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INTERVIEW OF ED TECHICK
INTERVIEWED BY DAVE CLARK
JANUARY 31, 1986

...WE NEED TO GET SOME BACKGROUND ON YOU TO KNOW WHERE YOU FIT IN...WHAT WAS YOUR DATE OF BIRTH?

MY NAME IS EDWARD TECHICK AND I WAS BORN AT TIMBER MOUNTAIN, IN A HOMESTEAD, SEPTEMBER 30, 1924, AND I'VE RESIDED IN THIS AREA EVER SINCE, EXCEPT THE TIME THAT I WAS IN THE MILITARY, DURING WORLD WAR II. FOR YEARS MY FOLKS LIVED AT THE BASE OF TIMBER MOUNTAIN IN A HOMESTEAD THAT THEY HOMESTEADED AND MY MOTHER CAME HERE IN 1913. MY FATHER CAME HERE WITH THE UTAH CONSTRUCTION COMPANY IN 1916 WHEN THEY CAME AND DEVELOPED ALL THE LAND ON THEIR FLAT AND MOVED ALL THEIR LIVESTOCK UP HERE FROM THE RANCH IN NEVADA AND HE CAME WITH 'EM. MY MOTHER AND HER PARENTS HAD CAME DOWN FROM BUTTE CAUSE THEY'D HEARD THAT THIS WAS THE LAND OF OPPORTUNITY AND THEY ALL TOOK UP A HOMESTEAD AT TIMBER MOUNTAIN. NEEDLESS TO SAY THEY NEARLY STARVED TO DEATH IN THE SAGEBRUSH AND THE RATTLESNAKES...GOT PRETTY DESTITUTE, SO MY OLD GRANDFATHER, BEING A SKILLED BLACKSMITH ALL HIS LIFE, HE GOT A JOB WORKING FOR THE UTAH CONSTRUCTION COMPANY, HERE ON THE FLAT, SHOEING HORSES AND SHARPENING PLOWSHARES AND DOING ALL THEIR GENERAL BLACKSMITHING... AND IN THE PROCESS HE HAD ONE OLD HORSE THAT HE'D GOT FROM A NEIGHBOR - THEY WERE VERY POOR - AND HE'D DRIVE DOWN AND STAY ALL WEEK; AND THEN ON THE WEEKENDS, WHY, HE'D EITHER HAVE MY MOTHER OR HIS OTHER [sic] DAUGHTER DOWN IN THE BUGGY TO PICK HIM UP AND BRING HIM HOME FOR THE WEEKEND. 'COURSE THEN, THIS TRAVELING BACK AND FORTH, THAT'S WHEN MY MOTHER MET MY FATHER, WAS GOING DOWN TO PICK UP HER FATHER, WHO WAS WORKING AT THE UTAH CONSTRUCTION COMPANY, WHICH WAS THE OLD SOLBERG [?] HEADQUARTERS, OUT HERE BY THE ROAD JUNCTION GOING FROM THE OLD ROAD FROM MARTIN AND THE NEW ROAD THAT GOES - THE HIGHWAY GOING TO CRATERS OF THE MOON. THE PROPERTY IS NOW OWNED, I THINK, BY TOTTEN'S, AND THEY HAVE A POTATO WAREHOUSE AND THE HEADQUARTERS THERE.

DID THEY HOMESTEAD THAT, OR -

THE UTAH CONSTUCTION COMPANY COME AND TOOK UP THAT LAND ON SOME KIND OF A RECLAMATION ACT. THERE WAS A LOT OF LAND, IF YOU'D PUT WATER ON IT SOME WAY, YOU COULD, UH, FILE ON IT AND IT WAS SIMULAR [sic] TO A HOMESTEAD. OF COURSE THEY'RE THE PEOPLE WHO BUILT THE MACKAY DAM, AND THEY RUN THE WATER FROM THE MACKAY DAM OUT THERE TO IRRIGATE IT.

RIGHT, OUT THROUGH THE CANALS WHICH ARE NO LONGER -

SOME OF THE OLD CANALS ARE STILL EXISTING, I CAN SHOW YOU A LOT OF THEM OUT THERE; SOME OF THEM ARE PLOWED IN BUT A LOT OF THEM ARE STILL THERE.

WHEN YOU SAY THEY BROUGHT LIVESTOCK WITH THEM, WHAT DID THE LIVESTOCK CONSIST OF?

WELL, THE BROUGHT 300 HEAD OF HORSES, WORK HORSES AND SADDLE HORSES, AND THAT'S WHAT MY FATHER DROVE UP FROM THE SHOESOLE RANCH IN NEVADA. AND THE FIRST PLACE THAT THEY DROVE THEM, BELIEVE IT OR NOT, IS RIGHT ON THIS RANCH WHERE YOU'RE

SITTING, THIS FORTY ACRES THAT I OWN. THEY'D RENTED IT TO PUT THEM IN HERE AND PASTURE THEM UNTIL THEY GOT SOME CORRALS BUILT UP HERE FOR THEM. OF COURSE THEY BROUGHT SOME CATTLE WITH THEM, BUT NOT MANY CATTLE AT THAT TIME. THEY BROUGHT WORK HORSES BECAUSE THEY WERE IN THE PROCESS OF PLOWING UP ALL OF THIS LAND AND PUTTING IT UNDER IRRIGATION. AND OF COURSE, ALL OF THIS - I HAVE A LOT OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT IT BECAUSE BOTH MY PARENTS WERE CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH [IT]; MY GRANDFATHER WORKING FOR THEM, AND MY FATHER - THAT'S - HE WORKED FOR THEM NINE YEARS IN NEVADA BEFORE HE CAME HERE, AND HE WAS ONE OF THEIR FOREMEN, AND HE WAS IN CHARGE OF THE HORSES AND THE MANAGING OF ALL THE HARNESS AND ALL THE EQUIPMENT TO KEEP THAT OPERATION RUNNING.

