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Oral History Number: 409-001a, b
Interviewee: Joseph A. Mussulman
Interviewer: Jack Rowan
Date of Interview: September 9, 2006

Jack Rowan: That's okay, again we're not doing Light at the Met so we don't have to be totally perfect. Feel free to be yourself today.

Joeseeph Mussulman: Okay.

JR: The first thing I am going to do is ask you to state your name, full name so that we can create a congressional record and then your date of birth as well if you wouldn't mind.

JM: Okay. Full name is Joseph A.—for Aggie—Mussulman. Date of birth 11 / 20 / 28, that's 1928 not 1828.

JR: Thank you for the clearance. Well, the interview today is focusing on your part in helping to gain wilderness designation for the Rattlesnake Wilderness area. I thought I'd start off by asking you a few questions most directly related to...sorry I need my mind to catch up with my mouth, I thought I'd start with general concepts about what drew you into the exploration of wilderness and wanting to be a part of that. What was it that you hoped to accomplish from your participation in this movement?

Then take a step back and ask you a few more questions about maybe the chronology of developments and some of the other key individuals involved and then finish up with some reflections back on what you've seen after 25 years now of...

JM: Can I swear on tape?

JR: You may. You may say whatever you feel.

JM: Well, shall I?

JR: Yes, what got you started?

JM: Well, it goes way back to when I was a little child, believe it or not, I don't know how old I was but I was under six I suppose, I had a little plastic Christmas tree. I suppose it wasn't more than six or eight inches tall, made of plastic and twisted wire, you know green stiff plastic and a little bit of white painted on top for snow and a little red bucket. But, I used to lie on the floor next to that, I thought I was under it, dreaming of the day I would be able to sleep under a pine tree. See, I was born and raised in East St. Louis,

Illinois. It wasn't quite the armpit of the world at the time, but it was heavy industry and I tried the Boy Scouts for a little while but the hikes were just around in the pollution. You talk about pollution. You have no idea what it was like, no place in the city was more than five or six blocks from a railroad crossing and all the railroads were coal powered and it was just incredibly polluted. I dreamed of a purity of a western forest and sleeping under a pine tree.

Well, to leap ahead a few years, I was teaching at a small liberal arts college in Ripon, Wisconsin—Ripon College as a matter of fact. I wasn't particularly looking for a position, and my mentor at Northwestern—where I had got my first two degrees—notified me that there was an opening at the University of Montana. So I flew out here on a, I think it was a DC3 or a DC6B or something like that. We had not touched down on the runway here, and I had already decided this was the place I had to live. So, this was in 1957. I talked myself into the job. I talked them into hiring me. My family and I drove out in a brand new '57 red and white Chevy station wagon and got here on the Fourth of July, I think, which was a Sunday that year. So there was a kind of celebratory atmosphere here, and Ted Jacobs, who was the president of the First National Bank met us at the door of the Episcopal Church, where we went that day. So we were sort of set into the social milieu right away.

The most important thing as far as your question is concerned is that within, I think, less than a week I had...I agreed eagerly to go on a hike into a mountain lake. That's what I wanted. That's what I came here for. In those days—you understand, this is the late '50s and all through the '60s into the '70s—we felt that part of our salary was the scenery. We were on the quarter system so we didn't have this brutal layout that we have now—the semester system where you start in the middle of August right at the height of the best hiking season. Scenery and the opportunity for diverse outdoor activity was part of the...one of the benefits—chief benefits—of working with this place.

My first hike was within a week of our arrival and it was into the Rattlesnake. George Hummel, who was on the music...I was a member of the Music Department. George Hummel, who was a piano teacher, took me into Rattlesnake Lakes. I think it was into Little Lake or Carter Lake. I can't remember which at the moment. That was my first introduction. I nearly died you know because I didn't realize what it was like to climb a mountain. But, I made it, and this just went on week after week. The fact that this was part of our salary meant that most of the men and many of the women on the faculty...the first thing that they would do for a new faculty member was take them into the mountains. I don't know whether that's still done, but that was obligatory then.

The Rattlesnake was the first place I hiked, and for various reasons I took to that. I went back to it again and again, even more as the months and years went by. Fished up there frequently. Of course, in the early '60s you could drive all the way up to the Lake Creek, I mean, the Wrangle Creek Drainage because it had been clear cut up there. You could

get a passenger car up there. I'm opening a map now. This map I designed and had printed it at my own expense, oh, sometime in the '80s. There wasn't any official map of the Rattlesnake area yet so I designed this and wrote the copy and so on, out of my experience hiking in the Rattlesnake and so on. In those days the Rattlesnake drainage was motorcycle country. Most hikers stayed out of it just because although the traffic wasn't nearly as heavy as it eventually got in the mid-60s into the '60s and '70s, but it was enough in those days to discourage people from hiking up there because there were plenty of places you could go that the motorcyclists didn't go.

Well, as the time went by, the years went by, I spent so much time up there and explored so much of it that I got more and more sort of personally interested in it as a resource. I started going to the local ranger district of Lolo National Forest with questions—questions about the area and they didn't know anything. The reason was that Montana Power Company bought the water rights up there...let's see in what year? I am checking the map now. It was in the 1930s, I believe. Yes, in the 1930s. Montana Power Company had purchased the municipal water system so they bought the settlers...this was *the* water shed, *the* water source. They bought all of the settler's property in the Rattlesnake Drainage, destroyed all their dwellings and out buildings, cleaned them out leaving only the eradicable—then eradicable—evidence of occupancy up there: foundations, a few made of cobble, local cobble, and an occasional irrigation ditch that some settler had dug to water his garden.

