the 460 classification series, I believe, under OPM. The professional forestry series. My first job with the Park Service was – are you ready for this? Forty-nine years ago, and ten and a half months, so it was December '62. Another six weeks it'll be 50 years – 50 years! I can't believe it! [Laughs.] And it was at Olympic National Park, at the Kalaloch Ranger Station, which is out on the west coast of Olympic. The Ranger Station at Kalaloch – I haven't been back for several years, so I presume it's still the same – it was only about 200 yards from surf line of the Pacific Ocean, so you could hear the surf day and night. A delightful place – humid and rainy – but a spectacular place as far as the ocean environment was concerned. Real dense, dense forests. I was a Park Ranger General, and the classification series was – hard for me to remember – something like 456 under the OPM classification system. Doesn't exist anymore. But I was a Park Ranger General. And in that day, they had various types of park rangers: they had park ranger general, which I was; they had park ranger historian; they had park ranger naturalist; and park ranger archaeologist. And the park ranger naturalists, of course, were the interpreters in places like Olympic National Park. Later they became part of the same series as Park Ranger General and were called Interpreters. Park Ranger Generals did just exactly that, did everything, including maintenance work – cleaning toilets and fixing broken pipes, changing the oil in vehicles and [laughs] generators, dealing with, you know, depredations like poaching and illegal vegetation gathering. And giving, doing interpretation – giving talks.

Richard Martin: I mean, not professional interpretation as far as developing programs – what's called professional interpretation today – but as far as education? A big education mission. We were always going to schools and events to give, in uniform, to give talks and programs. So, it was a very – and that was a part of the job I really liked – I really liked the variety of the job as well as the mission and the emphasis. 'Cause there was like, never a dull moment. You might have to change the oil in a generator in the morning, go change clothes and go to a school to give a talk about on whatever in the national park in the afternoon. So you know it was a very fast – and always things to learn, you never – you know, when you do a job like my

job in the Bureau of Land Management, which was cruising timber, in other words looking for trees to cut and then calculating the volume of wood that could be produced out of a stand of trees and how much it would cost to remove that and what the potential return for the logger would be, once you learn that, you learn that, you learn that, and you learn that. [Laughs.] Ah, and it'd be fun out in the woods, but as far as an occupation where one was challenged to learn all the time, some things new and different – once you learned that, that was, occasionally there would be changes in technology, but aside from that I think the occupation is still kinda similar today to what it was 50 years ago.

Richard Martin: Unlike, you know, in the job of a generalist ranger, you never knew everything. You always had to learn new things – whether that was, you know, getting called to fix somebody's arm and thinking after, "Oh, darn, I should go to a First Aid course," and we often did on our own time. I did, many times. Or a rescue activity, where you had to, you know, learn how to deal with people that were injured, but also how to deal in extremely rugged terrain – mountainous or rivers or ocean or whatever the environment might be – a constant learning occupation, which I found very, well I found it never boring. It was always, there was always something interesting that you could learn and that would help you do your job better. Then that was another thing that I really enjoyed about being a ranger.

Alison Steiner: So skipping back a little bit: you had mentioned that you were looking for a job that would work for your family, so I assume that there's, somewhere in there, there's a story of your personal life [chuckles] and, as much as you are comfortable with if you could kind of flesh out that and how your career was affected by, I guess, your personal life and where that fits into the story you've just told me up to the point where you got to Olympic.

Richard Martin: Right. Well, I had – I was married and had a young son, and the thing about the job with the Bureau of Land Management that I had had was, I was gone a lot. My wife and son were living in Boise, and I would go to various parts of Idaho and do my timber cruising job – which was enjoyable work, but I was rarely home during working periods, and I would often be gone for two weeks, and then home for an extended weekend, and then gone for another two weeks. So, aside from those periods, I rarely saw my family, which was hard. Difficult. And which I didn't particularly think was a good thing, as far as parenting, either. On the other hand, I was making a decent living, so I certainly didn't want to jeopardize that at all. And of course, the Bureau of Land Management and other federal agencies like the Park Service, there would be other opportunities for promotion opportunities if one wanted to and to make additional income. So as far as the economic viability of that job, it was fine familywise, but as far as the living and family cohesiveness and parenting, I was not comfortable with that. And I don't think my wife was

either. So, it was not really a hugely deciding factor in the logical part of my mind – to go to the Park Service in Olympic from BLM. But when I think back on it, I think now that it was part of the emotions of it – was that I'd be home more, actually a lot more, well basically every night, except for an emergency training or something. And I could even go home for lunch, you know, if I was just around the ranger station, 'cause it was just a walk from the house to the ranger station. So, I think, I don't know whether I ever logically thought that this would be better familywise or not, but – and talk to him [last phrase regarding interruption]

Alison Steiner: Well, I'll put it on pause. [Recording paused.]

[END OF TRACK 1]

[START OF TRACK 2]

Alison Steiner: This is an interview with Dick Martin. It's October 31st, 2012, and we're at the annual Ranger Rendezvous at Indian Wells, California. This is the second part of the interview. So, I believe we were talking about your family life and that Olympic provided you the opportunity to be home more. And I don't know if you want to continue along those lines or—

Richard Martin: Yeah, well, I just wanted to say that that was a huge family benefit, I felt, and you know of course, there was no such thing as an eight-hour day in those days. Ah, the Fair Labor Standards Act hadn't gotten to the Park Service [laughs] yet, and I don't know if it'd even passed, but you know I was working long, long hours and long days, and living on the ranger station you're never really off duty. People stop in, in those days they'd come to the door of your residence and ask questions, and you were expected to, you know, provide the answers – which was fine. Never a big problem. And, you know, the families and kids – and the other thing of course about ranger stations in those days though is that there were other kids for the kids to play with and to learn from, and other – particularly mothers – around, so that the kids got exposed to other families and kids and would go to the other house to play, you know, and the other mother would cook lunches or feed 'em or, you know, whatever and give slightly different lessons and ways of keeping the kids under control and everything. So it was, I thought, a really good experience for kids. So, and I believe you know in the end, it proved out okay. All the kids are okay [laughs] today.

Alison Steiner: And was your wife at the time working or—

Richard Martin: No.

Alison Steiner: —staying at home.

Richard Martin: No. Almost all women, wives, were at home in those days. At least the ones I was familiar with in NPS. And it wasn't just because some of the places were kind of remote, you know, without many jobs, either. It was just because that was, A) that was kind of the way it was done, that was the accepted social norm, and another factor was, I believe – I'm not an

economist – but I believe in those days it was easier for a single breadwinner to make a respectable living in those days than it is today. Although people did live more modestly. Most families just had one car, most families had smaller houses and residences and fewer things in those days. And college was cheaper by far, I mean, my parents – I worked my way through college – my parents couldn't afford to send me to college. So, one breadwinner could, you know, fairly well support a family, so wives didn't really have to work, but the primary reason was it was the social norm.

Alison Steiner: And, let's see. This might be skipping back a little bit but, before we get too far into your Park Service career, you'd mentioned that when you were a forester or a firefighter working for the Forest Service, that the idea is, was obviously that you're putting out the fires, rather than managing fires. And I was curious about – you said that the change of the theory of fires or how to manage them came not that long after. What was your personal reaction to the difference in the approach to firefighting?

Richard Martin: Oh, well, I think my reaction was there was no place to go but up. I mean, the rigid fire control philosophy of the Forest Service and the other agencies at the time – the Park Service and the Bureau of Land Management, the Fish and Wildlife Service, and most state agencies – was that fire was the enemy. Now, looking back to the turn of the century – that'd be the 20th century – why, there were people, scientists [and] not just scientists but practicing foresters when the Forest Service first began, you know, in around 1908, that there were some benefits of fire in the forest. But for management reasons and also political reasons, the philosophy became "It's the enemy." And that lasted pretty much until it just began to change very slightly in the mid- and late-'60s, and one of the places where that began to change? The actual cradle of modern fire management, one of the places that began, was in Sequoia National Park. And I was working in Olympic and Mount Rainier at the time. I transferred from Olympic to Mount Rainier in later, a few years later.

Richard Martin: And of course, those are very – we call 'em asbestos forests 'cause they were so damp most of the time and they don't burn frequently. But the fact was that, you know, those damp rain-forested areas, at least portions of them, had burned in historical time, on dry years with lightning strikes or with Native American started fires, for purposes of propagating other species or thinning the forest so it was easier to get through [chuckles] or killing off a few trees so they'd fall over for firewood for, or for whatever purpose. As well as – but of course the primary reason was lightning caused, which has been going on for millennia. When lightning and forests found each other, it was like the perfect marriage. They both had a purpose. So, I embraced the idea. The difficult part of that, and it lasts to the – there's several difficult parts of that change from control to management – that lasts to this day: one of course is just the technical analysis required for a productive fire that is a managed fire. There's the

technical part of that. And as large or larger is the management of the public understanding. The public understanding has a long way to go, even at this date. The benefits have been known now and understood since the '60s, um, it's almost 50 years later, and the public still doesn't understand it. Partly because some agencies don't want it recognized, for their own agency reasons.

Alison Steiner: So kind of moving back to Olympic – you mentioned that you transferred from Olympic to Mount Rainier, but before we kind of continue with your career moves, I wanted to just – um, you spoke about your family life at Olympic and then kind of some of the benefits that you saw in terms of mission and job variety and things like that. Were there any other things that stand out as positives or negatives or challenges about your time in Olympic, and that, you know, how long did you spend there? If you can just flesh out that piece of your career a little bit.

