

Maureen and Mike

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**Oral History Number: 276-007, 008**

**Interviewee: Richard D. Taber**

**Interviewer: Wendy Hall**

**Date of Interview: January 3, 1992**

**Project: UM Wildlife Biology Program Oral History Collection**

Wendy Hall: Interview with Dick Taber at his residence on January 3, 1992. Dick, my first question about where you grew up, did you grow up in San Francisco where you were born?

Richard Taber: I can't remember much of before I was about five years old, but the general pattern was that both my parents were professional people and they...I had an older brother, and they boarded us out at various places for much of our young life. So I can remember living in one place when I was five years old, you know how kids remember how old they were, and another one when I was six, and another when I was seven, and another when I was eight, and then another when I was nine.

WH: Were those all around the San Francisco area?

RT: Many of them were in California. One year it was in Phoenix, Arizona. Some of them were with, like boarding schools and things like that. Some of them were with an aunt and uncle—my father's sister.

WH: What was it like when you were growing up? What did you do?

RT: Well, I'll say that I always like the outdoors a great deal, and every opportunity I had to be out in the country as opposed to the city, I liked that. Even when I was in the city of San Francisco where I lived for a number of years with my parents, I liked to go fishing on the docks and things like that, what passed for outdoor recreation in that environment. I would say that the most...that tendency for the outdoors was the most striking thing about my childhood that stands out.

WH: Okay. What did your parents do?

RT: My mother was a physician, and my father was a dentist and a professor in College of Physicians in (unintelligible).

WH: In San Francisco?

RT: In San Francisco, yes.

WH: What kind of activities were you involved in when growing up? You said you were outdoors. What did you do when you were outdoors?

RT: When I got big enough to get around, my...When I was about nine, then I began to live with my parents in San Francisco and lived there when I was nine, ten, eleven and twelve. So I went to school in San Francisco then, and I liked sports and...Let's see I guess I was in fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth grade, then the first year of high school—that's in San Francisco. But at that time, we had a housekeeper and a lady, kind of took care of the kids and the house, and on the weekends, we would go to a country place (unintelligible) so that there was a connection with the country. I did a lot of being alone (unintelligible). California's pretty dry, not much fishing out there. Simply moving. I was energetic, and I liked to hike and to be out in the woods.

WH: Okay, who got you interested in and influenced you to study wildlife biology management?

RT: Well, I already had this tendency, or this interest, and when I was 14, a family friend gave me a copy of [Aldo] Leopold's *Game Management*, which I just (unintelligible). Then I, for the first time, realized that that might be a profession and from then on that was my major aim.

WH: Was there a person in particular? What was that person's name who gave you the book?

RT: No, I wouldn't say that there was any particular person. When I went to college, I majored in forestry for a year and then switched to zoology and also—I was at UC Berkeley—got acquainted with people in the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology which is where the wild...now called wildlife (unintelligible) took place. I got acquainted with the people in the profession, let's put it that way. I wouldn't say that there was any particular mentor at that time.

Later on, after I was in the military service, right toward the end of the war [World War Two], I was in Alaska, and I had the good fortune to be a commanding officer of a small Marine detachment there. Had leisure to get the wildlife literature sent to me, to read it, and to pick up on various professional people there were. Leopold stood out then just as he had with his book as the person with whom I'd like to study, so then I went back to study with him when I got out of the service and I was on the G.I. Bill.

WH: What role did your parents play in influencing you to study wildlife biology or management?

RT: I think that they had a part in this way that they made it possible for me to be in the out of doors. My father liked to hike and my mother liked the out of doors too, but my father was more inclined that way although he was not a hunter or a fisherman. When I was 13, my brother and I went to a ranch, which was also a summer camp in northern California, and I particularly really liked that and so they let me stay there. I stayed there--14, 15, part of 16. Of course, I was supposed to be going to high school all this time, and they had a sort of school—

one of the daughters was a teacher. So then I came back to San Francisco and went for a year to the academic high school in San Francisco, which was the Lowell High School (?) where I had done my freshman year. They said, well, if you do well here we'll give you credit for all the stuff you said you took. (Unintelligible) and I did well and they gave me credit, so I had credits for college. So my parents basically let me do that alone. I mean, they set it up so that they knew what I liked, so they set it up so that I could do that.

WH: Why did you continue on going to college and getting your higher degrees?

RT: Because I knew from my acquaintances at Berkeley that if you're going to enter a profession you had to have a professional degree. For a while—a very short while—I flirted with going into medicine as my mother had, but I didn't really like that type of life. So as it dawned on me...See this was in the late 1930s when the wildlife profession was emerging as a profession. It dawned on me that this was an opportunity, so in order to take advantage of this I had to go on to a higher degree. So I thought, well, I'll get my master's, and if I do well then I'll go in for a PhD. I went to Wisconsin and got my master's and came back to Berkeley and got my PhD.

WH: Who else, besides you just mentioned, influenced you to obtain your degrees?

RT: No one really stands out except Leopold. I mean, he didn't influence me to get my degree. I was already going to do that.

WH: What was your main emphasis, or what main emphasis in a classes did you take in obtaining your degrees?

RT: Well, wildlife is a field that's at the top of a pyramid and at the bottom there's flowers and plants and so on, and so as you think more about what wildlife consists of, you find yourself getting more questions in these—kind of building under this interest in order to support it and understand it. It isn't an organized thing. You don't start out that way because you start out with your interest and work backwards in a way and you can't probably go as far as you should. I would say that in picking courses, particularly in graduate school, I was influenced in part, of course, by regulation, what you have to take, and partly by my desire to broaden my education.