Montana Power then closed the drainage to protect the water resource beginning in 1937. Then it was open in the early '60s as the logging went forward, so there was a period there when it was untouched. It was gated, and you didn't dare go in. But, from the '60s with a logging road and a bridge across, now known as the Franklin Bridge, a bridge across the creek, you could drive up there. As a matter of fact you could drive to within, I think it was within a...I must check the map. It was within a mile or so of the end of Wrangle Creek Road, and it was maybe a mile and a half up to Little Lake—mile and a half, two miles. That was all bare ground then it had been clear cut right down to the dirt.

I remember one year, doesn't matter which, that my good friend—he was chairman of the music department then—Larry Perry, an organist...He and I decided to go fishing up there in the Wrangle Creek Drainage. He had ordered a new Plymouth Roadster Convertible, and he had been loaned...It was a special order so he was driving a loaned car from the Plymouth dealer, so we took that up there. Well we got up to the end of the road. This is a big climb, and that road up Wrangle Creek is several switchbacks—quite steep and rocky, very rough. Got up there to the end of the road, turned around, turned off the engine, got out, and looked back down the route we had come, and there was a dark liquid following us up the mountain. I said, "Oh man, Larry! Look at that, what is that, transmission oil or what?"

He said, "I don't know, it will be all right. We'll be going downhill on the way out."

We go in and fish, and I was really uptight. We encountered a couple of boys at one of the lakes up there, I guess it was Little Lake, at noon. Sat down and had lunch fairly close to them. They had hiked in up the Stuart Peak Trail. I went over and struck up a conversation and said, "By the way, my partner and I may be having a little bit of car trouble today, and we drove up. I had told him that I thought we had better start walking out, but he said 'No, no it will be all right.' When you get back if you can remember it..."

I gave them my name and my phone number. I said, "Would you call my wife and have her send so and so up here with some"—Larry had discovered that it was transmission fluid—"send them up with some transmission fluid?"

With my fingers crossed, we went ahead and fished. We got back to the car late in the afternoon...We were going to be home by dinner, and got in the car, started the engine, and Larry put in gear. He was a very cool, very calm, nothing shook him, but at that moment he said "Oh my god, Joe, we can't do it!" This was a crisis. So I'm equal to most crisis so I thought, Let's get this thing rolling a little bit. We can get down the mountain. We did with mighty exertions. We got it through some of the potholes and right to the brink of the grade, hopped in. Now we have very little steering and the brakes are...you know, it would have been just as well to drag your feet.

We picked up velocity, Larry trying to hold it under control as we went down. We get to one of those switchbacks and there happened to be a car off of the end of that switchback, had crashed months and months before. That was sobering. We were going so fast when we got down to the bottom that we coasted right across the Wrangle Creek Bridge, over the Rattlesnake and up the grade on the other side, but not far enough up to get over that rise. We just put rocks under the wheels and sat there. Built a fire, and figured we were going to spend the night. These two boys had remembered...Couldn't write it down, we didn't have anything to write with. They had remembered the name and the phone number, and they called. I had said if we are not home by supper time to send somebody up there. It was not long before another friend appeared with a wrecker trailing him. That was what you could do in the Rattlesnake in those days. Today, of course, it would be a breeze with the four wheel drive. Well, that's the climax I suppose of my introduction to the Rattlesnake. Do you have other questions?

JR: Well, maybe at this point it would be opportune to ask...Switching from your interests and experience with the Rattlesnake to recognizing that you wanted to be part of a movement for special recognition and as a part of that is a decision to pursue, not just wilderness designation but the national recreation area that joining of the two designations, what was your involvement in that?

JM: Well, that evolved very slowly, and the scenario as you describe it was not in anybody's mind then. But, going back to my statement that I would go to the Forest Service and they wouldn't know anything about it, little by little we sort of gained...they plugged me into the Montana Power Company. They said, "Well, now Montana Power owns all the creek bottoms and all the lakes. That's the recreational area."

Montana Power said, "Look, we're not in the business of recreation management. We're in the business of supplying the water to the city."

The Forest Service said, "We're not in the business of supplying water to the city. We're, in this case, in the business of recreation management, and there is no recreation management possible up there because all the water resources are under the control of Montana Power."

So, little by little I began working in behalf of the Forest Service and Montana Power, supplying both with information about what was going on up there. Because, people knew that from the '60s—early '60s—when it was reopened to public use the motorcyclists took over—dirt bikers. I worked with some wonderful people. Deschamps was the resource manager at the Missoula District then—Ed Deschamps. With the Montana Power Company two very fine men, Dick Goodall was the field manager for the Montana Power Company. He was responsible for control or responsible for the dams up there and the whole water system.

The manager for most of those years was a man by the name of Don Lucian (?), who was—I noticed quite coincidentally, quite recently in the early, or the late '60s he was mentioned by some of the Montana Power Company masters—he was the brightest, upcoming young manager for a managerial spot. But, we had good relationships, and as my interest grew I was coming back with information to them about what the situation was...situations were, and they in turn then gained better perspective, so this was a process in the growth of perspectives.

I had forgotten just when it was, I should look up the date of the founding of the Friends of the Rattlesnake, but one autumn I somehow got hooked up with a fellow who was a graduate student here in the resource management, School of Forestry, who had started a group he called Friends of the Rattlesnake. The object was to, not make wilderness out of the area or anything like that, but just to preserve it as a recreational resource for everybody, which meant somehow gaining some control over the motorcycle traffic. The short of it is, before the first of that following year he got a job somewhere else in the northwest and asked me if I would take over as president of Friends of the Rattlesnake. This was a very informal, but increasingly interesting group, and I am using the word in several senses at that time.

