8-5-2010

Robert Leonard Christensen oral history interview by Robert Cardin, August 5, 2010

Robert Leonard Christensen (Interviewee)

Robert Cardin (Interviewer)

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/flstud_oh

Part of the American Studies Commons, and the Community-based Research Commons

Scholar Commons Citation


http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/flstud_oh/204

This Oral History is brought to you for free and open access by the Digital Collection - Florida Studies Center at Scholar Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Digital Collection - Florida Studies Center Oral Histories by an authorized administrator of Scholar Commons. For more information, please contact scholarcommons@usf.edu.
Robert Cardin: Hello. Good afternoon, this is Robert Cardin. Today is August 5, 2010. I’m interviewing Bobby Christensen at Dive Odyssea in Fort Pierce, Florida. I’m interviewing for the Gulf and South Atlantic Fisheries Foundation project with the Fort Pierce fishermen on the Oculina Bank. Welcome, Bobby. Would you please state your name and spell it for the record?

Robert Leonard Christensen: Robert, R-o-b-e-r-t, Leonard, L-e-o-n-a-r-d, Christensen, C-h-r-i-s-t-e-n-s-e-n.

RC: Bobby, where and when were you born?

RLC: I was born in Denville, New Jersey.
RC: Okay, and when?

RLC: Sixty-three [1963].

RC: When did you move to Fort Pierce, Bobby?

RLC: Well, we moved to Miami first. We moved to Fort Pierce in 1970, seventy-two [1972].

RC: What brought you here?

RLC: My dad started commercial kingfishing.

RC: Okay. Bobby, are you married now?

RLC: No.

RC: Have you ever been married?

RLC: No.

RC: Okay.

RLC: Close, but no. (laughs) No cigar.

RC: Do you have any children?

RLC: Yes, I do have a daughter; lives down in Pompano [Beach]. Yes.

RC: And how old is she?

RLC: She is twenty years old.

RC: Okay. Bobby, how much schooling do you have?

RLC: Twelfth grade.

RC: Okay. Do you have any other jobs besides fishing?

RLC: Well, I do now, see, because of all those rules and the regulations of all the situations I had.

RC: Well, that’s interesting. We’ll get to that. But, I mean, what field are you in at this point? What kinds of jobs you’ve had at this point?

RLC: Well, at this point, I work for Pelican Seafood.
RC: Okay, so you’re in the fish market business?

RLC: Yes, I’m still in the fish market business.

RC: What other jobs have you done since you’ve got out of fishing?

RLC: Plumbing.

RC: Okay. Do you currently have a boat, Bobby?

RLC: Just a little play river boat, yes.

RC: Sixteen footer?

RLC: A fifteen foot Skipjack.

RC: Skipjack? Okay. Well, Bob, now I’d like to talk to you some about the Oculina Bank. How familiar are you with the Oculina Bank?

RLC: Way before they even called it the Oculina Bank.

RC: What’s the true name of the Oculina Bank, Bobby’s Fishing Hole? (laughs)

RLC: Yeah, it used to be.

RC: Why was Oculina Bank designated as an area to protect? Do you know?

RLC: Well, to me, in my recollection, was they thought that everybody was tearing up the coral by anchoring up, which I’ve never anchored up in there.

RC: Is there anything else you can tell me about the Oculina Bank, like what do you know about it?

RLC: Well, it was always a good place to catch grouper.

RC: What do you think about the closure of the Oculina Bank to anchoring and bottom fishing?

RLC: Well, it sure put a lot of—it put a big damper on everything, ’cause I ran my father’s boat and basically all the rules and regulations—all we could do was golden tilefish at that point.

RC: So, I guess, even with golden tilefish, he had to drive around it coming home?

RLC: Right.

RC: How did y’all cope with that?
RLC: Well, that was a lot of fuel, lot of extra fuel burned.

RC: Has the closure of the Oculina Bank affected your fishing, and how? I mean, exactly how did it (inaudible) you down?

RLC: Well, that was a good 50 percent of my income come from the Oculina Bank.

RC: Is “50 percent,” you’re referring to the grouper [and] snapper species?


RC: If anchoring and bottom fishing Oculina Bank was not prohibited, would you fish there?

RLC: Well, no—I mean—repeat that one more time.

RC: If the Oculina Bank had never been closed and it was still open, would you be fishing there?

RLC: Oh, yes, 100 percent.

RC: And now, here we go: How would you fish for, and what?

RLC: Well, I used to longline cable.