SO, THAT COMPANY, UTAH CONSTRUCTION, WAS MAINLY IN THIS AREA BECAUSE OF WHAT WAS ABOUT TO HAPPEN AT MACKAY DAM, AND SO ON?

OH, NO, THEY FILED ON THE EXCESS WATER OUT OF THE LOST RIVER AND BUILT THE DAM SO THAT THEY COULD IRRIGATE THAT [THE LAND].

SO, DID THEY THEY EXPAND OUT THERE AT A LATER TIME THERE, MORE LIVESTOCK, OR...

WELL THEY DIDN'T. THEY CAME HERE AND WERE SO BIG THEY REALLY DIDN'T NEED TO EXPAND. THEIR RANCHES WAS ALL CALLED BY SECTIONS: THEY HAD SECTION 36 AND SECTION 21 AND SECTION 16 AND SECTION 4, AND EACH ONE OF THOSE WAS 640 ACRES...WAS ALL UNDER CULTIVATION AND THAT'S A LOT OF LAND [chuckle], FOR THOSE DAYS, WHEN THEY DID ALL THE WORK WITH HORSES AND EVERYTHING.

SO, THE REAL TRICK TO ALL THAT WAS HAVING THE WATER OUT THERE THROUGH THAT CANAL.

MM-HMM, YEAH. SO THAT'S ABOUT SOME OF THE BASIC STORY I CAN TELL YOU ABOUT THE ERA FLAT AND HOW IT WAS DEVELOPED. THEN OF COURSE MY PARENTS AND MY GRANDPARENTS LIVED OUT AT THE FOOT OF TIMBER MOUNTAIN, OR WHAT YOU CALL TIMBERED DOME, THAT'S THE NEW NAME FOR IT... AND THE MARTINS LIVED JUST THE OTHER SIDE OF CHAMPAGNE CREEK, AND WHEN I WAS A CHILD THERE WAS PEOPLE MINING AT THE ONE SILVER MINE, BY THE NAME OF DALLIES [?], AND THEY WERE OPERATING THE HORN SILVER MINE THEN. THEY WERE THE FIRST KIDS THAT I EVER SEEN WHEN I WAS A CHILD, CAUSE I WAS PRETTY ISOLATED - I WAS THE ONLY ONE OUT THERE, AND BY THE TIME I WAS SIX YEARS OLD I WAS ACQUAINTED WITH THE DALLIES AND THE MARTINS. THERE WAS TOM AND SAM AND INEZ MARTIN; INEZ IS THE YOUNGEST, SHE'S THE GIRL, THE YOUNGEST GIRL. AND I ALSO KNEW OLD ERA MARTIN'S MOTHER; SHE WAS THE POSTMISTRESS OF MARTIN. SHE LIVED TO BE EITHER 100 OR 102 YEARS OLD. AND THEY HAD SOME KIND OF A TALK SHOW ON THE RADIO YEARS AGO AND SHE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO FLY BACK AND BE ON THAT BECAUSE SHE WAS THE OLDEST POSTMISTRESS [chuckle] IN THE UNITED STATES. AND, OH, SHE TALKED ABOUT IT FOR DAYS...

OF COURSE YOU MIGHT REMEMBER WHEN I WAS A BOY WE'D GO OVER AND VISIT THE MARTINS AND THEY HAD TWO BUFFALO SKULLS NAILED ON THEIR OLD CABIN AND I USED TO ASK HER ABOUT, "WAS THERE ANY BUFFALO WHEN YOU CAME HERE?" "OH, SURE, THEY WERE EVERYWHERE OUT HERE!" AND OF COURSE, SHE WAS ONE OF THE

VERY FIRST PIONEERS, I GUESS, TO THIS VALLEY, I DON'T KNOW THE EXACT TIME THAT THEY CAME BUT THEY WERE HERE LONG BEFORE THAT WAS EVER HOMESTEADED; THEY WERE SOME OF THE FIRST SETTLERS OUT THERE.

SO THEY WERE INTO A LITTLE BIT OF MINING, A LITTLE BIT OF...

YES, OLD ERA HAD SEVERAL MINES UP THE CANYON, BACK OF THE RANCH; IN FACT THERE'S STILL ONE UP THERE THAT HAS, OH, SOME LOCAL PEOPLE HAVE IT; THAT USED TO BE HIS. IT'S GOT SOME GOOD ORE IN IT, BUT THERE'S SO MUCH WATER THEY CAN'T GET IT OUT.

[DO] YOU REMEMBER WHAT THEY MAINLY MINED, WAS THAT SILVER?

WELL, NOW ALL OF THEM WERE MOSTLY SILVER, SOME'D HAVE A PERCENTAGE OF ZINC, LIKE THE OLD PAYMASTER, YOU KNOW, IT HAS A LOT OF ZINC.

[DO] YOU REMEMBER YOUR FIRST CONTACT WIHT THE MONUMENT?