JR: Who was the gentleman?

JM: I wish I could remember his name...It's just gone. I knew him so short a time, and I don't think I ever had any communication from him or with him again. Then again I did a lot of...I don't know when this started, but I did a lot of nature walks then—walk and talks. Because I had enough knowledge about the human history, the socio-cultural history of the drainage, and also about the natural resources, about wildlife, birds, and water life and so on that I think I could make a fairly interesting short days talk. So, I'd announce one of those walks and I'd get 20 or 30 people showing up for those, which in those days was the size of a crowd. I'd call a meeting to just let the general public know what was going on and would draw 60, 80, 100 people. The public interest grew steadily.

Let's see, where does that take me? It finally got to the point where I was spending so much time handling Rattlesnake business, there was so much interest, so many people calling me that it was interfering with my work, my teaching, and conducting. I got the board to get a few dollars some place and we hired an assistant, whose name was Cass Chinske, and that helped a good deal. Well, as the interest grew a number of people, I don't think I can name them all, but most especially the dean of the School of Forestry...The name will come to me in a moment. The wilderness movement was underway by the '70s, and the whole idea of turning this into what we then called an urban wilderness, because of its contiguity to the city that began to emerge in the...Arnold Bolle was the dean, the name of the Dean of the Forestry.

He and several other men and women were involved in the expansion of this experience we had been having for a number of years, I had been having for a number or years into the idea of having this unique resource, then even more unique because of the urban interface. They got—Arnie particularly, Arnold Bolle—to Pat Williams and Senator Baucus—Max Baucus—and Melcher interested in backing this. They saw some value in it. Steadily the Forest Service and Montana Power all got on board so to speak, rather open doors for this possibility. Montana Power for instance wasn't ready to exchange some land up there for land elsewhere with the Forest Service, that kind of cooperation went on, well, before the NRA [National Recreation Area] and wilderness emerged.

JR: I am going to check the tape. I think we're pretty close to a transition here. We've still got a few minutes. I just don't want it to click off when you are in the middle of a soliloquy.

JM: I understand.

JR: So maybe we'll back up a little bit and to the best of your memory, a little bit of the chronology. You'd said you couldn't remember which autumn it was that the Friends of the Rattlesnake came into being. Do you remember, was it late '60s?

JM: Late '60s, very early '70s. I would say not the late '60s, but the early '70s because in '75, '76, the mid-70s I wrote and produced a series—a small series—of two or three or four slide tape presentations. One of those as I recall was titled *Summer of '76*. That was extremely popular, it was just a kind of lyrical thing about...Some of those slide tape projections were about the resource damage that was occurring up there, because of heavy motorcycle use. It was about possibilities, potential possibilities for other types of recreational use. Where was I going with that? Help me.

JR: This was probably '76 you said.

JM: Oh yes, because it was called *Summer of '76*! This lyrical piece was just about the flowers and the sunsets and the creek and all of that with the slow movement of Mahler's first symphony behind it. So that got a lot of play, and that attracted a lot of attention. It just kept enlarging the potential support for this NRA and Wilderness idea. This then was consummated by Baucus and Williams and Melcher in 1980, October of 1980.

JR: The presentations that you were making, was it predominately to Missoula social groups or was it to businesses?

JM: Anybody. That was the point. That was the problem as far as the conflict with my own responsibilities, professional responsibilities here. I needed somebody who could take this out to service clubs, or to somebody's annual meeting, church groups, just one or two appearances a week at least, sometimes more particularly in the winter. Meanwhile I was keeping up these talks. Then my interest had grown in the resource as such, as a resource, not necessarily as the Rattlesnake particularly.

My interest in the subject had grown to the point that I took a couple of courses in the School of Forestry here. I was going through the files a moment ago. I see some of the term papers I turned in and hypothetical management plans for the Rattlesnake. I was taking these courses in 1979, 1980. One of the courses was of course on an interpretation that is this is on how to illuminate, tell the story of the resource in attractive ways, at various levels and for various purposes. I took that course from...oh gosh the name, I should have thought of the name earlier. It will come as I talk. He was sort of a temporary faculty member. He had been on the staff—the park service staff at Glacier—and he'd gotten crosswise with the superintendent up there over the issue of the boardwalk up at the pass. I'd forgotten just what the details were, but he had been put on indefinite leave, so he was down here teaching. I took the course from him when the superintendent or a superintendent eventually called him and said, "All is forgiven, come home." He asked me if I would take over teaching the course. So, I did. I taught it for three years, I think, winter quarter.

That was a heady time. I would teach that course as I recall at nine o'clock in the morning, eight or nine in the morning Tuesday, Thursday. At ten o'clock I was teaching oral perception—ear training and sight seeing over in the music department—so it was a real culture shock. But, I genuinely enjoyed working...

[End of Tape 1, Side A]

[Tape 1, Side B]

JR: You had been teaching a course and you were beginning to say, I think 1979 you...

JM: Yes, along about then. I think it was the fall of '79 I had been writing books steadily for ten years, you know, summer, weekends, nights, and I was indexing my last book, which was a biography of the conductor Robert Shaw, conductor of the Atlanta Symphony. I was indexing that, and one day I said to myself, "I don't want to do this anymore." So, I went down to the regional office, got an application for a job, and told them I'd do anything but clean toilets.

JR: For the U.S. Forest Service?

JM: Forest Service, yes. So, I by that time had a close enough association with Ed Deschamps, at the Missoula District and Dick Goodall, and so and so. I was hired on a joint contract or a joint plan. Montana Power paid part of my salary to the Forest Service and I got...I was a GS 4, but it was good pin money, did a lot of things with it. I started work as, at the time, a back country guard I was called. This was in the early spring, April of 1980. It seems to me it must have been a year before that that I started work. Yes, I put in one summer, one summer farther away from the...(unintelligible). Yes, yes, because very soon they put me on horseback up there.

