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Dorothy Huyck's National Park Service Oral History Project, 1942-1987



Eloisa V. Bustos
September 27, 1978

Interview conducted by Dorothy B. Huyck
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[START OF TAPE]

- Dorothy Huyck: 00:00 The date is September 27th, 1978. I'm Dorothy Huyck. I will be interviewing Eloisa V. Bustos, B-U-S-T-O-S, who is a realty technician in the Southwest Regional Office, Santa Fe. Can I ask when you first became acquainted with the National Park Service?
- Eloisa V. Bustos: 00:26 We were going to be moving back to Santa Fe. I'm a native of Santa Fe. We moved away and we moved to Albuquerque. And at the time that we moved, I was a housewife. I had had previous government service. I had around six years government service. And we moved to Albuquerque, and I decided I'd go back to work. And I worked for the Soil Conservation Service. I had reinstatement privileges. And I had worked for them around 11 months when we came back to Santa Fe, and I was interested in National Park Service. I wanted to be in a smaller governmental unit, and I was very fortunate to obtain a temporary position with the Division of Land Acquisition. And it has turned out to be a permanent position. I've been with them now almost six years, and I enjoy it very much.
- Dorothy Huyck: 01:31 You came to the Park Service then in 1972?
- Eloisa V. Bustos: 01:33 Yes.
- Dorothy Huyck: 01:35 And at what grade?
- Eloisa V. Bustos: 01:36 GS-3. When I quit the Bureau of Land Management and the Soil Conservation Service, where I had had previous experience, my highest grade there had been a GS-5, but I had to settle for whatever I could find here. My family was already in school here, and my husband was here, and we were just waiting to find a home. So, I took a GS-3 position and I have worked up to GS-7.
- Dorothy Huyck: 02:02 What positions have you moved from a 3 to a 7?
- Eloisa V. Bustos: 02:09 From stenographer, up to realty clerk, and up to realty technician.
- Dorothy Huyck: 02:17 And you were a realty clerk in what years?

- Eloisa V. Bustos: 02:23 Oh, well, I came here as a clerk-stenographer in I'd say, oh, say three years ago, I became a realty – Or, maybe even longer than that, I became a realty clerk, and then I was reclassified to a realty technician.
- Dorothy Huyck: 02:44 How recently?
- Eloisa V. Bustos: 02:45 I've been a realty technician for I'd say at least two or three years. About two or three years.
- Dorothy Huyck: 02:54 And the realty clerk grade was from GS-5?
- Eloisa V. Bustos: 02:59 It was at a GS-5, and then GS-6 I believe. And I have been a 7 for two or three years.
- Dorothy Huyck: 03:09 What do you do as a realty technician?
- Eloisa V. Bustos: 03:14 I am mainly involved in maintaining and coordinating the management information system, it's called MIS, and it's the management tool by which we advise our management people as to what stage of land acquisition each tract is progressing. And we use this also for all our funding, how many acres were acquired during the last fiscal year, or also for overviews that the Washington Office makes on our office. We are able to say how much money we have spent on land acquisition within certain periods of time. This MIS has a variety of reports that can be generated through this MIS we have project management reports that are part of this system, and it can give you an idea of what title has been requested, what title has not been received.
- Eloisa V. Bustos: 04:27 The same thing with appraisals with just about any function of--I'd say, well, there're a variety of functions that are input for each tract, from the actual scheduling dates by which we see what negotiations, scheduling dates, and this and that, to the actual file retired date. And that becomes an archive because the deed assemblies are sent into Washington and we assign them here a deed number, and we send them in, and they do microfilming and send them on to the archives. So, it's from the beginning stage of acquisition to the last stage of acquisition, and all this is put into this system, and you have your printouts and you can just leaf through it and see just exactly where you are on each particular parcel. So, it's a very challenging job. You become acquainted with a variety of printouts, and then in

addition to that, I take care of the financial records for our office.

- Eloisa V. Bustos: 05:43 And we have all the inholding areas that we have to account for, the Land and Water Conservation money, and we keep close records of that. We reconcile our accounts with the printouts that are furnished to us monthly. And we take care of all of the receiving reports, for example for title. And so, it has to be all very accurate. We have to make a review of what obligations have not been liquidated at the end of the fiscal year. So, this is what I'm involved with. Mainly MIS and the financial records, and then of course, being that I've had experience in that office for nearly six years, I'm able to help the other girls that work in our office with questions they might have on the administrative function of the office, whether it be timekeeping, Congressional correspondence, just about everything, contracting and property management, and things like this. So, it's from administrative down to technical the work that I do.
- Dorothy Huyck: 07:09 In how many areas in the Southwest is land acquisition going on?
- Eloisa V. Bustos: 07:18 Well, I really can't give you the number. I can name a few for you, okay? We're concentrating a great deal on Hot Springs National Park, that's where most of our work is at this point. We're working with Hot Springs, doing the work from title on to negotiating from the regional office. We have a negotiator that goes down to Hot Springs and negotiates with landowners and helps them with their relocation claims, et cetera. And then we have, well, our boss is responsible for the project offices. We have two of them, one in Buffalo National River, and one in Big Thicket National Preserve. The Big Thicket is being handled for us by the Corps of Engineers. But nevertheless, he has the responsibility over the land acquisition for this area. We have Chickasaw National Recreation Area. We have Fort Smith. We have some activity going on in – Well, we had activity going on in Bandelier, we acquired quite a large parcel in Bandelier. And then of course we have smaller units where not too much activity is going on.
- Dorothy Huyck: 08:52 When you say you say you acquired a large parcel in Bandelier, do you mean an inholding in that case? Or am I taking you too literally with the word in BAND?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 09:03 Well, we were able to expand, or we're going to be expanding our Bandelier area, so what we had to first acquire the property, and this has been accomplished.