Richard Martin: Well, I worked there at Olympic for seven years, and I moved around the park – I once calculated and in seven years I moved 13 times, just within the park [laughs]. I had a young family, though, so it was easier for us to move, and we never moved in a moving van. It was always in the back of a pickup truck or a 2-1/2 ton flatbed truck or – we even moved one time in a hosed-out horse truck – ah, for a variety of reasons. One is that's what, you know, the park wanted, but also because a couple places we lived in the summertime would snow in in the winter, so it would be appropriate to move to another location for the winter where the snow was plowed or where it didn't snow. But I enjoyed all of those because of the variety of the work, A) and because also in some of the locations in Olympic National Park, in those days in the wintertime, there would be nothin' to do. I mean, you could maybe keep busy painting the insides of buildings or diggin' a new water line or rebuilding the fire cache and sharpening all the [laughs] tools or something, but boy, in some of those locations in the winter, there was just, you know, there might be an occasional steelhead fisherman come out into the park in December, but it would be rainy, cold, and again, in those days, during the school year, people did not travel to national parks as much as they do today.

Richard Martin: Today many parks are what are called – many of even the parks that have snow and a winter season have a winter season. But in those days most parks – Olympic included – did not have much of a winter season. There were two places in the park that got many winter visitors. One was Hurricane Ridge, which was a ski area, where I learned to ski – downhill ski basically – so I got to work there in the winter, so I had different things to learn and to do. The other was the Hoh, one of the accessible rainforests on the west side. Those were the only two locations in the park that got much park visitor use. There are a couple places where the main Highway 101, that goes around the entire Olympic Peninsula, goes through the park, but there – that's primarily people going from point A to point B and just going through the park on the highway – they might stop for a picnic or

something occasionally, but mostly it was just a transportation corridor. So there wasn't much to do in some of the ranger stations, and I enjoyed going to different ones and learning different things, working with different people.

Richard Martin: I enjoyed the people, by and large. You know, there's – human personalities being what they are – there's always gonna be, you know, one or two that, you know, [laughs] you don't see eye to eye with, but I enjoyed not just working with some of the people, but you know there was socializing on the ranger stations as well as in the park generally. That was recognized as an important function of park management in those days, was to have social activities. Periodically, you know, maybe not one a month, but, you know, several times a year there'd be – and of course, there would be welcoming parties and going away parties and things that were family friendly, I mean, all the kids would come and spouses and everything. So I enjoyed the social activities as well. There was just a lot of neat things – and the other thing of course was that, in a place like Olympic, with a really slim staff of people, there was one or two or three rangers per ranger station in those days, and I think our field permanent staff was about 12 or 15 rangers, for the whole peninsula. So, in addition to doing things, you know, in your district or sub-district, why, frequently your neighboring District Ranger or Sub-District Ranger would ask you to come over for a few days and help to do something, you know, different. In a different location. There was that. The park was really encouraging – and I think the Park Service generally was really encouraging – people to expand their skill and knowledge bases of not just their specific occupation, but to grow as individuals and as – we weren't called professional in those days – but as, you know, rangers as well in not only your skills but your judgment, your intellect, and your ability to embrace a variety of things. So, I enjoyed all that. One the other hand, I did get pretty tired of the rain. And, in my particular personality, after awhile, I wanted to do some different things in a different park.

Richard Martin: So, you know, I got to – and you wouldn't know it – I got to actually do some things that I think were long-term benefits to Olympic. I was one of the people that wrote the first backcountry plan for management for Olympic. By today's standards, it's a very – was a very – primitive plan, but boy, it was quite groundbreaking in its day, because we closed all the garbage dumps, we started one of the first Pack It Out programs in 1968 or '69 – I've forgotten the exact year. We put in pit toilets and the rangers did this – we were out there digging pits and putting the buildings over 'em. We classified the trails by, you know, their level of development and their difficulty. And we started a permit system, not nearly as formal as came along in the '70s, but so, and it was quite a challenge to get acceptance, both within the management of the National Park Service – not the park superintendent – I mean, he was a wonderful man, ah, Mr. Ben Gale – but, you know, in Regional Office and things, it was like 'You guys are doing what?' [Laughs.] 'We don't know about this. We're not sure, uh, could

you explain that? That's not going to cause a controversy, is it?' [Laughs.] So, you know, it gave me some, they gave me – and the other rangers as well – an opportunity and opportunities to, ah, they encouraged tinkering with innovation, which I found throughout my career was something I really enjoyed doing with NPS. So yeah, finally I thought, you know, I should and wanted to go to a new area. I was getting' a little tired of the rain, I was getting' a little bored with what, I kind of felt like I had done what I could do there. I could stay there my whole career if I wanted – just speaking for myself now, not the family or other things – or I could, you know, transfer, and I thought it would be beneficial to and enjoyable to go to a new area and learn and meet some, learn some new things and meet some new challenges. And work with some new people.

Alison Steiner: So, a couple more questions about your time in Olympic. You mentioned that you dealt – you didn't phrase it this way, but law enforcement issues – but I'm wondering, I know that law enforcement in the national parks has changed a good deal since the early 1960s to present. So, I'm wondering, how, I guess, hoping you can talk a little bit about how it might've been different then. How, how did you deal those kinds of law enforcement issues?

Richard Martin: It was really different. It was very informal, no training – or almost no training. If you wanted to be trained in law enforcement, you had to buy your own gun and join a gun club and go out and, you know, practice shooting with the gun club or else buy your own gun and go out and shoot at cans on trees, which is what I did. I'd used a rifle and a shotgun my whole life, since I was – I didn't go hunting but I'd been taught to shoot by my father when I was, I think, eight years old. So, I could shoot a long gun extremely well, but I had never had a handgun in my hand when I was 24 years old. Never. So I went out and got one, and I started plinking away at cans on trees outside the park in the National Forest, and – I think the lead's probably still out there – we didn't know we were supposed to pick it up in those days. But there was almost no training. Of course, the main crimes we dealt with in Olympic's case, were resource crimes: poaching, driving off the road, illegal camping, harvesting of vegetation illegally, you know, those kinds of things. Occasionally there'd be a trespass, like somebody'd break into a building – and we didn't call it breaking and entering in those days, we just called it a trespass, so it'd be a misdemeanor. We did deal quite often with poaching, and we dealt often with court cases, going to court – well, today it'd be the U.S. Magistrate's court.

Richard Martin: In those days they were called U.S. Commissioners, and they were not always lawyers. It was appointed positions in the Department of Justice particularly for the national parks, and I think they also had some on military bases, but in our case national parks. And most of the old parks had a park commissioner who tried the misdemeanor cases, and so we were going to court, oftentimes in the Park Service office, in one of the

offices [chuckles] where the commissioner would hold court. Very informal, sometimes there'd be a lawyer for the defense, but usually not. So, there'd be the ranger and the defendant, and we'd both tell our stories, and the commissioner would make a decision to acquit, to dismiss, or to fine. And they had the authority to make fines within the confines of the CFR, as I remember, for sure – six months or a thousand dollars in those days, I don't know what it is today – 36 CFR for park violations. And I think if it was beyond that, it had to go to U.S. District Court. But we were doing that all the time.

Richard Martin: On the other hand, we had no ability to transport people appropriately. I mean, we would transport them in our pickup truck or sometimes even otherwise [chuckles]. Completely inappropriate, unsafe for the arresting ranger and inappropriate for the arrestee as well. Our equipment was no way standardized. It would either be personal weapons, or a hodgepodge of weapons accumulated by the park, oftentimes through confiscations. So, somebody'd have a .38, somebody else would have a .45, somebody'd have a .38 special, there'd be four-inch, six-inch, eight-inch – never, almost never worn on the belt unless there was an immediate threat. So usually in the glove compartment or – I never carried a briefcase – a backpack or the trunk of the vehicle or something like that. We usually had long guns, though, you know, for bear management, but that's not law enforcement. So, the law enforcement thing was, was very informal, very limited training in laws of search and seizure, laws of arrest, laws of evidence, constitutional law.

Richard Martin: Once or twice a year there'd be a course that the FBI, thankfully, would present on constitutional law and arrest, certain arrest and search and seizure, and evidence. Once in a while the Washington State Patrol, which was a wonderfully professional organization in those days – I presume they still are – would come and teach defensive driving. Never high-speed driving, 'cause we didn't have high-speed sedans in those days. We had pickup trucks [chuckles] primarily, so we'd learn to make car stops from the Washington State Patrol. But that was pretty much it. And rarely an opportunity – there was no qualification requirement, so it was highly informal. And it didn't really begin to change until – there were always a few rangers in those days, a very small percentage, that were professional in their law enforcement, either by personal inclination or by their prior occupation, and oftentimes we would learn things from people like that, that were within the Park Service that had been police officers before being rangers or had decided they liked the law enforcement part of being a ranger and, you know, had really focused on that aspect. But that again was personality specific, so there wasn't really a program to speak of, and that didn't come about with much emphasis until the Stoneman Meadows Massacre at Yosemite in – was that 1970, I think? And even then, it was a slow process for about ten years, I think.

Alison Steiner: Okay, so maybe as we move forward, you can point out when, you know, some of those changes, if it factors into your career, 'cause it does seem like that's one of the very significant shifts. I think the last thing about Olympic – you mentioned that you wrote a backcountry management plan, or helped write a backcountry management plan, and I know this is the same time that the Wilderness Act is being passed, and I believe Olympic is now a wilderness.

Richard Martin: Yes, it was not formally a wilderness at that time.

Alison Steiner: Mmhm. So I'm kind of wondering, you know, with these broader shifts, or the kind of, this outside context, was there any discussion in the park as you were writing a backcountry management plan about what's going on with this wilderness movement?

