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Voices from the Stream: An Environmental History
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11-13-2010

Bob and Kae Andry

Bob Andry

Kae Andry

Chris Brooks

Clayton Galloway

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Interviewees: Bob Andry and Kae Andry
Interviewers: Chris Brooks and Clay Galloway
Location: Andry Residence, Ft. McCoy, Florida.
Date/Time: 11-13-2010, 1:53pm.
Duration: 52:03

Brooks: Okay. This Chris Brooks C H R I S B R O O K S of University of North Florida, and . . .

Galloway: Clay Galloway. G A L L O W A Y.

Brooks: Okay and we're here with Bob and Kae Andry, and I'll let them spell their names for us.

B. Andry: B O B A N D R Y

K. Andry: K A E A N D R Y

Brooks: And you're with Save Rodman Reservoir, Inc., correct? Yeah, okay. All right. A lot these questions you already answered in the truck, but we're going to go over them again for the recording and all that good stuff. How long have you lived here?

B. Andry: I bought my place. I saw it first in 1967 before they had flooded the canal.

Brooks: Okay.

B. Andry: Then we bought it in early 1968 and that was the year they flooded Rodman. We used it as a camp while I was stationed at the Cape with the Polaris and Poseidon programs until I retired from the Navy in 1975 and we've lived here ever since.

Brooks: So when you originally purchased the property it would be assumed that the reservoir was going to be there for a good long time.

B. Andry: Yes, as a matter of fact, we expected . . . when we bought the property we expected to see barges going by.

K. Andry: We bought it because of the water.

B. Andry: Yes. Actually we were looking for a place on the water and we couldn't afford one. [CB laughs] But we found a gentleman who had eighty acres here that his grandfather had gotten for tax money during the Depression and he was splitting it up and going to sell it off and he sold us a chunk. It was nothing but virgin woods at the time. The road coming into it was just a couple of sand ruts and it was about as far out in the sticks as you could get in Florida.

Brooks: Okay. And so really what brought you to the area was to be on the water and have a big chunk of land?

B. Andry: She wanted trees and I wanted water.

Brooks: All right.

B. Andry: There were no trees in Brevard County.

[Laughter]

K.Andry: Yeah but then when we moved here they sold . . . we sold all the trees across the twelve acres on the other side of the road and then they threatened the water. But we wouldn't be able to take a boat. We figured we're here you can take a boat North or South.

Brooks: Hmm. Okay. And you guys started Save Rodman Reservoir, correct?

B. Andry: Yeah. The Cross Florida Barge Canal lands were returned to the State of Florida I believe in 1992. And that was about the time that the Florida Defenders of the Environment and Governor Chiles decided to get rid of Rodman and restore it back to its original condition. Now let me say something about Governor Chiles. I have a . . . squirreled away some place in my records, I have a copy of the stationery . . . official stationery for the Florida Defenders of the Environment. And Governor Chiles is listed on there as one of their . . . they didn't use the word advisor but that's what it meant. So when Marjorie Rollins . . . er Marjorie Carr, who was leading the Florida Defenders of the Environment, had a friend in Tallahassee and she wanted to get rid of the Rodman Reservoir and restore back to the Ocklawaha River . . . easy thing for her to get . . . Governor Chiles to go ahead and say that he wanted to destroy the reservoir. Probably the reservoir wouldn't be here today if hadn't of been for Senator Kirkpatrick, because when Governor Chiles ordered the DEP to get rid of the reservoir Senator Kirkpatrick didn't like that, and he asked Dr. Canfield of the University of Florida Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Science to look into the situation and using the existing science and try and tell us what was here on Rodman, because no one really knew what was here. It had been created . . . flooded in '68 and now several years had gone by. There was a lot of misinformation floating around saying the Rodman was a bad thing and nobody was sure. So Dr. Canfield along with Mark Hoyer and Eric Schulz came up with a document called *To Be or Not to Be*. Anyhow, *To Be or Not to Be* something about the Rodman Reservoir. In other words was the reservoir going to be here or not. And they looked at information from the Fish and Game Commission and other sources and compiled this document, and Senator Kirkpatrick used this document in the legislature to get the legislature to authorize an official study of Rodman. Nine-hundred thousand dollars in the 1993, I think, I'm not sure of the date but I think it was the 1993 legislature, to do this study the St. Johns River Water Management District did the environmental part of the study and the DEP did the