OH, YES, UH, I CAN REMEMBER GOING OUT THERE WITH MY PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS IN THE MODEL T FORD WHICH WAS PROBABLY WHEN I WAS FOUR YEARS OLD. THE MAIN THING I CAN REMEMBER ABOUT IT WAS THE DUST BOILING UP THROUGH THE FLOORBOARDS OF THE OLD MODEL T SO BAD [laughs] THAT YOU COULDN'T SEE FOR DUST! I USED TO - BIG OLD KID - USED TO STAND UP BEHIND THE WINDSHIELD, AND GET UP CLOSE TO THE WINDSHIELD, 'CAUSE THE DUST BOILED UP THROUGH THOSE OLD BOARD FLOORS SO BAD YOU COULDN'T SEE WHERE YOU WAS GOING, HARDLY. AND THEN, OF COURSE, BY THE TIME I GOT IN - WE MOVED CLOSER IN SO I COULD GO TO SCHOOL - WHY, WE USED TO OFTEN HAVE OUR SCHOOL PLAY DAYS: SPRING PLAY DAY, WE'D GO TO CRATERS OF THE MOON. UH, I CAN REMEMBER ONE PARTICULAR YEAR THERE WAS ONLY SEVEN OF US IN THE WHOLE SCHOOL, AND THAT'S FROM GRADES ONE THROUGH EIGHT. WE WENT OUT THERE AND HAD A PICNIC, AND IT JUST POURED RAIN AND WE ALL GOT WET, AND OF COURSE, LIKE KIDS DO - WE WAS HAVING A BIG TIME. WHILE WE'RE ON THE SUBJECT, THOUGH, I WILL MENTION ONE THING THAT I'VE NOTICED: A REALLY DISTINCT CHANGE IN THE CRATERS. WHEN I WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL, WHY, WE HAD A SCHOOL PAPER THAT WAS CALLED "THE SPATTER CONE". IN FACT, I GUESS IT WENT ON FOR MAYBE TEN YEARS, THE SCHOOL PAPER WAS CALLED THAT - YOU'D HAVE TO LOOK AT THE RECORDS AND SEE, BUT, IT WAS FOR A LONG TIME. THEN, OF COURSE, WE ALWAYS WENT OUT THERE EVERY YEAR WHEN I WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL AND I HADN'T BEEN UP ON THE SPATTER CONES - I'M 61 NOW [1986] - SO, FROM THE TIME I WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL UNTIL TWO YEARS AGO I'D NEVER WALKED UP ON THE SPATTER CONES. AND JUST TO GIVE YOU AN IDEA OF HOW FRAGILE THOSE CRATERS ARE, I HARDLY RECOGNIZED THEM. THEY'RE WORN DOWN THAT BAD. THE OLD TRAILS AND THE WAY THAT WE USED TO GO UP - THEY'RE WORN DOWN TEN FEET! IT'S A VERY FRAGILE ENVIRONMENT, IT CRUMBLES AND SHATTERS AWAY, AND SO I WAS AMAZED! I JUST HAD A HARD TIME FINDING WHERE WE USED TO GO.

WELL, THAT'S PRETTY MUCH A KNOWN FACT, THAT YOU CAN LOOK AT THE OLD PHOTOGRAPHS -

OH, CAN YOU?

- OF WHICH THE EARLIEST WE HAVE IS 1922, AND THEY'RE NICE AND CRISP AND THEY'RE TALLER THAN THEY ARE NOW.

THEY REALLY WERE, NOW.

YOU CAN TELL HOW MUCH IS GONE. [HAVE] YOU BEEN OUT SINCE THEY'VE DONE THE REHABILITATION WORK ON THOSE, WHICH PRETTY MUCH WAS FINISHED UP LAST SUMMER?

UH-UH. TWO YEARS AGO WAS THE LAST TIME I CLIMBED UP ON THERE. I DROVE BY WHEN WE WENT OUT TO THE CRATERS TRAIL RIDE WITH OUR HORSES, BUT I DIDN'T GO OVER TO THE SPATTER CONES.

THEY'VE DONE A LOT OF WORK, NOT THAT THEY'VE MADE THEM TALLER OR ANYTHING ...

THEY FIXED IT UP TO PROTECT THEM, I GUESS.

...ASPHALT TRAILS, AND COVERED UP SOME OF THE COMMON USE TRAILS, AND NOW, EXCEPT FOR THE FIRST TWO, THEY'RE ALL CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC; AND, UH, YOU CAN WALK UP. IF YOU GO TO ONE SPATTER CONE IT'S ABOUT THE SAME AS IF YOU GO TO ALL OF THEM, BUT NOW WE CAN PROTECT THE REST OF THE CHAIN ALMOST COMPLETELY, OUT THERE. SO, UH, THAT HAS BEEN DONE. TALKING ABOUT CHANGES THAT HAVE OCCURRED, THAT ONE, I'M SURE, WOULD BE THE MOST STRIKING, UH, AND CRATERS IS A PRETTY, WELL, IT'S ACTUALLY A PRETTY FRAGILE AREA, BUT IN ANOTHER WAY IT IS FAIRLY TOUGH.

OH, YES.

IT'S HARD TO SEE REAL PROBLEMS OUT THERE. ONE THING THAT WE'VE HAD A LOT OF COMMENTS ABOUT, ESPECIALLY FROM PEOPLE THAT HAVE COME BACK TWENTY YEARS LATER -

WELL, SEE, I WAS - WELL, I HADN'T BEEN UP THERE FOR NEARLY FIFTY YEARS.

FIFTY YEARS, O.K.

AND, BOY, DID IT, AH, IT REALLY SHOWED.

HOW DID THE AMOUNT OF VEGETATION OUT THERE STRIKE YOU?

OH, AH, THE VEGETATION HAS COME BACK.