Richard Martin: Lots. But again, it was kind of personality specific. I had a huge interest in it because I was a wilderness lover. A huge interest. And I subscribed to all of the wilderness magazines – Wilderness Society magazine, and at that time the Forest Service was doing some wilderness utilization research through their research arm, and so I got all of their booklets. In fact, I even visited their research center on my own in Portland, to talk to them about – I was trying to get the Park Service at Olympic and Mount Rainier to participate in some of that, but the Park Service had other priorities. But I was a wilderness lover, so I was talking about it a lot, and there were other wilderness lovers in the park – a bunch of 'em. Not everybody, but some really strong wilderness lovers were rangers and interpreters in Olympic in those days, and there was a lot of talk about 'How are we gonna do this?' Even though Olympic was not formalized legal wilderness, it was was in fact wilderness, and we managed it as such and viewed that as our mission. So how are we gonna do this? How are we gonna preserve this, protect it? What are the appropriate steps to take? Of course, there was limited ability to do things, you know, real dramatic. The main missions in the wilderness in those days [were] trail maintenance, safety, education. Concepts like Leave No Trace and Minimum Impact hadn't been invented yet. I mean, we were thinking along those lines, but we didn't really have labels or concepts of what those meant. Those came along in the '70s. But in the '60s, it was still 'Let's try to education people as best we can, let's try take as care of the trails as best we can so people stay on the trails and don't go off and you know make informal trails or social trails or erosion. And let's educate people on safe practices as best we can.' So that was kind of, those things were the main emphasis of what we dealt with. The resource issues were primarily in those days, again, bears getting fed by garbage, human waste around campsites and ranger stations – how to deal with that – again and the safety issues. So, the first thing we did was close all the old traditional dumps. The park had all kinds of old dumps in the backcountry that went back to the days of the Forest Service and that the park had continued. So, we had closed all those. We had put in pit toilets where we thought they

were needed, and we made a really strong emphasis on trail management and trail maintenance, so that the trails were encouraging to visitors to stay on the trail instead of go wandering off, shortcutting, making their own trails, you know, doing that kind of thing. So, by today's wilderness management standards, it was very limited, but by the standards of the time? Olympic was as ahead of wilderness management as anybody, I believe, because it was really difficult for us to begin to persuade people to pack—

[END OF TRACK 2]

[START OF TRACK 3]

Richard Martin: —out their garbage! Instead of just throwing it behind a log. Up until that time, in some wildernesses, ah, the one that comes immediately to mind is the Boundary Waters Canoe Area in Minnesota, where I grew up, and when I was going to college, there was a movie – and I don't know who put it out, and I don't think it was the Forest Service – but it was about the BWCA and how to dispose of garbage in the wilderness. Lake wilderness with canoes and portages. And one of the things you did? Of course, in those days there was no light food, it was cans or dried, smoked foods primarily – and so you had a lot of cans in your canoe. So what you were supposed to do is burn the can in the campfire – 'course you had to cut wood in order to burn [chuckles] the thing – and then you're supposed to take it out in the middle of the lake and sink it. And that was what was taught in the movie.

Richard Martin: So, and that was like early '60s. So, we were not only, in the late '60s, and when Olympic started the Pack It Out program, we were not the only ones attempting to do that, but Olympic was right there in the forefront of it. So we all took quite a bit of pride in that, ah, there was a huge learning curve – not that the public is stupid, it had just been taught other things, you know, prior to the Pack It Out program.

Alison Steiner: Sounds like the lawnmowers are coming this way. Maybe we should move into the other room again. [Laughs.]

Richard Martin: Yeah.

[END OF TRACK 3]

[START OF TRACK 4]

Alison Steiner: This is an interview with Dick Martin. It's October 31st, 2012, and this is the third part [4th audiofile] of the interview. It's being conducted in Indian Wells, California, for the Association of National Park Rangers Oral History Project. And two things that I forgot to ask you at the beginning of the interview, but would definitely be good to have on record, is your birthdate?

Richard Martin: September 9th, 1938.

Alison Steiner: Okay, and also have you been interviewed before by the Park Service?

Richard Martin: Not this type of interview. I've been interviewed for lots of other functions, but not for this purpose.

Alison Steiner: Okay, great. So we were just talking about your job in Olympic, and you said that you moved to Mount Rainier, and I'm wondering if you can talk about a little bit, or talk a little bit about that move, what you moved to, why you moved and—?

Richard Martin: Sure. Well, like I mentioned a bit ago, I foolishly thought that I had, you know, the ranger job wired after seven years. You know, if you can earn a college degree in four or five, why can't you have a job figured out in seven? I mean, that wasn't the thought process, but I, for some reason I thought, 'I've got this pretty well figured out.' And I always liked, like I mentioned, learning new and different things, so basically, I was ready to do something different. I wouldn't say I was exactly bored, but maybe that's what it was. So, I talked to the Chief Ranger and the Superintendent about moving to a different area. And I told 'em I really wanted to go to an area that was similar, but different than Olympic. I wasn't really interested in moving east or too far south. I wanted to stay in the west, and I really loved the large wilderness parks, and so I mentioned that to them. A few weeks later, they – there was a social activity in the park, and the Superintendent introduced me to the Regional Director, who was John Rutter, a person I'd never met.

Richard Martin: And a couple of weeks later, I got a job offer to [laughs] Mount Rainier – and that's how it happened. And so, I transferred to Mount Rainier, I went to a District Ranger job there, and it was my first formal government move, where there actually was a moving company and an actual moving truck involved. And I went from living, you know, in quite small and cramped National Park Service quarters in Olympic – not that I'm complaining, but it was just the way it was – into a very comfortable house at Longmire at Mount Rainier, right in the park among the tall trees and everything, at what was at that time park headquarters, was at Longmire. Now it's outside the park, at Tahoma Woods. So, it was a physically a delightful move. It required uprooting the kids, of course, because two of them by that time were in grade school. And they, you know, and the ranger station we'd lived on they'd had other kids to play with and another family were living there at the time. And we all got along great, you know, and shared dinners together and everything, so it was uprooting for them. It was uprooting for my wife, because she had made a lot of friends – she was, is, a very friendly person, and she'd made a lot of friends around, both within the park and outside. So, it was difficult for her, because when we left Mount Rainier, we were living near Port Angeles, where there [was a] junior college and all kinds of activities and things to be involved in. Well, Longmire at Mount Rainier, the house was nicer, and there was a lot of families there at the time, and families with kids, so a great small community. But it was small, and there weren't the same opportunities as in Port Angeles for other activities – you know,

advanced education or groups or clubs or various forms of entertainment. We could go to the movie in Port Angeles in 15 minutes from where we lived in Olympic, and to go to a movie from Mount Rainier was an all-day trip [chuckles], down and back. So, it was difficult for her.

Richard Martin: On the other hand, we made great friends at Mount – people we're still friends with today. Although we are no longer married, we still keep in touch, both of us individually, with people that we met at Mount Rainier. And so, you know, it had its positive – ah, jobwise it was a tremendously positive thing for me – and I think it was for the kids as well, because the school they went to at Mount Rainier had a lot of Park Service kids in it. It was the grade school right outside of Mount Rainier, Columbia Crest Elementary School, I think it was called. So, there was this great school community, and a place for socializing and things, so it was – and a lot of kids in Longmire at the time. Those – we had three sons at that time, and they were always out there playing with the other kids, it was nonstop! In the winter they'd sled and build snow forts and, you know, go trompin' around on their little short skis in the snow and stuff, and in the summer, they were out there climbing trees, doin' stuff. It was just the greatest, greatest community! And when some of those of us that lived there at that time get together today, we still rave about what a phenomenal thing it was to be able to live in that, within Mount Rainier National Park and in that community, and the things that we were able to do because of the National Park Service. It was amazing.

Richard Martin: Jobwise, it was a whole different thing for me, because I was a District Ranger, but I was right at Headquarters, so there was [laughs] all this, all of these, you know, Division Chiefs and specialists just across the road that loved to tell me what to do [laughs]. Yah, so that was a bit of a shock, because at Olympic, there was never anybody out there. Rare. Once in a while, you know, the Chief Ranger or the Chief Interpreter, the Chief of Maintenance would come around, 'Ay, you guys oughtta do that.' That'd be like a couple times a year maybe. That'd be like, couple times a year, maybe. Otherwise we were doin' what we thought was the right thing to do. But this was a whole different scheme of things. Every day I was meeting with people that were Division Chiefs and the Assistant Superintendent or Superintendent on various things, and every day they would call me or come over to my office and have some helpful suggestions for me [laughs]. So it was a whole different – but on the other hand it was a phenomenal learning thing, just from that, just from the internal communications and networking, but also priority setting and judgment, regarding what to respond to now, what to respond to later, what not to respond to – just internally. Aside from the visitor use and resource concerns in the field. So, I learned a tremendous amount about internal communications and and priority setting. And I was not at all perfect, by any means. I found myself irritating some people that I didn't want to irritate, and I found myself making some judgments that were disagreed with by Division Chiefs or the Park Superintendent? But I did

find, even though some of that stuff was very uncomfortable when I was so advised, 'Don't do that again,' I found that it helped my judgment in later years.

Richard Martin: The park itself and the work in the field was phenomenal. Hard. The environment, the winter environment at Mount Rainier is difficult. It's snow – and I presume this is still true, even if global warming – it snows a lot. And it's heavy, wet, goopy snow that's hard to deal with. It's not this nice light, fluffy powder – it's kinda similar to Lodgepole in Sequoia. Heavy, wet snow, although it comes in huge quantities, compared to the southern Sierra. So sometimes the snow'd be up, you know, practically to the rooftop, and you'd be out there, day in day out, shoveling out fire hydrants, shoveling out your driveway, shoveling out the fire truck, shoveling out the patrol vehicle, puttin' chains on the patrol vehicle to drive up or down the road, to dig somebody out of a ditch someplace. So, it was a hard job just dealing with the environment and the weather, and particularly in the winter. And the winters are fairly long, run from about the first week of November, typically, to about end of March, and hard to do much outside. And for families, except for the kids who are always out there rain or shine, it could get a little claustrophobic in the wintertime. My wife, it never seemed to bother her. She had all kinds of things she was always doing. She liked to write, and she was a phenomenal cook, and always had things to do with the – and this isn't meant to be sexist – but always doing things with the other women, 'cause that was kinda how things were done. They were always having activities that they enjoyed doing.