economic part of the study. The purpose of the study was to look at four possible dispositions for Rodman: total retention, partial retention, total restoration, and partial restoration. At the end of the study, it was deemed that partial retention was not possible. In other words, they were going to lower the water level down about half way and leave it there. The reason for this was that there would not be enough water to control the rich ecosystem that was part of Rodman and the weeds would take over and pretty soon you'd just have a weed patch. They needed more water so they could control it. Total restoration was deemed impractical, because it would cost too much. So the two remaining alternatives were total retention or partial restoration. And partial restoration was deemed to be basically restore the existing . . . the channels to the existing positions, blow the dam, walk away, and let nature take its course. Now the legislature when they saw the results of this study and I mean the results, not the executive summary, because the executive summary had a lot of political overtures in it. For instance, they would say as much water could be . . . I'm not sure whether this came from there or not. I was gonna say they were gonna say as much water could be used for human consumption with a restored river as it could from the reservoir, but I'm not sure whether they say that in there or not, anyway, there are a lot of political overtures in the executive summary and the study itself, the environmental study itself comprised eighteen volumes said that basically there wasn't anything wrong with Rodman. Oh, I know one of the things . . . the Florida Defenders of the Environment had said if Rodman is destroyed there would be more area for the black bears. Well the Fish and Game came back and said, yeah, one black bear. And they said well if Rodman is destroyed there would be more area for the panthers. And Fish and Game came back and said panthers aren't gonna go there, because there's too much . . . there are too many buildings around, too much development around. It's not panther territory. So things like this that had been said about Rodman had been disputed in the studies and as a result the legislature said and Comptroller Milligan at the time said that looking at the financial part of the studies, the economic part of the studies, that retaining Rodman had a two-to-one advantage over destroying Rodman. And the legislature said we're not going to authorize any money for this and Comptroller Milligan said he wasn't going to let any money spent for it unless the legislature authorized it. So, we had a balancing situation where the federal . . . the FDE is trying to get rid of Rodman but it can't get any money. And on the other hand, those people want to keep Rodman are encouraging the legislature not give them any money. And basically that's been the situation to the day.

Brooks: Okay.

B. Andry: Okay. Does that sum it up for you?

Brooks: It does it very well, actually. So really the argument to save Rodman hasn't really changed much over time, since . . .

B. Andry: Since it started?

Brooks: Yeah.

B. Andry: One thing has happened. We have a nutrient problem. The St. Johns River has got too many nutrients. I'm gonna call them developmental nutrients: nitrogen, phosphorous, stuff like that. Rodman has a lot of nutrients coming into it, but the plant life in Rodman is removing these nutrients before they're emptying into the St. Johns River. Approximately fifty percent of them, which is a whole lot of nitrogen considering the flow. Silver Springs flows between three hundred and eight hundred million gallons a day. That's Silver Springs alone, not counting the water from the other sources. In that, we see about a thousand micrograms per liter of nitrogen. Well, if you figure the amount of water coming down the river and that much nitrogen in each liter, that's a whole lot of nutrients that Rodman is taking out before it goes into the St. Johns. So that is another good thing, good reason for keeping Rodman.

Brooks: Right. You mention a lot of those nutrients are coming from development in Marion County?

B. Andry: Right. Going down through the aquifer and coming out in Silver Springs.

Brooks: Yeah. How has their argument changed? The FDE and . . .

B. Andry: It hasn't. The only thing that's changed is it seems like, now I don't know this, it just seems like the FDE has started shifting some of the responsibility to fighting Rodman from the FDE in Gainesville to . . . really it didn't have any local reason for getting rid of it other than to carry on Marjorie Carr's legacy . . . and get rid of it over to the Putnam County Environmental Council.

Brooks: Right.

B. Andry: I still . . . my personal feeling on this is the FDE is still pulling the strings and they're just the mouthpiece, but I don't know that for a fact.