WH: So were there any particular types of courses you took?

RT: Practically all the courses I ever took in college other than the required ones were science course of some kind or other. Your freshman year you have to take freshman composition and public speaking or something and you have to take some foreign language and you have to take those things, but I can't say that I ever paid much attention.

WH: Did you take mostly zoology classes then?

RT: Zoology, botany, entomology, paleontology so, you know...You might say these things all revolved around animals. Even botany to an extent. I remember when I got to Wisconsin I had a couple of favorite plants, botanical plants, botanical courses that Leopold liked. He liked leaves and seeds and aquatic vegetation because he thought most people hadn't been taught it. It wasn't really a coherent program. If I were to be designing a program now, as I have in Seattle, I would have a much better program than I had.

WH: What difficulties did you have to overcome while being a student?

RT: I didn't have very good work habits like many young people. I was rather young when I went to college. I was 17 and...Is that right? Let's see, 1937. Actually, 16 when I registered and had a birthday shortly after that. Something like that. You know, it's an entirely different world when you go away to school and you're wandering around and you'll have other interests and I...My physical activity, I didn't like to be cooped up in class. School was always sort of a prison to me, and I didn't like to sit there all day. Once I got in college where I could either come or go, I went quite a bit so that I wasn't much of a scholar in college in my first four years. But I was interested enough and quick enough in my last two years in college—presentable, halfway presentable records of grades—and when I think I had applied to Wisconsin I just barely had the grade point average to get into graduate school.

WH: How did you pay for your education?

RT: I worked in the summer times when I was an undergraduate, but my parents paid most of my way as an undergraduate. Of course those days, college was a lot cheaper than it is now. Then when I went to graduate school I was on the G.I. Bill and also I would get scholarships and things in graduate school. From the time I went into the service in 1942, I was a civilian.

WH: How did you meet your wife?

RT: She was in my freshman public speaking class.

WH: When did you get married?

RT: Right after the war, like everybody else.

WH: How did you meet her? Just in that class?

RT: Well, yes, that's right first got acquainted with her, and then began to go out with her more as a junior and a senior. Then corresponded with her during the war. Didn't ever see her for four years.

WH: What were her interests then?

RT: She graduated in political science, and she worked on the newspaper at campus and she went...She had secretarial skills too and so she went in the WACs [Women's Army Corps] three or four years or several years—Women's Army Corps. She was in Europe while I was down in the Pacific.

WH: What was her name?

RT: Her name, her maiden name was Barbara Fleming.

WH: What are her interests now? Does she still—

RT: She's dead now. This is the second wife here for me.

WH: Oh, I'm sorry, okay.

RT: My first wife's interests were mainly literary. She got her master's here, and her...another forgotten professor, Leslie Fiedler (?), and then she worked for a while on a PhD at Pullman. That was sort of the extent of her higher education, but she liked to write and I'd say that writing and reading were her principal avocations.

WH: Okay, so how did you meet your first wife—I mean your second wife, I'm sorry.

RT: Well, after my first wife and I got divorced in 1967, I guess, and then mutual friends introduced Pat. She had been divorced a couple of years before, and she had four children and I had three children. They were just beginning to get into college age, and we joined forces. (Footsteps) And there she is!

WH: (laughs) Hi!

RT: Why don't you turn that off for a second.

WH: Okay.

[Break in audio]

WH: What are Pat's interests?

RT: Pat is a very sociable person. She's a teacher. Taught various grades, mostly kindergarten, but handicapped kids and other primary grades. I would say her specialty is people and social relations...By paying attention to her interests, I've become more and more interesting myself in people and social occasion and we've been writing a book together about parties. Parties.

*Parties Without Pain* is our working title. It's almost done! So, we'll be looking for a publisher. We share in this interest, in what works and what doesn't work. If I brought something to this, it's just been an organizing and analyzing and maybe testing out to see if things work for it. In a way it's part of applying the scientific method to party games.

WH: Where did you say you met her?

RT: Met her?

WH: Yes, where'd you meet?

RT: Here in Missoula.

WH: Oh, in Missoula, okay. So, what would you say, what role Pat played in your career?

RT: Well, she has accompanied me in a number of overseas missions, and her ability to get information from people is way above mine. I have some handicap because I came out of the artillery a little deaf. Anyway, she comes back from any kind of a journey with infinitely more information than I do on this kind of more human side which is extremely useful. Then in a more pedestrian way lots of times when I'm talking to somebody professionally she can tell me what he said, or if I misapprehended what they said—help me. Much more importantly, she digs down much deeper and finds out more. So that's a very, very, very helpful thing that she's done for me. I'd say that she has helped develop a human relations side of my nature.

WH: What role did your family play in your career?

RT: I think I told you their main role was one of kind of turning me loose to do what I wanted to do. Knowing that people are influenced by role models, I would say that I do have the role models in my parents and in my grandparents to an extent, of professional roles. People becoming proficient at something and practicing that thing so that makes it natural for me to play such a role too.

WH: How many children did you say you have?

RT: I have three. Pat has four.

WH: Okay, and the three were from your first marriage, correct?

RT: Yes.

WH: Did any of your children follow in your footsteps?

RT: Yes, I would say so. My oldest daughter is, in a way, a child of the '60s, and so she has always...She went to Reed College, and she has sort of stayed in the feminist counter-culture tradition. She likes to write, and she has started one feminist newspaper in Seattle which was successful. Then she moved down to Berkeley, and she started another feminist newspaper there, so she is...I consider her successful in her own way. My next child was a son, and he was one of the straight arrows that came right after the '60s counter-culture and went to Stanford and then to Columbia and got his PhD and is a professor of chemistry at the University of Delaware. My youngest child is a daughter, and she was interested in biology and got her PhD and is a behavioral biologist at Baylor Medical Center in Houston, Texas.