Richard Martin: The work in the field was enjoyable, but also very – could be – very challenging, dealing with the mountain and the weather. A lot of the park would be snowed in in the wintertime, so if you wanted to get anywhere that was normally open in the summer, you went on snows or skis, and you went in oftentimes rain or wet snow falling. Fortunately, the park had been dealing with this for almost a hundred years at that time, so there were cabins that one could use. But the travel in the wintertime was very difficult and very challenging, and one really needed to have their act together. If you were gonna go out on the snowed-in roads or the woods in the wintertime, you really needed to have your survival act in hand. Because you could get dumped on by a couple feet of snow while on a ten- or twenty-mile ski trip, and it would snow for another five days. [Chuckles.] So, you either had to be able to, you know, ski in, or snowshoe out or hole up or get to a cabin or something or you weren't gonna come out too well. But I found that challenging, but enjoyable to deal with. I was young at the time, in my 20s and early 30s, so I enjoyed going out, you know, skiing into snowed-in cabins or even staying out, if necessary. That could be tough, but if you had a tent and it didn't snow, you were okay. If you had a tent and it did snow a lot, you know how you had to deal with that – which meant you didn't sleep at night 'cause you were always pushing the snow off the tent all night long and making sure

that air was coming into the tent and everything. But I found that an enjoyable challenge to deal with. On the other hand, once one got above tree-line in the wintertime, which is an extreme environment at Mount Rainier, if a storm came along, it was a survival situation. You had to be able to dig a snow cave and figure out how to live in that snow cave for several days or until the storm went away, 'cause if you went out in the storm up there, you would need at least three people just to put wands in the snow so you could find your way back to the snow cave if you got disoriented. And trying to read a compass in a blinding ground blizzard is next to impossible to do, so the only way to travel is, you know, one wand to the next, lining up the back two in order to go in a straight line, and that is an extremely challenging thing to do for any length of time in a ground blizzard. Extremely challenging. So, one had to be able to survive for some period of time, you know, in a snow cave, until the storm blew on – and digging a snow cave is an art of its own, so. But I found that to be pretty enjoyable.

Richard Martin: The high altitude rescues were, again, extremely challenging, because in the Pacific Northwest, nobody lives at 10,000 feet. Or almost nobody. The ranger at Camp Muir would live there at 10,000 feet while he or she was stationed at Camp Muir, you know, for a few days. But I was living at 2,000 feet, as were most of the park staff, and the park rangers that climbed – including me – well, there were some rangers at Paradise that'd lived at 5,000 feet. But going from 5,000 feet to 10,000 feet or 14,000 feet and trying to pull off a rescue without being acclimated to 10,000 or 14,000 feet is an excruciatingly difficult thing to do. And there's high hazards to the human body, you know, from high altitude impact – pulmonary edema and all that stuff. On the other hand, we practiced and trained with that stuff so much that we were really good at it – a technically – and we were aware of the hazards, because they had begun the research into pulmonary edema at Denali and in the Himalaya, at least in my recollection, in the '60s. So, there was some awareness of high-altitude illness and recognizing the signs and symptoms. Nothing like today, of course, but pretty darn good. Coughing, sputum, shortness of breath, high, high heart rate, and all that stuff. Gurgling in the lungs. And none of us ever did actually – in the five years I was there – none of us really got sick. Headaches and stuff, 'course, but nothing worse. And we were damn good at that. On the other hand, the art and science of high-altitude rescue was nowhere close to where it is today. We didn't do short hauls. We didn't do hoists. Well, we did sometimes [laughs], just by the art of muddling through. I'll tell one story, if there's time.

Richard Martin: But, and the high altitude helicopters at that time, the only ones were the Llamas, we didn't have Llamas available, so if we were going up to – particularly above 10,000 feet – we needed a really gutsy military pilot or a really gutsy contract pilot with a really light aircraft. And we did do that in my experience in the five years, on three occasions that I was in the helicopter. But the really good helicopter, like the A-Stars that they use in

Sequoia today, were not, I don't think, I don't know if they'd been developed, they weren't on this continent at the time, so the only ones were the Llamas and there were none of those around Mount Rainier or anyplace. So that was a high-risk occupation, and still is to this day in many ways. But the science and technology today is light years ahead of where it was in the '70s. But none of us – all of us, I think, suffered some minor injuries and things, I hurt my back, a couple of the guys got, you know, had to have knee surgery and things – but none of us had really life-threatening damage to our bodies. And we were extremely proud of what we were doing, and thought we were doing good things for the public and for the park. Fire management was almost nonexistent. I was the park's Fire Chief, but [laughs] it was like the park's non-Fire Chief! We had a few fires the one year I was there, lightning strikes, we put those out and next four – I was there five years total – next four years, I don't think we had a wildfire one. Had an occasional structural fire, so that was not a big thing at Mount Rainier.

Richard Martin: The one winter that I was there, Mount Rainier had the world's record snowfall, and boy – I'm not sure I can remember the exact snow depth – somewhere around 1,100 inches fell at Paradise, and it didn't melt till August. And there's rangers still alive that lived through that. I think Bob Gerhard was there that winter, I believe, at Paradise. I was still living down at Longmire, so we didn't have as much snow, of course, but it was up, you couldn't see the roof. And the door was like a little, it wasn't quite a tunnel where I – in my house – but it was like, might as well've been. Mountains and mountains of snow, and you know we were living in that. Snow falling, seemed like every day for six months, you know, by the foot. I don't, I think at one point the Paradise Road was actually closed for several weeks, just because they could not plow it. It was just plain too deep to plow. There was no place – the rotaries couldn't – they had no place to throw the snow! [Laughs.] And I think they abandoned, if I remember right, abandoned Paradise for some weeks, and the only thing that went up there, I think, was the fuel truck to fuel the visitor center and the housing. And I think most of the employees at Paradise moved to Longmire or Tahoma Woods for a few weeks if I remember right. My memory's a little hazy on that.

Richard Martin: But anyway, you know, so the basic message is that the environment of Mount Rainier can be extremely challenging. And those are just the snow and the high-altitude stories. There's also the volcanism there, that I did not experience during my tenure, but the park does periodically and has in recent years, with floods and things from snow melt caused by volcanic activity. But I basically enjoyed it. It was a wonderful experience – had definite hardship about it but was a great thing.

Richard Martin: And we also did the first backcountry management plan for Mount Rainier. Which was a little harder to get started than the one at Olympic, because Mount Rainier is a higher profile park, you know? Particularly in

the Pacific Northwest, Mount Rainier is the icon, you know. And everybody in Seattle and Tacoma, it's their pet mountain out there. Olympic, on the other hand, was over there on the peninsula, and was lower profile, so when we decided we needed a backcountry management plan – for a variety of reasons. The big reason was – and this had started in the late '60s, but was the era of lightweight backpacking, and the baby boomers. So there was a big boom of people in their late teens, early 20s, that wanted to get out in the national parks and not just wilderness, forests, you know, outdoors, whatever, and many of them attracted to national parks to go backpacking, but the other was all of this great new stuff: nylon packs, lightweight sleeping bags, aluminum frame packs, lightweight stoves – which they'd had in Europe a long time, but only a few mountaineers, you know, in North America knew about. You ever see the little Svea stove? The little Svea? Yeah. And there was a little Optimus and a couple others.

Richard Martin: Wow! We don't have to cut firewood in a damp dark forest anymore. We can just, you know – and lightweight dried food was a new deal, except the only dried or only lightweight food before had been dried or smoked foods. So freeze-dried foods and the wider availability of dried foods that were not just, you know, salt and smoked but were actually dried. Um, nylon clothing – this is still the days before fleece or Gortex, but nylon clothing, lightweight waterproof clothing. A wider availability of good boots – they were leather at the time and heavy – but as opposed to wearing overshoes or just mountaineering boots. Mountaineering boots were available at just two or three places in North American – or at least in the U.S. Like REI had a few, an outfit called Gerry, which was in Colorado, an outfit called – yeah, can't remember its name [The Ski Hut] – in Berkeley. Doesn't exist anymore. Just two or three places in North America where you could buy good hiking boots up until about that period of time, then they became more widely available. So, when all that stuff came on, I'm like 'Oh my god, we can go out in the wilderness!' And we don't have to carry a canvas tent anymore, we don't have to wear a canvas coat that's gonna get soakin' wet, or the alternative that would be fisherman's rain gear, which is heavy Mackinaw-weight stuff. We can go out in the woods, you know, with a lightweight. So that was – the result [was] a lot of people started backpacking into the national parks all over the west, but particularly those that were close to urban areas, like Olympic and Mount Rainier.

Richard Martin: And Mount Rainier really, because – two-hour drive from Seattle, lots of easy hikes up to beautiful places, beautiful meadows, beautiful sub-alpine, and so we were just getting buried under backpackers! And they were shittin' in the woods and makin' social trails and camping in the middle of meadows with fire rings, so they could sit there behind their fire and have a beautiful, beautiful view of the sunset. Don't blame 'em a bit – I did the same thing myself many times. But it was like an out-of-control sit – and of course a bunch of 'em'd get in trouble, we'd have to go rescue 'em or

wheel 'em out of the backcountry with a litter. So, we needed a back – we needed one, we needed some way to deal with this! And we had a great, a great Superintendent at that time, a guy named Jim Tobin, [has] since passed away. A wonderful Chief Ranger named Alan Atchison, who's still alive, lives down around Tucson some place. I haven't been in touch with him for years, but Alan Atchison – great, great man. Not a – he was not a huge outdoorsman, but he really understood when things were necessary, and he was very persuasive with regional offices and getting them to accept things that us little guys out in the park thought we needed to do. So, we got a really good backcountry management plan at Mount Rainier, and I believe that plan to this day is somewhat intact. I know it's way more sophisticated and complex and has been revised many, many, many, many times, but it included a bunch of things that today are very accepted that had never been done before, at least overtly. And I think Rocky Mountain and Sequoia Kings were doing, beginning to do similar things at that same time.