IN OTHER WORDS, THEN, A LOT MORE OF THE AREA IS COVERED WITH IT, WHEREAS IT USED TO BE BARREN AND BLACK.

WELL, I KNOW, THIS MIGHT NOT BE AN APPROPRIATE THING TO SAY TO YOU, BUT THERE WAS A TERRIBLE FIRE THROUGH THE CRATERS IN - I EITHER THINK DURING THE WAR OR RIGHT AFTER - '41, MAYBE, JUST BEFORE I WENT IN THE SERVICE? CAN'T REMEMBER, MAYBE JUST WHEN I CAME BACK...BUT, SOMETIME ALONG THEN. NOW THAT BURNT OFF, AND AFTER THAT, IT JUST COME BACK, WAS JUST A SEA OF GRASS OUT THERE WHERE IT USED TO BE...LIKE IN THE BIG BASIN WHERE THE - ERA USED TO KEEP HIS CATTLE, WHAT DO YOU CALL THAT FLAT? YOU MENTIONED IT A MINUTE AGO, THAT BIG GRASS PRAIRIE THEY HAVE. SEE, WHAT HE USED TO DO WAS TAKE HIS CATTLE ACROSS THAT RIFT. HE HAD A BRIDGE THERE, OUTTA LOGS -

LITTLE PRAIRIE.

THERE YOU GO, THAT'S IT. LITTLE PRAIRIE. THAT PLACE HAS REALLY CHANGED. OF COURSE, BEING IN THE MONUMENT, YOU SEE, FOR A LONG TIME AND NO ONE GRAZING IT, HELPED. JUST A SEA OF GRASS; IT DIDN'T USED TO BE THAT WAY. A LOT OF PLACES, EVERY PLACE THAT BURNT OFF IN THE 40's, IS JUST LUSH NOW COMPARED TO WHAT IT USED TO BE.

WELL, THEN, YOU FEEL THAT 'MOST ALL THAT AREA THAT'S NOW THE CRATERS BURNT DURING THIS FIRE? IT WAS QUITE A FIRE?

WELL, YEAH, IT GOT OUT OF HAND, IT WENT THROUGH EVERY PLACE THROUGH THERE THAT WASN'T SO CINDERY IT WOULDN'T BURN. ANY OF THE BRUSH PART BURNT...I WAS THERE, I REMEMBER IT.

HOW ABOUT NORTH OF THE HIGHWAY? DID IT GET IN THE FOOTHILLS?

NOPE. JUST ON THE DESERT.

JUST ON THE DESERT OUT THERE.

IT HAD A 22-MILE FRONT AT ONE TIME.

WELL, YOU SAY IT GOT AWAY FROM THEM, DO YOU MEAN THE PARK SERVICE WAS BURNING IT, OR WAS IT -

DIDN'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH IT. IT STARTED OUT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DESERT, AND - PARTICULAR STRANGE YEAR, WE HAD QUITE A BIT OF EAST WIND AND IT BLEW IT THIS WAY. BURNED AREAS THAT HAD NEVER BURNED BEFORE.

[DO YOU] REMEMBER WHAT TIME OF YEAR IT WAS?

OH, SURE. AUGUST, JUST LIKE ALL OF THEM, RIGHT IN THE WORST TIME. NOW, FROM HERE IN THE VALLEY, WHY, IT JUST LIT UP THE WHOLE SKY AT NIGHT, IT WAS THAT LONG: IT WAS 22 MILES. THEY HAD FIREFIGHTERS FROM EVERYWHERE OUT THERE, TRYING TO PUT IT OUT BUT THEY DIDN'T DO VERY GOOD, COULDN'T DO IT. THE TERRAIN WAS SO ROUGH, IN THOSE YEARS YOU DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH EQUIPMENT. YOU KNOW, THEY HAD - I THINK THEY HAD 500 MEN ON IT AT ONE TIME. THEY WAS AFRAID IT WAS GOING TO TAKE SOME RANCHES, HOMES, AND EVERYTHING, BUT...

IT JUST EVENTUALLY -

FINALLY, IT JUST BURNT ITSELF OUT. OH, THERE'S BEEN SMALL FIRES UP ACROSS THE HIGHWAY UP IN THE OTHER PART OF THE CRATERS, BUT THIS PARTICULAR TIME THE WHOLE DESERT WENT.