WH: What are their names and which—

RT: Oh, my older daughter is Rebecca Taber, and then Douglas Taber, my son, and Katherine Maier—M-a-i-e-r. She's married that's (unintelligible).

WH: You said you just had one brother?

RT: I have a brother, yes!

WH: What was his name? Is his name?

RT: Robin.

WH: Where were your parents originally from?

RT: Both of my parents were born in...No. My mother was born in San Francisco, and my father was born in Oroville, California, in gold country but his family moved to San Francisco when he was a young boy. So both of them grew up in San Francisco.

WH: Did you play any sports when you were going to school?

RT: I would say my main sport in school was baseball, but the last school-oriented baseball I played was I think in college the sophomore class. I pitched softball for the softball class, and that was the last organized sport I participated in.

WH: I think that finishes the first section of questions. What department appointed you to U of M [University of Montana]?

RT: Oh, I came here and joined the School of Forestry in '56.

WH: In '56, okay. Then the other universities, such as the University of California Berkeley, who appointed you there?



RT: I worked, before I got my PhD and also after my PhD for their...it's called School of Forestry and Conservation or something like that at Berkeley. It was an experiment station. It's a research title specialist or something like that.

WH: Okay, there wasn't a particular department that appointed you then?

RT: Yes. My head of my project that I worked on was Professor Harold Biswell, and he was in Forestry School. For one year, after I got my degree, I replaced my major professor who was another Leopold (unintelligible) son—Starker Leopold a professor at Berkeley. He was my major professor, and he went on sabbatical. About '54, '55 I guess, and I covered his classes for him while he went on sabbatical, so I was in the Biology Department.

WH: Then how did you end up at the West Pakistan Agricultural University?

RT: Well, after I taught here, at the University of Montana for six years, I decided that, if I could, I'd like to take a sabbatical, but the University didn't give sabbaticals so I concocted my own sabbatical. I cast about because my children, my older daughter then, was 15 or 16, and she would be out of high school soon. I realized that if I didn't take my kids overseas I'd never get another chance to take the whole family. So, I worked hard and looked all around, mainly countries that were former parts of the British Empire where they spoke English and to see if I could scare something up.

There were a group of professors from Washington State at Pullman, who worked...had some sort of an arrangement with Pakistan, and where they were...I don't know where the funding came from, might have been AID [United States Agency for International Development], but a lot of them were at the agricultural university at Lyallpur [now Faisalabad] (unintelligible). In part of that project was Professor Goodheart (?), and he was on this faculty so he was familiar with what was going on in Pakistan. He knew that I was looking around, and he pointed out to the Pakistanis that I was a wildlife biologist and he pointed out to me that they had a big problem in wild boars. So I got a Fulbright. Then I applied for Fulbright Research Scholarship to go to Pakistan and study wild boars and was accepted.

The Fulbright funding...We talk about funding quite a bit because professors never have any money of their own. Fulbright assumes you're on sabbatical so it pays really about half. You have half of your salary on sabbatical and either Fulbright or then that's all right, but I didn't have half of my sabbatical because I was taking leave. So I applied to the Guggenheim Foundation and then I applied also to National Institutes of Health, pointing out to them that I was not only going to work on the wild boar but I was also going to work on the marmot, many of which carry of course carry parasites and diseases for human beings. So, I got...not right away, I went with hope that I would get some more funding—some of these things I had asked

for would come to pass. When I was over there (unintelligible) got this grant so that took care of the funding for that sabbatical year. That's why I went to Pakistan.

WH: Who appointed you in the University of Washington?

RT: In the summer of 1956, I was in Alaska working on a study—not my own study—on cycling of the lemmings. I just went onto that for the summer because I hadn't been in that part of Alaska and see what it was like up there where the Eskimos were (unintelligible) and so on. I had been divorced from my wife, and getting back together with the same wife. Wife number one and two, same person. I thought that I could get along better if I were not in the field so much.

So I was going to look for a teaching job where I could be home look after the kids, and so I put my name into the University of California placement service, and of course they then began looking around. My name came to the University of Montana—it was Montana State University then—for a joint biology teaching position in zoology and botany. Dr. Wright was on the committee and he saw my name there and he knew two things. We had met—he knew something on my background. We had met at the mammal meetings a few years ago, and he also knew that the School of Forestry was in need of (unintelligible) person. So he informed the dean, Dean Ross Williams in those days and gave him my folder and said, "Here's a person you might consider."

So when I was up there trapping and hunting in Alaska, I got a wire that said, "Would you teach six courses on wildlife at the Montana State University?"

I wired back, "Sure." I came here then as soon as I came down, about August—

[End of Tape 1, Side A]

[Tape 1, Side B]

RT: I got the job in the School of Forestry teaching wildlife. Replacing Doug Gilbert (?) who had just (unintelligible).

WH: So how did you end up at the University of Washington then?

RT: 1968, Pat and I were married. I had been divorced here and she had been divorced here, and I knew that the University of Washington College of Forest Resources was expanding. I knew their dean and so I thought, well, maybe it'd be a good idea for us to start right in a new place, new environment. So, we went out there and was interviewed for a job. (Unintelligible).

WH: What types of projects did you work on while you were at each of these universities?

