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Paul Anderson
October 24, 2014

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

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ANPR Oral History Project

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The narrator has corrected the transcript.

Audiofile: ANDERSON Paul 24 Oct 2014

[START OF TRACK 1]

Brenna Lissoway: Okay. I'm just going to do a quick header. This is Brenna Lissoway interviewing Paul Anderson. Today is October the 24, 2014. We're at the YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park, Colorado. And this is our first interview. So, if you wouldn't mind, just as the header, just state your name, date of birth and where you were born.

Paul Anderson: My name's Paul Anderson. I was born on May 5, 1950 in Fort Collins, Colorado.

Brenna Lissoway: Just down the road.

Paul Anderson: Mm hmm. My first career, or my first job in the National Park Service was at Rocky Mountain.

Brenna Lissoway: (laughs) That's great. So, to start, I was hoping you might tell me a little about your family and growing up in Fort Collins.

Paul Anderson: So, I grew up on a farm just outside of Fort Collins. My family ran a dairy farm. And so that meant that my parents were engaged 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. So, we didn't take very many vacations. I won't say we took any vacations as a family. The best we could do together was to take off between, say, eight in the morning when we were finished milking and four in the afternoon when we had to start again. And of course, coming to the mountains to go fishing or to go hiking was a great family experience – and a rare one, too.

Paul Anderson: My grandparents lived on the farm as well. My grandfather worked for the Soil Conservation Service. I think they probably spent more time with me as a child here in the park and elsewhere, hunting and fishing, than I actually spent with my own parents.

Paul Anderson: I had five sisters. We had you know, probably what I would consider a fairly typical farm upbringing. We were the hired hands. So, at the age of five, I started doing my barnyard chores, which was to feed all the baby calves twice a day. When I turned seven, I graduated, because my oldest, or my next sister was old enough to start feeding the calves. And so, I milked cows, and I milked cows for, well, actually, I don't know, 10 years, twice a day. Had to get up and milk them before school and had to come home from school and milk them before I could do my homework and go to bed. So, it was a pretty interesting life.

Paul Anderson: When I was a teenager, I fell in with a group of friends in junior high and high school who skied and hiked. We formed the first, not the first, we reinstituted the Fort Collins junior group of the Colorado Mountain Club. There were 10 of us, probably, to start with, but it grew to about 25. Of course, what that meant was that we spent the weekends in the mountains together. And we did a lot of climbing. In fact, most of our efforts were focused on climbing. If you live in Fort Collins, well there's some

climbing in the Horse Tooth area, or was at the time, and a very little climbing in the Poudre Canyon. The majority of the good climbing areas up here in Estes Park, close to home. So, we spent a great deal of time climbing on Lumpy Ridge in the north. I can't remember the name of the ridge. Black Canyon Ranch, anyway. And on the east face of Longs Peak.

Paul Anderson: That group also skied a lot, and some of them belonged to the National Ski Patrol. So, when I was 16, having just learned to ski, I joined the National Ski Patrol as a junior in the Hidden Valley Ski Area, which at that time was operating here in Rocky Mountain National Park.

Brenna Lissoway: Wow. So, you found enough time in between working on the farm to be able to do some of these outdoor pursuits.

Paul Anderson: To a degree. By that time, by the time I was in high school, my sisters were, most of them, not all of them, were old enough to take on the chores. I think my parents were a little more lenient at that point in my life. So, I mean, I couldn't go camping every weekend of the month, but I could go at least one or two weekends. And that kind of thing.

Brenna Lissoway: You mentioned that you reinstituted the Colorado Mountain Club? Can you tell me what it had been previously?

Paul Anderson: The Colorado Mountain Club is a fairly large organization that advocates for mountain recreation and preservation in Colorado. The majority of the people that at the time, anyway, and probably to some degree still today, are people that spend a good deal of time climbing, hiking and recreating in the mountains in Colorado. So, I was of a generation, and we're talking about five or six years here, I was of a generation that followed a great generation of climbers and skiers at Colorado State University. Those folks had, when they were growing up in Fort Collins, had formed a Colorado junior group, Fort Collins Junior Group of the Colorado Mountain Club. Their club had affiliated local organizations around the state. So, there was a Denver group and there was a Boulder group and there was a Colorado Springs group and that kind of thing. So, we affiliated; we knew those people, but they were beyond the level of where the junior group was, and the junior group kind of fell apart. So, they helped us put it all back together and become more active again. I think that probably had a pretty strong influence on my life direction.

Brenna Lissoway: Just being able to be in the outdoors and take on those pursuits?

Paul Anderson: Yeah.

Brenna Lissoway: So maybe talk to me, so you said you came into the park, into Rocky Mountain National Park quite a bit.

Paul Anderson: Mmhmm.

Brenna Lissoway: What was your first impression of park rangers, the national park itself? What were your early kind of ideas around that?

Paul Anderson: So, my grandparents retired in 1954, I think, when I was about four or five years old. And they had a trailer, eight foot wide by 28-foot travel trailer. They used to take it to the mountains every summer and spend a summer in the mountains. They'd invite the kids to go along one at a time and stay a week with them. I don't know how many times, but at least one summer they spent the summer in the Aspen Glen campground here at Rocky Mountain. I don't know how old I was, but I might have been five or six or seven years old, somewhere in there. So, I went up to stay with them for a week in Aspen Glen. I can't say I wasn't bored some of the time as a little kid with your grandparents all day, every day. But what I did was I was fascinated by the ground squirrels that were running around the campground. And there were, like today, plenty of them. I figured out that I could build a squirrel trap by getting a cardboard box, a stick, a string, and put some Cheetos inside-put the box upside down on the stick, put Cheetos under the box, and then wait for the ground squirrels to come in and drop the box on them. Actually, it was pretty effective at trapping squirrels.

Paul Anderson: So, then I had another box. I would catch it in the box and somehow get it from the box to the other box, and I had this box full of ground squirrels. There were like four or five of them in there. I was having a great day. Here comes the maintenance guy. I didn't know who that was at the time. (laughs) I'm out there having a great time, and the maintenance guy walks up he goes, "Oh, what are you doing?" And I said, "Well, trapping ground squirrels." And he goes, "Have you caught any?" And I said, "Well, I have, as a matter of fact. I've got a whole box of them." (laughs) And I was pretty proud. So, I took him over and showed him my box full of ground squirrels. And he went, "Wow!" He said, "You must be a really good squirrel trapper. That's an amazing number of squirrels you got there in that box. What are you going to do with them?" And I went, "I don't know. I never thought of that." And he said, "Well, you know, might I suggest, this is a national park. (laughs) And you probably shouldn't be trapping squirrels in national parks because that's kind of not how we behave here. But I can understand why you'd want to do that. So, what I'd suggest is, it might be kind of a good idea to let those squirrels go." (laughs) I don't know how much it meant to me right at the moment. I mean, it could have been a ranger. I mean, it was certainly somebody I identified with authority from the National Park Service. But they were very kind. Just that contact made a huge impression on me. I mean, why wouldn't you kill them? I mean, ground squirrels dig holes and they're a pain in the butt. You know, cows break their legs in ground squirrel holes.

Brenna Lissoway: Right.

Paul Anderson: Etcetera, etcetera. Here's this guy saying, "You need to let it go." Oh, well. Okay. It's a whole new world. But he did it in a very gentle and compassionate way. So that was really my first experience in Rocky. I mean, I didn't know anything more about it then, probably not as much as

some people who come to visit from outside the area. But it certainly made an impression and I never forgot that.

Paul Anderson: Over the years as I grew up, I mean, it was probably many years before I came back to Rocky again. But I came back to climb and was much more aware of what the park was about and what its mission and purpose was, although I mean, I didn't know it as well as I know now. But you know, I knew it was a special place, and it was a special place for us when we climbed.

Paul Anderson: So, you know, so that whole, the whole environment that we operated in, because we spent a lot of time in the park, it kind of rubbed off on our lifestyle. I think a lot of us that were in the Colorado Mountain Club, because of the time that we spent in the park, we started to look towards careers in the outdoors. I mean, I wanted to be a farmer.

Brenna Lissoway: Okay.

Paul Anderson: But I also thought well, maybe I could be a game warden or a forest ranger. I just knew, though, from the time I was in junior high school that I had to have a career that was outdoors. I couldn't have a career inside. So that experience with climbing, I'm sure had some influence.

Paul Anderson: Being teenagers, or young adults, and climbers, and this was in the '60s, we were kind of Bohemians. The park service, even at that time, represented government and you know, control and bureaucracy. So, it was always a challenge to the group in some way or another to see if we could hoodwink the park rangers.

Paul Anderson: You know before I ever, before I even started skiing at Hidden Valley, I mean on patrol at Hidden Valley, I knew two or three different rangers by their first name because I'd run-ins with them.

Brenna Lissoway: Oh, geez. (laughter)

Paul Anderson: It wasn't all negative.

Brenna Lissoway: Right. Right.

Paul Anderson: Although there were a few times when the ranger did say, “Well, you know this trail's closed" for whatever reason. You'd go, "Yeah, yeah. Okay, fine." And we'd walk down the road a ways until we were out of sight and then cut through the woods and back up -the trail again. I mean, we did those kind of things all the time.

Brenna Lissoway: Mm hmm. Mm hmm. So how did your desire to have an outdoor career sort of begin to take shape, just in terms of, you went to Colorado State. Is that right?

Paul Anderson: Mm hmm. Right.

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

Paul Anderson: Well, I thought for a while I was going to be a landscape architect. I'd worked for the Woodward Governor Company in Fort Collins, which was a big manufacturing company, multinational company. They had a youth program, so at 14, I went to work for them full time in the summer and part time during the rest of the year. In like an intern program. But of course after two years on the yard crew, which I just loved because you're outdoors all day working with plants and blady blah, blah, then they sent you into the plant to learn how to run machines, because they manufactured governors for engines. And they had these long, you know, assembly line kinds of operation. The plant, they were very proud of their environment. We all wore bowties and shop coats and white shirts and slacks to work in a machine shop. We ran grinders and drill presses and lathe machines, metal stamping machines and all that in our bowties and white shirts. I mean, it was spotless, too. It was the worst job I ever had in my whole life. I finally dropped out of the program because I couldn't stand it anymore. Couldn't stand working inside.

Paul Anderson: So, I quit the program. Actually, I got fired from the program because I quit going to work. I went to Yosemite and went climbing for a few weeks. They called me in, and they said, "Well, it's clear your interests and ours aren't in the same place." I said, "Yeah, that's true. And I don't want to work here. I don't want to work in a plant anymore." And they said okay. "Well, the yard crew supervisor's got a supervisor opening on the yard crew. So, when you get out of here, after we fire you, you need to go talk to them."

Paul Anderson: So, I did. I went down there and talked to them. Sure enough, they hired me as a supervisor for the yard crew. The guy that ran the crew was just a wonderful, wonderful leader and a mentor, and he was a landscape architect. So I thought well, I'll go to college-so this was all happening right before my freshman year in college-I'll go to college and get a degree in landscape architecture and work for Woodward Governor Company or something on that order.

Paul Anderson: Well then when I got to college, I found out that landscape architects don't work outside. That was a real bummer. So, I'm thinking oh, God, what am I going to do now?

Paul Anderson: So, I'd started in landscape architecture, and I shifted to horticulture for a little while. Then I got married. And I didn't have a job, really. I was getting married in June and it was probably March or April, April or May, and I didn't have a job. So, I'd been working part time at a place called the Wilderness Outfitter in Fort Collins, selling outdoor gear.

Paul Anderson: The guy said, "Well, since you're getting married, I'll give you a permanent job and a partnership in the company if you want." I'm like, "I don't think I want to do that. That's an indoor job, too." I said, "Well, let me think about it. So, I didn't take the job that day. I go home. The next day, Woodward Governor calls me up and says, "Okay. You 're getting

married. You need a stable family life and you need a source of income. So, we're offering you a permanent job as a supervisor on the yard crew." And I'm like, "Oh, fantastic. You bet I'll take it."

Paul Anderson: So, I go to work. I work a week and the park service calls me up from Rocky. They say, "We have, we'd like to offer you a job. We know that you've been active in search and rescue and skiing, and several of the rangers know who you are and recommended you for this job. We need somebody for the search and rescue team, but we don't have any ranger jobs. So, we're here to offer you a job doing landscape gardening for the park service." They said, "It's a seasonal position. It will start June 14 and it will go through Labor Day at WG-3 wage." Which was a dollar an hour at the time, I think.

Paul Anderson: I said, "Let me see. I just got a permanent offer at Woodward Governor, and took it. And a permanent offer at the outdoor store. And now I'm getting a seasonal offer to work in Rocky Mountain National Park for three months in maintenance. I'll take it."

Paul Anderson: And then I had to tell my boss that I was quitting his career job. That was a pretty tough time. But it was the best decision I ever made in my life.

Brenna Lissoway: That's extraordinary that they recruited you. You hadn't applied?

Paul Anderson: No, I had applied.

Brenna Lissoway: Oh, you did apply.

Paul Anderson: I applied for ranger jobs. I didn't apply for a maintenance job.

Brenna Lissoway: I see. Okay.

Paul Anderson: A couple of my friends got fire control aide jobs in the park that summer. Colorado State was Ranger U. If you were in the forestry, outdoor recreation department, you could get a job at Rocky, easy. Relatively speaking. Seasonal position. Or on the forest, or whatever.

Brenna Lissoway: So even at that point, Colorado State University was known as the Ranger University.

Paul Anderson: It was that way in the '50s.

Brenna Lissoway: Okay.

Paul Anderson: And it was still known that way. Then shortly after I graduated it was sort of, and it went for a period of time when it wasn't at all really strongly represented in that small segment of a generation in the park service. But I think it's probably regained its prior notoriety over the last 15 years or so.

Brenna Lissoway: Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

Paul Anderson: There's a lot of good professors there today. I mean, when I went there, there were two or three professors that were truly outstanding. Connected directly with the park service and the forest service. I mean, really tight.

But by the time I graduated, those professors were gone. And the relationship, it seemed like it just sort of drifted away.

Brenna Lissoway: Do you remember who those professors were?

Paul Anderson: Ralph Dix was one of them. God, I probably could remember them if I wasn't thinking about it. But there were two, they were really key. J.V.K. Wagar was one of them. Anyway, so, that's how I ended up so to speak getting into the park service. I had, I guess there's a little more to this story that plays itself out. So, I envisioned myself as a climber and a skier. And I worked when I was 18 I worked as a professional, I got hired as a professional ski patrolman at Hidden Valley by John Bryant, who was a seasonal ranger, and Steve Hickman, who had just come to Rocky and was the rescue ranger. So, I got to be really good friends with those guys on ski patrol. And we climbed together in the off time. During the summer of '68, I spent a little time climbing with both of those guys on the weekends.

Paul Anderson: But at the time, I really didn't know that you could have a career with the National Park Service. Or maybe what it was, somehow, I wasn't aware of the opportunity. Or maybe it just didn't fascinate me enough. I'm not sure.

Paul Anderson: In the summer of '69, it was the summer after my freshman year in college, well, probably it was that I was thinking about landscape architecture for a career. The summer of '69, I didn't have a job, so I decided to paint houses for a living. I had a good friend who had milked cows for my dad when I was 12 years old who lived in Talkeetna, Alaska, and had climbed Mount McKinley once or twice during the time he was in college. He was in college with Steve Hickman and John Bryant, although I didn't know them at the time. That guy's name was David Johnston.

Paul Anderson: So David Johnston, it turns out, well, when I was 12, I wanted, I was really turned on by backpacking and Boy Scouts and everything. David had a nice new Kelty pack. Frame pack with a big green pack bag on it. God, I had to have one of those. Of course, being a farm family, we didn't have any money. So, my dad and Dave got together, whatever, probably '62, got together, and for my birthday, they built a frame out of electrical conduit. They designed it, welded it. And went down to the military surplus store and bought all of the fabric parts and put it all together and got me a pack bag. So, for my birthday I got a green pack. Frame pack.

Brenna Lissoway: Custom.

Paul Anderson: Custom made. And I was like the proudest guy.

Brenna Lissoway: That's really-wow.