HMMM...WELL, YOU KNOW, THAT'S INTERESTING, BECAUSE THE RECORDS THAT ARE OUT THERE ARE POOR. IF YOU WANT TO LOOK AT, WELL, PLANT SUCCESSION, AND WHAT'S HAPPENING OUT THERE, YOU REALLY NEED TO KNOW THAT, AND THAT POSSIBLY IN THE EARLY 40's, IT PRETTY MUCH BURNT TO THE GROUND AND THAT EVERYTHING HAS STARTED TO CYCLE BACK THROUGH AGAIN...AND SO, UH, THAT'S INTERESTING...AND IT ALLOWS US TO GO BACK FURTHER AND MAYBE TRACE, TRY TO TRACE, MAYBE, MORE DETAILS ON THAT TYPE OF THING. UH, AND ALSO ANOTHER QUESTION YOU WOULD BE ABLE TO OBSERVE, YOU BEING AROUND THAT GENERAL AREA, CONCERNS THE WILDLIFE...AND MOST OF THE INFORMATION THAT WE HAVE ON THE WILDLIFE IS BITS AND PIECES HERE AND THERE, AND REFERENCES IN THE LOST RIVER VALLEY ABOUT THE WAY THINGS WERE, AND SOME PEOPLE, I THINK, WERE VERY GOOD AT RECORDING THESE, AND SOME PEOPLE WEREN'T...WE'VE HEARD THAT INITIALLY, MUCH MORE OF THIS VALLEY MUST HAVE BEEN COVERED IN, ALONG THE LOST RIVER, MUST HAVE BEEN IN TREES, AND A LOT OF COVER; WHERE WHITE-TAIL WERE PROBABLY THE PREDOMINANT DEER IN THIS AREA...AND LIKE A LOT OF THE WEST, ONCE THE TREES WERE CUT DOWN AND THE FARMS WERE PUT IN, WHITE-TAILS DIDN'T HAVE THE COVER AND MULE DEER BEGAN TO SPREAD INTO THOSE AREAS...SO IT WOULD MAKE SENSE, EARLY REPORTS OUT AT CRATERS REPORT VERY FEW MULE DEER, AND NOW THERE'S A SUBSTANTIAL-SIZED HERD OUT THERE. ALSO EARLY REPORTS OF SHEEP, UH, BIG-HORNED SHEEP, AND, THEN A FEW REPORTS, MOSTLY ENDING ABOUT [THE] MID-20's, OF, UH, GRIZZLY BEAR IN THAT AREA. [DO] YOU HAVE A FEW OBSERVATIONS OF THE WILDLIFE AND THE CHANGES THAT HAVE -

OH, SURE, I'VE QUITE A BIT TO SAY ABOUT THAT. UP UNTIL 1936 WE NEVER SEEN A DEER UP AT TIMBERED DOME. IT WAS UNHEARD OF. UH, THE FIRST ONES THAT WE SEEN WAS IN THE SUMMER OF '36. MY DAD WAS A - LOVED TO HUNT ALL HIS LIFE, AND HE USED TO GO TO SALMON AND STAY WITH HIS BEST FRIEND IN SALMON, THOSE

YEARS, TO GO DEER HUNTING - WASN'T ANY DEER HERE. THEN BY THE 50's THERE WAS SO MANY DEER THAT YOU COULDN'T GO UP ANY CANYON WITHOUT STUMBLING OVER THEM.

YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT MULE DEER...

YEAH, ALL THE WILD MULE DEER, [THE POPULATION] JUST EXPLODED. THEN, OF COURSE, THE GAME COMMISSION GOT THIS FANCY IDEA THAT THEY'D HAVE A TWO-DEER SEASON, TWO BUCKS AND ALL OF THAT, AND THEY NEARLY ANNIHILATED THEM BEFORE WE GOT RID OF THAT PARTICULAR [chuckle] BIOLOGIST, THAT GAME BIOLOGIST; AND THEN THEY STARTED COMING BACK. BUT I DON'T THINK I'D GO ALONG WITH THE STORY ABOUT THE RIVER BOTTOMS HERE BEING FULL OF WHITE-TAIL; 'CAUSE WHEN I WAS JUST A CHILD, I HAD A VERY OLD FRIEND, ONE OF THE FIRST PIONEERS THAT CAME TO LOST RIVER, OLD ALEX BEAVERLAND [?], UP TO MOORE. [HE] SAID THAT WHEN HE CAME HERE, THIS WHOLE VALLEY WAS SOLID FROM [UNINTELLIGIBLE] TO MOUNTAIN WITH NOTHING BUT BEAVER DAMS, AND THERE WASN'T ANY TREES, IT WAS JUST WILLOWS. [IT WAS] JUST A VERY FEW COTTONWOODS TILL YOU GOT TO MACKAY, AND DARLINGTON; AND THERE'S NO SIGN OF ANY - AND I BELIEVE THAT, BECAUSE, THERE'S THIS WHOLE VALLEY, SEE, IF THIS - WELL, AND ANOTHER ONE WAS, UH, A FELLA UP TO MOORE BY THE NAME OF DWAYNE NATION, HE'S STILL ALIVE. HIS FATHER CAME HERE ALONG ABOUT THE SAME TIME;AND HE SAID THERE WASN'T ANY WAY THAT YOU COULD GET A TEAM AND A BUGGY ACROSS LOST RIVER, FROM THE HILL ROAD ON THE EAST SIDE OVER HERE, TO THE WEST SIDE. IN ANY OF THE SUMMER MONTHS YOU COULD NEVER CROSS.

JUST A BIG POND -

JUST A BIG BEAVER-DAM SWAMP. AND THESE PEOPLE SAY THAT THEY SEE WHITE-TAIL AROUND OR THERE'S BEEN WHITE-TAIL, I'VE NEVER EXPERIENCED IT IN ALL MY LIFETIME HERE THAT I'VE EVER SEEN A WHITE-TAIL IN THIS VALLEY. I'VE HEARD RUMORS, BUT I'VE NEVER SEEN 'EM, AND I'M A HUNTER AND I GET AROUND A LOT, BUT I HAVEN'T.

SO AS FAR AS YOU ARE CONCERNED, UNTIL 1936, WHEN MULE DEER STARTED TO MOVE INTO THIS AREA -

WELL, WHAT HAPPENED, WASN'T A MATTER OF MOVING IN. THEY WERE HERE. THE MINERS KILLED 'EM ALL. THEY KILLED EVERYTHING IN THE HILLS, TO EAT. THEY USED TO MARKET 'EM. I'VE HAD A LOT OF OLD PEOPLE THAT'S TOLD ME THIS, ERA MARTIN, FOR ONE. ALL THOSE MINERS, THE HILLS WAS FULL OF MINERS, YOU KNOW, WITH THE SILVER RUSH, AND THE BIG BOOM HERE. THAT'S ALL THEY HAD TO EAT, AND THEY KILLED 'EM AND FED 'EM TO THE BOARDINGHOUSES: NOBODY COMPLAINED, AND NOBODY CARED.