RT: I had mentioned (unintelligible). This means that my interest in birds was marginal. I could hear bird songs. I can still, a number of birdsongs in my mind, but I can't hear! I had too many big guns going off in my ears in the war. So I concentrated on mammals. Well, that's not entirely true. When I was an undergraduate, I started working for the State of California, so they had a post—a student biologist. One project they had was a deer project I helped on.

When I came out of the service, I had some time to before college would start, and so I went to work on a pheasant project for the State of California. I got interested in pheasants and interested in their breeding behavior, so, when I went to Wisconsin, I took that as a project, the breeding behavior of the pheasant. But other than the work on pheasants (unintelligible), why, I had worked on mammals. So my PhD work was mainly on deer and most of my work here was on deer (unintelligible).

When I went over to Seattle, I had a little meeting of the biologists there and said, "Well, we're starting off with quite the program here, but what are the missing elements of what's going on? What areas need work?" The response was elk. Elk were spreading in the Cascades and nobody knew what happened so that many of my graduate students there worked on elk. Not entirely for anyone, but I would say that was a major emphasis. Then I had many more graduate students at Seattle than I had here—it's a big university and PhD (unintelligible). Some worked on goats and on deer and not entirely on hoof mammals, but hoof mammals are a big emphasis.

WH: What methods or techniques did you use when you were conducting your studies?

RT: I would say that I am direct observational. I like to be in the field, I like to watch animals, I like to try to figure out why they're doing what they're doing. I guess, I have been intrusive in two ways. One—I've been catching and marking animals, so I can tell which is which. The other is in collecting them. When I worked here for example—this was a former day, when you could

go out and collect animals much more freely—and one of our projects was deer collection in the Rattlesnake. I think ten deer a month, maybe a few more, where you could figure out what they're eating, what their cycle of weight and fat and so on during the season, reproduction. I mean, all kinds of things you can get from dead animals. But I'm not really an experimenter, I'm a laboratory oriented person at all, I'm a much more field oriented person. Of course when you're working on animals, plants and soils and productivity and location and things like that, and I'm by no means a specialist in these things, but aware of them or to the implications.

WH: What types of equipment do you use to capture the animals, for example?

RT: When I was working on deer in California, our project was related to shrub management. The problem that they saw was in the chaparral. Half the people wanted to burn the chaparral and graze livestock on it and food, they thought, and the other half wanted to suppress all the fires. So there was a social and political conflict, so the state had a chaparral management project under Professor Biswell (?), and I was (unintelligible). There were others (unintelligible). In order to tell one deer from another, we caught them in corral traps. When they're in the corral trap, you can go in with a net, catch a deer, and put an ear tag in it. When we were working on mountain goats in Olympic National Park, we found that goats would come to salt licks and you put a noose over the salt lick and twitch the noose when the goat puts their head through it. Be careful with their horns. We had different kinds of deer traps working on deer—smaller ones as well as corral kinds. Then when it comes to the smaller mammals of course we used conventional traps. Mouse trap, rat traps.

WH: How have these methods changed?

RT: Well, one of the big changes that came in during my career was the use of drugs to immobilize them. Practically all of our elk work, we've caught elk in the wild with dart—darting the elk.

WH: What types of classes have you taught at Missoula and the other universities you've been at?

RT: General wildlife, advanced wildlife, and mammalogy. I could tell you what would be (unintelligible) in a course. I've given short courses in Pakistan. Under those headings I have (unintelligible) most of my teaching.

WH: What challenges have you faced when you were at the University of Montana?

RT: I don't know that I faced very many challenges at the University of Montana. A young professor, just starting out of course, first couple of years I was jumping around pretty fast, trying to get his courses all organized. The University of Montana has very good...I wouldn't say back-up...but good establishment of colleagues in zoology and botany. Very competent people,

so that students could get directly from Phil Wright, let's say, and Bob Hoffman (?), their mammalogy background and ornithology background. From people in botany, plant ecology background so that you can give more emphasis to the social and political side of wildlife in a smaller sense than you have to in some places where they can't get these other things and it's all the basic material before you can get to the application.

So the University of Montana was a good place to teach wildlife. The students, in forestry—most of my students were forestry students and my classes were forestry classes—reminded me very strongly of the troops I had in the Marine Corps. They came from all over the country, they were full of fire and they came here because they wanted to come to the Rocky Mountains. Very good students too. Quite different from the students in Seattle, more cosmopolitan students, city-oriented students. Much more various, of course, because the graduate students in Seattle came from other countries and so it was a much more diverse group in Seattle.

WH: What type of work did you do as a student biologist for the California Department of Fish and Game?

RT: Before I went to Florida State, I worked a summer at the San Joaquin experimental range. It was an experimental range of the University of California Agriculture. It was arranged to study grazing systems, but they also studied wildlife. So I spent my first summer untangling kangaroo rat middens (?) to figure out what seed they eat and what not. Second summer came, then for the first time, the University...the state of California was testing for student biology. Since I had that volunteer work, I was practically the only one with any field experience, and so I got a job with them and that job was on a deer project. That must have been at the end of my...between my junior and senior years. Then that winter vacation, Christmas vacation, I asked them for a job again and they gave me a job on a water fowl refuge building a house. I helped build a house. So I had some connections in the state of California. When I came out of the service then, they knew who I was and that's when I started working with them on the pheasant refuge.

WH: That was when you were a student biologist?

RT: No, what did they call me...junior biologist or something like that. I guess. I have forgotten what my title was.

WH: So what did you do when you were working as a conservation aid for the Wisconsin Conservation Department?

RT: That was on my pheasant research.

WH: As a research zoologist for the California Forest and Range Experiment Station—

RT: That was the chaparral project.

WH: What was it like working for the different agencies when you worked for California State and then Wisconsin?