Paul Anderson: So anyway, so David was back and forth from Alaska. And climbed McKinley a couple of times. Then in the, I think it was in, it was either in late '60s, it must have been late '60s, '64, '68, somewhere in there, he was the first person in the first party to climb Mount McKinley in the wintertime. He and Ray Genet and Art Davidson did the first summit. So boy, he was my hero. Because I was a climber now. And David was a big

climber. And he did all those kinds of things. And he lived in Alaska. And he worked for the park, but he worked for the state parks, not for the national parks.

Paul Anderson: So, in the summer of '69, I'm painting houses. I start painting this guy's house who's moving, selling out, moving, a professor at CSU in geology. I'm going to climb, and paint houses all summer. And the guy after a week or so of brushing the paint off the house to get it ready to paint, he says, "So, what are you doing this summer?" I said, "Well, I'm going to paint houses and climb." He said, "Oh. Well, I'm going to move to Alaska. And I need some people to drive my trucks up there, to carry all my household goods up there. If you ever had a hankering to go to Alaska, I would be willing to pay your way up there if you'll help me drive my trucks." And I'm like, well, I don't know.

Paul Anderson: At that time, right then, John Bryant called me. He was now in Alaska working on the pipeline, doing ecological studies. He's a plant ecologist doing ecological studies. He calls me up and he said, "Do you want to come to Alaska and spend a summer flying up and down the pipeline route, doing transects and stuff?" I said, "Yeah, I do. I want to do that." So now I'm not going to work on houses anymore. I'm going to go to Alaska. So, I told Ernie, "Well, I don't think I'm going to go." He said, "Well, do you know anybody that can?" So, I got my friend. He said yeah, he'd like to go. So, he was going to drive with Ernie, and I was going to fly up and work with John. Well, anyway, it turns out my friend's dad called him and told, "If you don't have a paying job by tomorrow, you're coming home for the summer to Boston." And he's like, "I don't want to go to Boston!" I said, "Well, you know, think about it, Pete. I mean, I've got enough money to make it through the summer, and I've got this job with John. Why don't you take the job with John, and I'll drive the trucks."

Paul Anderson: So, Pete did. He went up and he spent the summer doing the pipeline transects. And I drove the trucks up the Alcan in 1969 which was probably the most incredible adventure of my entire life, driving up the Alcan in a big, huge, monstrous truck. I mean, wow, I've never been in any kind of situation like that.

Brenna Lissoway: Like a moving truck.

Paul Anderson: Yeah. It wasn't a tractor trailer, but it was the biggest flatbed truck you could ever put on the road.

Brenna Lissoway: How long did it take you?

Paul Anderson: Thirteen days from Fort Collins to Fairbanks. So of course, now I'm really excited because I'm going to spend the rest of the summer hiking around Alaska. There were five of us that drove a caravan of trucks up there. As soon as we were done, we took one guy's pickup and off we went to explore Alaska. We drove down to Denali to find Dave Johnston. We drove into Wonder Lake. But at that time, you had to drive in from the

Richardson Highway. So, it was 135 miles to Cantwell from the paved road. And then from Cantwell to the end of the park road was another 120 miles. So, it was kind of remote.

Paul Anderson: So, we drove all the way out there. Had an incredible experience on the park road and got to Wonder Lake. As usual, the clouds were down around the mountain. You couldn't see anything. And so, we set up camp at the Wonder Lake campground. And went to bed. About eleven o'clock or so that night everybody starts making noise. And we woke up, my tent mate and I woke up and stuck our heads out the tent. And there, in all of its glory, the clouds were lifting off of the summit of Mount McKinley and it was just incredible alpenglow on the mountain and in the clouds. I mean, it was like, I couldn't believe. I'd never seen anything like it before. I said you know, this is incredible. I've got to come back here.

Paul Anderson: So, we didn't get to see Dave, because he was down climbing in South America at the time. My friends who were in Colorado, Colorado Mountain Club friends, we were going to climb the Diamond on, east face of Longs Peak that summer, at the end of the summer. I got this mail message, general delivery that said, "Paul, we know we were going to do this Labor Day weekend. But we decided we're going to do it the fourth of August," or something, which was like four days away. So, like if you want to climb with us, you've got to come home now.

Paul Anderson: I had 80 dollars in my pocket, and I was 100 miles from the airport. I stuck my thumb out on the highway down in the Kenai Peninsula and said I'll go see if I can get a ticket at the airport and go home. And I got to the airport and the ticket cost 75 bucks to fly from Anchorage, Alaska, to Denver. So, I still had five dollars when I got home. Took the bus five dollars' worth, which got me to Lyons, and then I hitchhiked the rest of the way up here.

Paul Anderson: We packed up all our gear and went up to the Longs Peak ranger station the next morning. We got up there in, we knew all the Longs Peak rangers by that time. Steve Jones was on duty. And he said, "What are you doing?" We said, "Well, we're going to go climb the Diamond." And he said, "Really? When?" "Well, today." "Not today." "What do you mean not today? We're ready to go. You can check our gear. We're ready to go." "No, you can't do it today. The peak's closed. Can't do it." "What do you mean the peak's closed? You can't close the peak." "Well, we did. And you can't go up. So, you wait here till it's open." We're like, "Okay. What's going on?"

Brenna Lissoway: Why was it—

Paul Anderson: He said, "Well, there's a climbing accident up on the Diamond. And it's closed until we get the guy out of there. So, we said, "Okay." So, we go back. I mean, you can imagine coming all the way from Alaska to be told you can't go. So, you know what the first thing that goes through our minds is. How far down the road do we need to go before we cut in the woods to go up the trail to climb the Diamond. So, we're sitting here

planning this all out. And all of a sudden here comes Steve. And he says, "Do you guys really want to go up there today?" We're like, "Well, hell yes, we do."

Paul Anderson: He said, "Okay, I've got a deal for you. You carry all of this rescue gear, plus your own gear, and you can go up right now." So apparently, they needed reinforcements gear-wise up there and didn't have anybody to carry it. So, we got to carry it. So here we have probably 75 pounds, at least, of our own gear. And we all heap on, split up whatever there was. And it was climbing gear. I mean, hardware and ropes and all that stuff. We must have had 100 plus pounds each. And off we went up the trail. We spent the next 24 hours on this rescue for Cordell Kor, who was the nephew of one of the most famous climbers Colorado's ever produced, Layton Kor. So, Cordell had fallen on the Diamond and bashed his head in. They got him down to Broadway and the park service folks went up there. And we used an old cable winch, which the people had practiced with. I mean, I had never been on a rescue with the park service, technical rescue with the park service. But those guys had practiced using this cable winch. But they'd never used it in a long lower like that. It was pretty problematic, and we're probably lucky that things went as well- as they did.

Paul Anderson: So, they got him off the Broadway and down onto Lamb's Slide and we carried him down to Chasm Lake and put him on a river raft and floated him across the lake. Dr. Sam Luce, who was the Estes Park doctor at the time, I think he was probably the only one in town, was a really wonderful man and a mountaineer himself. He went up to Broadway and took care of this guy all the way down the mountain. And I don't think he would have lived if it hadn't have been for Luce. He was in pretty bad shape.

Paul Anderson: So, we get to the Chasm Meadow and I'm thinking Jesus, we're dead tired. We've all got, or at least I have, really bad altitude sickness. And I'm thinking man, I don't know, I mean, I need to rest before I can even think about climbing the mountain again. And then, you know, we've got to carry this guy all the way to the trailhead. And we're going to start all over.

Paul Anderson: About that time, one of the rangers said, "Oh, we've got a Huey coming in, if he can land in the meadow, maybe we can fly him out. We won't' have to carry him all the way down."

Paul Anderson: So sure enough, here comes a Huey UH1H, from Fort Carson. And they land it in Chasm Meadow by the shelter cabin. And we put him on, and they flew him off. It turned out to be the highest altitude helicopter rescue that had ever been performed in Colorado at the time. So that was the beginning. It was the first big helicopter rescue that was ever done in Rocky. And I'm a volunteer.

Brenna Lissoway: Right.

Paul Anderson: Not really a volunteer volunteer. (laughs) But you know, that's how I ended up on the rescue team. So, the next summer was when I got hired for—

Brenna Lissoway: So that's why, you would have had a good reputation for having participated in that.

Paul Anderson: Yeah.

Brenna Lissoway: I see. I see. Okay, wow. So, what did you think? I mean, were you hooked at that point with search and rescue? Or how did you feel about it at that point?

Paul Anderson: You know, I don't know. It was pretty interesting. I guess I was. But not search. I was really hooked with the rescue. I mean, that was pretty cool stuff.

Paul Anderson: So, the next summer, you know, I came to work as a gardener. And my job – and this was really important – my job turned out to be hoeing the flower bed in front of park headquarters, which is still there today. But it doesn't look quite the same as it used to. So, the bed was, you know, it was supposed to be natural. They had planted some aspen trees and some bitter brush and some other currants and stuff, but it was bare ground in between them. Of course, all the weeds grew up in the bare ground, and the people didn't like the "weeds," quote, unquote. So, my job was to hoe all the weeds in the flower bed in front of park headquarters every week. I did, and it took me three days to hoe all the weeds from one end of the flower bed to the other.

Paul Anderson: Well, the flower bed, if you know this, is right underneath the windows in the front of the office wing of the building. I'd so I'd be hoeing down the bed every week. Of course, all of the division chiefs and the superintendents were in their offices with the windows open because it was summertime. And as I'd go by, they would talk to me through the windows.

Brenna Lissoway: Talk to you.

Paul Anderson: Talk to me, yeah, the gardener.

Brenna Lissoway: What would you talk about?

Paul Anderson: Oh, just what was going on. And how things were going. How I enjoyed my job. And they knew I was a climber, because I went on rescues. So, we'd talk a little bit about the rescues there and you know, climbing that I was doing on my weekends and whatever, whether I was enjoying my work as a seasonal and that kind of thing. So, it was just casual conversation. It wasn't really work-oriented or counseling or anything like that. It was just pleasant conversation.

Paul Anderson: So, there were two days a week when I wasn't hoeing the flower bed, right? Those days, I shoveled crap in the sewage lagoon. (laughs) So I said, you know, I'm the only landscape gardener that ever worked in

Rocky Mountain that hoed weeds for three days and hoed shit for the other two. (laughter) But I did the best job I could. It was really important for me. I saw it potentially as a way to get into a career in the park service. And I was in hog heaven. I mean, living and working in a national park was just absolutely awesome. And again, that's when I think I began to realize that you could have a career in the national parks.

Paul Anderson: So then, by that time, I had transferred, not transferred, I'd left Hidden Valley. That next winter, I went to Breckenridge, on the ski patrol at Breckenridge. So, I spent the winter there. I worked for five or six winters at Breckenridge and worked here in the summertime. So, I had seven years of seasonal time in Rocky. So, I applied for ranger jobs.

Paul Anderson: My grand vision was that I would get hired to run the Beaver Meadows entrance station, be a fee collector. That would be, you know, died and gone to heaven. I didn't hear anything. I didn't hear anything. So, I applied for a job with the forest service down in the White River Arapahoe National Forest, which is where I was working. I knew the snow ranger from the ski area. So, he hired me, or offered me a job on a survey crew for the forest service. Having gone through this once before, I didn't jump on it quite as fast as I did the times before, the year before.

Paul Anderson: I get this call from Jim Randall, who was the chief ranger. I didn't know Jim Randall. I mean, I know Jim Randall didn't know me, because I'd never really met him formally other than to talk to him through the window when I was hoeing the flower bed. And he said, "Are you available to come up to headquarters and meet with me?" And I'm like, what did I do? I mean, I don't know this guy. He doesn't know me. Why is he asking me to come up there? Am I fired again? And so, I drove up and sat down in his office. And he said, "So," he said, "I know we haven't really formally met. But you know, I talked to you a lot last summer when you were hoeing the weeds in the flower beds. So, are you looking forward to coming back this year?" And I said, "Well, you know, I mean, I love Rocky Mountain and I love being on the rescue team. But you know, I can't hoe weeds in the flower bed and shovel shit for another summer. I've talked to the forest service about a survey job down there." And he said, "Well, you know-." (Now remember, I didn't get a ranger job the year before, right?) So, I figured this was the Dear John thing. He said, "Well, you know, we've been trying to figure out what to do here with you. Well, about the only thing we could come up with in our division is, you know Charlie Logan?" Who was one of my best buddies. He said, "Charlie went to Europe to climb." I said, "Yeah, I know. He had a fun time over there. All winter long, climbing in Europe." He said, "Yeah, he just sent us a note, said he's not coming back. So, there's an opening. (laughs)

Brenna Lissoway: Wow.

Paul Anderson: So, I picked myself up off the floor and said, "You bet!" (laughs)

Brenna Lissoway: Oh, my gosh. That's probably like a dream job.

Paul Anderson: It is. I mean I was like, are you awake? (laughs) It was the most incredible thing that had ever happened in my life. Period. Bar none. Up until that time. Ever. It's like, this could never happen. And it did. I worked with Larry van Slyke and Pete Pederson at Longs Peak Ranger Station. Those two guys were two of the most wonderful coworkers and mentors that anybody could ever hope to have. It was a superb summer.

Brenna Lissoway: What sort of things did they teach you?

Paul Anderson: How to beat the government. At their own game. (laughs) I'm joking a little bit. But you know, we were very dedicated employees. Satisfactory wasn't good enough. Satisfactory to us in terms of how we operated was not acceptable. Those guys had a long bit of experience in the park service. Larry had been working here as a seasonal for years and years in different positions. Pete had worked in Yosemite for a number of years and was a good climber and new the park service inside out, upside down and backward. When I say beat the park service it's like well, we need to do these things at the ranger station or on the Longs Peak trail to make conditions better, but we don't have the money to do it. So even in those days, we were out recruiting volunteers to help us do things that we couldn't get the resources to do otherwise. We had people from Camp Saint Malo, which I don't think is there anymore, but it was just below the ranger station, that would come up and do work projects for us. We had some friends over at Aspen Lodge, that spent the summer there, and they recruited a bunch of people from Aspen Lodge to come over and help do trail and sign maintenance with us. Of course, we didn't tell anybody, because we didn't want to get in trouble.

Brenna Lissoway: Right.

Paul Anderson: But it made things that much better. So, we had a lot of fun.

Paul Anderson: And there were a lot of rescues. We had just a tremendous number. I bet you we had, oh, on the average, 15 big rescues during the summer. Up in the east district. Not all in Longs Peak. We'd probably have three or four big ones. We only had two rescues off the Diamond while I was here during that period of time. But you know, lower stuff. Snow field injuries and people that were scrambling and fell in the boulder field or the rock at Mount or Lady Washington, that kind of thing. So, we got some kind of life or death situations, but they weren't really as technical or as overwhelming as somebody that's fallen 300 feet in the middle of the Diamond and you're 1500 feet off the ground.

Brenna Lissoway: Yeah.

Paul Anderson: So that was good. My first rescue, I came to work early that year. I don't know what Larry van Slyke was doing. He might have been working somewhere else in the park. So, I was the first ranger on duty at Longs

Peak. And I of course, I'd never been a ranger before. My experience was hoeing weeds and going on rescues with all the other guys.

Paul Anderson: So, I'm opening up the ranger station and trying to get used to the fact that I have the best job in the entire universe. These kids come running up to the ranger station and say, "Can you help us? Our friend is up at Chasm Lake shelter cabin and he's not feeling well. And I think he needs some help." And I'm like, okay, fine. So, I get on the phone and I call Steve Hickman, who's the head of the rescue team. I said, "Okay, here's the deal." And he said, "Well, you get your gear and run up there and check him out and tell us what we need to do." I'm like, "Is anybody going to go with me?" "No. We don't have anybody to send. Just go do it." So, I said, okay. So, a friend who was visiting, he was actually a friend of Larry's, was visiting. He said, "I'll go with you if you want." So, the two of us packaged up a medical pack and some gear and off we went. We ran up to Chasm Lake. We get up there, and it's late in the day. And there's snow drifts that are four, five feet deep across the trail in many places. I mean, it was rough going.

Paul Anderson: We get up there probably late afternoon. And the kid's in the bunk in the cabin. I'm thinking its altitude sickness. He had all the symptoms of altitude sickness. He'd lay down on the bunk and he'd kind of be okay. Was kind of woozy. And then we'd ask him to sit up. He'd sit up and he'd be kind of dizzy. And then he'd throw up. And we'd lay him back down, he'd be okay.

