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## Interview with Lew Colomy, President of the Maine Fish and Game Association

WLBZ Radio

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**University of Maine Raymond H. Fogler Library Special Collections Department**

Transcript of a sound recording in MS 608, WLBZ Radio Station Records, Bangor, Maine, 1931-1973

Title: Interview with Lew Colomy, President of Maine Fish and Game Association

Date: January 6, 1955

Recording number: Reel-to-reel Tape 5, part 1

Length of recording: 10:36

[Transcript begins]

Interviewer: How would you tackle a problem? How would your way be different from that of a smaller organization, say our own Penobscot County Club here?

Colomy: Well, in turn, Bill, you see we have a delegate from each local club that attends the state meetings. And what we try to do we don't go into any local situation whatsoever that the local club can handle. Anything that we handle has to be of a statewide nature, and so where we come in is the fact in legislative matters, and working with the legislature, working with the Fish & Game Department, bringing all these different ills that the various local clubs have into one head and discussing them and trying to come up with an answer that's not only good for that local club, but good for all the clubs in the state of Maine or all the people in state of Maine, because after all, this fish and wildlife belong to the people of Maine and they affect every human being that there is in the state, large and small.

Interviewer: If you don't enjoy them actively such as fishing or hunting, economically they certainly do make their point, how they're run and so on.

Colomy: Well Bill, last year our our tourist trade in this state was somewhere in the neighborhood of two million dollars and our hunting and fishing run somewhere between 40 and 60 million. So you see that's big business, and when you distribute 260 million dollars over the population of the state of Maine, everybody is affected by it.

Interviewer: What would you say are the the biggest and most pressing problems of the Maine Fish and Game Association at this present time?

Colomy: Well, of course one of our problems that we have put a tremendous effort in has been this pollution problem that we got in the state and we feel that now is the time that something should be done about it. I want the people that are hearing me over-the-air to understand that we want this done in a constructive manner, but we are still persistent in that we must have a beginning.

Interviewer: Right well this morning Governor Muskie had something to say about pollution so what do you say we listen to part of a tape recording of his address and then perhaps you can comment on it afterwards all right?

Colomy: All right Bill, be glad to.

Governor Muskie Recording: "The following action is recommended at this time: first, completion of the work of classification of waters within two years, and appropriation of the necessary funds; second, a tightening of the third highest classification, Class C, which under present law is too broad; three, reorganization of the Water Improvement Commission to give increased representation to public members having no direct connection with industry; four, in addition, the Commission should be required to explore the possibilities of pollution abatement and to report its findings in two years together with its recommendations relative to methods, costs and the setting of a time limit for compliance. For this purpose, it should draw upon the experience of other states insofar as such experiences applicable to the pollution problems which the Commission's classification work discloses. It is essential that our policy in this field be firm and progressive while avoiding damage to our industrial structure. Industry has a responsibility to press constantly forward to a solution. The attack should be aimed at both industrial waste and municipal sewage, but progress against the one need not be made contingent upon progress against the other. A sober, objective approach based on a solid foundation of fact and experience is the key to a final and satisfactory solution."

Interviewer: Well Lew there are the words of our governor this morning and I wonder if you could tell me what you think of them?

Colomy: Well I think that it's a very constructive program. It's something that we have definitely been working forward to and it's certainly very encouraging to me in particular after six years of long hard work and sleepless nights to have a governor come out and make a definite stand because there's been no question in the past at every legislature this thing has been practically just a brush-off. As I said before a little to you earlier this evening we realize the program must be constructive, but we are not satisfied with any 25 or 30 year program and to keep on going. This thing just gets worse and more expensive and we feel that at this legislative session that there's definitely is going to be a beginning and I think it do well for him to heed Mr. Muskie's approach of this thing.

Interviewer: Well there has been quite a bit more said fairly recently about stream pollution and of course that includes rivers, too. Then there has been in in the last few years that is it's only been recently that people have been hearing about it and as a result they might be somewhat confused about some of the terminology. Now what is classification, just exactly what does that mean?

Colomy: Well, Bill, classification is this: most of our rivers, our Maine rivers, in fact one that were right near too now in Bangor, is heavily polluted and they're in practically in a class D situation, which is bad. It's bad from a health angle, it's bad from a bathing angle, bad from a boating angle and it's bad from a fish life angle. Now your C that Mr. Muskie spoke about, as he said, it was too broad and it was too broad in the old C classification wasn't much better than D. And the B classification will give you all the things that I just named, boating and bathing, fishing, healthier conditions, property value goes up where you have clean water, new industry will come in where there's clean water, and from the economical value to the state, it would be almost impossible to estimate it.

Interviewer: What is a Class A, is there one?

Colomy: There is very little, to the astonishment of a lot of people in Maine, there isn't too much class A water for the simple reason is that especially in the agriculture districts where that you might have drainage from pastures or something similar to that, it could lower the classification just enough in that water so that it wouldn't quite come under the class A bracket.

Interviewer: A is very narrow?

Colomy: That's very narrow.

Interviewer: But A and B are both considered good?

Colomy: That's right, very good.

Interviewer: And C is undesirable and D is very, very poor?

Colomy: There is, there might be some cases in the state where that for some reasons that we might have to settle for the upper bracket of C, which is very near B and that will support fish life and boating, bathing and good health conditions.

Interviewer: Well what do you think if the anti-pollution program is really pushed and something is done about it, what do you think will be the changes in the state?

Colomy: Well, the value to the state, it's, as I said, it's hard to estimate for the simple reason this is something that will go on for generations to come. This will build up, it will mean a new industry that there's many an industry that has to have clean water to operate with and it means that I am in hopes in time to see in your city of Bangor, Augusta, Portland, and such places where that you will have kind of a little recreational parks on the edges of your river where that your people perhaps that not so fortunate as some others that can take these long expensive trips and have vacations that can enjoy themselves with their family in the hot summer evenings and at the speed we're living today and going to live in the future, I figure that this relaxation and recreation is just as much of a must as a man's paycheck.

Interviewer: It certainly is. Before we started in recording here you mentioned the fact about cottages would spring up on many of our bigger rivers.

Colomy: Well that's very true, that's very true, Bill. That's been definitely proven in other states. Our beautiful scenic rivers here with the shorelines that practically have no agricultural value on any of them on account of abrupt banks and unevenness of the ground but still they're beautiful from a scenic angle and I wish that I was sure just when this would happen. I'd like to go out and buy myself 8-10-15 miles of some of these shorelines for little to nothing tonight.

Interviewer: Well, I [recording stops abruptly.]

Announcer: The previous material was recorded on January 6<sup>th</sup>, 1955.

[Transcript ends]

For more information about this transcript, audio recording, or other materials in Special Collections at the University of Maine, contact:

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