RT: Well, I would say that in all of these organizations I've worked for it was very much the same. They had a group of people working on some research project, and I wouldn't say that there was much difference between the different administrative units.

WH: What kind of graduate, post-graduate projects have you supervised?

RT: As I said, I guess the majority of my graduate students have worked on hoofed animals. But, there have been many others also. I think of one now Erik Dinnerstein (?), who is now working for World Wildlife Fund, did his doctoral pieces on bats in Costa Rica. Javier Simoneti (?), who is on the University of Chile in Santiago, Chile, he worked with small mammals in Chile. So, there's quite a diversity of people. For a while here, we got Canadian students, because apparently this was the most convenient place for Canadian students to come for wildlife programs. I remember one who...I got mostly agency-oriented people and so I had them prepare theses on, like, the wildlife of Manitoba, wildlife of Saskatchewan. I had one from Thailand—did the wildlife of Thailand. Where they had to review the whole situation, both biological and administrative. So, I can't say. I can't condense all my relations with graduate students...I haven't had a prescribed area of study like some laboratory-oriented person might have where he spends all his time working in mammalian physiology or something. It's always been a wide diversity.

WH: How were your projects funded?

RT: Topic close to a professor's heart. Most, I would say, of my projects have been funded by an agency—agencies (unintelligible). Early in my career in Montana, I got together with Bob Hoffman and the National Science Foundation had just been established and so he was (unintelligible) so we sat down together and said, "What can we do in Montana about biology, that's appropriate for here and definite enough and hasn't been done," and so on. So we decided to do, make a survey of alpine areas of Montana—everything about the alpine areas—which we did. So we had an alpine study going and recruited soils people and botanical people and so on. But that was sort of a special situation. Most of what I have done has been done with the support of the Game Department or the Forest Service or the Park Service or somebody like that.

WH: Which students were the most memorable that you had?

RT: From the University of Montana?

WH: From anywhere.

RT: I've had about 1,000...about 100 students. It would be...This is a very difficult question. A few years ago, I got a nice picture of a caribou with a little inscription. It was to me from my students in Alaska. I started counting up how many students I had who were in Alaska. I got 24 graduate students. Students stand out for different reasons, and so I don't think that I could pick one out over another or I could sit here and talk about all 100 of them but you don't have to really do that.

WH: Okay. Did any of those students become well-known or very well successful?

RT: Oh yes, of course, it would be hard to measure success, but a lot of them worked for agencies. Quite a few of them are in universities. Some are in national and international wildlife work. If we just think about a couple who are active at the present time, internationally, I mentioned Eric Dinnerstein who was working for the Smithsonian Institution and is now, I believe, with the World Wildlife Fund. Steve Burwick, international type, is...god, I've forgotten who he was working for, something connected with World Bank—got to be an advisory to work for the World Bank. So that's the most conspicuous types.

Then I have a couple of students who came from Nigeria. As I say, a Chilean student and her friend Pei (?) working and teaching in Taiwan, teaching all that (unintelligible). That's a different kind of group that is internationally...that is, working in some other country. My student from Thailand went back into the wildlife group to the benefit of the Ministry of Forestry and Agriculture. He may be, at this moment, the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture, right at the top of that pile. So, as you can see, your students go from here and succeed in other places. I suppose that most of my former graduate students are in federal agencies—state and federal agencies. One of them writes children's books. I remember him.

WH: What was his name?

RT: Slips my mind at the moment, might be Eddy Washington (?). It's Eddy Washington.

WH: How did your role in the department change through the years while you were at U of M?

RT: Well, I think it was 1964...Yes, I think so, when I went on leave **Les Pengelly** replaced me, temporarily. When I came back, I had a new job. I was associate director of the Forest and Conservation Experiment Station. The Dean, (unintelligible) the Dean of the Forestry School at the University, I was the Associate Director. And so, Les stayed on as wildlife professor. I taught a lot of my courses and he taught some. And then, in '67 I think, I'm not sure, I was asked to serve as acting director of the University of Montana Foundation. The University of Montana was, at that time, just trying to establish an outside source of funding from old grads and other

people and starting with...What do they call them? The Grizzly Riders. Anyway, they had a number of things to attract people, get successful former graduates back to get interested in the affairs of the University and helping out financially. That's what the University of Montana Foundation was. I was for a year or so before I left acting director.

WH: How have the ethical standards in the wildlife field changed during your career?

RT: Well, I guess there are really two ways of looking at that. One is the question of the validity of what is written. The general scientific system of trying to improve the quality of what is printed is the referee system. You submit an article to a journal and unknown referees who know something about that look at it, or you act as referee for other people's thing. This irons out some of the worst misapprehensions and mistakes and improves the quality of scientific literature.

The wildlife field is not very good at this. There is a lot of publication that goes on that is not refereed. A good example is the North American Wildlife Conferences, I've contributed to it myself so, I know. General symposia are not refereed and so this is a second-class literature because it's not looked at by referees. The wildlife field is...I went to the trouble, when I was reviewing a book on the deer of North America a few years ago, of checking the percentage of the references that had been written in referee journals—the better ones. The second best were the references that had only been reviewed by somebody like a Forest Service, with in-house review, and so, number two quality. The worst ones would be the ones that weren't reviewed at all, they were just printed. A high proportion, I think 40 percent or so...I'm not sure of that statistic. Anyway, unfortunately high proportion of references in wildlife-oriented literature are from grey references—not very good.

Books are even worse, because all you have to add...The author has not submitted this to anybody particularly and so you just have to take his word for it. Any of our words alone is not as good as a word that's been looked at by somebody else, critically. So this is, I would say, from my point of view, the wildlife field is not in very good shape, as compared to some more rigorous area probably physics and chemistry or something like that.