RC: And was that for the groupers?

RLC: Yes.

RC: How did you do that? I mean, was that like on the peaks or out in the sand around them?

RLC: Actually, it was a flat bottom. It was flat bottoms offshore the steeples.

RC: What kind of grouper live outside of the peaks there?

RLC: Well, yellowedge and snowy.

RC: Okay. That’s one of the first comments I’ve had about that, so I’d like to ask you a little bit more about it. Some people talk about fishing right on the peaks. Was it different species that took you to the bottom or outside of them?

RLC: Yes, yes. The yellowedge were a deeper fish than the steeples itself.

RC: Right. What, they just lived on the shelf bottom or something?

RLC: Right. It’s a hard bottom out there, a hard bottom.

RC: Okay, that’s interesting. So, would I assume that, like, they’re not really jammed up with
the gag groupers and the stuff; they go off on their own?

RLC: Mm-hm. Right, it seems like they stay together, you know? They seem like they migrate by the—schools of them.

RC: But, I mean, they’re not really interacting with the gag groupers much?

RLC: No. No, you hardly ever catch them out there at all.

RC: Well, let me ask you this much: What depth were you catching them at?

RLC: Well, 360 feet of water.

RC: Oh, okay. Well, that is definitely outside of the peaks.

RLC: Yes, yes. It’s about a good half a mile offshore to the steeples.

RC: Cool. And I heard you used the word “snowies”; is that also where you’d fish for some snowies?

RLC: Yes. Different times of the year. I know a little spot to go there, you know, in that depth.

RC: We’re here on the map; here we are. We’re looking at the shallow water part of the closure, from the 0.80 line, the GPS line. You remember that one?

RLC: Right.

RC: That was inside the edge, and then the outside, and then there’s that bottom out there.

RLC: All right.

RC: So, is that what you’re referring to?

RLC: Yes.

RC: Okay, thank you. Next thing, overall, how has fishing changed since you began fishing in the Fort Pierce area? You’ve mentioned rules and regulations; is that all that you’ve noticed changes in?

RLC: Well, the quotas, you know? To me—you know, this might be personal opinion—I think Mother Nature puts a quota on everything, ’cause you go out sometimes the tide will be running too strong, fish aren’t biting. To me, Mother Nature put the biggest quota. You know? It seems like Mother Nature would regulate the fish. You know, that’s mine and my father’s opinion, and I’m sticking with that.

RC: All right. A lot of people feel that way. It’s a very valid point. Bobby, have you had
experiences with law enforcement within Oculina Bank, or just regarding the Oculina Bank?

RLC: No.

RC: All right, Bobby. Now, I’d like to talk to you about your fishing history, specifically.

RLC: Okay.

RC: What was your earliest memory of fishing, and how old were you—like, fishing in the pond with your uncle or grandpa at the lake, or something?

RLC: Well, I mean, when we lived out at Hollywood, Florida, I fished in the canals and stuff, until my dad met a gentleman that was a kingfisherman. My dad bought a little kingfish boat and I used to go out with him on weekends. We’d go hook and lining for kingfish, and I was probably about twelve years old when I started kingfishing with him on the weekends.

RC: How about—I guess you were much younger than twelve when you were fishing on the canals?

RLC: Oh, right.

RC: How old were you then?

RLC: Six, eight, ten, right in there. I was a little young buck.

RC: How did you learn how to fish when you were back in the canals and stuff; who taught you?

RLC: Myself, trial and error.

RC: Okay. Now let’s go up further in the future, here. Do you remember a point in time, or what made you just decide to become a fisherman? You know, like you see a big catch and your dad said—

RLC: Yeah. Well, when my dad finally bought a forty-foot swordfish boat, I used to go out with him, and then I started being regular crew with him.

RC: But how did you decide to just (inaudible) a job was there?

RLC: I just—I loved the water.

RC: You just knew that’s what you wanted to do?

RLC: Right. Yes.

RC: Okay. When did you start work as a fisherman here in the Fort Pierce area, and how old were you here when you were fishing?
RLC: Well, I mean, I kingfished here when I was, you know, when I was thirteen to eighteen. And then when my dad bought the *Buckin’ Float* in 1980, he swordfished it for a while and then we turned it over to a longline tilefish boat.

RC: So, you kingfished it first, you said?

RLC: Right. Yes.

RC: And how did you fish for the kingfish?

RLC: Well, we trolled with planers.

RC: Okay. I guess you used the artificial baits, or the sea witches, or what have you?