Paul Anderson: So, it was clear to me he wasn't going to walk out. He was too sick to walk out. So, I said, "Oh, Jesus, what are we going to do?" And my friend said, "Well, call Larry and ask him." So, I said okay. Or call Steve. So, I called Steve. I said, "Okay, Steve. Here's the situation." I described, you know, did a patient assessment. I said, "So I recommend that we carry him out. He can't walk out." Steve says, "Okay. So, do you want us to start a carryout team? Or do you want the helicopter?" I'm like, "What? I don't know. What do you think I should do?" He's like, "Well, you're on scene. You're in charge. You tell me what you want. Do you want a carryout team, or do you want a helicopter?" I'm looking around and I said, "If we call the helicopter and there's nothing wrong with this guy, I'll never live it down."

Brenna Lissoway: Yeah.

Paul Anderson: The guy looks at me, my friend looks at me, and he goes, "Well, what do you think we should do?" And I said, "Well, you know, carrying him down is going to be till tomorrow morning, and he's pretty sick. He needs to get down from the altitude. But it's also a lot cheaper. And it's getting towards dark. And if we don't get him out of here, we're going to spend the night with him. That doesn't seem like a lot of fun, either." He said, "Well then call him and tell him you want to get the helicopter."

Paul Anderson: So, I said okay. I did. I called him. And I didn't know whether it was the right decision or not. And I was really worried. I mean, I was stressed completely. Just about that decision. Not about the guy. Helicopter came in. Picked him up. Took him out. Took him to Sam Luce. We tidied up things and walked down in the dark. And the next morning I got a call from Sam Luce and he said, "Good job." I said, "Well, thanks. It was my first rescue by myself." And he said, "Wow. Really? Boy, you sure called that one right." And I'm like, "Well, thank you. I really appreciate it. Because I was really worried about calling for the helicopter." And he said, "So what were your choices?" I said, "Well, either call a helicopter or call a carryout team." And he said, "Well, I'm glad that you realized that if you didn't call a helicopter, this kid would have died."

Brenna Lissoway: What was wrong with him?

Paul Anderson: A severe head injury. He had been sleeping outside the cabin in a sleeping bag with his buddies, because the cabin was full. This didn't all come about until afterwards. The cabin, it was full of people. And so, they put a tarp up on-the edge of the cabin, like a lean-to. And there's big rocks holding the roof of the cabin, literally holding the roof of the cabin on. So, they climbed up on the roof and they put rocks on top of the tarp to hold it on the roof. So, they're sleeping down here. Well, the wind blew so badly that night that it pulled one of those rocks off and hit the kid in the head, literally. I mean, the rock was this big. Hit him in the head and then rolled off. Nobody realized what had happened because they were all asleep and the kid was unconscious.

Brenna Lissoway: Oh my gosh.

Paul Anderson: So they wake up in the morning and he's sick, you know? So, they assumed that it was altitude sickness. There was no sign of trauma. I don't know why, but there wasn't any sign of trauma.

Paul Anderson: Anyway, so not only was I lucky to get to be the Longs Peak ranger, but my first rescue could have gone completely the other way. But by sheer luck, I think, it went extremely well. I got a commendation from the family for it.

Brenna Lissoway: Wow.

Paul Anderson: I finally, you know, I couldn't live with it. It's like, you don't understand. I don't need any commendation. That kid, he's not alive because of me. He's alive purely because of luck. It could have gone the other way. But it was a positive start to a long career in search and rescue, and I'm still involved in search and rescue today.

Brenna Lissoway: Yeah. Yeah. So how about the rest of that summer at Longs Peak? How did you like being a ranger? Representing the park service? Because you had mentioned previously that that wasn't – (PA laughs) You had some questions about that.

Paul Anderson: My days trying to hornswoggle the rangers never left me, and they still haven't. And I think it's been an attribute of my career, a positive attribute of my career. It's helped me in more ways than one over the years. But you know, it's kind of that independent and, what do you call it? Sort of, not in your face, but kind of, well, independent way of looking at things. Just because you say it should be that way, it doesn't necessarily mean it's the right way. I think that really has helped me a lot over my career in analyzing situations and in maybe pushing the envelope at times and in ways that get the job done better than if we had just said that's the way we do things, and that's the way we have to do it. Even if it doesn't make a lot of sense, we're going to do it that way. So, I think that carried over in my career and was probably important. But as far as being a ranger, you know, it was the best thing I've ever done in my life. And it was then. After six years as a seasonal ranger, so I worked three years at Longs Peak. And then I went to Bear Lake and ran the Bear Lake Ranger Station for a year. Then back to Longs Peak as the supervisor for a year, and then I supervised all the backcountry operation on the east side of the park the last summer I was here. We had about 15 people in the back country at the time.

Paul Anderson: So, I'd never wanted to be anything but a seasonal up until that time. I'd gone back to college. By that time I knew that I had, I guess, by the time I had got back into college, I knew I wanted to probably pursue a career in the park service, and you had to have a degree for that. But you didn't have to have a degree in anything in particular. So, I looked around and said, you know, what is it that you enjoy doing most in life, and can you do that in college? It was botany and plant ecology. So, I went back and got my degree in botany and plant ecology. Had the time of my life. My grade point average went from a 1.9 or 2.0 to a 3.6 or something by the time I graduated. I had a 4.0 average for the last two and a half years that I was in college.

Brenna Lissoway: And do you think that's mainly because you had switched to a major you were interested in?

Paul Anderson: It was partly that, and it was partly the influence of the park service.

Brenna Lissoway: Just motivation to join the organization?

Paul Anderson: Yeah. Yeah. To be a part of it. So anyway.

Brenna Lissoway: So then, so what did you do after your seventh season at Rocky?

Paul Anderson: That's when I graduated. So, I was ski patrolling. I still had, because I supported myself all the way through college. So, I had to work part of the time. So, I worked in the summers here and then I'd go to school for a quarter and then I'd work for the winter quarter at the ski area. And I'd come back to school for the spring quarter. So, I actually graduated in December of '76, I think. That's probably right. Yeah.

Paul Anderson: So, what I told myself, I've always been maybe more brash than I should be. But basically thinking about what should I do, and I was thinking about whether I should go to work in the forest service or whether I should go to work in the park service, and I had it narrowed down to those two things. At the time it's like, well, you know, I really actually love dealing with people more than I love dealing with trees. The forest service deals more with trees, and they're not very good at dealing with people. The park service deals really well with people, so that's what tipped me towards the park service. But you couldn't get a job either way at the time. It was just like it is exactly right now. Vietnam War. If you weren't a vet, you couldn't get into a park service job anyway, because you couldn't compete with all the vets that were competing for those jobs.

Paul Anderson: So, during that last quarter of my senior year, I had over 75 applications out all across the United States for federal positions. At that time, you had to apply to every OPM [Office of Personnel Management] office. There was no national like USA jobs at the time. I can't remember how they advertised everything. But basically, what you could do is you could put a standing application in at a regional office for OPM. So, all of those were covered. Then anything that opened up separate from the regional office somehow was tied into that. So anyway, I had like an Excel spreadsheet on a yellow legal pad trying to track the status of all my applications.

Paul Anderson: So, I applied for biological technicians and clerk/typists and park technicians and anything I could qualify for, everywhere in the United States. Everywhere.

Brenna Lissoway: So, no discrimination.

Paul Anderson: None. Because at the time I knew I wanted to work for the park service. The only way I was ever going to get in was to get in somewhere else, and it was worth it to me to go anywhere for a while to be able to get back in. So that's what happened that whole three months.

Paul Anderson: A week before school was out, in December, the dean of the school called me into his office. And said, kind of like the chief ranger, I wasn't quite sure what this was about, because I really didn't know him at all. He called me into the office, and he said, "Well, congratulations, you have a job, working for the Beltsville Laboratories of the Agricultural Research Service. You know, that's a pretty keen job. There's a lot of people here that they would really jump for that opportunity." And I'm like, "Whoa, where is it?" He said, "It's in Frederick, Maryland." I said oh, well, that's interesting. You know, I didn't want to live in the east coast. I didn't want to leave Rocky Mountain. But by that time, it wouldn't take me five seconds to say, it could have been anywhere, and I would have said, oh, great.

Brenna Lissoway: Because it was a permanent position.

Paul Anderson: Because it was a permanent position. Yeah. And this was it.

Paul Anderson: So, I graduated from college in December. And the first of January had a little U-Haul trailer packed up behind my pickup and drove across the country to report for work in Frederick, Maryland. I worked in a biological containment lab in Fort Dietrich, Maryland. Which was a biological warfare laboratory. And spent six months, actually, five or six months, working on exotic plant diseases. So, we were raising all these diseases from around the world in this containment lab to figure out how to control them in case they got released in the United States. So, it was pretty interesting. But not as interesting as the park service.

Brenna Lissoway: So, you said you only lasted there for four or five months?

Paul Anderson: Well, after three months, I mean, I didn't like it. After three months, I started applying for positions in the park service one by one. There weren't very many at the time. Anyway, so this park technician subject to furlough opened up in Big Bend. I applied for that and got a phone call from a guy named Jim Lyles who I didn't know worked there. But Jim was the west unit manager when I worked at Rocky and had transferred down to Big Bend as a chief ranger.

Paul Anderson: He said, "Yeah, we advertised this position. It's kind of hard hiring people here at Big Bend. Most people don't like to come to the remote areas like this." But he said, "We've got a few names on the register. I was looking through it as it came in, and I said, Paul Anderson! I know Paul Anderson. I wonder if it's the same guy."

Paul Anderson: So, one thing led to another and he called the district ranger and said, "So you can have this cert, and you can hire anybody you want. But let me tell you, there's a guy named Paul Anderson on here, and you need to take a good look at him." And so, I got that job.

Paul Anderson: So, I packed up the U-Haul six months later, six months after I started, and back across the United States – and of course all of this is at my own expense – to Big Bend. And it was, I mean, I remember sitting in the ranger station in the Chisos Basin one afternoon going, it was hot, and it was in September, and going well, if I weren't here, I'd be back in school. I know I'd much rather be sitting here in this ranger station rather than sitting in a classroom. I mean, it doesn't get much better than this.

Paul Anderson: So, I did that for a few months. My boss was a guy named Doug Barnard, who's one of the more colorful characters in the park service. He and I hit it off really well. We did. I mean, I just loved working for him.

Paul Anderson: So, Doug says, "You know, there's a park ranger intake program going on. And they're advertising it right now. All the guys in the park, all the park technicians are applying for it because that's how you get to be a ranger, professional." He said, "You know, you ought to think about it, because it's good practice filling out the application and going through the process. You don't have experience and enough time to be competitive for the job. But it will give you a chance to get a feel for it, you should apply."

Paul Anderson: So, I applied. The next thing you know, I get a call from WASO [Washington Support Office] or someplace to show up in El Paso, Texas for an interview. So, we went to El Paso. And I'm sitting there being interviewed by Shenna Bierhaus, Rod Harris and Bob Harnden (superintendent of Glacier). It was a wonderful group of people. And Bob says, "So, do you have any career aspirations in the National Park Service?" And I said, "Oh, yeah." He said, "Well, what are they?" I said, "I want to be superintendent of Yellowstone." They all did exactly that, right? Ha, ha, that's pretty good. And he looked back up and said, "No, really? What are your career aspirations? I said, "I want to be superintendent of Yellowstone"

Brenna Lissoway: You were serious.

Paul Anderson: I'm dead serious. He said, "Really? Why would you want to be superintendent of Yellowstone?"

Paul Anderson: I said, "Well, I'm a very goal-oriented person and I like to set strong goals that I have to work hard to reach. And setting the goal of superintendent of Yellowstone means there's so much I have to learn that I can take advantage of almost any opportunity that comes along to improve my skills and abilities, etcetera, etcetera, in so many different areas, because I'll need all those areas to be superintendent of Yellowstone. So, I can pursue that career, I mean, pursue that goal in a way that will give me the best opportunities."

Paul Anderson: They said, "Well, you know," they said this, "they said we've heard a lot of that stuff about how we want to be superintendent of Yellowstone or Yosemite or whatever, but we've never heard what you just told us." And I'm thinking, well, I've never been in an interview like this before, either.

Paul Anderson: So, a few weeks later they called me up and said, "Guess what? You got into the program." So, I'd gone to Big Bend in May, I started work the first of June in Big Bend. By December, I was on my way back east to Shenandoah but this time, not with a U-Haul trailer. They were paying my way this time. So, I went to Shenandoah and went through the centralized intake program.

Brenna Lissoway: Can you talk about that a little bit? I'm not real familiar with how that was working at that time.

Paul Anderson: Well, so, in the good old days, whenever that was, before my time, most of the rangers at least that came into the park service were assigned to the Albright Training Center, or the Kowski Training Center before they were sent to the field. So, you reported for duty at the training center and then you got your assignment. The center had moved from Yosemite to Grand Canyon a few years before. Probably in the late '60s or early '70s. And this was '77, end of '77. They'd had a couple of intake programs. Bruce McKeeman was in 1966 intake program. And then there was another intake program in '72, both of which, I think, were under Hartzog, I'm not

positive, but I know one of them was. And Hartzog was really interested in getting people into the urban parks. So, the intake programs were--you apply for this program and you get selected, you're going to an urban park for two years. That's it. Well, I didn't apply, because I didn't want to go to an urban park.

Paul Anderson: So, this was the next program, central program, Service-wide program, after the '72 program, and that was in '77. So, there were five years when there was no, as far as I know, there was no centralized national program. There were regional intakes.

Paul Anderson: So, it was a national competition inside and outside the government. It was a pretty difficult; it was a high-powered process to get in. So, you had to do your application and compete with everybody in the country, both in and out of government. Then you had to go through oral interviews with an interview panel that was selected from around the country, and there were four or five of those interview panels that interviewed hundreds of people. Bob Hamdan was the superintendent of Glacier. Rod Harris was the chief ranger at Carlsbad Caverns. Sheila Bierhaus was the superintendent of Timpanogos Cave National Monument at the time. So, it was a really high-powered kind of situation.

Paul Anderson: Then you didn't have a choice as to where you went. If you volunteered for the program, they had parks set up to be your intake park. And apportioned people out, and I don't know how they chose who went where. I was just hoping I wouldn't get sent to Gateway. And I didn't. (laughs) Although one of my best friends did, and he did fine.

Paul Anderson: So, we were told, so the intake program then had priority for training, Service-wide training. And we had to, each of us had to, and everybody was on the same program. So, everybody had to develop an IDP [Individual Development Plan] with their supervisor and had to be approved by Washington. Then you had to follow that IDP, and the park had to support your participation. They couldn't say no, you can't go. And Washington paid for the training.

Paul Anderson: So, I was at Shenandoah for about two years, I think. Maybe a little more. I can't remember. But anyway, during that period of time, I went to criminal investigator school for three months. Well, first off, I went to Albright to enter the Introduction to NPS Operations. In my class were a few key people, like Jim Brady was my mentor there, whatever you call it, advisor. Rick Smith and Ron Toman were the three instructors.

Paul Anderson: In that class were Phil Francis, who retired as superintendent of Blue Ridge Parkway. And Mary Kimmett, and, God, who's the deputy director.

Brenna Lissoway: Deputy director right now?

Paul Anderson: Peggy O'Dell.

Brenna Lissoway: Oh, okay.

Paul Anderson: Peggy O'Dell was in there. Mary Kimmett, who was the head of Philadelphia city parks after she quit Independence [National Park]. So, it was a pretty high-powered group of people. It was an incredibly good class. At that time, they were complaining that in the past they had more than a 65 percent attrition rate over the first five years from their intake classes.

Brenna Lissoway: Oh!

Paul Anderson: In that class, there were, two people out of the class left in the first five years. It was pretty good. They did a good job. And so, we got priority for training. Everybody set up their own training program. It was the best training I've had in my entire career in the park service. I mean, I was going from one good training to another good training and working in the park in different on the job kind of training experiences over a period of time.

Brenna Lissoway: And something that you put together.

Paul Anderson: Yeah.

Brenna Lissoway: You were structuring your own curriculum, essentially.