The other ethical aspect is the whole aspect of the ethics of the relationship human beings to animals. Of course, there hasn't been any changes of this, in the sense of individual people still have the same opinions ethically as they once had. Some people feel that human beings should not take animal life at all. Others have a feeling of a sympathy and kinship with animals, and other people like animals for pets. There are many different relation sort of things that Steve Keller (?) studies. But, what has changed is the proportion, the number of people who feel that hunting, let's say, is an unethical thing to do. Well, this puts American wildlife conservation in a very critical place, because the whole edifice of wildlife conservation has been built with the support of the sportsman. So finances are based upon that, either directly from licenses or indirectly through taxes, so that if all this is considered someday, for the majority of people to



be wrong, then some other system has to be developed and there's no sign of another system yet.

WH: How have the trends in wildlife, as far as what was studied or what was or wasn't done, how have the trends affected the projects you have done?

RT: I'll give you an example. When the Endangered Species Act was passed, suddenly, there was a federal interest in a whole host of animals that no one had paid any attention to before. If you, for example, were a forest supervisor and had responsibility for a lot of (unintelligible) and chipmunks and things, salamanders, you didn't even know what was on the list. In the early '70s, people in the universities, like myself, were getting a lot of enumeration of...I remember one on the Tongass National Forest in Alaska. What is there? Forest Service didn't rightly know because they're suddenly responsible for a lot of things that the states had no interest in, because the states, with their focus on sportsmen, were interested in game species and many game species comprise ten percent of the total, something like that. They're like the other 90 percent. What are they? What are their names? Where are they? How do they live? What do they need? So, that has been a major change during my career in the wildlife field, as ever...Well, I wouldn't say gradually expanding but suddenly expanding responsibility for a great many species that had...They hadn't been looked at very closely.

WH: Did the type of projects you did change then, too?

RT: That provided us with some bread and butter projects, because we did provide enumeration information. It was not particularly high-powered research project, but in a number of cases where we provided information to agencies—let them know what they had on their land.

WH: Were those then just general survey type?

RT: Mostly literature surveys, and you know, a compilation of (unintelligible) surveys.

WH: Have the trends had a positive or negative effect on what you wanted to get accomplished?

RT: I would say that it's become increasingly apparent that the problems—that all problems—are not biological.

[End of Tape 1, Side B]

[Tape 2, Side A]

WH: Okay, I'll ask the question over again. Have trends had a positive or negative effect on what you wanted to get accomplished?

RT: [pauses] No, I don't think that trends have had either a positive or a negative effect, but they do change your orientation. Sometimes they direct your attention to something. As I say I think that as far as wildlife conservation is concerned, the biology part is fairly well understood, but the relations to human beings is the part that is not too well understood. I'll give you an example. When we came back here and began working with the newspaper, to get a feel for what was going on, it gradually dawned on me that mountain lions had been seen around student housing, a child was killed in Idaho and another one was mauled in Glacier National Park. Wolves were coming back into the North Fork. This information got in the paper as a matter of human interest that people are interested in these things. They weren't too concerned about it. There was no policy to go and stamp out the lions. You could see them, right on the hill there. It gradually dawned on me that the level of public acceptance of large predators here is very high. People seem to accept these things. You know, occasionally a rancher will complain because he's expected to complain about the wolves.

Then I was asked to review a grizzly bear recovery plan as a part of the committee for the Wildlife Society and I did. I didn't find very much in there that would reflect that there was a public acceptance of grizzly bears. I thought, well, people accept the wolf and cougar, maybe they have a soft place in their heart for grizzlies. So I enquired how the grizzly...Jack Land (?) who was on the screening committee for research, and I said, "Is anybody studying people's attitudes about the grizzly?" because I sensed that the grizzly bear recovery plan had an underlying assumption that the grizzly could only live where it had nothing to do with people. They had these little enclaves set up and from a biological point of view. It seemed to be a kind of negative thing because animals don't survive in enclaves very well. Jack said that there was one study of human interactions with grizzlies but that was in Glacier National Park, and that they had never had a well-conceived study of public attitudes toward grizzlies in the region. Which I would think would be an important region, an island between Glacier [National Park] and Yellowstone [National Park], because they're two poles of grizzly. What happens in between? So, I think that they...If I'm correct, then the wildlife profession has kind of neglected an important aspect of basic conservation which is the level of public acceptance.

WH: What community organizations have you belonged to?

RT: I'm not too much of a joiner. When I was here before, as a matter of part of my job I'd say, I was a member of a Sportsman's Club (?), and for a few years ran the Heener Sportsman's (?) programs for kids. Other than professional organizations, I haven't...and the Unitarian Fellowship, I haven't been a member.

WH: Third section of questions, how has the University changed since you arrived?

RT: University of Montana?

WH: Yes.

RT: I really can't say much about...Seems to me, it's very similar to what it was, but then I have given a little class here, but I don't sit in faculty meetings and I don't hang around the University a whole lot. I use the library and so on, but I'm not very intimately acquainted with the functioning of the University. I think that during the time when I was gone, the University became organized—the teacher's union, something like that—so that...that type of workplace movement has been formed. That's a change. But, the general level of insufficient support—state support—the dedication to the students, this University seems to me (unintelligible) very accessible to students, much more so than in a large, research-oriented university. So, I think it maybe hasn't changed.

WH: Okay, how was the Wildlife Department started?

RT: Here?

WH: Yes.