Brooks: And that was the interview we were trying to get and couldn't. So . . . In general, talking about them, what relationship would you say you have with environmentalists, or Save Rodman has with environmentalists, in general? Maybe not just the FDE, but . . .

B. Andry: Well . . .

Brooks: Or do you consider yourself environmentalists?

B. Andry: I live out here. And I try to take care of it. A lot of the folks trying to get rid of Rodman don't live out here. They don't know anything about it.

Brooks: Right.

B. Andry: The . . . you gotta go back and look at the history a little bit to fully answer that question. Marjorie Carr was Archie Carr's wife. Archie Carr had a lot of clout in the environmental community with the Sierra Club and all the other environmental clubs, because of his save-the-sea-turtle type thing. Nothing wrong with that. That's good. Marjorie could use some of this influence to influence... with the other environmental groups. . . Audubon Society says get rid of Rodman, but you saw birds out there today all over the place. Glen Lau tells me he has even seen apple kites come up from the Everglades when it's a drought down there and live in Rodman until they could go back. If the Audubon Society wasn't trying to get to side so much with the FDE they'd probably think this was a great wild bird life sanctuary. And they'd have people out here looking at the birds. Like I said, I've seen . . . I've seen limpkins, which is a species of special concern. I've seen green heron. We've got night herons. We've got just about every kind of aquatic bird you could possibly think of. I've even seen bronze limpkins. Bronze limpkins are native to Louisiana and this is something that Audubon Society would probably be interested in if they weren't trying to get rid of Rodman. So anyhow, playing upon this past political influence that Marjorie Carr had. She was able to get these other units to say okay get rid of Rodman and I think that's a shame. That's . . . we do have good . . . well I don't know whether you'd think Ducks Limited was environmental or not but they consider themselves environmentalists. They like Rodman a lot, because there's good duck hunting.

Brooks: Right.

B. Andry: And geese . . . on the other side I saw geese, I was over by Deep Creek a few years ago and I saw geese starting to flock up and then spiral up and start their northern migration. And just bunches of 'em, hundreds of 'em.

Brooks: Hm.

Galloway: How did Save the Rodman Dam get started? Like what was your first step?

B. Andry: Oh the Save the Rodman incorporated?

Galloway: Yeah.

B. Andry: Well after the studies came out, my wife had been interested since I was busy building my house and stuff like that and my wife had got interested in this. And she wanted to read the studies when they were published. She couldn't find a copy of the studies anywhere. Finally found the copy in the basement of the library in Gainesville, so she went up to Gainesville to the basement and went down there and read the studies. And copied a lot of them and brought them home. And it looked like the governor, Governor Chiles, was going to be able to get rid of Rodman about that time. So she decided she wanted to do something about it. I said you can't run back and forth to Tallahassee and talk all the time. If you're gonna do something,

you have to get some backing and do it right. We're gonna have to get organized. And so I said I'm gonna help you with this, but what we're gonna have to do is we're gonna have to have some money. And we're gonna have a way to handle the money. I said we either have to get a federation or a non-profit organization, so we can legally handle the money and take care of things. And the only way I can think of to get the word out to people was to print a newsletter. And to print the newsletter, again, we needed the money. So what we did, we had a meeting down at the big house down at the RV park, the Ocklawaha RV park, had a meeting there and told people about the meeting that we were gonna try to get something going. Oh, I digress just a minute. There was one part of the environmental studies that I didn't like. They had . . . it had to do with wells. What wells might go dry if they drop the reservoir. And they had looked at land all the way around the perimeter of the whole reservoir. Some forty-two sections, I think. They came up with ninety-two possible wells that might be affected . . . no, ninety-two wells, not the ones that would be affected, ninety-two wells, that's all they could find, that's all the way down to Eureka and all the way up to Orange Springs and everything. Well, we're talking maybe a thousand, two thousand people here. So obviously there's more than ninety-two wells. So I said okay, let's see if we can pin this and get a better figure. So I did a study of just the south part of the reservoir here in Marion County and about halfway down to Eureka on the east side. In other words, on the far side of the reservoir and I got a bunch more wells. And I don't remember the figures now, but there were almost as many that would actually be affected if the water was lowered as they had come up with in the first place. So at this meeting we had down at the RV park, people got interested in this because of the wells. So I made a little presentation about the wells and I figured, we said that what we wanted to do was form this non-profit organization. We needed a little help. And we would charge a membership fee and the membership fees then would be used to publish the newsletter. And we'd get the newsletter out to as many people as we could to try to get members to save the reservoir. And that's how it came to be. We, my wife was the president and I was the vice-president and there's Lou and Donna Snow lived down the road here. Lou was the treasurer. And there was a gal from Cedar Landing was the secretary. We got organized and started publishing the newsletter. We started out by mainly just putting in the newsletter what was in the studies. Condensing it down from eighteen volumes down to a few . . . couple of pages putting inserts in there. And then it grew and grew and grew until 2000, yeah 2000. It got too big for us and that's when it moved to Palatka. And out of the Chamber of Commerce in Palatka supported us and Ed Taylor up there became our president of Save Rodman.