One of those peak experiences of my whole life was...I think it was Thomas Fuller who was the resource assistant of the district then. He assigned me to post the first wilderness boundaries line. So, I rode my horse, Blaze, one weekend day up to, up the Stuart Peak Trail, to the wilderness boundary, which I had identified that easily enough, over the years and nailed up the first wilderness boundary sign. Rode in the snow, with the snow coming down on Blaze's ears. It was a beautiful day in this light snow. Subsequently, I did a lot of work like that. I worked weekends until school was out, and then I worked fulltime in the summer and weekends again in the fall.

Posting the wilderness boundary that was the first job because Welcome Creek Wilderness, you see, was wrapped in the same package as the Rattlesnake so there was a 28,000 acre wilderness up Rock Creek that had to be signed and inventoried. I did a lot of inventory work and in the files. The archive files are some of the summaries I drew up as written reports to the Forest Service and early on to Montana Power. Within those, if I could just back up a little bit speaking of Dick Goodall—Montana Power Company field manager—he was a motorcyclist himself, but he deplored the conduct of many bikers going up there. I imagine, there were still ten years ago, evidences of the old hill climbs that the bikers wore in, very quickly, course you can do it in a season. Nothing to it. You can do it in a weekend.

So, Dick, we'd announce it to the public, we'd announce a cleanup day. We'd get a dozen or more, 15 or 20 people go up there on a Saturday, take a lunch, and do things like picking up and coiling up barbed wire because the settlers many of them would fence their property. That was a nuisance and a hazard not only to motorcyclists, but to people and wildlife. So I spent a lot of time hauling truckloads of coiled up barbed wire out of there. There used to be an old telephone line that went up Rattlesnake Creek to a ridge just directly below Stewart Peak, and there was a lookout station—not a tower, a station on Stewart Peak. Oh no. It was a little lookout station of a structure. It wasn't habitable particularly, as big as this table maybe, just a shelter on one of the peaks, ridges up there.

It was an exciting time for me, there was always something new to do up there, something new to find. I daresay I walked, I put my foot on every square yard of that area in the years I...the year before I worked up there and then during the years I was employed. Worked with the Forest Service for 12 years...Last few years...I've forgotten just when it was I retired. I took a retirement from the University having been there 31 years and got 6—which was unusual for the time and certainly unusual thereafter—6 third-time post retirement contracts. Which meant for six years I taught one-third time.

I taught an evening course—one evening course—fall quarter and one spring quarter and a daytime course winter quarter. So, I worked days from beginning of April, April 15 maybe at the latest, around till the beginning of hunting season steadily for 12 years.

JR: And that was starting about in 1992?

JM: Yes, roughly, yes 1992. Go.

JR: Take us back again and ask you, so you talked about the role of Montana Power Company, that they still owned a lot, most of the land up there, the role of course of the...Who are some of the...Where is the Friends of the Rattlesnake? So I guess first your role in the Friends of the Rattlesnake. You had kind of been asked to take over [unintelligible]...service as president of the Friends of the Rattlesnake? And that—

JM: Yes, sort of by default.

JR: —position, correct?

JM: Oh yes.

JR: Okay. So who were some of the other major...You mentioned some of the political figures. Who were some of the other major participants? You know, obviously you talked about the motorcyclists that were going up there, how did you try to address

them, and were there interest groups that you went to from the motorcyclists to get them involved?

JM: You know, I have to confess that I'd never been one to reminisce, I haven't done this kind of thing, I think, ever in my life, and so the past is done and gone. So, where many people certainly would remember the names...Many of my friends would come up with the names just one after another and all the details, and I can't. I just can't.

It seems to me, this would take some verification by research in the Missoulain, I suppose, that there was a brief and probably ineffectual interest in the part of motorcycle club in cooperating in...you know, getting the renegades to quit messing it up there. The only solution ultimately was to make it a wilderness area and put the national recreation portion of it under some strict and comprehensive rules and regulations, which was my responsibility to enforce, which is another story.

Some of my details that I expressed a moments ago, or narrated a moment ago, may be somewhat out of chronological order. I wish I could claim I am an irrefutable authority. The process of this becoming anything more than a de facto national recreation area and wilderness took a lot of working out. There was early on for instance...Well, we had to await the exchange of lands between Montana Power and the Forest Service before some areas could be opened up—Sawmill Gulch for instance—and now I've forgotten what all.

I got two or three things crossing my mind now...Let me back up to the negotiations, the people contacts—people connections—that were involved in building this. I sort of receded into the background as far as the negotiations to establish the NRA Wilderness were concerned. Arnold Bolle and one or two, or three other people were either in control of the situation or wormed their way into the situation. I still regret one thing, for instance, over which I had no control. Nobody would listen to me. This it seemed to me an opportunity, which shouldn't be called the Rattlesnake! I said it over and over and over. These people—this little committee that was working on this wouldn't listen. Nope, it's always the Rattlesnake. It's the Rattlesnake that's all there is too it. It's the Rattlesnake.

I said, "No, you got three drainages there. You have the Gold Creek Drainage, and the Grant Creek Drainage. What about the people at the Grant Creek? This is not the Rattlesnake to them, this is Grant Creek. Furthermore here is a rare opportunity to give this entity a name that will signify more than just a reptile that is never seen up there."