RT: When you talk to Doctor Wright, he'll tell you about wildlife technology, and wildlife technology roles in the zoology department and it was related to...The mission was to prepare people for state or agency employment. I think that probably Doug Gilbert was the first wildlife teacher in forestry here. I think he was here two years. Mel Morris was the range (?) professor, long, long time. He came here in the late '30s, and of course, he had a wildlife interest too and he in fact had done some wildlife studies. He had elk breeding studies and so on. Then when I came here to replace (unintelligible), I was the single wildlife professor in forestry school and then we developed a wildlife biology curriculum. So there was one in wildlife technology and one in wildlife biology and this, I think, if I remember rightly, was generally, finally consolidated under wildlife biology with a committee representing botany and zoology and forestry. I've forgotten what the question is now that I gave you that answer.

WH: Okay, yes it did. How did the wildlife programs—the two separate programs—work when the department was in two majors?

RT: Oh, you mean technology and biology?

WH: Yes, how did they work?

RT: My impression, and Doctor Wright can help you out on this, is that the wildlife technology at one time faded out and combined with the biology someplace along in there during the time I was here but I can't remember quite how it worked.

[Coughing in the background]

WH: Who led the two programs? You led the—

RT: No, let's see. I wouldn't say it was any one person in charge of everything. There has always been a kind of committee, and I think there still is a wildlife committee with representation from botany and zoology and forestry. Right now, for example, they have a wildlife committee in zoology.

WH: Who taught the courses in the two programs?

RT: Well, courses labeled wildlife were taught here. Courses labeled zoology were taught in zoology and botany in botany. I can speak most, of course, to our students in wildlife biology. They definitely had a number of courses in zoology and botany that they had to take, and I've mentioned the strength in those areas here, which made it possible to emphasize the...In the wildlife courses, you can build on those in the wildlife courses very nicely. So very strong in that sense.

WH: How were the two majors different then?

RT: Well, I can't respond to that very well because I don't remember enough about it. I mean I think they're a matter of record. You could probably see what curriculum was for wildlife technology and wildlife biology.

WH: Why were the two majors merged? Do you remember?

RT: I think there was just so much overlap in them and so confusing to students, as to what they should do if they wanted to stay with wildlife, that it seemed most sensible to merge them.

WH: Do you remember how this merger came about?

RT: No, that's what I talked about earlier.

WH: Okay, all right. Were there any conflicts between the faculty between the two majors?

RT: No, I think relations (unintelligible).

WH: Can you recall what was lost or gained with the merger?

RT: I don't know what was lost, but I think that what was gained is what you always gain when you have additional people with different kinds of backgrounds involved is a greater depth of what you can offer.

WH: Why was the program named Wildlife Biology instead of, let's say, Wildlife Management or Wildlife Ecology or Wildlife Science, for example?

RT: Well, just a matter of finding a label. I do remember that when we went to originating this program in University of Washington, we simply translated the German designation, (unintelligible) and called it Wildlife Science to emphasize that it led to a graduate program. There was, I think, this change in emphasis in general in the University (unintelligible) from the time I started teaching until the end, and that is an increasing recognition that further work beyond four years will be required. Now at first, the emphasis was on four years, then it was on a master's degree, and then more on PhD so more and more schooling, more and more specialization later, so that people could operate on a higher level.

WH: What problems or advantages were there between the forestry, the arts and sciences, and the environmental studies programs?

RT: Well, the environmental studies program didn't exist when I was here before. This committee structure—we sat in two kinds of committees—the same people were on the wildlife committee and they were also on the faculty for the wildlife research unit, and so we did well and worked together well and had a general community of interests. So I don't think we had any negative problems.

WH: What advantages were there between those?

RT: Well, I think the great advantage in having specialists in, let's say, ornithology, mammology, etiology and various aspects of botany, as to fill in necessary fundamentals for wildlife students.

WH: When did the co-op unit arrive to the University?

RT: That was...It was before I got here, I think it was about 1954 or so, but that's another (unintelligible).

WH: All right. Do you recall what the early focus of the unit was or what was the focus—

RT: Well the first year...I happen to know the first leader was Cheetham, E.L. Cheetham, (?) from the state of New York who worked on deer reproduction. I guess he was here a year or two, not very long, and Craighead came. Early in Craighead's career he began working on grizzly bears, and that's been a large part of his career here.

WH: How has the focus changed for the unit?

RT: How has which changed?

WH: How has the focus of the unit changed?

RT: Oh, focus. Well, I think it's always going to be colored by whoever the leader is, and Cheetham was interested in reproduction and Craighead many things but the emphasis on grizzlies pretty heavy on field studies. Since Bart came here, Bart has more interest in physiology and also more interest in what's happening in other countries. So we have more students from abroad. Each leader puts his flavor on it.

WH: This question's kind of repetitive, who were the first leaders, assistant leaders of the unit, do you recall?

RT: Well, I don't know who the assistant leader was when Cheetham was here, because I wasn't here then. When John Craighead first came in, Gary Atwell (?) was assistant leader at one time, I think, maybe for a year or so. Wes Woodward (?) was a leader for several years. Was Bart an assistant leader? I've forgotten. That's about all I can remember.

WH: Do you recall how the unit was established?

RT: No that was before me. I'm sure they got to write (unintelligible).

WH: Okay, yes, that's what I figured. How well did the unit integrate with the wildlife program?

RT: Well, this depends upon the unit personnel, and the unit personnel are free to...Sometimes they're required to teach a course and sometimes not. I've always thought it was an unfortunate circumstance that when Craighead—much of John Craighead's career as a unit leader—students had very little contact with him. I can understand that. Busy in the field and busy with his things, but from a student point of view it would have been nice to see more of John.