Paul Anderson: Right. Yeah. With your supervisor. You chose what you wanted to do. I mean, I wanted to be a resource management specialist. I didn't really want to be a law enforcement person.

Brenna Lissoway: Okay.

Paul Anderson: So that's kind of why I ended up in Shenandoah, actually I had a chance to stay at Big Bend. I didn't want to work for the chief of resources there, and so that's why I went to Shenandoah. I was at Albright, and the chief ranger calls me and said, "You know, you'll be really happy to know who was selected for our first resources management specialist. You can work with him." It was the guy from Big Bend. (laughter) That was when I went in and changed my IDP and put in criminal investigator school.

Brenna Lissoway: Wow.

Paul Anderson: (laughs) So that's how fast my career changed. I mean it was like [makes fast sound]. But I still, you know, I mean I might have been law enforcement, but I did everything else, too. I did interpretation and I did resource management and I did administration and I did concessions. You know. As I was telling people today when Mike Reynolds (associate director for workforce management) was talking about administration and workforce enhancement. I said, "You know, as a superintendent, as an employee, as a supervisor in the park service throughout my career, I always, always, always tried to stay ahead of the administrative division in terms of my technical knowledge of the administrative procedures." Whether it was personnel or budget or recruitment or EEO [Equal Employment Opportunity] or whatever it was. To me, those were the most important things to know because you used them the most to help you get

your job done. You couldn't ever depend on the administrative folks - not individually, but collectively - to be able to get accomplished what you needed to get accomplished. So, if you could help give them some guidance or call their bluff or whatever or know how to approach a problem in a way that helped them say yes, that was a good way to work. Again, that's another one of my keys the key lessons I learned in my career that has been really helpful over time.

Brenna Lissoway: Mm hmm. Yeah.

Paul Anderson: It all started with that training program in Shenandoah. So big courses, besides intro and criminal investigator school, were administration for line managers, and of course a series of supervisory training courses, because I never, well, although I was a supervisory seasonal, you know, I hadn't supervised that much. So, we got all the basic supervision stuff there.

Paul Anderson: There was a program called (I guess there still is), Intro to Park Programs Management, which is about the budget process. So, I got that course. So, there's a set of about, maybe 10 courses that the park service put together. They were excellent courses. They were taught mostly at Albright and Mather, but around the country, to some degree or another. And man, I mean, those were a foundation upon which I built my career. You can't do that today. It's not likely possible.

Brenna Lissoway: You're saying it's just not available?

Paul Anderson: Yeah. It's not available. Just the opportunity to do that in the way that I did it, and others did, too, in that program, is not there. Our training program in the park service has deteriorated from the time that I went through the intake program to today. Dramatically. And it's really, it's too bad.

Brenna Lissoway: Have there been certain points? Or has it just been a steady decline?

Paul Anderson: Yeah, I think it, I mean, it has been, it's a, what do they call that, incipient progression. It's just we tend to every time the budget gets cut, we cut training a little bit more and a little bit more and a little bit more. You know, I presided over, so to speak, I mean, I went through one of the last Intro to Park Operations classes that we ever put on. Well, to the last three-month course. Then they kind of redid it and knocked it down to two months or something? I can't remember. So, from Shenandoah I went to the Grand Canyon. I spent a lot of time at Albright with Brady and some of those guys when they were instructors there, and helped do the curriculum for Ranger Skills, which was going to be the way to replace Intro to Park Operations, NPS Operations, and that was a two-week course. It was probably a good course. But it did not provide the kind of institutional knowledge and what's the right word? It didn't, the people that were in that class didn't make the same deep connections to their comrades and to the park service that we were able to acquire at the three-month course at Albright. And you can see it. I mean, in the organization since

then. There's things that create those kinds of cadres and people. But there's, today there's nothing that's quite that comprehensive.

Paul Anderson: I mean, January 1978, there I am in a class with say 30 people. To this day, our classmates continue to talk to each other on Facebook, on email, and follow each other's careers. Help each other with problems or issues. Harassing Peggy. You know, "What the hell are you doing, O'Dell?" (laughs) Anyway, you know. And it's just a bond that you create amongst good people in this organization that's priceless. To the organization and the people.

Brenna Lissoway: Yeah.

Paul Anderson: And so, the training program provided for that. It's different than anything that could ever happen in a park. I mean, because it's so much more global. But when we go to distance learning and online training and in-park training as opposed to pulling people from various backgrounds together for a period of time, we don't get that kind of connection.

Brenna Lissoway: The interdisciplinary—

Paul Anderson: It's not there. Yep. And even though there weren't really – well, I don't think they were – you know, we had administrative officers and we had interpreters and we had maintenance chiefs and we had law enforcement rangers, etcetera. You know, it wasn't about doing law enforcement or doing interpretation or doing maintenance. It was about all of that. It was about being a park service employee. So consequently, when you walked away from that course, you didn't view yourself as a specialist. You viewed yourself as a generalist. And I think in a lot of ways, it just progressed into being managers. You had the fundamentals across the board that you could, like I said, if you're going to be the superintendent of Yellowstone, this is a great foundation to start from. But you've got to go build the skills in each one of those areas.

Brenna Lissoway: Sure.

Paul Anderson: And that promoted that. It said, you know, you need to do all of these things. You can't just do one. That's changed over the years by necessity. But still, I think it's one of the things that would make us stronger as an organization if we had a little bit broader, individually, had a little bit broader perspective on who does what in the park service and what it takes to do that.

Brenna Lissoway: Mm hmm. Mm hmm. Yeah, that's an interesting observation. So, you went from Shenandoah to Grand Canyon.

Paul Anderson: So, Steve Martin was a friend of one of my best friends. He was in the intake program. I didn't know him at the time, but he was in the intake program at the Grand Canyon. He went through the next Albright class. And he came back to Glynco [Georgia] to go through the, or FLETC [Federal Law Enforcement Training Center] to go through the law enforcement patrol, park service law enforcement school, while I was at

criminal investigator school. He and his wife had a daughter who was five days, I don't remember, younger or older than my daughter. So, I brought my daughter and my wife to FLETC. He brought his daughter and his wife to FLETC. And our friend connected the two of us and we became fast friends.

Paul Anderson: Then while I'm there, I get this phone call from Washington. And they said, "So you need to start thinking about where you want to move and start looking for some positions." The idea was you're going to do two years in your program, and then they're going to place you in a park. So, it was kind of a rude awakening when they called and said, "You'd better find a place to go, because the program's ending."

Paul Anderson: I'm like, what do you mean? I'm not done yet. So, I'm thinking well, Jesus, you know, if I don't do something, I'll certainly end up at Gateway. (laughs) Which probably wouldn't have been so bad. So, I'm talking with Martin and I said, "Well, so you're in this mess, too. What are you going to do?" He said, "I've already done it. I just called up my supervisor at Grand Canyon and told him I wanted to shift into a permanent fulltime position from the intake program. So, they're going to let me do what I'm doing." And I said, "Wow, man, I don't think I want to do that." He said, "Well, what do you want to do?" I said, "Well, I want to get back west again." He said, "Well, have you ever thought about working at the Grand Canyon?" And I said, "Yes, it's a cool place. Why don't we call up the chief ranger and see if there's any openings."?

Paul Anderson: So, at lunch the next day, we called up the chief ranger at Grand Canyon. And Steve introduced me to the chief ranger. I said, "I'm in the intake program and I'm looking for a job. And if you have any positions, I'd really be interested in being considered."

Paul Anderson: And sure enough, a few weeks later I get a call from the Grand Canyon saying, "Hey, you're our new assistant sub-district ranger at Desert View." So, when I got done with FLETC, I went through Managing the Search Function in Shenandoah. The last day of that class, I packed my bags and off I went to the Grand Canyon again. And this time for four and a half years.

Paul Anderson: So, the intake program was a great program. I mean, the problem that we have, we have so many employees and it costs so much to do those things that not everybody that should or deserves to be in them, they can afford to do it. Trying to find that balance is a really difficult job.

Brenna Lissoway: Yeah. Yeah. I can see that. So, okay, so you headed back to the Grand Canyon. And you had mentioned before that you didn't really have any interest in law enforcement. And yet that's what you kind of had found yourself in.

Paul Anderson: Well, it wasn't that I didn't have any interest in it. But because I'd been in school in plant ecology, I was really interested more in trying to use it in

some way. And I thought well, I could be a resource management specialist. I mean, I thought about being a botanist. But you know what? In those days, they really didn't have botanists in the park service. I mean, there might have been some, but there weren't very many.

Brenna Lissoway: But not as a specific—

Paul Anderson: No.

Brenna Lissoway: Yeah. Yeah. So, what was your job like as sub district ranger, Grand Canyon?

Paul Anderson: It was pretty awful. I had one of the worst supervisors in my career.

Brenna Lissoway: What was so bad about that supervisor?

Paul Anderson: That's a good question. So, here's the rest of that story. So, I'm at Albright, Brady and I are talking at lunch. He said, "How are things going?" Or something to that effect. And I said, "Well, you know, I'm really glad to be at the Grand Canyon. It's a great place. But I have the worst supervisor I've ever had in my career." He looks at me and he goes, "Anderson, you are spoiled. You have led a really unique life to this date. Most people have some bad supervisors in their career. Very few people have great supervisors. And I don't know very many people at all who've had a whole series of great supervisors in every job they've worked in since "they joined the park service." (laughs) And he said, "So here's something that you need to pay attention to." He said, "Sometimes," and he said, "I'm not shorting you; you've learned a lot of things from these good supervisors. But you need to realize that sometimes you can learn as much if not more from a bad supervisor than you can from a good one. And I'm sure you're going to take advantage of that." (laughs) It's like, "Thanks, Jim. I feel really good about that."

Paul Anderson: So, what is it about him that made him a bad supervisor? Well, I mean, he was a nice guy. You know? Too nice a guy. So, he didn't really have any principles that he stuck to. His principle was make everybody happy. And that caused a lot of unhappiness. Right? Because he would tell everybody what they wanted to hear, and then not back up any of it. Because then things would change, and he'd be off doing a different direction. And so, it was very difficult to figure out what the expectation really was. When he'd say, "We're going to do this," and then you'd find yourself doing something different. So, he was not a good communicator in terms of clarity. He didn't lay out good expectations, and there was no accountability in that sense. He was more than willing to take the credit for all the good things. But if the bad things happened, you got the shaft. I mean, it was your fault. Nothing bad ever happened that was his fault. And nothing good ever happened that was anybody else's fault. And so, people didn't appreciate that.

Brenna Lissoway: Yeah. Mm hmm.

Paul Anderson: I got kind of squeezed in the middle between the other employees and the seasonals and the lower grade rangers and his management. But at the same time, he cared about people. He just wasn't a good supervisor in that sense. And so, honesty, integrity, clear vision. Treating people equitably. All of those, he lacked all of those things. He wasn't, I wouldn't say he was lazy. I don't think he was lazy. He just wasn't very productive.

Paul Anderson: So, I took an EMT class while I was there, from Ernie Kuncl. Two of the other rangers that worked there took this class. So, we'd drive into the Grand Canyon Village 30 miles every, twice a week, to take this class. Of course, by this time, things were so bad out there that the whole drive in would be telling stories about the district ranger. And it got pretty depressing. I mean, we weren't helping each other out.

Paul Anderson: I finally realized after some weeks of doing this that this was a bad thing, not a good thing. So, I said, "Okay, guys. Here's the way it works. We can't be doing this anymore. We're not helping anything. And we're certainly not helping ourselves. So, here's the rules. From here on out, on the way in and out of the EMT class, you can say anything bad about him that you want. But first you have to say three good things. Three. Then you can say the bad things you want to say."

Paul Anderson: We never talked the rest of the class. Because they couldn't think of three good things to talk about. But at least it cut out the crap. It kept us from the kind of downward spiral that we were sort of reinforcing with each other. It was pretty tough.

Brenna Lissoway: Yeah.

Paul Anderson: So, there were a lot of things I learned from that. One, I learned a lot about how to manage the budget, because he couldn't manage the budget at all. I got Rick Gale to help me learn how to do that, which was pretty amazing. I learned how to be more thoughtful and more consistent in my messaging to the employees. And I adopted a philosophy, I guess. I probably had adopted it earlier, but I really articulated it during that period of time, and that was pretty simple. And I carried that through my entire career and gave it to my employees at Denali and left them with it when I retired. And that is, in being a leader, or even an employee of the park service and not a leader, to be successful, it seems to me, that there's two things that you really need to focus on. The first one is, don't make any promises to anybody that you can't keep. No matter how easy it would be to make a promise to somebody to get yourself out of a difficult situation or get them off your back or whatever, if you can't keep it and you know you won't be able to keep it, don't make it. Find another way.

Paul Anderson: And then the second part that goes with that is keep every promise you make to everybody you make them, whatever it costs.

Paul Anderson: So, the first one is about honesty. Don't make any promises you can't keep. Be honest with people. And two, the second one is about integrity. And in

terms of being able to manage a workforce, being able to deal with external influences, being able to deal with controversy and you know, interests that aren't the same as yours, that you have to deal with on a regular basis, conflicts. You know, those two little actions go a long ways.

Brenna Lissoway: Can you give me an example of where that played out for you?

Paul Anderson: Sure. I can probably give you 100 of them. But I have to think about it. (laughs) Well, and it's kind of what we were talking about in terms of advocacy. Dealing with, recently, dealing with the community of Cantwell in Alaska; Cantwell is a community on the edge of Denali National Park. In 1978, when Carter established the monuments, the people at Cantwell were pretty upset. They, in 1979, January 4, 1979, staged the Great Alaskan Trespass [actually, "Denali-McKinley Trespass"], and rode their snow machines and vehicles, and shot guns and did all kinds of stuff in the park. They never became a really supportive community. So, the community's half Native and half western European. Pretty interesting group of people. But it's a very small community, about two or three hundred people that have lost a lot from the park's establishment. Including some of their traditional hunting area.

Paul Anderson: So, since 1980, when ANILCA [Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act] passed, they've been trying to get access to their land - and they are their traditional hunting lands - on ATVs. It's of course inside the park boundary now. And we don't allow ATVs inside the park, because they're not traditionally employed. So from the very first, when John Cook was the regional director and I can't think of his name, Clay Cunningham was the superintendent, we've told the people of Cantwell, "You can't use your ATVs because they're not traditionally employed, and we're not going to allow it, because you haven't provided enough evidence that we can find them traditionally employed."

Paul Anderson: So, they went and collected evidence. They brought it back. The next superintendent said, "Yeah, I looked at the evidence. It's not good enough. We're not going to do this."

Paul Anderson: So, the next superintendent gets there, and he says [sighs], "You know, I don't know what to do here. I mean, I don't want to treat you bad, but I don't see the evidence that they're traditionally employed. And I'll tell you what. Why don't you guys just, there's like an ATV track that's kind of like right around the boundary. It only goes a little bit in the park here and a little bit in the park there. And if you don't go any farther than that, I'll just look the other way." Because I'm not dealing with this issue. That was really the message.

Paul Anderson: So, I got there, and they were operating in the park. Not very long after that, a couple of young kids took off into the park on their ATVs through the wet meadows, hunting caribou, and they ripped the living daylights out of the landscape.

Paul Anderson: And so, we went out there and did an investigation. Caught them and cited them. Boy, I mean, the community was in an uproar. It's like, "You can't do this. We have a right to be there. And we've been stonewalled for all these years by the park service. They told us we didn't have evidence of using them traditionally. And then when we provide them evidence, they don't listen to us. And we give it to them again and they still say we don't have evidence. And now they said it was okay to operate in the park. And you cite us."

Paul Anderson: I said, "Well, you know, I'll look into it. But I can't promise anything, because I don't know where it's going to go. But I can tell you this. It's not legal to have your ATVs in the park right now. And maybe they were looking the other way while you were doing that. But we're not doing that anymore. Because of this. We can't tolerate that. And we won't. If they're prohibited in the park, they're prohibited in the park. So, you guys better figure out another way. And that's it. But I will look into the issue."

Paul Anderson: So, I went back and researched the thing and found out what I just told you, basically, that they'd been trying for 20 years, 25 years, to get an appeal, if you will, of the decision from the park service. They're all convinced that they had adequate evidence to show that they were traditionally employed.