SO THEY FED THEM TO THE MINERS THAT WERE WORKING THE MINES -

WELL, WHAT I - THEY ALL HAD BOARDINGHOUSES, MOST OF 'EM - WOULD HAVE A CREW OF MINERS, AND A COOK SHACK, AND THE MARKET HUNTERS WOULD BRING THEM AND SELL THEM FOR FIVE CENTS A POUND.

SO WHAT HAPPENED JUST PRIOR TO '36, THEN -

WELL, YOU SEE, WE'RE TALKING ABOUT THE TIMES FROM THE TURN OF THE CENTURY TO '36; THIS COUNTRY WAS SWARMING WITH MINERS AND HUNGRY HOMESTEADERS, AND THEY JUST KILLED THEM ALL AND ATE 'EM. YOU SHOULD READ MY MOTHER'S DIARY. THE WINTER THAT THEY SPENT HERE AT TIMBER MOUNTAIN - FIRST YEAR - IT WAS

GOING TO BE SUCH A LUSH COUNTRY...THERE WASN'T ANYTHING TO EAT! THERE WAS NOT A DEER, NOT A RABBIT, NOT A SAGE CHICKEN OR ANYTHING.

AND YOU FEEL -

NO WILDLIFE, [IT] WAS GONE.

JUST THE WAY THE -

MARKET HUNTERS KILLED 'EM ALL.

O.K., O.K. -

THAT'S WHAT THE OLD PEOPLE ALL TOLD ME. THEY WOULDN'T MAKE NO BONES ABOUT IT, BECAUSE THEY JUST SAYS, "WELL, WE DIDN'T HAVE NOTHING TO EAT. WE JUST KILLED 'EM."

SO . . .

THEN I - BUT - AMOS TAYLOR, WHO LIVED UP ANTELOPE [CREEK] FROM ALONG ABOUT THIS SAME ERA, HE'S 90-SOME YEARS OLD, STILL LIVES IN ARCO...UH, HE SAID THERE WASN'T ANY DEER UP ANTELOPE, WHEN HE CAME HERE. AND HE SAID - BUT - HE STARTED MENTIONING SEEING THEM EARLIER THEN WE DID DOWN HERE. HE STARTED SAYING, "THERE'S A FEW DEER AROUND", BY THE LATE 20's. SO I'M SURE THAT THAT HERD BUILT UP, MIGRATED OVER HERE...HECK, YOU KNOW, THOSE YEARS, WHY, YOU DIDN'T EVEN HAVE TO HAVE A HUNTING LICENSE, TO GO DEER HUNTING. DIDN'T EVEN HAVE TO HAVE A TAG. I HAVE AN OLD FRIEND THAT HAS PICTURES WHERE THEY WENT OUT. THEY HAD TWENTY DEER HANGING IN THE TREES. FOUR OR FIVE OF 'EM, OUT CAMPED IN A TEPEE AND JUST HAVING A BIG TIME.

SO, JUST ABOUT ANY TIME OF YEAR THEY WANTED TO DO IT . . .

WELL, THEY USUALLY WENT IN THE FALL, AND JUST STAY THERE FOR A WEEK, AND JUST HUNT UNTIL THEY GOT TIRED OF IT. SO I'M SURE THAT HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH IT, AND THEN I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY WHEN THE GAME LAWS CAME IN AS FAR AS HOW MANY, AND ALL ABOUT THAT. I CAN REMEMBER MY FIRST DEER TAG, BUT I GOT THAT WHEN I WAS TWELVE.

UH -

USED TO COST FIFTY CENTS.

[chuckle] HARDLY SEEMED WORTH IT, HUH? BACK THEN FIFTY CENTS WAS QUITE A BIT, COMPARED TO WHAT IT IS TODAY.

YUP.

HOW ABOUT THE ELK? THE ELK, FOR ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES, ARE STILL JUST STARTING TO INCREASE, THEY'RE STILL NOT IN GREAT NUMBERS, BUT, HAVE THEY JUST LAGGED BEHIND THE DEER AND -

WELL, THEY'RE TRANSPLANTS, I GUESS YOU KNEW. THIS FELLA THAT WE WERE TALKING ABOUT, MR. PAISLEY, WAS ONE OF THE FIRST...AH, PARK RANGERS. HIS BROTHER-IN-LAW, T. C. YOUNG, UP TO MOORE, WAS ONE OF OUR FIRST GAME WARDENS HERE. HE WAS A VERY CLOSE FRIEND OF MY FATHER'S - OF COURSE THEY ALL GREW UP HERE, LIVED HERE SO MANY YEARS, PIONEERS, YOU KNOW, TOGETHER. I WITNESSED THE FIRST THREE ELK THAT CAME HERE. TOM [UNINTELLIGIBLE] WENT OVER TO YELLOWSTONE PARK AND GOT THEM OUT OF THE TRAP, AND HAD THEM IN A HORSE TRAILER, ONE BULL AND TWO COWS AND THEY STOPPED BY THE RANCH TO SHOW MY DAD HIS ELK, AND THEY TOOK THEM UP INTO COPPER BASIN. THAT WAS IN...1940. THAT WAS THE FIRST 'PLANT - ELK WAS UNHEARD OF, HERE.