WH: How did the unit change over the years?

RT: I really can't respond to that. I don't know too much about that. I mean, other than knowing the leaders and knowing their interests, I can't say.

WH: Who decided that the unit should start teaching classes?

RT: I don't know when that was decided. It must have been not at first, because maybe the sort of comment I made reached headquarters from other sources so that they said, yes, we do want to see those leaders on campus more. So, I'm just speculating at this point.

WH: What role did the unit play in the different majors, as far as classes that were taught?

RT: Well, during the time I was teaching here, people in the unit would occasionally respond if we asked them to give a special lecture or something, but they didn't have classes (unintelligible).

WH: How has the wildlife field changed during your career?

RT: I think you could say not enough, because I think the wildlife field was very closely oriented with developments and about...In the United States after World War Two, the United States was the only industrialized nation that was not ruined by that war. So everything that was manufactured in the United States, everything that was grown in the United States, had someplace to go. So there was a great emphasis on productivity, and that led to an emphasis on monoculture.

Monoculture of forestry, monoculture of (unintelligible), every kind of crop, monoculture of deer. So an emphasis was on species—domestic species or wild species—that we wanted to have more of. That kind of philosophy permeated resource agencies, and that meant that each kind of commodity—a thing that was produced—had its group of people around it. That is people who talk about it, people who administered it, people worked in it, people who provided equipment or machinery for it if it was a crop, people in Congress who looked out for it. So you can visualize a sort of circle of interests around water, around grass, around trees, around cotton, no doubt, around game animals—game fish. Along in the late '60s and '70s, new publics grew up that were interested in these things that didn't have a place at this table. So they were outside these little circles of utilizers, and that was, of course, the story of the next couple decades is the struggle of the people outside to get inside and to influence events. That's where we are right now. People on the outside have gotten stronger and stronger and more and more irritated by rebuffs from the ones on the inside.

I'd say that the wildlife profession tended to be one of these little circles around game species, pretty much. The wildlife profession was not quick to recognize that there are all these people outside with all these different kinds of interests that, since they weren't kind of paying the bills, they didn't have much attention paid to them. Until they started influencing legislation. A good example, really good example, of a bombshell change in legislation was the endangered species legislation, which suddenly made 90 percent of the animals a federal responsibility, potentially, if they became endangered. Plants too, all kinds of things. That's a big change.

WH: What positive and negative impacts did the different federal presidential administrations affect the wildlife field during your career?

RT: I think that in the '70s, legislation of the '70s—the environmentally oriented legislation—everything from the Wilderness Act I think was a...I'm not even sure it was in the 70s, might have been the '60s, late '60s. The Endangered Species Act, the federal ban on use of poisons in land management. Those have been very important watershed changes that have affected wildlife conservation either potentially or (unintelligible). A lot of the scenarios are still being worked out. A good example would be the grizzly, the wolf, things like that.

WH: What impact did the various wars that the U.S. was involved in, effect the wildlife field?

RT: World War Two affected it in this way that a lot of people could go to graduate school that never would have gone to graduate school without the G.I. Bill. I don't think there's been any major consequences of military activity. There've been some peripheral ones. For example in Korea, we lost a lot of people to scrub typhus, and scrub typhus is born by a bacteria it's on little ... if some little mite [mites] over there that carries it and a flea or a louse or a tick or something, gets it and carries it to people. Military adventures are led to finding out, getting an interest in why people die of strange diseases, and this put some wildlife-oriented people to work but this had not been major.

WH: What role, mainly, did you take in making or influencing the game management policies at Yellowstone National Park?

RT: I think it was 1960 or so that several of us here thought that the control of elk populations, by direct killing by Park Service, ought to be supported. Park Service had two, at least, groups that were opposed to that. One, the states thought that the hunters—it was hunter oriented—and it was the opportunity for the hunters to control the elk. So the state of Wyoming, state of Montana, thought that would be a good idea. The other group was the group of typical American national park policy philosophy group that thought there shouldn't be any killing in national parks.

Several of us here thought that the elk should be reduced because they were damaging the range. So we put out a statement of support for the Park Service. I remember at the North American Wildlife Conference that some of the state people took after us and said they wouldn't hire our students anymore because they were mad at us. But, most of our students were going to work for federal agencies (unintelligible). I felt then, and I still do now, that there should be more overt management of the mammals within the national parks when they are causing trouble, and that this business of just letting nature take her course is awfully hard on soil and plants and also on other animal dependent on soils and plants. For example the Yellowstone moose, beavers, just a couple of examples. There are lots of elk, but there are fewer and fewer of (unintelligible) animals.



WH: What role did you play in the other National Parks, for example Glacier?

RT: We did a couple of alpine studies in Glacier, but I can't recall being involved in any policy (unintelligible) in Glacier. We, in the state of Washington, provided information on the north Cascades, North Cascades National Park was, I think, created in 1968 and on Mount Rainer, studied elk on Mount Rainer, but again, no policy.

WH: Okay, I'm going to flip the tape.

RT: Yes.

[End of Tape 2, Side A]

[Tape 2, Side B]

WH: —as far as influencing policy?

RT: Offhand, I can't think of any. I may work with refuges sometimes, but I can't think of any particular aspect of policy influence. I think the main policies at... that little one in Yellowstone and then at the Forest Service.

WH: What controversies, if any, were you involved in with Yellowstone?

RT: At that time that was the question of reducing the elk. Direct reduction by Park Service employees was a controversial issue. We supported the Park Service.

WH: Okay, that was my last question of my interview.

[End of Interview]