Galloway: Okay.

Brooks: We talk about the environment. You've got the FDE saying it's a cesspool or a septic tank or whatever. I'd say it's not. We were just out on it and it's beautiful. And they've got an economic argument that they're making that seems pretty unfounded, as well.

B. Andry: What are they saying economically now?

Brooks: It's pretty much as it was before that it'd be cheaper to let it flow free than it is to maintain the reservoir. They're still saying the same argument. It doesn't look like they're taking into account the amount of money that comes in from recreation and things like that.

B. Andry: No. They're looking at . . . well . . . the comptroller of the State of Florida looked at what the economic study said. And he said the two-to-one advantage over keeping Rodman to restoring the Ocklawaha River . . . I mean the main money man in the State of Florida says that, I give more credibility to what he says over what the FDE says. As far as expenses go on the reservoir, we talked a little about this this morning. Because the greenways and trails and the DEP control the lands of the Cross Florida Barge Canal this would still be a part, whether this part is flooded or not, it would still require people to maintain it. They have campgrounds here that could still be utilized if the reservoir was destroyed and these campgrounds would still require maintenance. The only difference would be the locks would be closed, but the locks don't put that much of a drain on the economy because the locks are gravity locks and their hydraulic, the door on the locks are hydraulically operated. All you gotta do is run a little electric pump to pump the hydraulics in and out.

Brooks: I think Kae is trying to get by here [laughs].

B. Andry: The amount of money spent to maintain the reservoir, there might be a little less, but not much, on a restored river.

Brooks: Right. So it's obviously not a cesspool. Economically, it's better to keep it. And if you get someone from Audubon Society or any of the other environmentalists out here on it would be obvious that it's valuable. What do you think their motives still are...

B. Andry: . . . to carry on Marjorie's legacy.

Brooks: It's the legacy?

B. Andry: Yeah, that's what I think. There are a few people that are doing it for revenge. They lost land.

Brooks: Oh.

B. Andry: When the federal government took . . . they bought some, they took some through power of eminent domain, some was just given it to them. But some of these people didn't want to lose their land and they had to be taken from them through eminent domain. And some of the families are still carrying grudges.

K. Andry: But they're not going to get the land back, even if the river were restored.

B. Andry: Right and you can't tell that to some of them that.

Brooks: It'd still be government property.

K. Andry: It's just Greenways.

B. Andry: That's right, but you can't get that through some of their heads. I mentioned while we were . . . this morning about Manny Sanchez called me up talking about June Robard's husband and how he wanted to join Rodman?

Brooks: Right.

B. Andry: Well June Robard is the daughter of one of these families that lost some land along down around Eureka some place. What was the family name? Anyhow, I almost had it. Lester?

K. Andry: Tuten.

B. Andry: Tuten. Lester Tuten. He's older than I am and I'm 73. But he'd get up at some of these committee meetings up in Tallahassee and go on . . . before the St. Johns River Water Management . . . go on and on about all the great fishing there used to be when he was a boy and how you can't catch fish out here, anymore, and all this. And it was just because that family lost land and they were still griping about it.

[Laughter]

B. Andry: There's a legislature like that. Saunders?

K. Andry: Right. I remember that name from Tampa. I think they continue on just because reservoirs are not very environmentally correct. You know there's a whole movement across the whole United States to get rid of reservoirs.