Richard Martin: But Mount Rainier was right in there, and we developed campsites outside of the meadows – we actually developed 'em and numbered 'em and gave 'em names – we started a permit system with quotas, a reservation system. The reservation system wasn't really rigid, because we didn't, you know, this was at its beginning levels. We put in toilets, we limited wood stoves – wood fires – at certain altitudes, required camp stoves, gas stoves, in certain locations. Pack It Out. This was still a little before Minimum Impact or Leave No Trace – quite a ways, quite a while before Leave No Trace. Minimum Impact came along first, in about the mid- to late-'70s. But so, this was still before anybody'd come up with a label of Minimum Impact. How else did we do that?

Alison Steiner: What was the public's response to these sorts of restrictions or suggestions—

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Alison Steiner: —to this plan.

Richard Martin: Typical. You know, anytime somethin' new comes along, there's a 'Ain't it horrible' crowds out there. And, you know, oftentimes that's justified. There're a lot of [chuckles] wacky ideas in the world that need to die, a quick death if possible! But in this particular case, the concerns were very predictable and understandable. The mountaineering community, of course, was still a hundred percent in the mode of Freedom of the Hills. And again, I don't blame them. I mean, I'm a Freedom of the Hills type myself; you know. In order to enhance freedom, sometimes one needs to do things a little differently.

Richard Martin: So, we had a huge education effort at Mount Rainier. Fortunately, we had the capability to do that. The staff was large enough and articulate enough

and dedicated enough and desirable enough to get this done, and we were always, during that – I think it went on for more than one winter, but for sure one winter – all the rangers and the interpreters, people, the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent going around to climbing clubs, hiking clubs, conservation groups, Rotary, schools, this club, that club, didn't matter, and explaining what we were trying to do and why we thought it was necessary. And ultimately the regional office actually gave us some funding for this – for the development of the campsites and some of the media and educational materials. Ultimately what the park and regional office decided to do was – and I think Sequoia did this same tactic – was to call it an 'experiment' [chuckles]. I'm pretty sure, if you look into Sequoia's management plan or whatever they called it, Backcountry Management Plan, in the early 70s, I think you'll find it was an 'experiment.' [Laughs.]

Richard Martin: So, we decided, we collectively – I don't, I'm sure it was not my idea – but the park and the region decided to call it and experiment to put in this permit system and the quota system and everything, worked like a charm. And I don't remember that we ever said no to anybody, the first year, and I was there a couple years after that. And there were never any significant problems. People still wanted to go out and camp in the middle of the meadows, but the education effort was effective enough that I'm sure a few people did, but not significantly. Oh, the other thing I forgot about, and this was veg rehab. There were a lot of social trails across meadows, you know, four trails wide, a lot of shortcuts, a lot of trails going to places where they didn't need to go, and we started to rehab those trails with a combination of seeding of grasses and woodchips, in order to try to retain the soils. We did that two summers that I was there. I haven't gone back to see the result – I don't know how they worked out – but that was part of the program, in addition to trying to reduce the camping and impacts on the meadows, was to try to do some restoration in the meadows that had been damaged.

Alison Steiner: Okay, so that's where we started. Okay so, I guess, are there any other significant – you've talked about a backcountry management plan – is there anything else that you did at Mount Rainier like that, projects that you worked on that you think were challenging to the norms of the day or significant to the park's history?

Richard Martin: Yeah, and they're not quite as dramatic, I don't think, as that, or as groundbreaking, but one of the groundbreaking things we did do was, in some of the more out-of-the-way locations, we moved campsites away from streams and lakes, which was a – it was kind of a new – concept in the '70s. The idea had, at least in my knowledge at the time, had been proposed by soil scientists and botanists and water quality people some years previously. But I wasn't aware of any place it had actually occurred. So, you know, we had the usual SCA crews and other crews, rehabbing campsites around particularly water resources, and moving the campsites,

you know, a hundred feet, fifty feet into the woods. Today I think the standard is pretty well accepted at a hundred feet, but in those days, if we could get it away from the water, you know, fifty feet, we would settle for that. So that was, that was something that was significant at the time, and of course the public was not enamored with that idea, 'cause I mean one of the beautiful places at Mount Rainier is Mowich Lake – I don't know if you've been there or not, it's on the west side, dirt road, beautiful lake, an old-style ranger log cabin, just 25 or 30 feet from the water's edge. Mount Rainier's up there – it's just a spectacular place! Campsites right on the lake, like – not a lot of 'em, maybe two dozen – and we rehabbed all those campsites and moved 'em away from the lake. And we did something that I don't think is accepted today. We did seeding, of course, but the other thing we did was we had the crews go out in the forest, dig up plugs of vegetation, and move 'em down to the sites on the lake, and I doubt if that would be acceptable to practice in today's world. I don't know for sure, but I doubt it, you know, given the protection emphasis of vegetative resources. But it was accepted at the time, and it worked like a charm. It really got vegetation growing way quicker than with the seeding, 'cause with the seeding you had to water for at least the first couple of summers and – which, you know, was an expense and a workload for staff, and then you still didn't know for sure whether it was gonna, because you know how that soil would be so packed down and there'd be all kinds of ash and junk in the soil from hundred years of campfires – so you still didn't know if the seeding would actually take, whereas the vegetation plugs just kept steamin' right away and began to spread out over time. So that was a pretty good, maybe not one-of-a-kind things, but it was certainly a forward-thinking activity.

Richard Martin: Um, what else did we – it seems like we did some other neat things. One of the things that we thought we wanted to encourage there at the time – there were very few people that were cross-country skiers in the U.S. in those days, and cross-country skis were hard to come by. I don't remember that REI ever even actually had 'em at the time. There was a place in Seattle called Osborn & Ulland, which doesn't exist anymore.[1] It was primarily a waterskiing and a snow skiing outlet down on the waterfront in Seattle. But they carried some mountaineering skis – wood – in those days, but with metal edges, stiff, and with cable bindings so you could kinda walk in 'em. REI had seal skins, for uphill climbing. And actual, real seal skins. I've still got my pair at home. Not today's plush stuff, which is more environmentally friendly, but this is real. Came off the hide of a seal. [Laughs.] So, REI had those. And we, at least I thought – and I think Bob Gerhard and a couple of the other rangers, and I know the earlier superintendent before Jim Tobin, John Townsley – wanted to

[1] Osborn & Ulland, located at Third Avenue and Virginia Street in Seattle and known as the "home of the Sniagrab ['bargains' spelled backwards] and outfitter of Northwest athletes for more than 50 years," went out of business in 1995.

encourage ski mountaineering and cross-country skiing in the wintertime, so we made several exploratory trips for routes, both out of the east side and the west side of Mount Rainier, and at least one of them turned into a survival adventure. [Laughs.]

Richard Martin: Actually right near where we were just talking about, right near Mowich Lake, but one of the other trips we took – and I know Bob Gerhard was on this one – was just this heavenly, heavenly trip across the east side on skis above tree line. Of course, today ski mountaineering, telemark skiing, randonee skiing is a huge sport, and particularly, I mean, the technology today is incredible! But in those days, with wood skis, big heavy boots, and, you know, bamboo poles – which were heavy and would break if you weren't really careful with them – why, it was a real adventure. Almost nobody was doing it in those days. So that was forward thinking, although I'm not sure that those exact efforts made any difference, either locally or with those sports in general. So, I don't think we actually achieved public acceptance of those activities. That was done primarily by the outdoor sports industry and by professional skiers, you know, starting much more in the '80s than in the '70s. But we took a shot at that.

Richard Martin: Bear management was a bigger challenge in those days than today, because there was no science to it. It was 'make it up as you go along', and the science of the day included – there was a little science, which was the drugs. They had come along a little bit in the '60s, Sucostrin and Sernalyn primarily. The drugs are much more sophisticated today than they were at the time, for tranquilizing bears. Traps had been developed – culvert traps – but the technology of preventing bears from getting into food had not been developed. Or the necessity. It was kind of understood, but it wasn't really. The ethos of the time is that 'We've gotta keep bears away from food.' We kinda thought that would be a good thing, but we didn't know how to do it. And the first efforts came out of the California parks, with the bearproof garbage cans. Both Yosemite and Sequoia Kings initiated that, and so – in my experience at Mount Rainier in the '70s – the state of the knowledge of the art was still 'Shoot the bear, dart the bear, trap the bear, transport the bear', uh, which we did with impunity. We didn't actually shoot any, in my experience, with guns. We did a lot of darting and transporting but darting and the drugs in those days were not sophisticated enough – and our skill level was not sophisticated enough – to get the dosages right all the time. But the drugs were a huge help, compared to just a bullet or a trap – much more humane – but then what to do with the bear in the end is not, I think, any better today than it was then. Taking a bear a hundred miles away – if the bear stayed there, it wasn't good for the bear, and if the bear came back, it wasn't good for the bear either. So, you know, in years later – finally in the '80s – when the bear-proof cans, bear-proof lockers, and the canisters came along, way after this time-frame we're talkin' about – bear management became much more sophisticated and effective. Both for the bear and for the people trying to manage them, so. But at this time, the answers were to dart bears and

transport them, and we always transported them to a remote area which will not be disclosed [laughs] either to the recipient landowner or to the public. And we didn't really, we did not develop any new technology at Mount Rainier at that time, for dealing with that. Other than those things, that's what comes to mind Mount Rainier-wise.

Alison Steiner: So, you mentioned that you stayed there for five years, and then moved where?

Richard Marin: Moved to Sequoia Kings.

Alison Steiner: And how did you make the decision to move on to another park?