RLC: Right. Sea witch, mullet strips, whatever.

RC: Spoons?

RLC: Yeah, spoons.

RC: That was—of course, you were fishing with your dad at that point; he owned the boat.

RLC: Right.

RC: He was your dad, and it was a forty-footer. What brand was the boat?

RLC: Number One, Key West Number One.

RC: Was it a straight up forty? Or was it a forty—

RLC: Just like Joey’s, thirty-nine.

RC: A thirty-nine Number One?

RLC: A thirty-nine Number One. Overall, makes it forty-one, but it’s thirty nine Number One.

RC: Where did you go fishing for the kingfish when you began? Can you show me on the map?

RLC: Yeah. Right there, northeast grounds.

RC: Northeast grounds?

RLC: Right in there. You know? (inaudible) straight out.

RC: (inaudible) this bottom north at 12, a lot of people—could y’all fish at the fifty feet, too?
RLC: Yeah, we did that.

RC: So you’re fishing fifty to ninety feet?

RLC: Right.

RC: Did you ever see any of the buoys?

RLC: Yes.

RC: Up towards Bethel Buoy there?

RLC: Right.

RC: Okay.

RLC: Like I said, he turned it over to a swordfish boat.

RC: Well, let me finish the kingfish. During what months of the year did y’all fish for kingfish? Was that an all-year job?

RLC: Basically all year, weather depending.

RC: Were you doing day trips, or were those like multi-day trips?

RLC: No, they were morning, come in afternoon, late afternoon trips.

RC: Like half, three-quarter day trips?

RLC: Right.

RC: What do you think your average catch was back then with the kingfish?

RLC: Average catch, you know, it’d be good to bring in 400 pounds.

RC: Okay. And Bobby, do you remember where y’all sold your catch at?

RLC: To Charlie’s Seafood.

RC: I’ve heard that name a few times doing these interviews.

RLC: Yes.

RC: Ooh! Wait, I’m lost here switching pages. For how many years did you fish for the kingfish?
RLC: He probably fished for maybe a year before we turned it over to a swordfish boat.

RC: Okay, so you didn’t really stop. You just kinda, like, switched your effort?

RLC: We’re talking about the one particular boat, right?

RC: Right.

RLC: Yes.

RC: Okay. So, when do you think y’all started to swordfish in the boat?

RLC: Swordfish? Probably 19—okay, he bought it in eighty [1980]. We didn’t kingfish it long, so probably, like, in eighty-one [1981], eighty-two [1982], right there.

RC: Okay, so you fished for kingfish. I guess—would that put us at, you think, 1970 until around 1982?

RLC: Yeah, basically, right there.

RC: And then you started swordfishing on, once again, the Number One. How did you fish the swordfish? What gear types and things?

RLC: All rope here, you know. All rope, spool on top of the canopy, and handline drops in the barrel.

RC: But you did have a power spool for the—

RLC: Yeah, right, it was hydraulics up top.

RC: Oh, a hydraulic longline spool? Okay. What did you fish with, like, squids?

RLC: Squid and mackerel.

RC: Squid and mackerel, okay.

RLC: Squid and mackerel.

RC: And Bobby, who did you fish with? Were you still fishing with your dad then?

RLC: Yes, me and my dad and my stepmother. Yes.

RC: Let’s name—whose thirty-nine Number One. What was it called?

RLC: *Buckin’, B-u-c-k-i-n dash, Float.*
RC: All right. I’m gonna ask you to show me on this map where it goes, but it doesn’t really (inaudible).

RLC: Okay.

RC: Did you ever start—what would be a shallow depth that you started at?

RLC: Well, we’re talking about, specifically, the swordfish?

RC: Swordfish.

RLC: Oh. A hundred fathoms. Yeah, 600 feet, 800 feet, right around there.

RC: So you start there by the Oculina Bank actually then, huh?

RLC: Yeah, we’d start down south. Down south. We go out and make one set off West Palm Beach. By the time we haul that gear back in the morning, we’re due east of the Fort Pierce Inlet, here.

RC: Oh, then you’d steam home?

RLC: Yeah.

RC: What months of the year did y’all do that?

RLC: Every month, you know, weather depending.

RC: Now, you’d steam out one day, fish all night, come in the next day; was that more than twenty-four hours? Yeah?

RLC: Well—

RC: That would be—

RLC: We left at—

RC: You left at noon—

RLC: Right. If we left at noon, went out there and made a set, we’d be back in by dark the next day.