Dorothy Huyck: 09:16 So it was not technically inholding?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 09:19 I'm not sure.

Dorothy Huyck: 09:24 Can I go back and ask where and when you were born?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 09:27 I was born on August 3rd, 1937.

Dorothy Huyck: 09:30 And where?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 09:33 In Santa Fe.

Dorothy Huyck: 09:36 And how many brothers and sisters did you have?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 09:38 Four brothers, and three sisters.

Dorothy Huyck: 09:42 Among those brothers and sisters, where did you fit in?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 09:46 I was the last one, I'm the youngest in the family.

Dorothy Huyck: 09:53 You grew up in Santa Fe?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 09:55 Yes.

Dorothy Huyck: 09:55 And what was your father's occupation?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 09:59 He was a bartender.

Dorothy Huyck: 10:02 And your mother was busy the eight children?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 10:04 That's correct.

Dorothy Huyck: 10:06 Did you attend high school in Santa Fe?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 10:10 Yes, I graduated from Santa Fe High School.

Dorothy Huyck: 10:13 Have you had any further education since then?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 10:16 No, not any formal education following high school.

Dorothy Huyck: 10:20 During the time that you were in high school here in Santa Fe, was there someone who particularly encouraged you,

some member of your family, or a teacher, someone in the community?

- Eloisa V. Bustos: 10:32 You mean to enter federal service?
- Dorothy Huyck: 10:34 No, I'm sorry. Who encouraged you in the educational process during high school?
- Eloisa V. Bustos: 10:40 Oh. No, the extent of encouragement was in the commercial field by our commercial teacher. And she figured that a woman should go to college to find a husband, and we could learn what we were going to learn in high school and obtain a commercial course and be able to earn a living. She was a fairly older teacher, and she figured the only reason women should go to college would be to find a husband.
- Dorothy Huyck: 11:10 So going to college did not imply any further education, or any better preparation for a job, but rather it implied finding a husband?
- Eloisa V. Bustos: 11:20 That's the way she used to put it.
- Dorothy Huyck: 11:23 And she actually said that?
- Eloisa V. Bustos: 11:25 Well, I would say yes. But of course, she was from the old school. But as far as any encouragement for college education, we did have the English course that was required for college preparation in high school, which is a requirement for college preparation, but you didn't have to take it at the time. If you took business English that was good enough for graduation.
- Dorothy Huyck: 12:02 So was there someone who encouraged you in terms of the high school process itself?
- Eloisa V. Bustos: 12:09 I suppose my family, mm-hmm (affirmative).
- Dorothy Huyck: 12:14 How would they express that encouragement?
- Eloisa V. Bustos: 12:16 Well, they figured if you had a high school education, you could find a fairly decent job to where you wouldn't have to work at any manual labor. And so, I'd say my encouragement came from my family, and from self-pride really.

Dorothy Huyck: 12:39 Did you take courses in math and science and all in high school?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 12:44 I took algebra. That was the highest type of math that I took.

Dorothy Huyck: 12:53 Was that a required course?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 12:55 Yes, it was.

Dorothy Huyck: 12:56 And what about any of the sciences?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 13:01 I took – No, I guess I couldn't – I took biology, but that was as a sophomore, so my science didn't really enter too much of the picture except for biology.

Dorothy Huyck: 13:19 As you were growing up did you play with boys?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 13:23 No, I think I didn't.

Dorothy Huyck: 13:26 You were not a tomboy?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 13:27 No.

Dorothy Huyck: 13:29 Were you encouraged to be a lady?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 13:32 Yes.

Dorothy Huyck: 13:36 Had you traveled to or been in any of the national park areas before you came to work for the National Park Service?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 13:46 Well, Bandelier with the school, they provided a trip to Bandelier for I think all of the children.

Dorothy Huyck: 13:58 And in what year then did you graduate from high school?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 14:01 In 1955.

Dorothy Huyck: 14:04 You're married?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 14:05 Yes.

Dorothy Huyck: 14:05 And when did you get married?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 14:07 In 1955.

Dorothy Huyck: 14:09 Right out of high school?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 14:11 Just about.

Dorothy Huyck: 14:12 And you have children?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 14:13 I have three children.

Dorothy Huyck: 14:14 How old are they?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 14:16 One is 21, one is 19, and a 10-year-old.

Dorothy Huyck: 14:21 And boys or girls?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 14:22 Two boys and a girl.