Stuart Peak. I thought it should be called the Stuart-McLeod National Recreation Area and Wilderness because the two most prominent peaks in it are Stuart Peak that you can see from town and McLeod Peak which is the highest one in the area. So you got C.H. McLeod—a pioneer Missoulain—and Stuart—Randall Stewart a pioneer Montanan.

What would be more logical than that? But, these guys just...I used to feel it wasn't that they didn't like the idea, they just didn't like me and they were damned if they were going to let me get away with naming the damned place. You know, "get that guy out of here, he doesn't know what he is talking about!" So, it is, for better or for worse the Rattlesnake. I don't know how many total hours I spent after it was named this explaining to tourists in the summer that there was no danger of rattlesnakes up here.

"Well why do you call it the Rattlesnake then, because the creeks wiggle like that?"

I said, "All creeks wiggle."

Well, some of the management issues then that arose that I had to deal with were dogs. We had to keep that water clean, and you can't keep dogs out of water, most of them. Then that of course is a very difficult issue to handle. It is the most volatile issue even more so than the motorcycles. The motorcyclists just got pissed off and gave me the finger and shook their fists and went someplace else. But, the dog problem was a major one because there is something about the human relationship between canines—canines and humanoids—that puts the dog at the head of the line. "You can tell me to go to hell but you can't tell my dog to go to hell!" You know, it was just a really volatile situation.

Then the Giardia crisis hit. Giardia lamblia—it's an intestinal spore that all mammals carry. Beaver are known to carry it. First they had to get rid of the beavers up there. Well, beavers are rats with slap tails. You trap them out or send them away. You give them a ticket and say go get on a bus, and they are going to be back. It's like shooting squirrels in your yard, you know? I lived for 15 years up in the mountains west of Lolo. Never lived in the Rattlesnake, but I used to be annoyed because our place was just perfectly still most mornings. The squirrels would get in the ponderosa pines and Doug firs [Douglas Fir] around us and yell at one another. I would go out there with my 20 gauge and blow them away. It took about 24 to 36 hours you could just hear the squirrels—the remaining squirrels—saying, "Hey, you guys, there's room over here!" In a few days it was just as noisy as it had ever been. They are rats with crooked tails.

Oh, you know the dog situation. Well, Cass Chinske who had agreed to help me out with the time crisis as far as Friends of the Rattlesnake was concerned, he was one who wanted to run his dog. Didn't see why dogs couldn't be up there. We had it posted clearly, which you have to do legally is keep the posting clear. You can't write somebody a ticket if the warning isn't evident. So, he would tear down the signs, and I did a little extra work of my own one time and caught him, photographed him and cited him. To make it short, he pleaded no contest, and that ended the news value of that. The Giardia lamblia issue was critical. I think it was more hysteria than anything else.

JR: Because that was still Missoula's water source?

JM: Yes, but I drank that water everyday! I wouldn't carry a canteen up there for crying out loud, and I certainly wouldn't carry purifiers. Didn't need it. There were some places I would not drink. I would not drink out of the main creek lower down because a lot of people had been around there, but that is just common sense. Lewis and Clark and their men were drinking out of the Missouri coming out in 18...and the Indians thought they were stupid. You don't drink that water. You drink out of this little creek! I've always thought that the Giardia hysteria was...Since I could drink the water and have no problem with it, the real issue was about that time more and more people were drinking more and more pop.

This is when during the '70s Coca Cola machines, soft drink machines began appearing everywhere. Chair of the music department put one in the music building. I had hysterics when I saw that. I thought, "God, we'll have sticky stuff all over the floor in the recital hall and so on." That's it, people were not drinking water much anymore so their systems were not accustomed to what's in it. I respect the urgency of finding pure water, but that's not the way nature designed this. We were designed to become accustomed to our environment in some respects. We can't keep changing it just because we don't like it or we are afraid of it. We live with it. That hysteria disappeared after a reasonable time.

JR: You spoke of some of the challenges of...one aspect was facilitating this land exchange with Montana Power Company and the Forest Service so that it could be designated and—

JM: Managed, right.

JR: —allocated to the Forest Service. But then there is also the issue of the Forest Service then having to decide to commit the resources to the actual...like as you mentioned having to post these regulations. What part did you have in helping to...other than obviously you were hired to help with that, but what was the role of yourself and the locals in terms of working with the Forest Service in terms of trying to come up with a plan for how to manage the wilderness?

JM: Well, certainly the Forest Service welcomed everybody's opinion, including mine, and I did draw up some plans. Now I am going to stumble around here a lot because I have not thought of this in a long, long time. After the National Recreation...of course the wilderness matter legally took care of itself. All you had to do was post the wilderness boundary, if you took a motor vehicle in there—a motorcycle or anything else. It was easy to enforce that. I did enforce that. I wrote a lot of tickets early on, particularly to people who didn't quite get the message.

Then you know, motorcycles were permitted for a short period of time up as far as Franklin Bridge and then they were finally closed out all together. So the planning process was an organic process. It evolved. At one point I remember...If I get going too elaborately, interrupt me and we'll change tracks. It occurred to me that if you could control the noise of the motorcycles and the speed was the number one problem. I knew from all the years I had spent exploring that area that there was potentially a viable trail on the east side, south side, east side of the Rattlesnake from Spring Gulch up all the way up to Franklin Bridge at least, could go on beyond that a certain distance.

So, I proposed that first of all we set up a plan by which a motorcyclist could bring his bike into the district office and have it assessed—evaluated in terms of sound. If it satisfied a certain level—decibel level—at a certain distance from the vehicle at a certain RPM. Then you could put, leave the motorcyclists, and then they would agree to respect certain conditions, respect other users, et cetera. Stay off water courses and so on, and not get off the trail. They could use the road going up to Franklin Bridge then, and you could put hikers on the other side of the creek, which is fresh. You didn't have to walk on that damned road. It was a logging road.