RIGHT, RIGHT. WELL, THAT HAPPENED THROUGHOUT A LOT OF THE WEST.

IN FACT, YOU COULDN'T EVEN GET AN ELK, UP SALMON, THOSE YEARS. 'CAUSE MY DAD'D GO UP THERE DEER HUNTING, WITH HIS BEST FRIEND, AND THEY NEVER SEEN ANY ELK THOSE YEARS AROUND SALMON. THEY ALL CAME SINCE - WELL, THEY NEVER GOT THICK UNTIL THE 50's. I USED TO GO UP TO SALMON AND HUNT THEM THEN, AND THERE WASN'T ANY ELK HERE, THEN. HUNTABLE ELK, THAT IS.

WELL, THEY STILL SEEM TO BE GRADUALLY INCREASING, UH -

THEY'RE DEFINITELY INCREASING.

- WHEN I GOT HERE EIGHT YEARS AGO IT WAS UNHEARD OF TO SEE AN ELK IN THE NORTH END OF THE PARK. AND NOW, THERE'S BEEN A GROUP IN THE NORTH END EVERY SPRING. AND, YOU KNOW, THEY'RE JUST SEEING THEM MORE THROUGHOUT THAT ENTIRE AREA, BUT STILL, NOT IN HUGE NUMBERS OR ANYTHING, BUT THEY'RE JUST GRADUALLY EXPANDING. AH, THE GRIZZLY, WE KNOW, EXISTED OUT AT CRATERS. THERE WERE STORIES THAT ERA MARTIN, SOME YEARS, KILLED AS MANY AS TWENTY GRIZZLIES. THERE WERE STORIES THAT THEY TRIED TO TRAP A GRIZZLY FOR THE WORLD'S FAIR IN SEATTLE OUT THERE, BUT WERE UNSUCCESSFUL. NOW, ALL OF THOSE STORIES WERE KIND OF UNDOCUMENTED, BUT, UH, ABOUT FIVE YEARS AGO, B.L.M., OUT IN THE LAVAS, ACTUALLY FOUND THE SKELETONS OF A GRIZZLY [sic] AND HAD SOMEBODY LOOK AT IT, AND THEY ESTIMATED THAT THEY FELT THE BEARS HAD BEEN DEAD ABOUT SIXTY YEARS, WHICH ALL FITS IN TO THIS TIME IN THE EARLY 1900's, THAT WE TEND TO SAY, YEAH, THERE WERE GRIZZLIES THERE. HOW MANY, IS A QUESTION, IF THAT FIGURE ON ERA MARTIN, OF 20, IS TRUE, THAT'S A LOT! DO YOU REMEMBER ANY STORIES ON GRIZZLIES OR ANYTHING?

WELL, I'M SORRY I CAN'T GIVE YOU ANY INFORMATION ABOUT THAT. IF THERE WAS ANY GRIZZLIES THEY WERE GONE LONG BEFORE ANYONE THAT I WAS ASSOCIATED WITH, OR [BEFORE] MY PARENTS HAD CAME HERE. AND I NEVER DID HEAR ANY OF THEM MENTION A GRIZZLY BEAR. THAT DOESN'T MEAN THEY WEREN'T HERE. THE OTHER PERSON THAT YOU COULD ASK ABOUT THIS THAT WAS IN REAL CLOSE ASSOCIATION WITH THE MARTINS - IN FACT, HE PRACTICALLY GREW UP WITH THEM - WAS STAN MORELL [?], HE LIVES DOWN TO BLACKFOOT. HE GOES TO ST. GEORGE, UTAH, NOW, FOR THE WINTER, BUT HE LIVES IN BLACKFOOT, IDAHO, AND I DON'T KNOW WHAT STREET THEY LIVE ON, BUT...STANLEY MORELL.

WHAT DID YOU SAY HE -

HE JUST PRACTICALLY LIVED WITH THE MARTINS ALL HIS LIFE. HIM AND TOM'S THE SAME AGE, AND THEY RAN AROUND TOGETHER. THEY LIVED WITH THE MARTINS MORE THAN I DID. SEE, WE LIVED ABOUT...HOW FAR IS THAT, FROM MARTIN TO TIMBER MOUNTAIN?

OH, AS THE CROW FLIES...

TEN MILES? OH, ABOUT TEN MILES FROM THEM, SEE, BUT...STAN MORELL LIVED WITH THEM FOR YEARS AND YEARS. BUT I NEVER DID HEAR OF ANY BEAR AROUND TIMBER MOUNTAIN;'COURSE, THIS ISN'T THE RIGHT ENVIRONMENT FOR THEM. IN FACT, IT WAS A STRANGE PHENOMENON, WE NEVER SEEN A BEAR, WE HAD SHEEP FOR ALL THOSE YEARS, AND NEVER SEEN A BEAR EVER, UNTIL,LET'S SEE...PROBABLY '52. 1952. FIRST BEAR WE EVER SEEN OUT THERE. OF COURSE, THAT WAS JUST BROWN BEAR, SMALL BLACK BEAR, AND JUST A FEW OF THOSE, BUT I NEVER HEARD ANY GRIZZLY STORIES EVER. WE USED TO HEAR WOLF STORIES A LOT, THOUGH. TIMBER WOLVES, ER, UH, PRAIRIE WOLVES, COMING THROUGH THE COUNTRY,

SOME WINTERS.

DID YOU EVER SEE WHAT YOU WOULD SAY WAS A TIMBER WOLF?