Richard Martin: Part of it was again the desire to do something different in a different area. Part of it was the desire – it was a different era in the Park Service, at least in my perspective. High-level managers in the Park Service were often pressuring rangers to become managers. And we all went to a lot of training in those days, not necessarily in our – and often not – in our occupation. I went to concessions training – I mean, not lengthy, but for a week or two. I went to training in budgeting. I went to training in environmental concerns – not science – but concerns. So, we're going to a lot of training. I didn't really want to go – I didn't want to become a manager at that point in time. I didn't know if I ever would, in fact. That came later, in my experience. But I didn't really want to get too high a profile in any one place and have people, you know, and I didn't want to have to say no too often, because I didn't want to alienate people either. And I thought – and I wanted to get away from the rain and the snow and go to a place that was a little less rainy. I'd been offered a job at Sequoia a couple of years before that, in fire management? I'd been offered the FMO job? And I – it's a long story, but I accepted it, but the regional office wasn't happy with me going there, so I stayed at Mount Rainier for a while longer, which I was perfectly happy to do. At any rate, Don Chase left Sequoia Kings – he was the Sierra Crest Sub-District Ranger in Bishop – and I actually asked the Regional Office if I could lateral to that job. So, my family was pleased with that. My wife was happy with it. The boys were a little less, because you know they were really into school and their friends – big, big, bigtime – and getting along famously. So, they got uprooted from elementary school, and the school we moved into in the Owens Valley was a challenge for them. But my wife was extremely happy with the move. We bought, we were able to buy a house in Owens Valley – which was our first house – and I had a job I loved, you know, in a great place, all kinds of independence. And a growing experience in some ways – in some ways, skill-wise, it was kinda the same old thing, but I enjoyed exercising those skills. As far as intellectual growth, though, there wasn't a lot in that new job, but I was happy with it, because I got to extend my field career, and I mean really out in the field [laughs], for a few more years.

Alison Steiner: So, I guess, since I work at Sequoia and Kings and I'm familiar with how that position is – oh, if I'm correct, you're the Sub-District Ranger of the Sierra Crest?

Richard Martin: Mmhm. Right.

Alison Steiner: You know, today that position is stationed in Grant Grove. It sounds like you might've been stationed in Bishop? Or Owens Valley.

Richard Martin: Yeah, Owens Valley.

Alison Steiner: If you could talk maybe a little bit about the experience of being stationed in Owens Valley – where you were very far from park managers, in contrast to at Mount Rainier – but also maybe interagency aspect of that job?

Richard Martin: Sure, I'd love to. You know, as far as being that far from the park functions and management – it was the best of times, the worst of times. Like, I could do whatever I wanted – as long as I didn't embarrass the Park Service, right? And be productive. On the other hand, it was really hard for me to influence the park, extreme – almost bordered on the impossible. And there were many things from my Olympic and Mount Rainier [positions], where not just me but the rangers in general had all been very assertive about what we thought were good things. Whether we were right or wrong – and we were not always right, of course – but the management both at Olympic and Mount Rainier had been extremely interested in what we had to say about various issues in the parks and what we thought should be done, and if we were willing to work on them – very willing to maybe not give us government time, but to encourage us to do things on our own at home at night or on weekends and come up with something that might make a difference on some function – whatever the devil it was. Well at Sequoia I found it extremely difficult to influence events except in Owens Valley, where I was kinda like a semi-you know, little outpost superintendency, because I was – if it came to Owens Valley and the Forest Service and Devil's Postpile – all I had to do was call up the Chief Ranger or the Deputy Superintendent *or* the Superintendent and things happened. Very expediently. So, Don, Don Chase started this before me. He was there two or three years. And he had a great relationship with the park superintendent at the time, and he started the relationship up with the Forest Service, primarily, but also a bit with BLM and state Fish and Game and with the communities at large. And really, still lives in Alaska most of the year, still alive – he'd be a neat guy to interview on his perspective. So, he start [ed this] – I don't take credit for starting this. I continued, I think I expanded it a little bit in a couple ways, a fair amount. But when it came to things regarding relations with the Forest Service, particularly on the east side, or other interagency issues or community issues, political issues? I couldn't have asked for more support through both superintendencies.

Richard Martin: On the other hand, when it came to trying to influence things that were going on within the parks, I had very minimal influence. Plenty of activity, I mean, I essentially lived in the backcountry in the summertime. I took my family with me. We lived out of a tent at Charlotte, Rae Lakes, LeConte, McClure, Dusy Basin [laughs], ah Woods Lake, and my wife of the time – who was an excellent backpacker, wonderful outdoorswoman – was very accepting of that. We rented our house out in the summer. And the kids were initially hesitant, but by the end of the summers? 'Do we have to go back to town? Do we have to go back to school? [Laughs.] We get to go fishing out here, we can hike – camping, being out every day [laughs] – Do we have to go back to school?' So, as far as the activities in the park, I mean, anything I wanted to do or could do or should do – the SARs were phenomenal, I even went on fires, I was still a red-carded firefighter, so I went on fires periodically in the parks and kept my qualifications up.

Richard Martin: I made many good friends in the Forest Service and in BLM. In fact, in later years – not too many years after I left that – I was offered two different jobs in that National Forest that were either transfers or promotions, and I've still got friends in the forest, in the Inyo there, and at least one person that's retired there and another one retired in northern California I still keep in touch with occasionally. So, from that standpoint it was phenomenal, but trying to have an influence over the way things were done in the parks, particularly wilderness-wise, was very difficult for me, and I didn't have much luck. And there weren't many things I wanted to do, but there were a few – which I still think are good ideas today. Wanta hear 'em? [Laughs.]

Alison Steiner: Yes. [Laughs.] That was gonna be my next question!

Richard Martin: [Laughs.] I wanted to make the trail into Baxter Basin and into Woods Lake into a no-maintenance, no-technology zone – 'meet the wilderness on its own terms'. And I proposed that to my bosses, and nobody liked the idea. I still think that's a good idea. Not so much that it's a good idea per se, but my personal attitude is, 'Occasionally try something different!' You know, why not push the envelope a little bit? Maybe a big bit, but certainly a little bit. And this is not pushing the envelope hardly even out to, you know, a sharp point. Why not try some things – you know, with the bighorn sheep there and the fact the trails are hardly ever maintained anyway? And the fact that hardly anybody ever goes, particularly to Baxter Basin, but even to Woods Lake, not a lot of people go – why not try something different? Or how about a 'no-grazing' zones there – not from the standpoint of vegetation management, but from the standpoint of 'Let's try something different.' I mean, that politically's explosive with the horsemen, but what else is new? I mean, they're always – them and the hikers – are always pissed at each other anyway. So, I still think an occasional cutting-edge idea like that is healthy for the concepts of wilderness management. They might work? Might fail. The concept of,

you know, pack out your poop, has kinda become now more normal, but that was something they didn't want to hear from me [laughs] in the '70s. I wanted to take some of the trails off the maps, including the Tom Harrison maps, and those were a couple of them. The trail over into Charlotte Basin – no, not Charlotte—

Alison Steiner: Gardiner Basin?

Richard Martin: Gardiner Basin, I wanted off the maps. Why not let people find some of that stuff on their own? I mean, there's lots of cross-country off-trail hiking there anyway, all kinds of it in both Sequoia and Kings Canyon, where you can make these big – and you'll find little old remnant trails goin' places – why not take some of those things off and try it out? Let people use their own goddamn GPS today [laughs]—

[END OF TRACK 5]

[START OF TRACK 6]

Richard Martin: So, it's, I still, I think some of these no-technology, no-map locations, I still think some of those things are not bad ideas. They may not be good, but they might be worth giving some serious thought to, instead of just 'Oh no, we're not gonna try it.' The issues regarding wilderness improvements – bridges, trail bridges over waters, ranger stations, some of that stuff – seems to me would benefit from some public discourse, be controversial, there's probably no good answer, but I have this feeling in my mind that the public would be better educated if they knew there was wilderness issue regarding these things. Not just a pro or a con thing, but a values thing – of what really are your values regarding wilderness? Do you want to have to stop when you get to a high-water stream? I mean, I've done that in my wilderness experience, on more than one occasion – I'd love to get across there, but I am, it's too fuckin' dangerous, I'm not gonna do it. So, you know, some of those – and I would bring these things up to folks in management and get another, 'Dick, there's another wacko idea you're comin' up with' [laughs], and they might've been wacko ideas, but I found it much easier to influence those events at Olympic and Mount Rainier than I did at Sequoia Kings.

Richard Martin: Now part of it I think was because they did already have a fully functioning backcountry management plan, and it was working great for its day. Working great. The public had begun to accept permits and limitations. People were way better educated, the management at that function within Sequoia and Kings had become institutionalized, so to speak, and it was working really good. So, I can understand some hesitancy to – 'Oh shit, let's don't [laughs] tinker with it – it's okay right now'? I can understand that. My life's attitudes have been a little different. I like to try to move things along, and try things out, and innovate. I've never been comfortable standing still. Either physically – my body doesn't work that way – and my mind doesn't either.

Richard Martin: [In] Owens Valley, the relations with the other agencies could not have been better. And I only take modest credit for that. Don Chase started it. Both park superintendents I worked for at Sequoia Kings were superb. Hank Schmidt, who hired me, was a great schmoozer and PR guy, and he knew the importance of the east side to the park, unlike a few of his predecessors. And Stan Albright, who came from Owens Valley, when he became the park superintendent, 'course he knew how important it was. He had actually started his career as a GS-4 at Devil's Postpile, and he had, I mean, everybody in Owens Valley was his friend almost. He'd gone to Bishop High School, so he knew how important it was, so he was a great person with relating with the Forest Service and the other agencies. And the state, as well as the community, 'cause he knew lots of people in the community that were not involved with land management. So, I only take modest credit for it, but I take a little bit. I worked really hard almost every day with the Forest Service on wilderness issues, and we had a lot of fun doing it. And I think part of the reason we had fun was we were peers rather than top-down or even necessarily of the same agency. But we enjoyed each other's ideas and company, and that's how *we* came up with the idea for the Lone Pine Visitor Center. That came out of our little 'havin' coffee and tea and havin' a piece of pie' at Schat's [pronounced SHOTS] Bakery or goin' on hikes or boat trips or fishin' trips or somethin' together, and how much we thought something like that'd be a good idea for – and it'd be, the initial focus was wilderness. It later evolved into something much bigger than that.