RC: It’s like thirty-hour trips or something?

RLC: Yeah, usually did pretty good right there on our little set out there.
RC: And do you have any idea what an average catch was with the swordfish back then?

RLC: Average catch, with what little bit of gear we set, a thousand pounds was a good to average trip.

RC: Where did you sell the swordfish to?

RLC: Charlie’s Seafood, too.

RC: How many years did you fish for this swordfish—I guess I’d like to ask you on the Buckin’ Float? How long did the Buckin’ Float fish?

RLC: We fished for swordfish for probably three years.

RC: So, say up till about 1985 or something?

RLC: Right.

RC: Why did you stop fishing for the swordfish?

RLC: Because we rigged it up for golden tile, for ground-line.

RC: And with the ground-line, is that strictly golden tile?

RLC: It was golden tile. And you know, a lot of times I’d go inshore and try to catch the groupers if the tide was running too hard offshore.

RC: So you might get up in the morning and want to fish for one and actually have to switch to the other because of the conditions?

RLC: Exactly, right.

RC: When you did fish for the groupers—you said, “When the tide was running hard, I’d fish for the groupers.” Is that when you’re referring that you would come in here and fish the Oculina Bank?

RLC: Yes. I’d come inshore, yes.

RC: Just for my information, let’s say you were at 700 feet tilefishing, and there was four knots of tide. You could actually come into here to 300 or 400 feet and there would be less tide?

RLC: A couple knots, yes.

RC: Big difference, huh?

RLC: Right, big difference.
RC: So that was always an option that you might have to take?

RLC: Right.

RC: Okay. So, that would have a big effect on you?

RLC: Right.

RC: All right. I lost myself, here. You stopped fishing for the swordfish to start tilefishing. Did that have anything to do with the fish prices, or just safety at sea, or shorter trips?

RLC: Well, actually longer trips, because eventually he turned the boat over to me, and I used to stay out for five to seven days at a time.

RC: Is that swordfishing or tile?

RLC: Tile.

RC: Tile. I’m trying to understand the reason why y’all switched from the swordfish to the tile, if it was market driven or (inaudible)?

RLC: I just think it was a change.

RC: Just wanted to change? Oh, I’ll be damned. Okay.

RLC: Yeah. It was a few boats doing it ahead of us, not too many, you know? Seen what they were doing, so we got us a spool and cable, and took it from there.

RC: So you had to get another spool in the boat? The swordfish spool?

RLC: No, we had to get rid of the swordfish spool and get a smaller spool for cable.

RC: So, when you left the swordfish you went to the tilefish, and once again, how did you fish for the tilefish? Cable longline, you said?

RLC: Yes, a eighth inch cable.

RC: How do you fish the longline? You want to tell me about the gear a little bit?

RLC: Well, you know, it’s a hydraulic spool. You’ve probably got about three, four miles of eighth inch cable and you can call them “gangions,” I call them “leaders.” Like I said, it all depends what the tide was, how many sets you can make a day. I try to make three 700 hook sets a day. Depending on the tide, sometimes you can make one set and that one set is gonna take you all day to haul back, so there you go with Mother Nature again.
RC: And so, you use cable with the gangions. What kind of bait do you use?

RLC: Start out with squid, we troll for bonito on the way out, and amberjack; we used to use amberjack. We mix it up; once you get going you mix it up.

RC: Basically, anything that you can get your hands on. (laughs)

RLC: Right. Yeah, basically. Yeah, it was amberjack.

RC: Who did you fish with for the tilefish? Was that you and your dad?

RLC: Yeah, me and my dad, and then one day he just turned it over to me and that’s when I used stay out in a little bit rougher weather than he did.

RC: And, now, this is still the Buckin’ Float?

RLC: Right.

RC: Where did you go to fish for the tilefish? Could you show me on the map? I know it only goes so deep, but—here off of Fort Pierce?

RLC: I’d go down south. I’d go down south as far as Jupiter.

RC: What, to where you felt the fish were?

RLC: Right, exactly. You know?

RC: Was this also twelve-month fishing, year-round fishing?

RLC: Year-round, weather depending, yes.

RC: How long did your tilefish trips last, Bobby?

RLC: Well, hopefully, you can go out in two days and run out of ice, but they would average four-day trips, five-day trips right there.

RC: So, say about four-day average?

RLC: Right.

RC: What would you say your average trip—the average for these four-day trips, what would your catch be?