Paul Anderson: So, I said, "Well, okay, I'll tell you what. Let's do this one more time. But we'll do it together. So, you guys, we'll have a public meeting. You can have your own meetings, but we'll have a public meeting. And either the individuals themselves or you as the community representatives can bring the evidence in of traditionally employed. And it has to be specific. I mean, that's the criteria. So, you've got to have specific people, and you've got to have specific equipment, and you've got to have specific trails, and you've got to have specific times and purposes and all this." So, it was a pretty good list of things.

Paul Anderson: They went and they're like, this is a bunch of crap. But it's like, hey, folks, look. If you want us to make a fair assessment of whether they're traditionally employed, I promise you, we will. But we've got to have the right information. All of it. And if there isn't adequate information, then the answer's going to be they aren't traditionally employed. So, it's up to you to get that information. And we're telling you what we need. You tell us what you've got.

Paul Anderson: So, they went away, and they came back. And they gave us all their information. I looked at it and I went, oh my God. There's clear evidence of these people operating on these trails and roads with bulldozers and weasels, Army weasels, you know, the half-tracks, back in the '40s to go hunt their game. It wasn't in the park. I was like, how could you ignore that? So, I mean, clearly, they were clearly traditionally employed when we saw all the evidence. We documented it and we did it in such a way

that when we - because we were setting a precedent - when we were done, man, we had an administrative record that was like this.

Paul Anderson: So, we didn't make any promises, other than that we would do the review and make a decision. So, I went to the solicitor, and I said, "Okay. Here we are. We've been requested to review this material. They've submitted it all. We've looked at it. I mean, how can you say that this is not traditionally employed?" He said, "It's not." I said, "What are you talking about, it's not?" He said, "Well, look at the law. In my mind, when you read the law, it says that if they're traditionally employed, they can be used anywhere in your park. So if you find out that ATVs are traditionally employed in the Cantwell area, off trails and whatever, they can be used anywhere in the park they want to take them, because they're traditionally employed and that's what the law says. And there's no way in hell that you can manage it, or I can manage it. And we're not going to manage it. We're not going to create this problem."

Paul Anderson: And I'm thinking, I understand. It's a huge issue. And I don't want to open the whole park. But I've made a promise. And they legitimately, by law, had met the criteria. So, what were we going to do? And it turns out, of course, that the state of Alaska had threatened the park service about access to the parks and has worked against us consistently to make us accountable to the state for doing all these things about access to the park and activities and that kind of thing. So, they (the NPS and the solicitor) were worried that if we said the Cantwell ATV users had traditionally employed ATVs, that it would expand into ATVs everywhere in the parks in Alaska. So, I just said, okay.

Paul Anderson: I went to the state. And I walked in the door and I said to these people that I really had a hard time working with. I mean they were, in my humble opinion, nasty people. But they had a job, too. I said, "I've got a problem and I need to know where you're coming from." And I laid it all out. I said, "You know, for 25 years, we've refused to listen to, or to rule on any appeals of traditionally employed in any of the parks in Alaska and this is why. Because the way we read the law, or one believes we could read the law to say if they're allowed here, then they're allowed everywhere. And that's not going to happen. It's not responsible. I can't do that. So here, I'm proposing that we say that they're traditionally employed, but only where they're traditionally employed. Not everywhere. So, they're not a traditional mode of transportation anywhere in Alaska. They're a traditional mode of transportation in the area where they were traditionally used before the park was established." I said, "We can manage that. We may not like it, but we can manage it."

Paul Anderson: They looked at me like I was a dummy. And they said, "Well, why would it be any other way?" I said, "What do you mean??" They said, "We don't want to see ATVs running all over the parks. We just want to see the people that have used ATVs prior to the park's establishment still have access to the areas where we've used them." And 25 years it took us to

come to that. Twenty-five years. They turned it upside down. The whole thing.

Paul Anderson: So, I went back and redocumented the daylights out of it. Talked to the attorneys and the regional director and went back and told the people at Cantwell, "Well, look. Here's the way it is. We believe your ATVs were traditionally employed in this area, 200,000 acres or less. Small area of the park. And, in fact, they weren't traditionally employed on trails. They were employed anywhere they wanted to go in that 200,000 acres. But there are some trails there now. And then a lot of places that have been restored. And because we have to protect this place in perpetuity for everybody, I'm trying to find a way to allow you to use your ATVs here, to authorize them, without damaging the park irreparably. And so, we'll do a study, we will find that they're traditionally employed in that traditional use area. Okay? But we're not going to authorize their use until we can figure out how to use them in a way that won't irreparably damage the resources. And that's going to take us a little time."

Paul Anderson: And of course, they were pretty happy that we agreed that they were traditionally employed, so they agreed to help us with the study. Basically, what happened, the end result of this study was we looked at it from a standpoint of where can we allow ATVs off trail? Not where can't ATVs go but, in a positive sense, how much of this area can we open up to ATV use off trail? And what we came up with was not much. Because of the wetness and the soil and everything. They weren't very happy about it. They got more trails, and they certainly got access to the park where they hadn't had it before. But they were limited to trails. And sometimes they had to carry their animals a mile or more to get them to the ATV. But then that was better than the 15 miles that they would have had to carry them otherwise.

Paul Anderson: So, at the end of the whole thing, we had set a precedent for traditionally employed, for ATVs in Denali. We had worked with the community to get their consent, I won't say agreement, but consent. They could live with it. And we had done everything that we promised them we would do. And in the end, the relationship with that community was better than it ever had been in the 25 years prior to that time. And again, basically, it was a lot of work. And a lot of blood, sweat and tears. But it's like, we made a promise, we're going to keep it.

Brenna Lissoway: How long was that process all together?

Paul Anderson: Probably two and a half years.

Brenna Lissoway: Wow.

Paul Anderson: Yeah. And it was pretty expensive. The park ate the whole thing. So, we probably spent three or four hundred thousand dollars before it was all over. So anyway, today they have access. They have tight controls. They're part of the decision-making process. There's tight controls over

when and where they can use their ATVs. And they every year review how they're doing and whether they need to make adjustments and that kind of thing. So, it turned out to be a win for the park service, and the community benefited. It wasn't a big win for them, but it was a benefit to them.

Brenna Lissoway: Well, just to have that dialog.

Paul Anderson: Yeah. So, it's all based on that, don't make any promises you can't keep. Some of the other superintendents might have done that, created expectations that were never met. And keep the ones you make. Even if it costs you a lot of time and money. Because that's important. So, there's one example. I mean, there's lots of smaller kinds of examples. But that's one that was pretty important.

Brenna Lissoway: Oh, that's an excellent illustration. Yeah. I'm going to stop here for just a minute.

[END OF TRACK 1]

[START OF TRACK 2]

Brenna Lissoway: Okay. This is the second portion of the interview. This is Brenna Lissoway still interviewing Paul Anderson. So, Paul, let's go back to the Grand Canyon and talk a little bit more about some of the projects or programs that you worked on while you were there. What are some of the significant accomplishments you feel that you worked on in Grand Canyon?

Paul Anderson: Well, there were several. But I think the most important one was we, well I started out at Desert View when I first transferred there. A couple of years later, Dick Marks became the superintendent. We reorganized the park and created a different back country operation by consolidating all the back country in all other units into one district. So, we had a South Rim District, a North Rim District, and then a Canyon District. All the back country from all the other units came into that district. I was assigned as the back-country sub district ranger for that operation. So, I had all the back country from Lee's Ferry to Lake Mead on both sides of the river.

Paul Anderson: Steve Martin was the river ranger and he had the river district. The two of us took it upon ourselves to write a new back country management plan. The old one was pretty out of date at that time. So, we did a lot of research. Engaged a lot of people. And engaged the Division of Resource Management as well.

Paul Anderson: One person in particular, David Cole, who worked for the forest service in research, had come up with, along with Hendy and a few others, the concepts, the limits of acceptable change. And so as we were writing the back country management plan, we spent a lot of time talking with them and reading their literature, and decided you know, that was probably a really good way to manage the back country at Grand Canyon.

Paul Anderson: So, over the next two years, we developed a new plan that was based upon the limits of acceptable change concept and went from a trailhead limit to a zone limit throughout the park and advocated for a computerized reservation system. At that point, all of the backcountry reservations and permits were handled by hand and paper and pencil, file cards.

Paul Anderson: We also advocated for a new back country office that was separate from the headquarters building where the back country office hours were limited to get permits, were limited to those hours that the rest of the building was open from eight to five. We were having a lot of trouble at that time – and they have since – with people who couldn't get on the trail early enough and got caught in the heat one way or the other, and we ended up with a lot of medical emergencies, partly due to the fact that they weren't able to get their permits in a timely fashion. So, we advocated for that as well.

Paul Anderson: Steve Martin went on to Yellowstone. I finished up the backcountry plan. Went through public meetings all over Arizona. It was my first experience at being the key person in a public meeting. And as a GS-9 sub district ranger, I'd get up in front of these audiences, some of which were hostile. Maybe not like some I've had since then, but they weren't very favorable about some parts of the plan. And the superintendent would sit in the back and give me moral support while I took all the heat from the public. Then he'd get up and thank everybody for all their input. And I'd go clean my wounds and have a beer. It worked out really well. I mean, we got a lot of great ideas from the public. I think it started me on, it was my first opportunity to participate in the public process in a direct way. And it gave me the inkling of confidence that that might be a better way to make decisions than we always had done before. Make them ourselves because we are the experts, and we know how to do them right.

Paul Anderson: So, we got the plan through. In the end, it came down to, and by that time, Larry van Slyke had come in as, actually by that time had come in as a district ranger, and I worked for him as a sub district ranger.

Paul Anderson: So, we were down to the nitty gritty with this plan. There were just two key interest groups that opposed it. And they were not going to give in. So, there were threats and arguments. And finally, Dick Marks had everybody in his office, the heads of the interest groups, and the district ranger and I. He said, you know, "I can see that you guys, I'm not getting a consensus here. So, here's my recommendation. I will call in my five experts on back country management. You call in your five experts to represent your interest. We will provide the space and coffee and restroom facilities and food at lunch. And you will go into this locked room, and you will come out with a consensus. And then I will sign it."

Paul Anderson: I'm like whoa, this is going to be interesting. I'd never done that before. And they said okay. So, we locked ourselves, a few days later—

Brenna Lissoway: So, you were one of the five experts.

Paul Anderson: Yeah. Right. So, we locked ourselves in the conference room at headquarters at eight in the morning. And we worked until about six in the evening that day. And you know whether we wore them down or whether we really made truly substantive progress, I'm not quite sure all these years later. But nonetheless, we went through point by point all of their concerns and we tried to address them in some way we could all live with. So, it was an incredible lesson in negotiation.

Paul Anderson: We came down to one point, and I can't remember what the point was, but there was just no way that we could agree, or they could agree, to whatever it was. So finally, at the twelfth hour, van Slyke said, "Okay, you know, this is a big back country plan. And this is the only thing that's holding it up. And you know, I can't give it up, and clearly you can't accept it. So, what if we look at it a different way? What if we write into the plan that we will implement this the way we're proposing? When the," whatever it was, it probably was a FONSI. "When the FONSI's signed, when the plan's signed, then with the commitment that at the end of the first year, we will together sit down, review where we are, and then if you're not satisfied that it's working, we'll go with your recommendation."

Paul Anderson: And they went, okay. (laughs) And so they accepted it. We had everything worked out. They supported the plan. We walked out. And went to the superintendent's office and told him we had a deal, and everybody shook hands, and I went home and changed clothes and went to my going away party. It was pretty, I mean, it was clearly one of my career experiences was to go through that whole process as a GS-9 ranger and have it come out the way that it did.

Paul Anderson: The interesting thing, too, I mean, I moved on and lost sight of what was happening with the canyon and probably, what would it have been, in two thousand and something, the late two thousands, Steve Martin went back to the Grand Canyon as superintendent. He said, "You know, when I got there, they were still using the plan that we wrote in 1983." It had been modified, because that's what we wrote it to be. Every year it needed to be reviewed and it needed to be adjusted according to our experience. And we'd review it with the public, not just with ourselves. They had those reviews over the years, and they modified it based on that, but it was still the same thing.

Brenna Lissoway: You made a very flexible document, it sounds like. Yeah. Wow. Wow.

Paul Anderson: So, I was proud of that.

Brenna Lissoway: Yeah. Oh, yeah.

Paul Anderson: A couple of other things that happened at the canyon, career-influencing, I think, certainly. So, while I was, as a sub district ranger in charge, well, in my first year as a sub district ranger out at Desert View, we had a big search. I got sent down in the canyon to be the, what we know now as the operations section chief. And my boss was running the incident. I mean, I

probably could have predicted this at the time, but things didn't go well. When we finally found the guy, we had probably alienated most of our employees and many of the volunteers that had come to participate in the search, just because of our poor management. You know, we put them in the canyon to search, and then didn't give them any food. Or in one case, we didn't give them any sleeping bags or shelter and they were there for two days. I mean, they were not happy campers. And it was clear we needed to do a better job.

Brenna Lissoway: Was that something that just fell through the cracks? Or was that just the poor system execution? What?

Paul Anderson: It was the poor leadership and execution of an inadequate plan. Steve Holder was the savior of the day. He was a South Rim ranger. We called him in and said, "Steve, we need you and some of your people to go in the canyon."

Paul Anderson: Steve said, okay. So, he got his group of people together. We flew them into the canyon. And they were one of the people that had to share two people to a sleeping bag with no dinner. And Steve, of course, is the kind of guy who usually is pretty outspoken. Good guy. He calls up. And he knew what it was like when it worked well. He calls up and he says, "You guys need to get some sleeping bags and some food down here. These people are getting awfully hungry. They haven't had any supper and now they're not getting any breakfast," and bladdy, bladdy, blah. And I'm like oh my God, you know? It did slip through the cracks.

Paul Anderson: So, we did that. He came out of the canyon that afternoon. And in our staff, or management team meeting, I said, you know, we really need a logistics chief to focus on this, because it's a big problem. I bet we had 50, 60 people in the field. And I think Steve would be a good person to do it. Steve said, "I'll be happy to do it. But I'm only going to do it if you give me the authority to do what needs to be done."

Paul Anderson: So, the incident commander said, "Okay. That's fine." So, he looks at me and he goes, "Okay. Here's the deal. You're going down in the canyon at eight o'clock in the morning." The first thing, when you're getting everything together, as soon as it's possible, the first thing you need to do is you need to figure out how many lunches we've got to have down there. And I'm going to have to know by nine how many lunches you're going to need. Then I want to know how many people you're going to sleep in the canyon and where they are." So, I said, okay. Not a problem. I can do this. This is good. So, I go down there. Things are totally screwed up in my end of the thing, too. I'm, you know, trying to get everybody organized, and this, that and the other thing. Sure, as heck, nine o'clock on the button, the radio goes off and its Holder. And he says, "Okay. How many lunches do you need?" Well, I don't even know how many people are down there. And I hadn't had time to think about it. I'm like oh, geez, I don't know. I don't know yet. I'm going to have to take some time. And he said, "Well,

how many people do you have down there?" And I said, well, I don't know. He said, "Well, about how many people do you have down there?" I said, "Well, I think I have 50." He said, "Okay. Seventy-five lunches. Do you have 75 people?" No, I know we don't. "Seventy-five lunches. They'll be at these places at this time. And if you don't eat them all, too bad." So, I said okay. He said, "And at noon, you better have who's going to be sleeping out and where."

Paul Anderson: Well, I did. And of course, we had food and shelter and everything there on the button. More than we needed, I mean, more than people needed, but enough to make sure everybody was taken care of. It was a whole new way of looking at how you manage support on an incident.

Paul Anderson: So, the end result of that, we found the guy. But not very much style in how we went about it. As a result of that, we were told by the chief ranger, you guys have got to rewrite the plan, the search and rescue plan. So, I got volunteered to lead the effort to rewrite the search and rescue plan for the park. Had a lot of help from the rangers. We put together a pretty good plan, and we got Rick Gale to help us get our organization together.

Brenna Lissoway: Now this was in the early days of the ICS, incident command system?

Paul Anderson: It wasn't there yet. It wasn't there yet.

Brenna Lissoway: Oh, it wasn't there yet.