YEAH, I SEEN THEIR TRACKS, I SEEN WHERE THEY TORE A MAN'S COYOTE TRAP ALL TO PIECES AND GOT AWAY. TRACKS IN THE SNOW, AND I'VE HEARD THEM HOWLING AT NIGHT. THERE WAS A STRETCH ALONG THERE IN THE MID-30's THAT THERE WAS FAR TOO MANY PEOPLE MENTIONING IT, BUT I NEVER ACTUALLY SEEN ONE, BUT I SEEN THEIR TRACKS, YOU KNOW IT COULDN'T BE ANYTHING ELSE. AND THEN YOU'D HEAR THEM HOWLING AT NIGHT.

...A LOT MORE MASSIVE THAN A COYOTE...

OH, HUGE, COMPARED. AND OF COURSE, THERE WASN'T ANY MOUNTAIN LION AROUND HERE UNTIL ALONG IN THE 50's, EITHER. THEY CAME WITH THE DEER. AND I NEVER HEARD OF A MOUNTAIN LION...IN FACT IT WAS A PRETTY DARN BARREN COUNTRY THERE FOR A LONG TIME, AND I THINK IT WAS AS THE GAME COME BACK, A LOT OF OTHER THINGS DID TOO.

WELL, SOUNDS LIKE A LOT OF IT WAS RELATED TO THE, THE MINERS -

OH, YEAH.

WHAT YOU CALL COMMERCIAL HUNTERS AND SO ON JUST KILLING OFF THE DEER AND WITHOUT THE DEER -

THE OTHER THINGS WENT WITH IT, YOU KNOW.

THE OTHER THINGS THAT CAME IN WITH THEM WERE KILLED OFF TOO -

WELL, THEY'D JUST EITHER GET KILLED OFF OR LEAVE. THEY HAD TO.

RIGHT, WELL, YOU KNOW, IT'S JUST THAT TODAY, YOU COULD HAVE - YOU COULD KILL A HUNDRED DEER, AND FOR A HUNDRED DEER THERE'D PROBABLY BE ONE MOUNTAIN LION AND MAYBE BE ONE BEAR, WHILE THOSE SAME HUNTERS PROBABLY KILLED OFF A FEW OF THEM, BUT THERE WAS ONLY A FEW AROUND ANYWAY.

YEAH.

TOOK YEARS FOR THEM TO COME BACK. SO...

OF COURSE, AS MUCH MOISTURE AND DAMP SURROUNDINGS AS GRIZZLIES LIKE, SEEMS HARD FOR ME TO REALIZE THAT THERE'D BE MANY GRIZZLIES THAT EVER LIVED IN THE CRATERS FOR VERY LONG. THEY MIGHT MIGRATE THROUGH THERE, BUT...NOT THE RIGHT ENVIRONMENT FOR THEM.

YEAH, WE DON'T HAVE A LOT OF INFORMATION ON THAT, AND THE ACTUAL FIND OF GRIZZLY REMAINS OUT IN THE LAVAS - I'M NOT TALKING UP IN THE FOOTHILLS - WAY OUT IN THE LAVAS, AND THEY ANALYZED THEIR STOMACH CONTENTS, AND THEY FOUND THAT, OH, THERE WAS A LITTLE BIT OF RABBIT, AND A LITTLE BIT OF ANTELOPE, IN THE DROPPINGS THAT THEY HAD AND...BUT MOST OF IT WAS JUST VEGETATION AND SO ON. THEY SAID THERE WAS A WATER SOURCE THERE AND, YOU KNOW...THAT GIVES A LOT OF VALIDITY TO ALL THESE STORIES ABOUT THE GRIZZLIES OUT IN THE LAVAS, BUT THE STORIES ARE ALL KIND OF, A LOT OF THEM ARE ARE SECOND-, OR THIRD-, OR FOURTH-HAND, AND YOU QUESTION THAT AND...BUT WHEN B.L.M. ACTUALLY FOUND THE REMAINS, THEN YOU HAVE TO SAY, WELL, NOW WE KNOW IT CERTAINLY IS POSSIBLE -

DEFINITELY WAS A GRIZZLY?

RIGHT, RIGHT. AND THAT'S NOT THAT DIFFICULT TO TELL -

OH, NO, THAT'S EASY.

YEAH. SO WE'VE GOT ONE OF THEM ON DISPLAY OUT THERE NOW, AND IT'S A MASSIVE SKULL, AND -

WHAT, DID THEY FIND IT DOWN IN A LAVA CRACK SOMEWHERE?

WELL, IT WAS - I HESITATE TO CALL IT A CAVE, BUT IT WAS AN AREA WHERE YOU COULD GET BACK IN - WELL, IT MORE OR LESS WAS KIND OF A CAVE-SHELTERED AREA, AND THERE WERE THE REMAINS OF THREE BEARS. TWO OF THEM WERE PRETTY BADLY GONE, BUT THE THIRD ONE WAS IN FAIRLY GOOD SHAPE, AND BEING IN A CAVE, THAT PRETTY WELL PRESERVED THEM, AND LIKE I SAY -

THAT'S PRETTY GOOD. WELL, THAT'S THE KIND OF PROOF YOU NEED.

WELL, YEAH, THAT PROVES IT. NOW WE WANT MORE OF THE STORIES, 'CAUSE WE KNOW THAT THE STORIES, PROBABLY MANY OF THEM WERE TRUE, BUT, UH, ----

[EDITOR'S NOTE: AT THIS POINT, THE TAPE RUNS OUT; AND SO, AS THE SUN SINKS SLOWLY IN THE WEST...]