Well, that didn't fly. I thought you could make it possible for the serious, concerned motorcyclist to use it in a certain way, in a certain area. Then you would charge a fee for that evaluation, and that biker would get a license or a decal or something to put on his machine that would give him the right to be there. So, yes your question is as I recall about the process of developing management plans, and I noticed in the files I wrote a management plan as a term paper for that wilderness management course I took.

JR: That was prior to your employment as a Forest Service employee, correct?

JM: No, it was about the same time.

JR: Oh, it was about the same time?

JM: Yes, yes. Oh let's see, what else? Give me a lead.

JR: Okay. There's the wilderness area designation and then there's the national recreation area designations. To your experience was there always a movement that this had to be a recreation area not just a wilderness area, or was that a point of negotiation to...?

JM: I don't recall having anything to do with that. That was Arnold Bolle's game, and I think that was certainly well taken if he had only named it what I thought it ought to be named. (laughs) But anyway, I am sure that was largely his proposition. There is another name that occurs to me in connection with the development of the exchange and the NRA wilderness legislation, that's Bruce Bugbee. His father was the philosophy professor

here, and he's a consultant—still is a consultant. He works with various entities in land exchanges, conservation easements, things like that. Help me out.

JR: You were speaking about it's probably Arnold Bolle that got it rolling, helping to come to this decision of a joint management decision...

JM: Right, right.

JR: Well, maybe I will kind of switch gears. You mentioned that this map that you have in front of you right now is something that you commissioned and you paid for. Was that because you felt like there still was a lack of information out there, or something that you just personally wanted to see?

JM: Yes and yes. The Forest Service...the government did not have a map yet of the area. I published two editions of this map. By the way, the Geography Department...graduate students in the graduate department did the artwork, the cartography, on this, and I provided the details. My working map that I carried with me daily and that I annotated heavily was just a USGS [U.S. Geological Survey]. Was a combination of USGS quads that I mounted on canvas, map canvas, and cut and folded into something that would fit into my pocket or saddlebag, or something like that. I had that and I could answer questions, but there wasn't anything available to the public so I published two editions of this. This is the corrected...the revised and corrected edition. I don't know what the date was, at least I think it is.

Anyway, as a matter of fact I did quite a number of things along this line during the '80s. I did a series of brochures for the Rattlesnake and Blue Mountain recreation area. I worked that area, as a matter of fact several seasons, several summers—field seasons. I was responsible for general maintenance and enforcement in the Rattlesnake NRA and Wilderness—Welcome Creek Wilderness—the Lolo's end of the Bitterroot Selway, Selway Bitterroot Wilderness which is essentially southward of Lolo Creek. What else? Oh, all the campgrounds. Five campgrounds up Rock Creek and two campgrounds up Lolo Creek. Plus the Fort Fizzle recreation area—picnic area.

I was responsible for all of those so I was really...oh, and Patty Canyon recreation area, so I was really stretched kind of thin. One of the problems, particularly in the spring and fall...I don't know all summer, all season, was the high school kids—keggers and so on or sometimes just screwing around. I had radio connection with, and a 911 dispatcher and for a while there was...

[End of Tape 1, Side B]

[Tape 2, Side A]

JR: So, you were mentioning that you did brochure work for all these different aspects of the Rattlesnake, Welcome Creek, Pattee Canyon, and I think you were just about to launch into...

JM: I was going to say that part of the excitement for me in working this area, learning this area during those basically 20 years from '57 to '77 or so, was being able to tell people about areas where you could get away from it all so to speak. You know most people think the Rattlesnake...better than 80 percent...80-85 percent of the traffic doesn't go more than a mile into the Rattlesnake, up the main creek, up that logging road. The more energetic used to go up to Franklin Bridge and the real diehards...there were runners who would run the whole circuit, 30-some miles up to Stuart Peak, up the ridge trail and down the road or the other way around. They've got the best use out of the area.

You know I would say, "Yes, you really want to go someplace that is exciting. Go up Grant Creek." Now there was a guy who had a house right on the trail as it...oh, within a few hundred yards of the wilderness boundary. He didn't want anybody going through his property so you couldn't do it that way. But, you could go up Stewart Peak trail way over here and from the ridge...where you first struck the ridge, if you just carried a compass, you could go down here into the Grant Creek, East Fork and Grant Creek drainage. This got you up into the headwaters of Grant Creek—the Grant Creek Basin. Murphy Peak and Sanders Peak were the major landmarks up there. There were some locals who would use that as a hunting area, but that was about all the traffic you would see up there. Partly because this guy was shutting off the trail on his public...his private property.

Gold Creek was a pleasant place to go into. You had to drive through an awful lot of clear cuts to get to it—to the trailhead—but it was well worth it. Sheep Mountain Trail was—which is the east fork of Rattlesnake—Sheep Mountain and Mineral Peak trail. You know that was really *terra incognita* [unexplored territory] in those days. The trail had been built for fire protection purposes—communication—but now my neighbor, a fellow who has the office above mine over at 615 Oak, he's a bicycle rider and he rides that circuit in an afternoon. He'll come in Monday morning and say, "Well, I made it up to Sheep Mountain yesterday afternoon, got down by suppertime."

The bicycle traffic...I haven't been back up there since I left the Forest Service, haven't been to the Rattlesnake anyplace. Largely...I suppose entirely because the bicycle population has just taken over. It was taking over to the point when I left the Forest Service that it was just painful to deal with it. Inconsiderate people, arrogance, if you got a bicycle you got rights. God gave you rights. A couple of anecdotes to illustrate the kinds of problems.