Paul Anderson: This was the last big incident before ICS came across.

Brenna Lissoway: Okay.

Paul Anderson: Before it escaped fire and came to the incident command system became "all risk." Which is where it started, when "all risk" was at the Grand Canyon with Rick Gale.

Brenna Lissoway: Okay.

Paul Anderson: So anyway, we rewrote the plan. We put on a bunch of training, both for the supervisors and for the front-line employees. We developed a basic search class for our seasonal employees and put everybody through it. We had; Coconino County also had jurisdiction over the canyon. There was a lot of strife with the county, working with Sheriff Richards. I mean, they were not happy. And we were pretty provincial about how we ran the incident. It was not good. So, in the plan we talked about how we were going to cooperate when we worked with the sheriff's office to build that into it.

Paul Anderson: And lo and behold, after I'd moved to the backcountry sub district, a gentleman by the name of Balsharoff, from South Yemen, went missing at Phantom Ranch. After a couple of days of his tent being in the campground, the rangers realized he was not there. So, we started a big search. The search went on for two weeks. Had more than 150 people involved at any one time. And I ran that search as the incident commander. Rick Gale was our advisor. We had the Coconino County

sergeant in charge of the Grand Canyon area as the deputy incident commander. And it was one of the best searches I've ever been involved in.

Brenna Lissoway: Why?

Paul Anderson: Because we had a plan. We had trained our people. We had implemented the incident command system as our management system for emergencies with Rick Gale's guidance. I mean, we had strong leadership amongst the people in those positions. So, everything worked really, really well. And while we didn't find him—

Brenna Lissoway: You didn't.

Paul Anderson: We didn't find him. After having searched the whole area thoroughly, a 25 square-mile area pretty thoroughly over the course of two weeks, the whole search went down to a clue, two clues, were a footprint in the wet sand at the mouth of Clear Creek that translated to "sign," not full footprints that went up onto the bank, onto the cliff edge, above the mouth of Clear Creek downriver. They tracked it step by step downriver some distance where there was a big slide mark over the river, and that was the end of the tracks. So, the assumption at that point, having ruled out everything else, was that he had tried to walk back along the river and slid off into the river and drowned. To this day, there's been nothing that's ever been found. But nonetheless, it was a classic search in park service history, search and rescue history.

Paul Anderson: So, what's the significance of that? The significance is that we went from a pretty shoddy operation to one that was extremely well-run and difficult but was extremely well-run. And from a relationship with our supporting agencies that was antagonistic at best, to one partnership that is still strong today. And it really began on that search. By making it a part of it.

Paul Anderson: As a result of that, Sheriff Richards, who I never really got along with very well in law enforcement, called me up some days later and said, "You know, I want to start an Arizona search and rescue coordinators' association." The county sheriffs each had a SAR coordinator that was in charge of SAR for the county. That sergeant that I'd worked with was the SAR coordinator for Coconino County at the time. So, he wanted to start a statewide association of SAR coordinators to do training and resource management, sharing resources around the state. And he said, "Would you be willing to come down and help us?"

Paul Anderson: I said sure. So I went, well, all of the rest of the time I was at the Grand Canyon, I worked with the State Office of Emergency Services and the sheriffs group, it must have been the Arizona Sheriffs Association, it would be the bigger group. Then the SAR coordinators were kind of a subgroup of that group. So, I'd worked with the sheriffs' association for probably a year, maybe, about a year, I would guess. We put together a program and training for all of the SAR coordinators. And then I helped

put on the training for the SAR coordinators that year before I left the Grand Canyon.

Paul Anderson: Interestingly enough, over the next 10 years, I came back to Arizona and taught at least five or six more management classes for the Arizona sheriffs' search and rescue coordinators. The conclusion, if you will, interim conclusion to that is that the year after I retired in 2012, that year, the Coconino County search and rescue coordinator, Aaron Dick, Dave Lovelock, who's a mathematics professor at the University of Arizona in Tucson, who wrote the search management program called WinCasie3, Computer-Assisted Search Information Exchange, while we were at the Grand Canyon in '78. We got together and wrote a new textbook called Find 'Em: A Guide to Planning the Missing Person Incident Response, which is now published electronically on their Arizona sheriffs' SAR coordinators association website. I'm still teaching classes for the association. And in fact, in two weeks I'll be teaching another one.

Brenna Lissoway: So how would you say, then, I mean, because it sounds like you remained very much involved in search and rescue all throughout your career.

Paul Anderson: Yes.

Brenna Lissoway: What other changes did you see in the park service in terms of approach to search and rescue?

Paul Anderson: Well, the biggest change that ever occurred in search and rescue in the park service was probably the same one that occurred across the country and perhaps around the world. And that was the work that Bill Wade and some of these other people did to collect the best practices from around the country and put them together in the original text called Managing the Search Function, which was done at the Albright Training Center in 1976, I think. That really was, I mean, it was revolutionary in terms of how we managed search in the country. And it's been evolving since then. The book that we just got done writing is really nothing more than another edition, contemporary edition, of the principles that were put forth by Wade in 1976. And Brady and a few other people. I mean, it was a collaboration. But Wade was the instigator of the whole thing. So that was a major change in how we managed search. You think about it. I mean, this book came out in '76. The people in the park service were training people, you know? I went through that class in 1978 as part of my intake training program. So, I'd just had it when I got to the Grand Canyon. But there were people there that still hadn't had that training at all. So partly the reason that first search didn't go so well was because the people that were running it weren't trained.

Brenna Lissoway: Right.

Paul Anderson: And it still happens today, but probably not as frequently. So important, that was revolutionary in the history of search management.

Paul Anderson: And then, I think, the incident command system, as a management system, which Rick Gale brought from Southern California Fire scope, into the Grand Canyon in about '81, I think. But certainly, the early '80s. He was the person who had the vision that the incident command system could be an all-hazard management system. And that the park service was the best-suited agency in the federal government to make it so. Up until that time, of course, nobody thought about it for anything but fire. So, we implemented it at the Grand Canyon, and it worked, and it spread from there. I think it's revolutionized how we respond. Is it perfect? No. It's not any better than the people that use it. But it really does give you the structure and the support mechanisms to do it right if you choose to use it. And, of course, the all-hazard program.

Paul Anderson: So, Rick Gale and I and another guy from the forest service, Jim Stumpf, who worked on the Angeles National Forest through the National Association for Search and Rescue started advocating for the incident command system in search and rescue. We used to go to the NASAR [National Association of Search and Rescue] conference every year and put on a workshop on the incident command system. And all these search managers would come and boo us and "throw rotten tomatoes" and try and run us out of town on a rail and bladdy, bladdy, blah. And so, we got pretty good at catching raw tomatoes and throwing them back at the crowd. I mean, it was pretty—

Brenna Lissoway: They weren't buying it.

Paul Anderson: No, they did not buy it.

Brenna Lissoway: Why?

Paul Anderson: Because they already knew how to do it. And this new system that was especially from the feds, and of course it came from the state of California, not from the feds. But anyway, they weren't going to use it. They already had their own system. And then, "well, we use it." But they didn't really use it. They just changed the names of what they were already doing.

Paul Anderson: So, we had these workshops and we taught classes. This went on for, I mean, they were well-attended. I mean, it was like going to a public meeting.

Paul Anderson: So after about five years, probably five years of going to every NASAR conference and putting on this workshop or some variation thereof, and being run out of town on a rail every time we got up there, we could start to see the tide change. About the fifth or sixth year we had our workshop at the NASAR conference, and there were about 10 people in the workshop. Every one of them was there to tell their stories of how the incident command system worked for them.

Brenna Lissoway: Hmm. Wow. How has the incident command system itself changed since the park service adopted it?

Paul Anderson: FEMA got a hold of it.

Brenna Lissoway: FEMA [Federal Emergency Management Agency] got a hold of it. Okay. (laughs)

Paul Anderson: You know, the incident command system, I mean it's sort of an enigma. The basis of the incident command system is clear, common communication, right? I mean, that's really what it is. It's an organization, a management organization. But the management organization is the same for everybody, for everything. And thus, I can go do an incident here in Colorado, up in Alaska, down in Arizona, over in Maryland. And I know what the organization is. I know what each function is. I know what each person or title in the organization does, and how information flows and all that kind of thing. So that's really the core strength of that system. And for many years, it was pretty easy. I mean, because that's how it was.

Paul Anderson: I think we kind of browbeat the search and rescue community and some of the park service. But the search and rescue community into, look, you know, you guys may not think it works, but that's because you don't know how to use it. And just because you call this guy the sector boss doesn't mean that if you call him a division supervisor, he's not doing the same thing. And a division supervisor is an accepted term in the incident command system. So, call your sector boss a division supervisor and it will fit right in the system. Call him a sector boss, somebody that's coming in from ICS wouldn't know what you're talking about. So that's how we did it, and that's where we got to.

Paul Anderson: Well, then FEMA got involved. And partly because of me. I was in charge of NASAR for a number of years. I was president of NASAR. And we were in dire straits financially. I figured out with the executive director that if we bid FEMA contracts, we could get lots of money, and we could influence the national response system by writing the protocols for the national response system. We were you know, uniquely positioned to do that. We were turning three plus million dollars in contracts a year with FEMA.

Brenna Lissoway: So, you were, you mean, the park service was being contracted-

Paul Anderson: No, NASAR was.

Brenna Lissoway: No, I'm sorry. NASAR.

Paul Anderson: This is my other life. My volunteer life.

Brenna Lissoway: Okay. Got you. So NASAR was being contracted to manage incidents?

Paul Anderson: No. They were being contracted to write the response protocols for FEMA.

Brenna Lissoway: Got it. Okay.

Paul Anderson: This is after Mexico. It started after the Mexico City earthquake in the '80s. And there were a couple others, Hurricane Andrew. So that really

brought it up to the forefront. The FEMA director before Ron Brown, way before, kind of got the same treatment Ron Brown got in Katrina. And they dug themselves out of the sand and decided they were going to make something out of it. The urban search and rescue task forces in Miami, Miami Dade and Los Angeles and Phoenix and Dallas all were established with FEMA money to be able to respond to these disasters quickly. NASAR wrote the protocols and did all the organizational work to establish all of those urban search and rescue task forces. We worked with USAID on international response, and that kind of – so anyway, we made a hell of a lot of money for the organization that we could use to fund these other projects, through that process.

Paul Anderson: We tried to teach FEMA as we were going along how important the incident command system was. And how they should be using it, and bladdy, bladdy blah. And so, well, NASAR kind of went by the wayside with the contracting over time after this stuff was sort of put in place. FEMA picked it up, and they took it to big time disasters and said, you know, this is a great basic system, but it needs to be adapted to meet the needs of the big disasters. And to some degree, it probably did. But basically, what they've done is they've created a whole new magnitude of ICS to manage major emergencies. Now everybody's having to kind of catch up to the terminology and the linkages and all of that. You know, if you go on the BP oil spill, or the Exxon Valdez oil spill. The park service pioneered ICS on the Exxon Valdez oil spill because of Anne Castellina at Kenai Fjords. We convinced the Coast Guard they better get their act together and use the ICS the proper way to manage it effectively, which they did. I thought that was pretty cool. Anne Castellina, she did a great job.

Paul Anderson: Anyway, so what's happened now is FEMA's doing a pretty good job of keeping the system intact and pure from the standpoint of there's only one system. But it's becoming more and more complex as they have more interest. So, they respond to an oil spill that goes on for months. And there's this kind of need and that kind of need. Well, that's pretty specialized. Let's call it something else and we'll add it into the system. Well, we need some of this over here, we've never had it, so let's add that into the system, too. Pretty soon the system's so big and complex that you need a manual to figure out how it's organized.

Paul Anderson: But it's better than it was. Way better. So.

Brenna Lissoway: Uh huh. Yeah. Interesting. So, I just wanted to give, anything else about Grand Canyon that you want to talk about?

Paul Anderson: No. I think there may be things I'm missing. But you know, it was probably four and a half of the best years of my career in the park service.

Brenna Lissoway: What was the best memory you have of the Grand Canyon?

Paul Anderson: The best memory I have of the Grand Canyon? Was sitting in a slot canyon on the side of the North Bass Trail in 110-degree temperatures underneath a little teeny dribbling waterfall in the shade. With maidenhair fem cascading off the walls. And thinking oh my God, life doesn't get any better than this. And I had dreams about that for years after I left the Grand Canyon.

Brenna Lissoway: Wow. So why did you leave the Grand Canyon?

Paul Anderson: Well, I became a seasonal, I joined the park service because really my goals in life were to have a job where I didn't have to work for a living. And where everything I did was fun. And they paid me for it. And that the benefits were good enough that I could retire as soon as possible to go back to what I was doing before I became a permanent employee, you know, and have fun. And I looked around and went well, what would that be? And I said oh my God, it's the park service! I mean, it is perfectly suited to me. All of those goals. And you know what? Forty-three years later, I look back on that and say absolutely. You were dead on. And I believe that with all my heart. I never worked a day in my life. And I had fun almost every day of the entire 40 years that I worked. And then, you know, they gave me some pretty good benefits, which I appreciated. When I turned 55, I could retire so I could go back to doing what I wanted to do. Which was have fun. And I really did, seriously. I said okay, here we are. Fifty-five. You can retire. To go back, now you can do what you want to do that's fun. After a few days of thinking about it, I said, that's what I'm doing now! So, I didn't retire. And I stayed on another seven years.

Brenna Lissoway: Mm hmm. So, what about that transition to your next position from Grand Canyon?

Paul Anderson: So, part of that, that sets the groundwork, right?

Brenna Lissoway: Okay.

Paul Anderson: Part of that is okay, so this is the most wonderful organization in the world. Their mission and goals. The people. But we're not as good at executing as we could be. So, we've got great ideas, and we've got great vision. But we aren't so good at executing sometimes. So, you know, all my career I'd get into a position and figure out how to improve our execution at that level in the organization. And what you, you know, this is my view. It's not reality.

Paul Anderson: So as a seasonal at Rocky Mountain, you know, I could make this back country spotless. I could make it as close to perfect as possible. But periodically, you know, the sub-district rangers would come in with some weird-ass idea, or didn't know what it was we were trying to accomplish and didn't support what we were trying to do, and we weren't able to get it done. Or else you didn't have time, or you didn't have the resources to make it happen. So, at that point you realized gee, you know, if I had that

job, I could influence all of this. And we could do this. And I could help people accomplish those things.

Paul Anderson: So, okay, let's try it. So, I did. I became a sub-district ranger. I mean, really my first substantive permanent job was sub-district ranger at Grand Canyon. The others were, I would call them more buck ranger and training positions. So that's what I did there. And you know, wow, it was awesome. I mean, we had the best crew of seasonals the park service ever saw. And we had more fun than anybody has a right to have.

Brenna Lissoway: At Grand Canyon?

Paul Anderson: At Grand Canyon. I mean, God, we had 12 back country patrol rangers in the Grand Canyon at the time. Outside the Corridor. Not counting those people. And not counting back country office. We had 12 seasonal--two permanents and a group of 10 seasonals. And we spent the majority of our time, I mean, at least eight days out of a pay period, 10 on and four off, eight days out of the pay period, everybody except me was in the canyon. Hiking. Patrolling. Working. And I was in the canyon six days out of every 10 for the entire time I was a sub-district ranger. Every pay period, six days in the canyon, hiking, patrolling, talking to people, cleaning up things, doing projects and that kind of thing. We hiked every trail and every route in Harvey Butchart's book. And we could talk firsthand about all of those routes that nobody could have ever done before. It was incredible! The back country was in better shape than it's been since they made it a national park. And we knew where the problems were, we knew where the resources were, like never before. I mean, it was incredible! And again, most of it was seasonal operation. But the opportunity to be there and to support them, to give them equipment, to cut the crap and say, you just go do it and I'll take the heat or whatever it is, helped it to happen.

Paul Anderson: But you know that damned district ranger, sometimes he would just not understand what we were trying to accomplish. So, God, you know, Larry, if you'd just go justify this project to the superintendent for us, we could make it happen. "Well, you know, things are not so good here. And moneys got to go," blah, blah. Well, you know, if I had the district ranger job, I wouldn't let that happen.