B. Andry: And to blow dams.

K. Andry: And to blow dams. And that has happened in, you know, various places. But it's so unique out here because of the springs.

B. Andry: I don't think that's the fight here, though.

K. Andry: No. Well I think some of the environmentalist that are part of it that that is part of the thing, you know. It's just restore a wild and free river.

Brooks: It's almost like it's some sort of a spiritual thing. Like they don't want the river to be, you know, let loose.

K. Andry: Sure. And they make the argument about how much more . . . I mean, I bet you're more on history than controversy, but they make the argument about how much more use people would get from the river. Well that's not true, you know? It's just not, because people could not have access to it. Because we have wetlands all along here.

B. Andry: You know, what she said about running free. When the first pioneer moved in along a virgin river in the wilderness here in the United States, he seized to allow that river to run free because he was there now it was up to him to manage his life so that it didn't interfere too much with it, he could have a good life. And you can't go home. Even if you blow the dam, it would never go back to the way it was before and you'd still have to manage it. It could not run free. Besides that, the Ocklawaha south of Moss Bluff, south of the other dam, Lake Griffin . .

K. Andry: You mean Rousseau?

B. Andry: No. The dam down below . . . north of Lake Griffin.

K. Andry: Moss Bluff?

B. Andry: No, Moss Bluff is just right down the road here. Yeah, that's right, Moss Bluff. I'm right.

K. Andry: *I'm* right.

[Laughter]

B. Andry: You're right. I was muddled there. South of Moss Bluff, that whole area down there is controlled by Dikes and weirs and dams and sloughs and everything, soothe Ocklawaha is not going to run free.

Brooks: It's going to be managed.

B. Andry: Yeah, Moss Bluff. I'm sorry.

Brooks: We talked about government a little. And when we were in the truck, we talked a lot about some of the crazy things the forestry service does. What kind of relationship do you have with the forestry service being out here?

B. Andry: Well they own a little bit of the land down here. They have six hundred acres. And last go around we had with anybody was with them. When the land was deeded, all this land was collected and given to the Army Corps of Engineers to build the Cross Florida Barge Canal. The forestry had this six hundred acres that's the west part of Upper Kirkpatrick Dam. And I don't know exactly what kind of a deal went on there, but it was obviously a hand-shake deal where one government entity was gonna help out another government entity. And they gave a long-term lease to that

land, the forestry service gave it to the Corps of Engineers. Now the land came back to the State of Florida and the lease came with it. And a few years ago that lease has starting to run out. Well, the forestry service has a lot of EPA and environmental people in there, and I'm sure that they decided this was the way to get rid of Rodman. So what happened they told the DEP that they could renew the lease but they'd have to get rid of Rodman to renew the lease. Well, the DEP knew they couldn't get rid of Rodman, cause they couldn't get any money to do the job. And they told the forestry service . . . there was a lot of shuffling and back-and-forth went on, communications stuff, but basically they told the forestry service that they couldn't do it. So the forestry service said well they're gonna think about it. And last we heard the forestry service had referred this to their legal department, and that was what?

K. Andry: Oh it's been five years.

B. Andry: Five years ago. They're still thinking about it.

K. Andry: It's been a long time.

Brooks: Hm. You've answered a lot of my questions already.

B. Andry: Oh! You know, we . . . after Kirkpatrick died we introduced a bill into the Florida legislature to name this the George Kirkpatrick State Preserve. At the same time they introduced what they call a memorial. A memorial is a document that is a communication between government bodies. This memorial was from the State of Florida to the Congress of the United States, and it was asking congress to have the forestry service return that six hundred . . . turn over that six hundred acres to the State of Florida. So we officially, the State of Florida officially asked for that. Now the governor did not have to sign this. This came from the senate and the house. It went to Washington and then they sat on it and it died, because it expired. But the State of Florida is on record asking for that land back down there, since we were talking about that. And by the way, that bill to name this the Kirkpatrick reserve, it was unanimous yes in the senate and ninety-two to twenty-six, I think ninety-two to twenty-six, does that sound right? A hundred and twenty, ninety-two, anyhow, there was a vast supermajority in the house and Governor Bush vetoed it.