Dorothy Huyck: 14:23 Which is the girl?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 14:24 The girl is the middle one, the 19-year-old.

Dorothy Huyck: 14:27 And what does she do?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 14:32 She works for United Southwest National Bank in their bookkeeping department.

Dorothy Huyck: 14:37 And your older son?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 14:39 He works in his grandfather's business.

Dorothy Huyck: 14:49 Is that your father?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 14:50 No, my husband's father.

Dorothy Huyck: 14:55 As you think back about your Park Service career, and differentiate from either the Soil Conservation Service or Bureau of Land Management, as you think just about the Park Service six years, have you found your supervisors to be encouraging, or discouraging, or maybe you've met some of both?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 15:16 Oh, we've had nothing but encouragement from our supervisors, I think they're outstanding.

Dorothy Huyck: 15:27 In what way do you find them encouraging?

- Eloisa V. Bustos: 15:30 Well, by allowing us to assume greater responsibilities in our jobs. Well, an example of this would be like the contracts we received from landowners. They trust us to be able to check whether we have title for these tracts that we're going to acquire and do the research in order to see if the tract is acceptable, if all of the steps involved have been met. So, this could be kept at a higher level, but they do allow us to gain experience from this, ordering checks and things of this nature, so I feel that they are very encouraging, they want for us to learn.
- Dorothy Huyck: 16:34 Without naming names, of course, have your immediate supervisors been men or women or both?
- Eloisa V. Bustos: 16:39 Both.
- Dorothy Huyck: 16:42 How many of each?
- Eloisa V. Bustos: 16:43 Oh, I'd say one of each, immediate supervisors. I work with other employees, and they don't have direct supervision of us, but they are higher level employees, and we do work for them. I don't know what type of supervision you'd called that, secondary supervision? But immediate supervision would be from both men and women.
- Dorothy Huyck: 17:16 There are of course some people who think of the National Park Service as a rather male-oriented organization. Do you?
- Eloisa V. Bustos: 17:25 I don't. We have our share of women employees. One of them is a GS-12, which is outstanding, I guess. I'm a GS-7, and I think that's doing all right as far as women is concerned, I think. Currently we're trying to re-describe my duties, and so hopefully I'll be able to advance. And we had another female employee when I came here and she was, I believe, a GS-9 at the time that I came here, so I don't think that our office has been male-oriented. Our chief of Land Acquisition in Washington is female.
- Dorothy Huyck: 18:16 Do you think that being a woman has in any way affected your opportunities for increased responsibility, or promotion? Either, pro or con?
- Eloisa V. Bustos: 18:24 No, I don't think so.

Dorothy Huyck: 18:29 And would you say that your specific talents and background abilities are being well used in your current position?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 18:36 I think so, yes.

Dorothy Huyck: 18:38 Are there any jobs in the Park Service that you think women should not try to undertake?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 18:44 I don't believe so. That's evidenced by the new selection here of a deputy director. I think a woman could fill just about any job provided she were qualified.

Dorothy Huyck: 19:06 You've been working throughout the time that you've been raising children, is that correct?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 19:07 Yes, except for four years. I was home for four years. And other than that, I've worked all the time.

Dorothy Huyck: 19:18 How have you managed to combine having three children and a career in the Park Service?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 19:25 By having a very nice mother-in-law who took care of the two younger children. And then of course I stayed home for four years when I was expecting my last child, and I returned to full-time employment after he was a little older. And really, I've had no problems as far as babysitters are concerned. So, I would say that my mother-in-law was a big asset to me.

Dorothy Huyck: 19:59 What is your husband's occupation?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 20:02 Right now, he's working for the post office.

Dorothy Huyck: 20:06 He's worked elsewhere previously?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 20:08 Oh, he's had management positions before he came to work with his father. But right now, he's working for the post office.

Dorothy Huyck: 20:18 And what is his father's business?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 20:20 His father has the Dependable Cab, the only cab in town.

Dorothy Huyck: 20:29 If your daughter by chance expressed an interest in working for the National Park Service would you encourage her?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 20:35 Definitely.

Dorothy Huyck: 20:42 I have been asking you quite a collection of questions. Is there anything that we not talked about that you'd like to comment on?

Eloisa V. Bustos: 20:53 Not really. I think if you are doing research on women, I think we've touched on just about all different phases, from management down to skills.

Dorothy Huyck: 21:12 All right, thank you.

Eloisa V. Bustos: 21:12 You're welcome.

Dorothy Huyck: 21:15 After she left Eloisa Bustos commented further on her commercial teacher in high school. This individual encouraged women in her class to think of college as a place for finding a husband. She encouraged a very high level of typing skills, and she looked upon her students as a source of secretaries for her son who was a lawyer here in Santa Fe. This approach suggests that there wasn't any particular encouragement for students to consider further education. Eloisa also commented on the role of women in this particular area of the country as far as filling in financially when their husbands are not employed, between jobs. She herself has performed this function and referred to other women also being the financial mainstay of a family when husbands are between jobs. She of course commented in addition that employment for women is necessary in an area where the cost of housing is very high, and that this is a requisite if one is to acquire a home.

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