Paul Anderson: So, Bill Wade calls me up and says, "I've got a problem at Delaware Water Gap. I really think you should apply for the district ranger job because it's a serious problem and I think you might be able to take care of it. But I'd sure like to see your name on the cert." So, I said, "Okay. I'd like to be a district ranger."

Paul Anderson: Well, the problem that he was talking about was that the park service had just been given by donation Highway 209 in Delaware Water Gap from Bushkill to Milford, Pennsylvania. Highway 209, of course, was the main road through the Pennsylvania side of the park. And it's the only park road that I've ever seen on 60 Minutes. But before I took the job, I was watching TV one Sunday night, and 60 Minutes came on. It was a story

about truck traffic on Highway 209, and how there were 3800 trucks a day on Highway 209. It was a two-lane, narrow two-lane road on the river valley, through the park, through the recreation area, about 30 miles, something like that, 30 miles long. And it went right through the main street of both Bushkill and Milford. There were multiple fatalities on that stretch of road every year. It was impinging on the quality of life for people in the valley, and seriously impinging on the quality of life. It was destroying the community of Milford just from the truck traffic, and the impact of vibrations from the trucks going through town were crumbling buildings.

Paul Anderson: So, the state and the troopers didn't like patrolling it, because it was dangerous. And so, the state decided that since they couldn't get control of it for all their efforts that the way they could do it is if they donated it to the park service for a dollar. The park service would accept it, and then they would have to close it, because our regulations prohibit commercial traffic in national parks. So in 1983, I think it was, maybe '84, anyway, '83 or '84, I lose track of time here, the state of Pennsylvania donated Highway 209 to the park service. And of course, the park service was like oh, gosh, now what are we going to do?

Paul Anderson: So clearly, according to the solicitors and everything, you guys are going to have to close this road. And you need to do it sooner rather than later. So that's where Bill called me up and said, "You need to apply for this job as district ranger." So, I thought well, you know, what the heck? I'm kind of a problem solver. And I wouldn't mind some more experience in law enforcement. So, I guess I'll go do that. But then of course my second thoughts got the best of me. And all the way across the country from Grand Canyon, I'm just like what the heck did you do to yourself? You just got in way over your head.

Paul Anderson: So, I get to the park and I walk into the chief ranger's office my first day of work. And I said, "Well, I'm glad to be here. And you know, I'm really eager and excited to do whatever needs to be done. And I know that it's coming down around our shoulders really quickly. So, if we could just like get the plan out and you could brief me on the plan, I'll get started to implement it." Because we were going to close the road in like two or three weeks.

Paul Anderson: The chief ranger looks at me across his desk. And he's very calm and very thoughtful. And he says, "Well, I'll tell you. I'm really glad you're here. And yeah, we don't have much time. So, I can't show you the plan because you're going to write it." And I said, "Well, what's been done?" And he said, "Well, we hired you." (laughs)

Brenna Lissoway: Wow.

Paul Anderson: Anyway, that's where it started. So, we were working 24 hours a day trying to get ready. We had 19 state and federal and local agencies involved in this closure plan.

Brenna Lissoway: And you didn't know the area. You had no contacts.

Paul Anderson: No. I'd never been there before. Nothing. I knew maybe one or two of the people that worked there besides Bill. But not very well. I didn't know anybody on my staff.

Brenna Lissoway: Mm hmm. Certainly not in the community. Not in the—

Paul Anderson: No.

Brenna Lissoway: —other agencies.

Paul Anderson: No. And so, it was like okay, well, you know, this is going to be an interesting proposition. They'd started, they got some money from Congress when, to staff up when they got the highway because Congress knew there was going to be a problem. So, they were already trying to hire new patrol rangers to patrol the road and that kind of thing. So that process was ongoing. And they had three supervisors, three shift supervisors, hired. GS-6s. And then probably half of their contingent of GS-5 patrol rangers. They'd gotten a whole fleet of cruisers from the park police. So, we were driving ranger cars, the old park police olive green cars. Which I'd never seen before I got to Delaware Water Gap. And I said, "Well, how did you get these?"

Paul Anderson: And well, you know, it's really interesting. The first thought when we took over the highway was that the park police were going to come up here and run the closure operation. And they were committed to do that. And then somebody along the way, and I don't remember whether it was the chief ranger in region, it might have been the chief ranger in region, basically said, "We can handle this. We don't need the park police to come and do it."

Paul Anderson: It created a lot of bad blood between the park service, the rangers, and the park policemen. So, anyway. So, we immediately set to work, and we were using all the supervisors we had. I mean, I went out and met with every agency head for every agency I could figure out had any affiliation or interest in the road. You know, from the state troopers to the game commission to the Department of Transportation and the local community police and their departments of utilities and transportation and that kind of thing. And we started putting together the plans and running it under ICS. Which was a real test, I guess, of using it for all hazards. Because it hadn't been run under ICS, something like that, we'd never used ICS for that kind of thing before.

Paul Anderson: So, anyway, we got a reprieve. We put out the announcement that we were closing the road effective April 15, and that no commercial traffic would be allowed after that day. But to set the stage, Highway 209 connects highways 80 and 81. And it goes along the Delaware River Valley. So if you wanted to go to Boston from Washington, DC or Chicago, you would go up, when you got into Pennsylvania, you would be on 80 or 81. And if you were on, going to Boston, you would get off at 80 and you would go

onto 81 and over the top of the Pocono Mountains to get to Boston. So, you had all the grades and everything. You could save a lot of money on gas, and the weather was better in the wintertime, if you just went on 80 to 209 and took this 30-mile shortcut on the 209 between the two highways. You missed the whole Pocono Mountains. So that's why there was so much traffic on that highway, commercial traffic on the highway. All the truck traffic going from the south, southern and western US that was going into northeast, was pretty much going through Delaware Water Gap.

Paul Anderson: So, when we said we were going to close the road, it went to Congress overnight. And so, within short order, we had a law, I mean, a law, that delayed the closure of Highway 209 for, I think it was about eight months. It might have been a year. Might have been a year. Anyway, but a long time. Long enough for us to get our act together. I mean, we were in dire straits if it had happened in April. I don't know what would have happened.

Paul Anderson: So, for that year, we finessed our plans. We worked closely with all of these different agencies in law enforcement and may have some interest and everything. And did a lot of PR work. We wrote regulations to manage the road under the new laws. The laws allowed us to collect fees from the commercial traffic and use those for the operation of Highway 209. And so, we did that. We wrote regulations to set the fees and develop policy to manage who could go on the road. Because the law wasn't going to close it completely. It was all but local traffic. It was local traffic, which they defined could use the road still. And they had to pay a fee.

Paul Anderson: So, we did all that. The interesting thing was that the truckers, of course they all knew what was going on. And we had, I mean, death threats to the rangers on a daily basis. It was pretty scary. I really, I mean, I was totally stressed out. Not for me personally at that point, but for the rangers that were on the road patrolling 24 hours a day and dealing with all these truckers on the highway. They were making lots of car stops. Lots of traffic stops. There were, I mean, I think we must have had six or eight fatalities on the road in that year before, after I got there or the year before it closed. We were enforcing park regulations and traffic laws on the highway that had never been enforced by the state before.

Paul Anderson: I remember the district ranger from [New Jersey] came over to visit me one day. And we were just finishing up an arrest on the highway. He said, "So how many people have you arrested this year so far?" And I said, "Well, I don't know. I think about 15 or so." He said, "Do you realize we haven't arrested 15 people in this park since it was created?" And I said, "Well, you know, we don't arrest anybody that we don't have to arrest. But we're not going to let them get away with doing things that are completely prohibited and unsafe here in the park." He said, "Boy, the chief ranger's going to be after you. He doesn't like this stuff, you know?" Well, the chief ranger never said a word. And we made, I don't know, probably 60

or 80 arrests in that first year. Which was pretty impressive for the park service.

Brenna Lissoway: Yeah.

Paul Anderson: But it's an ugly place to work. I mean, it was really ugly.

Brenna Lissoway: So how did you handle that? I mean, death threats and that intensity of a situation.

Paul Anderson: I didn't sleep very well. I'll tell you what I finally did. I realized most of these threats are coming over the CB, too, and all the rangers are running CBs in their car. Finally, what I realized was, was that we weren't getting anything positive about running these CBs. We weren't using them except to get threatened. We never talked to the truckers on the CBs. We talked to them other ways. All it was doing was just freaking everybody out. So, we all sat down and talked about it and said yeah, we'd probably be better off if we just turned them off. And so, we did. You know, there was a risk in doing that, I think. But it was, the benefit way outweighed the risk. And it sort of helped, the guys didn't change their tactics, if you will, but they were less stressed about it, if you will.

Brenna Lissoway: Yeah. Yeah.

Paul Anderson: So anyway, the closure went down. We had the Pennsylvania state police, and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation helping us at the entrance stations. We built two new entrance stations to control traffic. The day the closure went down, we had a ranger, a fee collector, a ranger, and a state trooper and a DOT front end loader/operator with a front-end loader parked at each entrance station. And so, this was concurrent jurisdiction. So, the state had jurisdiction on the road as well.

Paul Anderson: Well, the trooper said, "Well, we'll help you. You guys take the lead, we'll help you. But if they give you any crap, we're going to step up." And I said, "Yup, that's fine. That's what we want."

Paul Anderson: So, the first truck drives up to the entrance station. They're planning all this. The first truck drives up to the entrance station and he's really friendly and nice, you know. And he shuts off his truck. Dead. Shuts it off. He's not idling his engine. He just turns it down. As far as you can see down the road, it's this line of trucks that convoyed into the park. So, here's the media, the ranger, the trooper, and the fee collector and the DOT [Department of Transportation] employee.

Paul Anderson: And the guy goes, "So what's up?" And I said, "Well, the highway's closed to commercial traffic except for local traffic. And here's what local traffic is. And if you can give us some identification or information that we need to prove that you're a local truck, then you can go through if you pay the fee. Otherwise you have to tum around and go back." It's not like there weren't signs. The guy goes, "No, I don't think so." I said, "Well, sir, you're going to, are you from the local area?" "No. But I've used this road my whole career. I'm not going to quit using it now." "Well, sir, you can't

go forward. You need to tum around and go back. You're blocking traffic." "Yeah? And who's going to make me?" The trooper steps out of the office and he signals to the front-end loader operator, who fires up the front-end loader, and there's this big column of black smoke coming out of the front-end loader in front of this truck. And he goes, "Okay, hook him!" And the truck driver goes, "What are you doing?" And he says, "Well, if you 're not going to move, we're going to move you. And his job is to pick you up in that front-end loader bucket and push your truck off to the side of the road so we can clear it. So, it's your choice. You start it up and drive around the comer and tum around, or we're going to do it for you."

Paul Anderson: The guy starts his engine right up and that whole caravan turned around at the entrance station. It was impressive. (laughter) It was the most amazing thing I think I'd ever seen in my entire career. And it got caught, you know, the TV news—

Brenna Lissoway: And the media caught all of that, too?

Paul Anderson: Yep. And the park service came out smelling like a rose. We did our job perfectly, and the troopers worked really well with it. So anyway, that worked fine. I mean obviously it took us a while to get control of the situation. But you know, it was steady progress. We still had people trying us periodically. And we're still making arrests and escorting people out of the park and that sort of thing for some time after that.

Paul Anderson: But finally, one day, one night, a truck ran by the entrance station. It was a flatbed diesel, flatbed semi-trailer with a 40,000-pound load of steel beam on it. The fee collector called it in and road patrol that was up in the area pulled the guy over about a mile into the park, into the recreation area. The guy stopped in the middle of the road. Just in the middle of the highway.

Paul Anderson: So, the ranger on the loudspeaker said, "Sir, there's a pull-off right in front of you. Move off the road here and we can talk." The guy didn't do anything, so the ranger got out of the car and walked up there. He said, "Sir, you need to pull over to the pull-out right there." Which was made for trucks. It wasn't like it was dangerous or anything. The guy says, "Oh, okay."

Paul Anderson: So, the ranger goes back, gets in his car, and the truck starts up and takes off down the road at a high rate of speed. He wasn't stopping. So, another ranger up in front sets up a roadblock with his vehicle. And he gets out of the vehicle and jumps over the guardrail to get away from, because this truck is coming on. And the guy had room to get around him. It was in another big pull-off, but he was blocking the road.

Paul Anderson: So, the guy pulls up to the car and he stops. And the other ranger pulls up behind the truck. And they immediately jump up. And they're going to arrest the guy. They're going to pull him out of the rig and take him to jail. So, they jump up on the running boards and try and get the guy out of the

truck, and he throws the truck into gear and drives over the top of the ranger car that's in front of him. I mean, just flat to the ground.

Paul Anderson: Well, that's pretty scary.

Brenna Lissoway: Yeah.

Paul Anderson: Well, the next thing he does is he puts it in reverse. The ranger that's on the running board on the other side of the truck, who can't get in because the door's locked, realizes what's going to happen now. Runs like crazy back to his patrol car, backs it up, and barely escapes getting run over by the truck. Who then put it in gear, drove around the ranger who jumped off the other side. Took off down the highway. They clocked him at 90 miles an hour in the Stroudsburg city limits with this truck with 40,000 pounds of steel.

Paul Anderson: So, they called in backup and the troopers came in. and they chased him out onto Highway 81, or 80. And there's a big hill on 80, so the troopers set up a roadblock on 80 and stopped all the traffic on the top of this hill. So, the trucker got caught in the traffic jam. And then all the troopers and the rangers descended on him at that point. Arrested him. He refused to get out of his vehicle. They arrested him, took him to jail. He lost his load. His truck was impounded. He lost his load. He lost his job. He spent 90 days in jail. He had to pay for the impound on his tractor. I mean, it was pretty serious stuff.

Paul Anderson: The next morning, after all of this stuff went down, and the guy went to jail that night, and his load was impounded, and everybody knew what was going on. The next morning on the CB in the ranger station, you could hear the truckers talking. You know, because it had always been, "We're going to go give those Smokies a bad time," you know, blady, blady, blah. This time it was, "So, did you hear what happened at the Gap last night? Some rangers took down Buddy." Blady, blady, blah. "Tell you what. It's pretty clear now. You don't want to mess with them Smokies. I'm going around." And we never had another problem after that. Never.

Brenna Lissoway: Wow.

Paul Anderson: The credibility of the rangers was now high in the minds of the truckers and they quit harassing us. It worked out great. So anyway, that was, it was pretty ugly experience. But nobody got hurt. That was really a good thing. I was really proud of that, that nobody got hurt. And the park service, I mean, we dealt with the controversy. We dealt with the hazards and the dangers and people were very professional about what they did.

Paul Anderson: When all was said and done, I met the sergeant from the park police contingent that was supposed to come up there and close the highway. He had come up to visit somebody for some reason. We were having dinner together and talking about it with the law enforcement specialist. And he said, "You know, it really upset us when the park service decided not to have the park police come and close the road, because we were really

counting on coming up here and doing this. We didn't believe the rangers could do a professional job of it." He said, "But I have to tell you. We couldn't have done it any better than you did."

Brenna Lissoway: That's quite a compliment.

Paul Anderson: I thought so. So that was Delaware Water Gap and Highway 209.

Brenna Lissoway: I was going to say, I hate to ask this, but was there anything else that you were working on while you were there?

Paul Anderson: Yeah, I was running the district. (laughter) I had two huge swimming beaches and campgrounds and hunting and commercial permit operations. And historic building leases. This was, obviously, it was the focus of that period of time. But it was the full district operation. And I think one of the, I mean, we made great, so the history of Delaware Water Gap is that the corps bought up all of the farms, like condemnation. Bought up all of the farms and communities in the valley and moved everybody out. And as you might imagine, created some hard feelings. Then the park service walked in, and we got the brunt of all of the criticism.

Paul Anderson: So, the park folks had a pretty rough row to hoe here to get this, to deal with this, the aftermath of that. And so, I mean, I didn't come at a time where I had to initiate community relations. The district ranger before me had already been working on that for some years. But, nonetheless, over that period of time, we really sought out those people who really had an influence on park policy and operations--or park issues--and tried to work with them, that had been moved out of the park, and tried to work with them to mute the bad feelings about the park and create maybe more of a constituency than we had.