Brooks: Huh.

K. Andry: On the last day.

[Bob and Kae simultaneously talking.]

B. Andry: If he'd have waited another day, it would have become law without his signature.

Brooks: Huh.

K. Andry: That was a heart breaker.

B. Andry: I don't know why he did that.

Brooks: That's bizarre. We haven't talked about the manatees.

B. Andry: It's a great place for manatees. They come in out of the locks all the time. They keep a record of it.

Brooks: Yeah?

B. Andry: If there are any marks that are on there, they make . . . mark it down and keep a count so they know how many go out in the fall.

Brooks: Hm. Weren't there bubblers or something to keep them out of the lock?

B. Andry: No. The bubblers are there to keep 'm from getting squashed.

Brooks: Okay.

B. Andry: When they open and close the gates.

Brooks: Okay.

B. Andry: They don't care if they come through so long as they go all the way through.

K. Andry: And also back through.

B. Andry: I see manatees out here. As a matter of fact, a few years ago Senator Graham was gonna visit the reservoir and we were out there the day before doing a dress rehearsal of where we were gonna take him. And we got down here off the bluff off the RV park and there was a cow and a calf and a male manatee all right there, a family, right there in the clear water doing their thing. Eating weeds and halfway chomping along. Unfortunately they were gone by the time Senator Graham came the next day. But our itinerary which we left was a little tour down here that ended up at the dam. Senator Graham gets out, he trots up to the dam with his entourage, you know, and he starts to cross the dam. There's a black guy fishing there on the spillway of the dam. Old fella. And he says, you fish here very much? Yessah, I do. He says do you like it here? He says, well suh, I'm a disabled vet from Vietnam and this is the best therapy I can find. We couldn't have paid that guy for saying that.

[Laughter]

Brooks: Very cool. We talked some when we were out about draw downs, things like that. Especially there's draw-downs after fish kills.

B. Andry: No. No. Not draw-downs after fish kills. Draw-downs are for . . . they have nothing to do with fish kills.

Brooks: Okay. It was something I saw on the website.

B. Andry: We have had fish kills.

Brooks: In the past?

B. Andry: Yeah. The fish kills have all been natural fish kills, except for that one I told you about that happened up the river because of the flash flood. Any time you have a rich environment like this in any lake, not just Rodman, if the conditions are right and the dissolved oxygen gets too low, then the fish are gonna die. Now, to have this occur naturally normally it takes a long period of dry weather and then a fairly violent weather event that gives you a flushing of the flood plain. The rain water doesn't have any oxygen in it, believe it or not. So water falling in the lake doesn't help anything. The oxygen in the lake is what you get and when you flush the flood plain like that, you've got a lot of nutrients coming down into the water and decaying vegetation and this can use up that oxygen. And if you already have a situation where you have . . . it's been hot, still, no wind

K. Andry: And cloudy days.

B. Andry: And cloudy days where no sun, no photosynthesis going on. You've got a critical oxygen situation and all of a sudden you get this . . . a hurricane is a good example where you have clouds for several days, it's hot generally, and then all of a sudden you get this water. Then the D.O. (dissolved oxygen) can go down and you have a fish kill. The fish kills we've had in Rodman have been spotty fish kills. Some of them have been pretty bad. I mean, a lot of fish. But it . . . no more than you would expect from . . . well heck they have fish kills in the St. Johns River.

Brooks: Right.

B. Andry: So . . .

K. Andry: It's not because we have the dam.

B. Andry: No, it's not because we have a dam, it's because we have a rich system. And whether the dam was there or not, you'd still have a rich system. The only thing it'd be shifted down to the St. Johns River.

Brooks: Right.

B. Andry: Cause the . . . if it was the dam . . . that's one of the reasons why reforestation would take so long. You see that, that current when you put it back in the channel it's gonna go along at about eight to ten knots. So any seeds that fall into that water

aren't gonna stop until they get to the St. Johns and things slow down. So you're not gonna get any rich forestation from the seeds. And animals, the type of animals that live in flood plains don't carry seeds in their coats. So they're not gonna spread around any seeds. You might get a fox run down there sometimes, something like that. But you know you're not really gonna have anything going on. And so the only thing that you get for reforestation is wind-borne seeds from existing trees. Which go about sixty meters out, that's about it.