RLC: Three thousand.

RC: Where did you sell your tilefishes?
RLC: Well, after Charlie’s Seafood there, I think we started selling to Inlet Fisheries.

RC: I noticed you said “after Charlie’s Seafood.” What did Charlie’s—you just switch?

RLC: It’s something—the old man, I don’t know, something. Maybe prices or something; I’m not sure really what happened.

RC: So you just switched from one to the other?

RLC: Right.

RC: Okay. You didn’t keep selling to both?

RLC: Actually, I think maybe Charlie (inaudible). I think Ray Lowe or Steve Lowe¹; I’m not real sure.

RC: You were in the catching end of it, huh?

RLC: Yes.

RC: Okay, Bobby, for how many years did you fish for the tilefish for the *Buckin’ Float*?

RLC: Well, lemme see here, we bought in eighty-two [1982], we started—probably from eighty-four [1984] to ninety-four [1994].

RC: Okay, say about ten years?

RLC: Right.

RC: Bobby, where were the groupers tied into this? Did you ever catch the groupers using the *Buckin’ Float*?

RLC: Yes.

RC: We described that as tilefishing, but do all your tilefishing years involve the grouper years, also?

RLC: Well, you know, the tide was too strong offshore I’d go in and I’d search for grouper. I’d start out here off of Fort Pierce and if I didn’t do any good, I’d just keep working my way north, just different spots, trial and error.

RC: So, you might have done that in eighty-four [1984], and you might have done it in 1988. That was hand-in-hand, the two fisheries.

¹ Steve Lowe was also interviewed for the Oculina Bank Marine Protected Area Oral History Project. The DOI for his interview is O6-00014.
RLC: Right. It was an option, yes.

RC: So, we’ll call that the—well, you called it the bottom longline fishery. Okay. I’m sorry. You’ve already explained that. I guess now here we are at 1994. Why did you quit?

RLC: Well, basically, there was this—the only thing left to do was tilefish and, you know, I couldn’t go into the—now they call it the Oculina Bank. You couldn’t go around it, you know, you couldn’t go through it, you’d have to go around it, you couldn’t fish it.

RC: It made it more expensive to operate—

RLC: Exactly.

RC: And you had less catch because—

RLC: Right. No, that wasn’t an option anymore.

RC: Okay, Bobby. What did you do next?

RLC: (inaudible)

RC: I mean, in ninety-four [1994] when the—did the Buckin’ Float continue to fish in other fisheries?

RLC: Well, we still tried to tilefish it there. But eventually, there was so many rules and regulations that my dad had to actually put it up for sale.

RC: Okay, well, let’s talk about the Buckin’ Float. In ninety-four [1994], I guess, grouper fishing quit, you started going with the tilefishing, and your dad eventually sold the Buckin’ Float. Do you remember about when it was?

RLC: I’d say right there in ninety-eight [1998] he sold it.

RC: Okay. So now, that’s the Buckin’ Float. What did you do after ninety-four [1994]? You tilefished the Buckin’ Float up till ninety-eight [1998]—

RLC: Right.

RC: And your dad sold the boat. What did you do next?

RLC: Well, I had to go to some other trade. I went to plumbing.

RC: Okay.

RLC: Just did different trades, whatever it would take.
RC: So that’s ninety-eight [1998], that’s twelve years ago, and for the past twelve years you’ve basically—

RLC: Land jobs.

RC: Land jobs. All right. Thank you. And back to your cable fishing: you cable fished the tilefish and then you would come in and cable fish the groupers, also?

RLC: Yes.

RC: And can you tell me about—you mentioned you tried to fish 700 hooks three times a day on the tilefish. How would you fish the groupers?

RLC: Oh, the Oculina Bank, (inaudible) grouper fishing; I know I said a couple hundred hooks a half a mile at a time. Just basically trial and error, you know?

RC: Okay. Well, you said that 3,000 pounds was an average catch on your tilefish on a four-day trip.

RLC: Right.

RC: Did that include groupers, too?

RLC: Well, no. No.

RC: What was a good grouper catch?

RLC: A good grouper catch would be a couple thousand pounds, but, you know, if you couldn’t tilefish you’d have to grouper fish. But they weren’t—it was a hit and miss with them, too. Mother Nature, you know? Mother Nature puts her quotas on it, I think.

RC: So if you took your 3,000 pound average, and on a four-day trip you might also have a couple thousand pounds of snowies with those?


RC: It was one or the other?