Alison Steiner: So, when you say the Lone Pine Visitor Center, do you mean the Interagency Visitor Center that now exists?

Richard Martin: Yeah. Yeah. And that's what it was always called, just that: Interagency Visitor Center at Lone Pine. That's how that came about, was we – there were no, [it] was primary Park Service and Forest Service. We later roped in DWP, Department of Water and Power, because they were always lookin' for somethin' that looked good [laughs] and that they could point to: 'Look what we did for you guys!' And they built the building at their expense and gave the land to that. And the state Fish and Game, and state Department of Forestry and Fire Control, the local chambers of commerce, and the county. County was Inyo County, one of the few things they did [chuckles] in my experience, as a county, they jumped on board. So ultimately it was thirteen organizations and agencies that got that built, got that opened – I raised the first flag over it the first day it was open. And that has turned out to be a phenomenal benefit to Owens Valley, wilderness, resource protection, interpretation, education – phenomenal. I am so proud of that facility there, and now you know it's been rebuilt into an even bigger facility—

Alison Steiner: So, I know that today the Park Service talks a lot about partnerships, interagency cooperation. I'm wondering if at this time it was rare. I mean,

in some cases, it's still rare today, to find a really successful model, but was that supported by the Park Service or—?

Richard Martin: Absolutely. Well, by both superintendents. I'm not sure if there were other people within the park, you know, at the management level, if they were enamored with it, but the superintendent didn't let 'em get away with any backstabbing or trying to sink things, when it came to interagency cooperation on the east side – and nor did the region. The region was fully on board. Howard Chapman was the Regional Director at the time – a great, great, great man – and he came to Owens Valley and rode in one of the Mule Days Parades one time while I was there, at our invitation. And so, it was rare elsewhere, though. The agencies would cooperate locally oftentimes, you know, on issues or things that would come up from time to time. Occasionally, certainly, cooperated on fires. Forest Service or BLM didn't do rescues, of course, or much EMS. We'd cooperate on things like camping issues or stuff like that, very localized. But as far as this level of not just cooperation, collaboration, but actually doing a project – and this was not the only project, I've got a couple others I'll mention – doing a project for the good of 13 agencies, and coming up with the money and the staff and the plans and the programs: to do that was unique, in my experience at the time. And I think it was pretty damn unique throughout the west. It was just phenomenal. I am, I still feel just so good about that. And – next time you go in there – look at the plaques that list all the agencies there, that built and support that. After we turn off this, not now, but ask me to tell a story about Death Valley's involvement, early, after the recorder's off. But the putting that all together and then seeing the public acceptance of it – always people in there – it's just so enjoyable.

Richard Martin: And the routed plaques that list all the agencies there are made from bristlecone pine wood, and they were made by a National Park Service employee at Devil's Postpile National Monument, Wally Hoffman, who still lives in Benton [California]. He just retired from the Park Service about ten years ago. So, I just think it's a wonderful – and part of the wonderful, was the working together with the people to do it, because we were going around, you know, panhandling for money. I made trips to the county, Inyo County – 'We need you guys to cough up five thousand dollars, you know, for windows or something'. And I went over to Death Valley and panhandled them for stuff. Sequoia Kings put in – Sequoia Kings and Inyo Forest put in the largest share of the money to build and to staff and to do the interpretation in that. But we were going around asking everybody for money, and almost nobody said no. So, it was just a fun thing to be involved in, and it's a wonderful thing to see now, thirty years later, still steamin' along and in good order.

Richard Martin: One of the other things that we did there, that I to this day I feel phenomenally good about, was initiating the study of the Sierra Nevada bighorn sheep. The Forest Service and the Park Service, and primarily the

forest rangers and the park ranger staff, had protected those sheep from about the end of the mining era in about the turn of the 1900s to the mid-1970s, just by the seat of their pants, you know? By not tellin' anybody they were up there, by there might've even been, you know, a few predators blown away, but it had all been just dedication and hard work. There was almost nothing known about those populations, except that they were kind of on the ragged edge. And the Forest Service actually set up areas going up toward Shepherd Pass and toward Baxter Pass that were called something like 'Special Zoological Zones' and they wrote permits for people to go on those trails, and this was even be – I think it was before the Park Service started the Wilderness Permit System, but at least concurrently with that. Just to even traverse those, 'cause the Forest Service wanted those sheep protected, Park Service wanted 'em protected.

Richard Martin: And there was this guy that came out of, I think either out of Michigan or Michigan State, that wanted to start studying the sheep as either a master's or a doctoral dissertation, John Wehausen [WAY hous en]. And he showed up in Owens Valley and then he talked to the Forest Service, then he came over to Three Rivers and talked to the Park Service and I was there, and he was willing to do this – you know, he was gonna do this basically as a volunteer – what we, what he asked us and the Forest Service to do was to provide some funding for him for food and transportation, you know, all that kind of equipment for survival and all that kind of thing. He wanted to put a cache of food and stuff in Baxter Basin, so I signed his first permit to put his cache out there, and the Park Service and the Forest Service each contributed 20,000 dollars to his first year's studies. And I don't know how long they continued to support it financially, but for some years, Forest Service and Park Service put up a lot of money – you know, in those days, that was the '70s – it's a lot of money today. It was a massive amount of money in those days. So he started those studies. He's still in Owens Valley, an interesting guy and, you know, the Fish and Wildlife Service just, what, four years ago? Finished up their, ah, what do they call their plans for endangered, for threatened species? It's ah—anyway their plan. I actually went to one of their meetings in Bridgeport, and I wrote comments to 'em about it. About – god, I wrote about four or five pages.

Richard Martin: But, you know, out of that came the restoration efforts, where they restored them to Wheeler Ridge, north of Bishop, all the way up to Yosemite in Lee Vining Canyon. Some of those populations that they restored have had difficulty, but a lot of 'em are goin' strong. I mean, it's the range from – if I remember right, from John Wehausen's first census, there was about 125 animals in the Mount Baxter herd and then about 20 or 30 in the Mountain Williamson herd, down by Shepherd's Pass. And since then – oh, and Fish and, the state Department of Fish and Game was a big help with this as well. They didn't put too much money in at the time. They've since in recent decades put a lot of money into it, but at the time it was Forest Service, Park Service thing. Anyway, out of that came

transplanting to their historic range – or not all of it, but a lot of it – the populations are much larger than they were in those days. There's now a protection plan the Fish and Wildlife Service has done that's formalized them as a threatened – I think it's threatened, not endangered – as a threatened species. They've, they are taxonimally [taxonomically], they've got a new name, a sub-species of Orvis [Ovis] Canadensis, which I think is, I can't remember, Sierrae or something like that, but a new sub-species. So that's something that the Park Service can take huge pride in. I take a limited amount in. And, at this meeting I went to in Bridgeport, I walked up and – I hadn't seen the guy in 30 years – I said, "John, I don't know if you remember me or not." "Oh yeah, Dick, how are you? You wrote my first permit!" [Laughs.] God, I'm shocked he remembered. So, it was a very heartwarming moment. So, and that came out of – that would not have happened without Forest Service, Park Service – not just 'Oh we'll kind of go along here and get along, let's all keep in communication' – the Forest Service and Park Service devoted significant resources to trying to get this done. Not just, ah, you know, an exchange of memos or something. So that, that I feel really, really good about.

Alison Steiner: You mentioned briefly that, um, I think it was when you were talking about closing the Baxter – no, some of the meadows to grazing – you touched on the controversial nature of stock use versus backpacking in the Sierras, and you mentioned also at one point there, political issues that you had to deal with in Owens Valley, and I was kind of wondering if you could flesh out some of those political issues—

Richard Martin: Sure.

Alison Steiner: —or that particular controversy?

Richard Martin: Sure. Ah, the big Sequoia Kings controversy at the time was Mineral King, and that flopped over a little bit into Owens Valley. The Forest Service still wanted to put in a ski area there – 'cause it was Forest Service land at the time, in the mid-'70s. The Park Service had a little bit of land where the Atwell Mill is, and the ranger station and at [that] sequoia grove? But the rest of, I don't know if it was the entire basin of Mineral King, but most of Mineral King, if not all of it up there, was Forest Service, part of Sequoia National Forest. And they still wanted to put up a ski area there, Disney still wanted to do it. The Sierra Club and other conservation groups had kinda supported 'em earlier, but then they realized 'Wait a minute. That's a dumb thing to do', so the conservation groups all rose up in arms against it, and they ultimately killed it. And then Congress made it part of the park in '77, I think?

Richard Martin: But the local congressman for Bishop was the same congressman – lived, he was from Bakersfield – that was dealing with Mineral King. And I would go to these meetings, you know, with the other agencies or with community leaders and things, and he'd be there. And, you know, you'd all introduce ourselves – "Hi, I'm Dick Martin of the Park Service"

[laughs]. And so, he had his staff actually contact me about Mineral King – a wonderful young lady, I can't remember her name, that was his staff person in Bishop. And, you know, I really didn't know where the Park Service was comin' from on Mineral King and, so you know, I kind of waffled and dotted and weaved in our discussion. But then I called the park was kinda the typical Park Service thing, 'We're not for it and we're not against it,' 'cause you know they didn't want to get embroiled with the Forest Service and everybody, 'cause of course the congressman there was against transferring it to the park. And shortly thereafter, a couple years later, it was added to the park by Congress, because of John Krebs, the congressman from Fresno, and then it was still kind of a controversy, 'cause you know the summer home cabin owners there were not enamored of the Forest Service or the Park Service, so – it wasn't a huge thing.