K. Andry: Can we go back to the draw down? You know, because we have it every three or so years and when people around here found out they weren't gonna have it this year a lot of people were upset because when we have a draw down the fishing is so great, and everything's so concentrated, but several years ago the Fish and Game people asked Ed Taylor, who's our president, to come down to a homeowners meeting in Lake Griffin. Did you tell them this?

B. Andry: No, I didn't.

K. Andry: Because they wanted to have a draw down down there at Lake Griffin, because they felt like it was needed for the health of the lake. And they had the homeowners association, because the homeowners were saying no, no we don't want a draw down, because if you have a draw down we can't use our docks, we can't put our boats in, you know, we're going to be so inconvenienced. And so they wanted Ed to come down and tell all the positives that come about because of a draw down. And the fact that all the people, most all, I would say most everybody around here is supportive of the draw down. Nobody fusses because it's hard to get your boat out. You can, it's just not quite as easy. The homeowners were just adamant. They didn't get anywhere with that. So it's just a different mindset.

B. Andry: During the last draw down, I got four dozen minnows and went out and made a hole in the weed beds and caught forty-five fish in one hole. Now, all of 'em weren't keepers, but I still caught forty-five fish. It just doesn't get any better than that.

[Laughter]

Brooks: You mentioned earlier that you wished they would fluctuate the levels more often?

B. Andry: Yeah. I think that . . . that's just my own personal opinion. They have a tendency to bring it up to almost twenty feet and hold it there constantly. And I think it would be better to fluctuate a little bit more. I don't want to see any more draw downs, but I think like if they would bring it down to during times of drought if we have dark water, one of the reasons they keep it high is to keep the sun from penetrating too far into the water and that allows hydrilla to grow from the bottom. The dark water shades hydrilla . . . that's one of the reasons we don't a draw down, because the hydrilla is not out there this year. Hydrilla is great for using up nutrients, but it also can get out of hand. And so if we have dark water and there's not a chance of the hydrilla getting out of hand, I would like to see 'em bring it down to, you know, to

seventeen-and-a-half, eighteen feet sometimes. Leave it there for a few weeks and then bring it back up to twenty feet. Not great fluctuation, but enough fluctuation so that it doesn't stay at the same level all the time. But the conditions would have to be right to do that. You wouldn't want to that with crystal clear water like we've got now.

Brooks: Right.

Galloway: Where do you think this argument . . . do you think it's going to go away anytime soon? Or . . .

B. Andry: I wish.

[Laughter]

K. Andry: We've spent our whole life on it.

B. Andry: We had a, you know, Senator . . . uh . . . oh c'mon Bob, remember. Who was the senator that died in Jacksonville?

K. Andry: King.

B. Andry: King. Senator King passed away two years ago. He was a strong supporter of Rodman after Senator Kirkpatrick died he sorta stepped in and so we had a bill last year to name it the King Reserve and also there was more environmental stuff that went with it about maintenance, maintaining the reservoir. And one of these fellas that is adamant against Rodman, chairing the natural resources committee in the house, right? Is that where he was? Yeah. And he said no way that bill is getting through my committee. And so we pulled it. We'll try again this year. If we can get it through . . .

K. Andry: And the governor signs it.

B. Andry: And the governor signs it, we can put it to bed. Put the argument to bed. Because, see, what happened was did you read about the CLAC committee? Canal Lands . . . Okay, well one of the things back in the history, Governor Chiles, I guess to justify his stance, created the CLAC committee, Canal Lands Advisory Committee. And it was their job to draw up a management plan for the whole greenways situation. And they got back to him, they said okay here's what we want to do with the rest of the greenways. But we don't know enough about Rodman to mess with it. And . . .

K. Andry: They did not make a recommendation.

B. Andry: No, they didn't make a recommendation and no management plan. So Rodman doesn't have any management plan and this bill would be the start of a management plan, as well as giving it protection. Once it had protection within . . . see, Governor

Chiles told the DEP to get rid of it and nobody's bothered to tell the DEP not to. And until somebody in authority tells them not to, they're gonna keep on trying to do it. Now if the governor would just tell the DEP, hey, this is just costing too much money and time, forget about it. The Rodman, there's nothing wrong with it. That might put an end to it, too. But so far we haven't had a governor do that. It'll take a governor or an act of the legislature.