RLC: It was one or the other because the snowies, you catch a stray one off there tilefishing, but you’d actually go into where there wasn’t golden tile, there’d be just groupers.

RC: Go to where the groupers live?

RLC: Right.
RC: Okay. We’re doing good here, Bobby. Now, I’d finally like to talk to you about how fishing has changed in time in regards to Oculina Bank. You know, there’s been several different changes.

RLC: Right.

RC: So, I’m gonna kinda read the law out and you tell me if it affected you. In 1984, the Oculina Bank—you know, the small little area—was closed to trawling, dredging, and longlining. Did this affect your fishing?

RLC: Yes.

RC: How? In income, you mean, or area you could fish?

RLC: Yes, income. It took so much to leave the dock. I (inaudible) in fuel, and yes, it put a big damper on it.

RC: In ninety-four [1994], the Oculina Bank was closed, where fishing for retention of snapper [and] grouper was prohibited from, and prohibited from anchoring. Was your fishing impacted by this?

RLC: Yes.

RC: Oh, this—I guess ninety-four [1994] is the one that affected you the most?

RLC: Right.

RC: Okay, so ninety-four [1994] is when the bottom longlining messed you up?

RLC: Yes.

RC: Okay, and then, in ninety-six [1996], anchoring was prohibited within the Oculina Bank. Did this bother you; if so, how? Did you ever anchor in there?

RLC: Well, it’s Oculina Bank. How shallow does it get?

RC: Comes here to 180 about.

RLC: I used to anchor up at about 160. I’d be anchored up out there: a tilefish day or a grouper day, you usually go in there and get out of the tide.

RC: So if you tilefished out here outside of it here on the map, you’d actually have to drive around it and come in and anchor up?

RLC: Yes.
RC: Oh, so you went around it several times a trip, possibly?

RLC: Right, just trying to stay within the law.

RC: (laughs) We all try to do that, Bobby. Okay, and here in ninety-six [1996] trawling for rock shrimp was prohibited in the area to the east of the Oculina Bank and to the north, you know, all the way out to a hundred fathoms into the north. All that area was incorporated into the Oculina Bank HAPC [Habitat Area of Particular Concern]. Fishing was closed, all bottom long trawl prohibited in this expanded area, as was anchoring by any vessel. Was your fishing impacted by these regulations? That’s when they made it twenty miles longer.

RLC: Yes, definitely.

RC: Excuse me for the tongue-twister. Okay, here we’re getting towards the end. These closed areas, people call them marine protected areas [MPAs]. And when you designate a marine area closed to fishing, it’s being used more and more often; there’s more and more of these MPAs being used as a fishery management tool. What do you think about these closed areas compared to, like, other types of management?

RLC: Well, to me—

RC: Would you rather see an area open with a limited number of fish you could take, or do you think this type of closing is better?

RLC: I’d say—of course, open it with a limit, right.

RC: You would prefer a limit. Okay. All right, last question: Thinking ahead to the future, what do you think fishing in Fort Pierce will be like in ten years?

RLC: I do not think there will be any commercial fishing at all. It’ll be all sport fishing.

RC: What, just out of attrition or out of regulation?

RLC: Out of regulation, yes. Everybody’s selling their boats and they just—you know, a lot guys just can’t afford to go out and do it anymore.

RC: All right, Bobby, that kind of finishes us up here. Is there anything you’d like to say, or is there anything else you need to say?

RLC: Well, me and my dad’s personal opinion on all the, you know, the quotas and the rules and regulations is Mother Nature, you know, does enough of this. You can’t catch a tilefish when the tide is streaming five knots offshore; it could be beautiful, the fish won’t bite. Mother Nature, I think, puts the regulations on it all, between the weather, the tide, and everything. I don’t think that we were overfishing them because Mother Nature—you could go out one trip, get 3,000 pounds; go out again, you go to the same spot, and not even catch a fish.
RC: All right. And if you’re not making money, a lot of people don’t go fishing.

RLC: Right.

RC: So, economics kinda monitors the fishing, too.

RLC: And if that’s your only—if you grew up and that was the only thing you knew how to do, had a trade, everybody else had a trade and that’s the only thing you knew—I mean, it made life very difficult.

RC: This isn’t a question to ask, but were your years back then fishing better than all of your life than you have now, you think?

RLC: Oh, yes.

RC: Just being on the ocean?

RLC: Right. Yes.

RC: All right. Excuse me. Thank you. We’re concluding this now, then.

*End of interview*