I had a big Tennessee Walker, 14 and a half hands and big guy, but he was a trotting fool. One weekend...I worked a lot of irregular hours, my plan was to be up there, be at any of these areas during the hours when people wouldn't expect you. Normal people worked eight to five, nine to five. I would be up there until 11:00, 12:00, 1:00 in the morning. One weekend I was up there in the lower part of the Rattlesnake along the road and was coming out and there was a young family with two little toddlers. Couldn't have been more than two years old—two and three, or something like that. Scampering around, going ahead of them, and a bicyclist came around me, which bent me out of shape a little bit. Fortunately, my horse was accustomed to that. He was kind of cool, but I had a way of giving him a spur on the other side where it couldn't be seen so and he'd just move into the tack of a bicyclist who didn't have the courtesy to say "Coming through" or "On your left" or "Hi there! Nice day!" Anything, anything, just let people know that you are behind them.

This bicyclist, a girl, went around me and got up behind this little family, and she was teetering on this bicycle. They were walking very slowly. They had little children who were playing. She finally saw an opening, and she zoomed through. Of course these little toddlers, they could have just as easily been in front of her, she would have hit them. Well, I found a place where I could get around, and I just kicked my horse into a canter and got up beside her. I said, "Miss, miss, would you pull over just a second. I would like to talk to you." Faster, faster, well, my horse loved that so we stayed with her until we got down almost to the gate. Finally, she got the idea. She stopped, she said, "I thought you were racing me."

I said, "Miss, why didn't you simply say to those people 'Excuse me,' or 'Isn't it a pretty day?' so they knew you were behind them. They would have made way for you. They would have made sure the kids were out of the way."

"No, no, I am on a bicycle. That gives me rights!"

But, the crowning episode of all, I wasn't involved in fortunately. Dean Solheim who was the wrangler out at Nine Mile, you know that name?

JR: I do.

JM: He had packed in, I don't know who it was...it doesn't matter...into the lakes up there and was coming out with a string of mules empty, on a saddle horse. He got down below Stuart Peak. About a third of the way up to the ridge there is a spring, a creek that crosses the trail. He was just below that on a very narrow part—very steep on both sides up and down, and down the trail came two bicyclists. These were grown men, never, never think of saying "Behind you!" or started talking between themselves so those mules could hear them. Course they come zooming up behind them, slam on their

brakes, so you got the skid mark and that goes those mules up six feet off the ground. That pack string literally came apart; bent...They all had Decker pack saddles on, you know, steel rings, bent one or two of those until they were junked. One of the mules ran off. They found him I think three days later up Saw Mill Gulch. These guys said, "What did I do? I'm just bicycling down the trail. I got just as much right to the trail as you have."

I don't know what they said, but I can imagine—you can imagine—that Dean was not very happy about that because he could have been killed. Mules were rolling down the hill, and by himself it was a handful to handle that string. Then try to patch them together on that steep, narrow stretch of the trail, no place to stand. You can't educate people who don't have the sensibility to be afraid for themselves. These two guys should have been afraid for themselves. You got a mule kicking around, you got problems.

So, that at too great a length, those are things, reasons that I just never went back up there. You see, there is one thing about the motorcycle, and I got sensitive to this very soon after the bicycles began to take over the place. A motorcycle, you can always tell when they are coming, how fast they are going, what their attitude is, and how soon they will be gone, but you can't tell that about a bicyclist who doesn't make any noise. See he is trying to be sensitive to the environment, so don't make any noise. I don't know what it is. I just don't know what it is.

Going up one time I thought that it would be a good idea, talk about management planning, to require that every bicyclist have a bell because it used to be that was obligatory. Many years ago, I rode a bicycle through Missoula for 25 years when we didn't have bicycle routes and trails and so on. The courteous thing was when you passed a...well you didn't ride on the sidewalks anyway, but on the campus you kept making a little sound so that you didn't startle people. You know going up the Rattlesnake one time I...here were two men and their kids on bicycles going up and they had bells. They were very considerate. They saw me saw the horse, ding the bell. They went on up, I congratulated them. I thanked them. I said, "I wish you would pass the word, get everybody to do this." So, they went on up the trail. A little later they're coming back, they're racing. They're going like a son-of-a-bitch. Ding, ding, ding, ding, ding, ding. Around everybody, around me. To heck with it.

So, that's bicycle country. Sometimes I think it would be...I rode a motorcycle up there for a while for the Forest Service. Just when the area was partly...when the NRA was open to motorcycles they felt it would be good to have that presence on the...Is that about it?

JR: Well, one other thing I was particularly interested in, you had mentioned that suggestions you had made and some of them you felt, sounds like you felt were more

listened to and some were dismissed. What do you think is the root of that, mostly because you were seen as a music professor and what are you doing involved in this? Or were there other factors?

JM: Well, no matter what you do, of course, you're a stereotype. There are people who still think that I... "Do you still direct the Jubileers, Joe?" I did that for 19 years, but I didn't do it for a lot more years. I suppose there was a little of that, but I didn't let that concern me as much. I remember some woman being up there with a dog. It was close to the gate, and I wasn't going to make a big deal out of it. I said "You know you can't have a dog up here. We've got to keep the water clean."

"Oh not my dog, not my dog!"

I was rather insistent that she take the dog, put it in the car and open a window and leave the dog there if she had to walk, otherwise take him home. She said, "I don't have to! You and your regulations. I don't have time for these regulations! I have a PhD."

I said, "So do I."

She thought I was being sarcastic, of course.