Richard Martin: The biggest thing was fish planting. Fishing recreation in Owens Valley communities is a huge thing and a huge moneymaker for lodges, restaurants, outdoor sports stores, guides – a huge thing. And California Department of Fish and Game, you know, plants fish throughout the high lakes, and at the time they planted fish in the Sierra parks, all the way up to Lassen. With aircraft – primarily fixed wing, you know, dropping the fish out of an aircraft over the lake into the water. And actually, the Park Service did some of that in those days, too, in other parks throughout the west. But the regional office and the quote 'policy' in the National Park Service changed at some point in the early '70s – I've forgotten when – ah, you know, that that was not an appropriate thing to do, for natural resource reasons.

Richard Martin: So, Howard Chapman, this wonderful regional director, told state Fish and Game, California Fish and Game Department, that, you know, we weren't gonna do any more fish planting in Sierra parks. Well, the word never got around to me [chuckles] – you know, I was out at the end of the line, and there was no computers or emails in those days. Things happened by paper snail mail or telephones, and telephones were very expensive in those days, with long distance calls, so I didn't hear anything about this. And I was in a meeting with Forest Service, Fish and Game, Inyo County, I think the Chamber of Commerce was there for Bishop, couple other people, and this Fish and Game guy – who's a great guy, a great, great guy, fish biologist, he was a big pupfish, desert pupfish manager, did a, he risked his career to save desert pupfish, anyway – he gets up and he says, 'Well, I don't know, I don't know if Dick can address this or not, but we just heard that the Park Service isn't going to allow fish planting [laughs] in the Sierra parks anymore, and Dick, you have anything to say about that?' [Laughs.] It was like 50-75 people in the room. And I got up and I kind of, you know, muttered, and stammered, 'Well, I don't know too much about it. I'll see what I can find out.' I even went back to the Leopold Report about, you know, natural processes, and vignette of primitive America, and I blabbered on for five minutes, and I can't tell you exactly what I said. I was, 'I'll try to find out for you', and this, Phil Pister [PEE stur]

was the guy, this Fish and Wildlife, or Fish and Game guy, fish biologist. 'Well, actually, we've heard from your regional office and that's what they're sayin'.[2] [Laughs.] 'Well, I ah, I'll have to look into that more, 'cause it's news to me', so you know, I wasn't able to cover myself with glory.

Richard Martin: But I did get a really good lesson in that job, a bunch of lessons that really helped me out as a superintendent in later life, about local relations, about controversial issues, about the more friends you can make doing positive things, the less bad something controversial will be? And that became one of my standard attitudes when I became a superintendent, is working together with interests on as many things as we can find to do together 'cause when a disagreement comes up it will be way less messy. And may be resolvable. May be resolvable easily, may be resolvable over time, but there's some hope of resolution if you have worked together with people on things you both feel good about – or all feel good about. And so, I did not get beat up there. The Regional Office? They got hammered. [Laughs.] And the Regional Director had to backpedal.

Richard Martin: And we all, the backcountry rangers and all the resource staff and everybody else that were working in Sequoia Kings the following summer? Had horrible duty. Horrible duty. We had a little form we had to take to every lake in Sequoia Kings. Every single lake. And try to catch fish. [Laughs.] Summer of 1976, I believe. Maybe '77. We had to try to go out and catch fish to determine what lakes had fish in them and what kind of fish they were, and – I'm, I was being facetious about the horrible duty—

Alison Steiner: Yeah, I know.

Richard Martin: Uh—

Alison Steiner: So, it was pretty nice.

Richard Martin: And if I recall, I think they found fish in some 1,100 lakes or something.

Alison Steiner: Wow.

Richard Martin: And, after I came back as superintendent? I went to the Resource Management staff, "I'd like to see the data sheets from the '70s on lakes that have fish on 'em, um – I might use that to go fishing." But I really actually wanted to see that information, and I don't know if they ever could find 'em – I never saw it, at any rate. But that would be something that would be valuable for Ward to look into, is the data sheets from the fish collection from the mid-1970s controversy with Cal Fish and Game over stocking at the lakes in Sequoia and Kings Canyon, because that could, in a hundred years from now, that would be, will be of incredible value, if those data sheets still exist, to some researcher or researchers or

[2] Edwin "Phil" Pister, oral history interview with U.S. Department of Fish and Wildlife. http://digitalmedia.fws.gov/cdm/singleitem/collection/document/id/1188/rec/9

park management. So that was, that was a political issue that the park dealt with that, you know, that came to Owens Valley. Ah, hm.

Richard Martin: There was always the issues, you know, of horses and mules, hikers and backpackers, and the mule-packers of the day and the backpackers of the day both began to benefit from the park's efforts at education and appropriate uses of wilderness that were non-resource impacting. And the concept of Minimum Impact management, Minimum Impact Use, evolved over time, about in the mid-'70s between the Park Service and the Forest Service, and we began to preach that as a concept. Pre-Leave No Trace. And my job was to work particularly with the packers along the east side, in educating and jawboning, basically, for minimum impact stock use, including not tying stock, horses to trees and leaving them for long periods of time—

[END OF TRACK 6]

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Richard Martin: —there were no grazing impact studies that had been conducted yet in the park, although we did the first one later. But about, you know, grazing utilization at a recoverable level rather than overgrazing, but it was real general, because we didn't any concrete information in those days. So, it was an educational effort, it was not a limitation effort, and you know there was obviously some accepting, some not accepting. Or some accepting less enthusiastically.

Richard Martin: And so, I would go to some of the meetings with the packers, and I got along personally with 'em – all except one, and I'll talk about that in a minute, if we have time. But you know it required, we were asking them to change their way of doing business, that they'd been doing since the 1880s, since the John Muir trail was built, or before, you know, for hunting and fishing in the high country. And this was a difficult task no matter who it was, you know, it could've been you or I doing some other activity and somebody from the Park Service came along and said, 'You know, we suggest', in the most benign fashion, not 'you gotta do it this way, but it would work better for the resource if things were done X instead of Y', but it was a not impossible task, but it was a challenging task. And it took some years, ah, today I think the packers in the backcountry are operating – there might be an exception – but are operating superbly well, and they were learning, but they were learning in the '70s. My job on the east side was to help them learn.

Richard Martin: And it worked ex – very well, except for one packer who operated out of Independence. And he was not a local guy, and he only lasted two or three years there, and I can't tell you his name, but he bought a longstanding permit from an old packer that had been there for years – was a great guy – and this guy, he came from Fallon, Nevada, he had some personal problems, and he didn't take care of his stock, he wasn't there at the trailhead with his stock ready when people had contracted him to do, he

turned his stock out at inappropriate places like around Bullfrog Lake and other areas and leave 'em there for long periods of time, and that was my job to deal with this guy.

Richard Martin: I rented horses from him one time to go into Woods Lake and take a couple of people with me to do a cleanup job there. So, I show up at the Sawmill Pass trailhead there, you know, in Inyo, in the Owens Valley, and there's three riding horses and a couple of mules out there, and I knew how to pack – I wasn't a professional packer but I could do it – so we bundled all the stuff up. And I started looking at the horses' feet, and they're neither trimmed nor shoed! I don't, we can't – what're we gonna do? Well, we gotta make this trip, so we put on the saddles, we put on the sawbuck, and so, away we go up to Woods Lake. Fortunately, the horses and mules did not get sore feet, and none of them fell off the trail or anything, we did our job for a couple of days and came back. So, I go over to this guy, who – he had a place on the, kind of on the eastern edge of Independence, right on the edge of the town – and you could tell this guy was not altogether there. I think he might've had a drinking problem. Anyway, I was telling him, "You know, the horses we had were, the shoes were neither trimmed or shod," so "Oh gosh, I—" "Well, you took 'em out there the day before for us, right? Didn't make sure they were ready to go?" "Well, I, I meant to do that." And so "Well, you've gotta do that. That's just part of the deal." And I said, "I've gotten a few complaints from some visitors that you haven't been up at the Onion Valley trailhead when you've agreed to take 'em to Kearsarge Lakes or Charlotte or some place. So, I need, you know, if you want to keep your clients, you've gotta please your customers." I said, "As one of your customers, I wasn't real pleased with the – no big thing, I'm a park ranger, you know, we deal with what is, but if I were a customer and you'd done that, I would be quite unhappy."

Richard Martin: But the guy just screwed up that same way throughout the summer. I'd get reports from people that he wasn't places he was supposed to be, his horses weren't shod, and then toward the end of the summer, I began to get complaints that his horses were not being well fed. So, I happened to drive by on purpose where he pastured his horses. North of Independence but before you get to Big Pine, there's a place called Black Rock, and he had a – I don't know if it was DWP land or what – where he pastured his horses. So, I had the government truck, so I was kinda keepin' a low profile – in those days they were all green? And I kinda snuck out there, trying to pretend I was lost, and his horses looked horrible. Ribs showin', backbone stickin' way up above the muscle mass – they looked dreadful! Dreadful! Oh, my god, these horses are bein' abused – oh god, now what do it do? I don't want to get into one of these things where – Park Service is tryin' to fuck over a packer sort of things [laughs]: What do I do? Well, I called up one of the veterinarians in town, in Bishop, and I said, "Do you mind goin' down and take a look at those horses? 'Cause I'm not a professional, I'm just a layperson, but they really look bad, I mean."

"Sure," he says. "Would you mind keeping the fact I asked you quiet?" "No problem." He goes down there and looks. A few weeks later the ASPCA yanks this guy's chain for inhumane treatment of horses, and Park Service yanks his permit, Forest Service yanks his permit. He's outta there. Gone, goodbye. But that had the potential to be a Park Service versus stock user political issue, which turned out just fine but could've become a real problem, particularly for the parks, if we had become known as "Uh, parkies're after the, us poor little packers that're just tryin' to earn a living and—" [chuckles].

Alison Steiner: Well, maybe that's a good place to stop for the day, and then we can pick up tomorrow?

Richard Martin: Sure.

Alison Steiner: If that still works for you?

Richard Martin: Sure.

Alison Steiner: Okay.

Richard Martin: Yeah.

Alison Steiner: Well, thank you for—

Richard Martin: My pleasure. It's been fun remembering some of this.

[END OF TRACK 7]

[END OF INTERVIEW]