Paul Anderson: And so, I was a, you know, an active member of the volunteer fire department and went to dozens and dozens of fires. That place bums like every time you tum around. Lots of fires in the park. Arson fires. So, I had a pretty strong relationship with the volunteer fire department.

Brenna Lissoway: Did you live in the park? Or did you live in the community?

Paul Anderson: Well, at Delaware Water Gap, it's sort of hard not to live in the community. It's not big enough to be by itself. It's kind of, it would be like living at the Yin Estes Park. So at my district level, the key to me were the town supervisors for the towns in the district, the business people that had business operations throughout the park. Because not all of it was privately owned. The volunteer fire companies – they were all volunteer fire companies and volunteer rescue squads. And game commission, which is the game wardens, and fish commission, which is the fish wardens for law enforcement for Pennsylvania, and the state troopers. There were maybe some others. But those were really key constituencies that I cultivated in terms of park operations.

Paul Anderson: Then the communities that were on the edge of the park, specifically that had been formed by the people that moved outside the park, I spent a good

deal of time working with them and trying to find ways to have them, if they chose to do so, do things that would be productive and maybe kind of healing for what had happened there and treat them with respect and that kind of thing. And you know, it was pretty interesting. When I left, I felt pretty good about, I'd learned a lot about dealing with the communities. A lot. And I felt really proud and good about the things that we accomplished with the residents around the park, and the park partners, cooperators, at the time. This is way before partnering was the way to go. And I still have good friends in the community there from when I worked there.

Paul Anderson: Which translated directly to going to Yosemite from there as the Wawona district ranger, and living in the midst of 360 in-holders, the birthplace of the National In-Holders Association, and the claimed home of Charlie Cushman, who started the National In-Holders Association, and now is still active in the American Land Rights Coalition, or whatever it's called.

Paul Anderson: You know, it was an interesting progression. I certainly wanted to work in Yosemite. I didn't know that much about the in-holdings in Yosemite, but I knew a little bit. So, when I got the job and figured out what was going on with these in-holdings, I thought, you know, I can do this. Much more confident than I was going into close Highway 209. I can do this, because what we did at Delaware Water Gap, the people we had to deal with, the issues we had to deal with, the interests we had to deal with and how we dealt with them and how we got people to help us out instead of fight us, and how we worked together and the friends that we made, we can do this at Wawona, too. You know, it's not an impossible task. And it would be really fun to try some of these things that we did, that started with the sheriff's office at the Grand Canyon, and transferred to all of these people at Delaware Water Gap and Pennsylvania, and try some of that stuff in California and see what we could do. Because they'd been trying to write regulations to govern the in-holders in California since at least 1964. That was the earliest regulation drafts that I could find. They'd never been able to get them through.

Paul Anderson: So, by the time I got there, Bill Horn was in the secretary's office. And Denny Smith and a couple of other people. So, when the in-holders had a problem with the park service, they didn't call the district ranger and they didn't call the superintendent. They didn't even call the regional director. They just called Bill Horn.

Brenna Lissoway: At the Department of the Interior?

Paul Anderson: At the Department of the Interior. And said, "I've got a problem." And of course, then it came rolling down through the service director all the way down to the district and somebody had to do something about it, and everybody was pissed. Rightly so.

Paul Anderson: So, and the district ranger from Wawona had done his best of trying to. get control of that. But it took a while to do. I mean, his effort was important.

It gave me a place to start. And I worked from there to try and stop this. Well, how do you do this? I'll tell you. It's pretty easy. It really is. I mean, people think that it's so hard. But it's not hard at all. You just have to talk to people. You just have to be there. You just have to be responsive; you just have to be honest; and you just have to have integrity. And then they come to you, instead of going to Bill Horn.

Brenna Lissoway: So how, but how do you demonstrate that? You don't just walk in the door and go, "Hi, I have integrity.

Paul Anderson: No. Here's what you do. You walk in the door and you figure out who all the key people are and what are the issues and who are the key people, right? Chuck Cushman's one of them, but there's several others. There's, you know, Chuck was, by that time he wasn't the president anymore. So, there's the president and the vice-president and the board of directors for the in-holders. And then you know, there's these people, I mean, who does really the business of the in-holders? And it's oftentimes not the board of directors. It's these other people back here behind closed doors and you never know about. Who are they? So, you figure that all out.

Paul Anderson: Then introduce yourself and take the crap that goes along with being a government employee in a situation like that. And it's like well, you know, I hear where you're coming from. Not like blow you off, which sometimes happens. So, it's like, well, I'm here. I'm really excited to be here. I really look forward to working with you. I know it's going to take some time to establish a relationship and to establi.sh credibility. But if you'd give me a chance, I'd really appreciate it. What can I do from here to start building a relationship?

Paul Anderson: You know, some of them would say, "Get out of my house." I mean, they did. And some of them would say, "Well, you know, I've got this problem, and here it is. That damned superintendent threatened to condemn my house if I remodel my bathroom." I'm like, "He did?" (laughs) and there you go. It's like, okay, so what are you going to do? Well, we'll take care of that. No, you don't say that. Right? I mean, you don't make a promise you can't keep. So, it's like, "Well, geez, let me look into this and see what I can find out. I'll get back to you." "Yeah, right." I mean, that's the reaction. So, you do. You call the superintendent and say, "Did you tell them you're going to condemn their house if they built their bathroom?" And he said, "Well, as a matter of fact, it's not quite that simple. But yeah, essentially, I did." And I said, "Oh. Well, I have to deal with this." And he said, "Well, just tell them they can't build their bathroom."

Paul Anderson: So, I thought about it for a while. And the next day I went back to their house personally and knocked on the door. I said, "I called the superintendent. I talked to him about it. And here's what he told me. And here's where we are. And I appreciate that that's a hardship on your part. But the superintendent said that until we can finalize the land use regulations, he's not going to permit any kind of development in the park.

So, if there's something positive that can come out of this, it probably would be for us all to get together and see if we can't promote getting these regulations done so we can get everybody off our back." So that was one place where it started.

Paul Anderson: And then I went to, well, I was there over the winter. I guess in the spring, early spring, they had an in-holders' meeting. I got up and talked, and they threw their "rotten tomatoes" at me, and it was like, it was very—

Brenna Lissoway: Are you saying literally? Okay. Just making sure. (laughs)

Paul Anderson: What's the other word that you use? Something bombs. We'll use rotten tomatoes. No, I never had rotten tomatoes nor eggs thrown directly at me.

Brenna Lissoway: Okay, just, I wanted to clear that up.

Paul Anderson: The threats were there. The threats were there. So, I'm standing up in front of them and everybody's pretty friendly, introducing. Then we start talking about town regs and what the park service is doing. And it gets more and more riled. And then, I mean, it was hot. And the president of the community in-holders' association, Maria Escola was, I mean, she was pretty tight. And very loud and high-pitched voice telling me what she thought of me and the park service, and that they'd tried to work together with the park service for years and years, and they'd never had any luck.

Paul Anderson: So, I'm sitting there getting beat up by these people. And I mean, I don't know what happened, exactly. But it just suddenly dawned on me that I didn't know why they were here, and I was there, in this conversation. And I went, "Okay. For just a second, stop. Please stop. I'm listening, but I can't hear everything, because everybody's talking at the same time. So, let me ask a question. Because I'm new and I don't understand, and I want to understand. Let me ask a question. What is it, what is it that you're worried about most that the park service is going to or is doing? What is the most important thing you're worried about that's causing all this?"

Paul Anderson: And they said, "Well, that's easy. We're afraid that the park service is going to buy us all out. And then they're going to move headquarters out of the valley to Wawona. And they're going to take over all our houses and they're going to become park housing. And they're going to push our families out. And then they're going to start building, even if they don't push us all out, they're going to come out here and they're going to start building all of this infrastructure to support park headquarters in this community that we've lived in for generations. I mean, we were here before the park was. That's why it's an in-holding. And now they're going to come and buy us out and tum it over to be used by the park service for their purposes as a headquarters and ruin the setting of this town. Ruin the quality of life in this town for all of us. And you know, we live here because we love Yosemite National Park. But we don't think the park service does."

Paul Anderson: And I said wow, that blew me away. I didn't know that. In fact, at the time I didn't realize that the park service had even proposed to move headquarters to Wawona. So, I went back and did some research. In fact, they (the NPS) kind of alluded to it, but it wasn't a done deal. But it was clear in their minds that it was going to happen.

Paul Anderson: So, I said, "Well, let me tell you what I know, Because I don't know everything. But here's what I know. I talked to the superintendent about the park's plans. And you know, he's told me that my job is to preserve this place. As it is. And not let anything happen here that would change the character of the park. And that I'm supposed to help you guys," not help you guys, "that I'm supposed to see if we can't write some land use regulations that will be fair to everybody and in the public interest, that will keep Wawona the way it is, and not allow it to grow out of control." And they're like, "What?!"

Paul Anderson: And I said, "Well, you know, I don't know the answer to all these things. But this is what I've been told. So given your concerns, I'm going to go ask some more questions. But it seems to me like what I've been told we want to do here and what you're telling me you want to protect are the same thing. We're just not connecting. So, I'll tell you what. I will go do my research and find out what's really going on in the park service's mind. And then I will talk to the president of the in-holders' association and we can decide what we're going to do about it." And they said, "Wow. Okay. That's fine." And that was the end of the harassment. I mean, they were pretty nice after that. They didn't throw any more rotten tomatoes.

Paul Anderson: So, I did. I went home and I went down, and I talked to the superintendent. And in fact, that was true. He said, "Yeah, there was a proposal at one time to move headquarters to Wawona and get stuff out of the valley." He said, "That's not really feasible in my mind and we're not going to do that. But I don't want that damned Wawona to develop into a big resort community inside the park." You know, commercial establishments, people building mansions, or more, more, more.

Paul Anderson: So, I said, "Okay. Well you know, they're worried that you're going to go out there and you're going to build more, more, more. That's what they're really worried about." And he said, "Well, you can fix that."

Paul Anderson: So, I went home. And that's where it started. And it really did. Where it started was discovering that we had common interests and common objectives. And it's a hard thing to do sometimes, but that's it. So, from there, working with the president and the in-holders' council, I said, look, and we had the county on our case, too, because the county wanted land use regulations, too. And they were criticizing the park service for stonewalling and not talking to the residents.

Paul Anderson: So, I said, "How about this? Let's form a group, kind of like a steering committee or something. And we'll sit down, we'll talk about how we should go about this and see if we can't find a way that makes sense to

everybody to go about the process of addressing this whole issue of land use regulations. And see where that takes us. Because I've been told we need to write land use regulations. You've been told you don't want the park service telling you what to do. And right now, since there's no regulations, the park service can pretty much tell you anything. And there's nothing to go on or push back against or anything like that. I wouldn't want to live in that situation."

Paul Anderson: So, we did. And over two years from that point, over two years, the steering committee came together, and they wrote, there was already a framework that the park service had done in years past. They took that as a start, and they rewrote everything. And they wrote all the land use regulations for the private property in section 35. And I was kind of their advisor. We got a lot of shit from a lot of park service bureaucrats for doing it that way, because we were giving up our authority and responsibility to the community, who wasn't to be trusted. And you know, things were going to turn out really bad.

Paul Anderson: But given the experience that I'd had working with the county sheriff in Grand Canyon, and the experience working with the locals at Delaware Water Gap, I thought, you know, maybe they're wrong. And lo and behold, we produced the Wawona Town Plan. We took it to the county board of supervisors together, and they formalized it and approved it as the land use regulations for Wawona.

Paul Anderson: Like the back country plan, there was one last hitch in the thing that they wanted and I couldn't give, and that was that they wanted the arbitration, if you will, for a disagreement was to rest in the park. And of course, that couldn't happen. So, the park service said well we're not going to sign off on this because that's not, you don't have the authority to do that. In that one clause.

Paul Anderson: So, I said, okay. So, I went back to them and I said, "We have a Wawona Town Plan. It's approved by the county board of supervisors. This is private property. It's under the jurisdiction of the county as well as the park service. And the park service can't legally approve this one line. But we can agree to manage by the word of the plan. Right? And we'll do that till we figure out how to solve this other problem."

Paul Anderson: Well, it turns out that the town plan regulations that they wrote were much more strict than the ones the park service was proposing in the first place.

Brenna Lissoway: Wow.

Paul Anderson: It was amazing. And they loved us. I mean, they loved us. When I left Wawona, they had a going away party put on by the in-holders was amazing. It was wonderful. And we had control for the first time in who knows when, over everything that went on in that community. The best part about it was, they did most of the policing. We didn't have to do it.

Brenna Lissoway: How long were you in Yosemite?

Paul Anderson: Three years. A little over three.

Brenna Lissoway: So, it took about that long?

Paul Anderson: Yeah. It was done, I mean, I was there to watch the implementation for a while. So, it was probably two years to get the plan done. A year and a half, two years. Anyway. I mean, it was the best job in terms of community relations that I ever had in my career. I mean, it was just amazing to watch what happened when you took a chance, when you stepped outside the box, and when you gave people the power to do the right thing, they acted responsibly. And I found that over and over in my career. Except in Alaska.

Brenna Lissoway: That's a different context?

Paul Anderson: You know, we just haven't hit the right button yet. But it will happen someday. But we're still kind of negotiating for position with some of the state folks and some of the interest groups in Alaska. It will probably go on for another, who knows, 10 or 15 years, maybe. And then it will probably start to come together in a bigger way. It's already happening in the communities in Alaska. Piecemeal. But the state governments, obviously, politics get in the way of good decision making sometimes. And we've had a relationship like this over the years.

Brenna Lissoway: A roller coaster?

Paul Anderson: And we're down in the bottom right now. But anyway, the point of it is, you know, we can do that. We as park service employees can do that. Individually. That's not something the park service did as an organization. That's something that we did by, on our own. I mean, not on our own. But we did it every day.

Brenna Lissoway: As individuals.

Paul Anderson: As individuals. We did it every day, relentlessly, in our specific comer of Yosemite National Park. And that's what happened. You know, it can be. As I told the people today over there after Bill and Deanie and Craig Obie and what's his name, Dean? From NPCA? They said, they're talking about advocacy and they're talking about dealing with Congress, and how you should deal with these issues, and what the ANPR [Association of National Park Rangers] and what CNPSR [Coalition of National Park Service Retirees] can do, and NPCA [National Parks Conservation Association]. I got up before I came down here and I said, "Look, you know, I absolutely agree. But most of the people in there, not all, but most of the people in there are seasonals or new rangers. Lower-graded rangers. Most of them aren't superintendents." So, I said, "You know, I'm sitting here listening to you and I think boy, this is good stuff. But what do I do? What about, how do I advocate? Sure, I can call up Bill Wade at midnight and tell him, 'You need to look into this.' Or, 'You might have asked this question.' Or whatever. That's a good thing. But what do I do?"

Paul Anderson: They said, "Here's what you do. You can do this. Individually. As an employee in the park." My belief is that your best way to deal with an issue and with interest groups that oppose your point of view is to get to know them better than they know you. And that means, in many cases, taking the risk of putting yourself out there and introducing yourself to them and bringing them into your park, and trying as best as you can within reason to explain why you have the position that you do, what it means, and how important it is to you. At the same time, trying to figure out where they're coming from and why, and if there's anything in common that you might be able to build upon. I mean, if you're going to go into battle with somebody, knowing what they think and what their fundamental beliefs are is going to give you a big advantage. So, take the opportunity to do that.

Paul Anderson: Well, what does that translate to? When the superintendent brings somebody from an opposition group into the park, don't look at that as oh, my God, now I have to deal with this. Look at it as oh, wow! What an opportunity! You know? It's a chance to make another constituent. But I'm going to keep my ears and my eyes open and learn as much as I can in the process. And in the end, in the end, you're going to know who those people are. They're going to know who you are. You're going to have a dialog started on this issue that could potentially pay dividends down the road. And if it doesn't, at least you know as much or more about them as they know about you. And when it comes to fighting the good fight, that's important information. So, invite them in. invite them in.

Paul Anderson: It's really hard to blame and defame people you know well. But it's easy to defame and blame people who you don't know at all.

Brenna Lissoway: That makes a lot of sense. Yeah. I'm going to pause there for just a minute.

[END OF TRACK 2]

[END OF INTERVIEW]