I think the Forest Service, the bosses I had were always open for discussion. We were coworkers. In fact, some of them were kind of sensitive about this old guy, the way this old guy treated them. I remember saying, in introducing...I don't know whether it was the ranger resource assistant or somebody to an acquaintance of mine, and I said, "This is so and so he's my superior."

He bends down to my shoulder and said, "I am your boss not your superior."

Where are we now?

JR: Well, particularly when you said your suggestions about the naming of the area...

JM: Oh, oh! That was just dismissed out of hand. That was not Forest Service. They had nothing to do with that; Montana Power didn't have anything to do with that. In fact I seemed to recall that Don Lucian, the manager for the...well I shouldn't put words in his mouth, but a lot of people thought that was a good idea.

JR: But, you think some of the resistance to that was because people didn't see you as a resource expert or was it just...

JM: I really don't know. I don't know that it was anything personal it just...Arnie used to say to me, "No Joe, everybody knows it as the Rattlesnake."

I'd say "What about Gold Creek and Grant Creek?"

"Everybody knows it as Rattlesnake."

It was easy to sell that because the legislatures knew that, that this was the drainage...The issue I think was the Rattlesnake was Missoula's watershed, and it's now, I guess it's still a backup—a standby watershed so there is still reason for protecting the water quality. It's been interesting to see it go through this cycle of closure, to motorcycle, to hiker, to bicycle. It's all cyclical. Bicyclists will get tired. There will be another fad sooner or later. The marks they have left on the ground will heal, at least they will develop scar tissue to the point that you can't tell what it was originally that made that trough that looks like a trail.

When I was up there, there were blazes on trees up in this beautiful drainage basin up here below McLeod Peak, particularly down right in here. I suspect a trapper had blazed a trail to lay his trap lines up there. Was still there the last time I was up, were.

JR: You told me that when those trees passed that there's not going to...(laughs)

JM: Yes right! But this was a place that I was particularly fond of. There is a spring right here. It's between...where is that? It's in the Lake Creek drainage, and I can't remember where it is but it is a spring, comes right out of an outcrop. The vegetation is very lush where it comes out, it's right next to the trail. I used to romanticize about it. I thought if there is a god named Pan this is his abode. This is his secret place. I called it Pan's Glade. I loved to sort of work things out so I had lunch time there or break time there.

JR: I guess maybe one last thing. Does it strike you as ironic that part of what served the effort to protect this area was the motorcycles, and that now one of the primary management issues is another two wheeled vehicle that's...

JM: Yes, yes. I don't know what to say about that. I just stay away from it because it upsets me too much to go up there and you know. I hate to see bicyclists on the sidewalks downtown. I mean you and I paid taxes to see to it that the bridge is built wide enough to have a bicycle lane on either side, and they can't even ride in the damn bicycle lane! They've got to get up on the sidewalk!

JR: As I bicyclist I hate to see other people do things like that.

JM: Yes, yes.

JR: Do you have other reflections back on...You talked quite a bit on your reflections on your time for the Forest Service and being a part of raising awareness about the...Is

there anything else you would like to share, would like to have marked for posterity about what this area means and why it's important to have it? As you mentioned several times the urban interfaces relatively unique about...

JM: I don't really have much to say further about it because since I left off any responsibility for anything about the area. We've got this urban trail system that leads right to it and I'm not even familiar with that. I saw it at its beginning, I used to ride through there because it was, well down into this little dog leg here. Now I suppose this area and—after I went to work for the Forest Service—the other areas too, the Welcome Creek Wilderness for instance, was I thought potentially as important as this area because it had a history. That history was manifest in the area. It's rugged. What it teaches you about history is what the prospectors were like and the Chinese were like who followed the prospectors to try to find gold or minerals in that little area.

One of my first jobs was to sign the boundary of, as I mentioned a while ago. Remember I had my second golden retriever at the time, and because I had to carry quite a bit of gear and you couldn't do it on horseback, I had a pack on my dog. Coming down one of those drainages—on one of those little tributaries of Welcome Creek—I remember having to take...it was so dangerous that the talus was so steep, so treacherous as far as security was concerned and sharp, holes you know, that I took the pack off my dog. One of my daughters was along with me on that trip. She carried the dog's pack, and I carried the dog across this talus slope. It was that steep and that dangerous. Think of a miner with a donkey or a mule poking around among those rocks.

At one point I tried to develop an interpretive brochure on that with focus, with emphasis on the...There was one stretch of Welcome Creek that the Chinese had gone in and, I forgot what they called this technique, but they wrestled the large stones out of the creek bed and walled the creek. You can still see that wall and it's 12 to 15 feet or more high in many places. They did that so they could get down to the gravel you see. That was sort of an enchanted area to me. Steep as a cow's face.

Then you know the south fork of Lolo was an enchanting place too and little used at the time. My experience embraces all of the...Blue Mountain, and I spent a lot of time on Blue Mountain in the last few years I worked with them. It was a focus of my life even while I was trying to be a musician, but you know my advanced degree is in humanities, isn't music at all. I haven't had anything to do with music for the last few years.

JR: Interesting.

JM: Been writing, chiefly and been producing the website Discovering Lewis and Clark, which is a monster now.

JR: And is a subject for a whole other interview.

JM: Yes, that has been quite an odyssey too.

JR: I can imagine.

JM: Fourteen, going on fifteen years I have been working on that and not directing the Jubileers.

JR: I believe today is the anniversary of the expedition's return to St. Louis.

JM: Yes, a last hurrah. But I found that on the Lewis and Clark website, Discovering Lewis and Clark to September of 2008 so we still have work to do.

JR: I have no doubt you will continue to do that.

JM: As far as I can. As long as I see the same face in the mirror every morning.

JR: Well thank you for your time.

JM: You're welcome.

[End of Interview]