Brooks: When you moved here, did you think you'd be this involved with politics?

B. Andry: No.

[Laughter]

B. Andry: I wanted to build my house and go fishing.

K. Andry: No it's . . . it's been an education. An experience. We've met a lot of really nice people. A lot of legislators that you never would have met in your ordinary life, you know? Great people. Some that weren't so great. I mean. We've been to Tallahassee and testified before committees as, you know, speak at the St. Johns committee. Who would ever have thought? I was a school teacher he was a Navy guy.

B. Andry: I told them about that committee where that guy came toting in that bunch of books on that rolling cart. I don't know if you remember that or not.

K. Andry: Oh that tall, skinny guy in Palatka...

B. Andry: Yeah, he came in toting those books. And Senator Kirkpatrick chewed him out for lying to him. [Laughs]

K. Andry: Yeah, he was . . . Senator Kirkpatrick was one of a kind. He truly was.

Galloway: I think that's all I have.

Brooks: Is there anything else you want to say?

B. Andry: I've said enough.

K. Andry: You've got your brain really full now.

Brooks: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

[Laughter]

B. Andry: Well, You know where we are if you can think of anything else.

[Laughter]

Brooks: I guess that's about it.

Galloway: Yeah, I can't think of any things I need answered.

K. Andry: Do you think you've got enough for your paper?

Brooks: When you take those water samples. Who are they going to?

B. Andry: University of Florida. Lake Watch.

Brooks: Okay.

B. Andry: Actually, it's Dr. Canfield. The same guy who did *To Be or not to Be* is in charge of Lake Watch. But he's not near as active in other things. He had Lyme's disease and it was really bad and he's . . . he has trouble getting around now. So he's not as active with all the things he used to be. Mark Hoyer is still there, sort of running things. Eric Schulz left. He was with Lake Watch for a bit, then he left.

K. Andry: Lake Watch is really neat. We go to the Lake Watch dinners once a year. They take samples from . . . I forgot now many. I had it in the last newsletter or the one before that. Lots of water bodies in Florida. So it's all sent up there. He'll prepare the samples, strain it through like he does, and we take it down and put it in the freezer at Silver Springs and then some Lake Watch people will come around and pick it up. And they take it up there to . . .

B. Andry: Analyze it.

K. Andry: . . . analyze it. Right. And then we get the data. They were really slow about sending us the data. I don't know, are they any quicker? I mean, we take samples and it'll be eight months before we found out . . .

B. Andry: It's running about six months now.

K. Andry: Their program has been really cut. You know in the economy.

Galloway: You guys take samples once a month? Or how often.

B. Andry: We used to have nine sites. But then we had to cut back and we cut back to four sites.

K. Andry: Every other month.

B. Andry: Well, yeah. We take down there at Eureka. We take up in Orange Creek. Those are the two main flows coming in. And then we take . . . I don't have a map. There's

Deep Creek comes in from . . . no, we stopped that one. We take it down just before it flows out of the dam. We're taking four samples right now. But we've just got to go ahead. We had to cut back to every other month for a while and we weren't getting much data to fight it. Cause there's too much spread. So we talked to them about letting us go back to every month, and before we were doing Eureka, halfway up to Orange Springs, Orange Creek, out here at the cove, up at the Deep Creek Bridge, into the canal, before the dam, and below the dam. That's what we did before. We had a really good picture of what was going on. But now we know what's happening in the main tributaries coming in and what's happening going out.

K. Andry: And ten years. He's been doing it for ten years.

B. Andry: There's a little creek coming in the Dredge Canal when you're going over the big bridge and you look down, there's a little creek that goes into that. There's hardly any flow. And Deep Creek comes in from the north. It's sort of a slow, lazy thing, too. And the only time anything ever happens up there is if there's a heavy rain or something and it's flushed. So that's . . . we're probably not missing too much there. We're probably doing pretty good.

[END]