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I: Today is April 8th, 2016. Interview with Daryl Smith. Interviewer is Jean Eells. So let's start in a place that you might feel pretty comfortable recalling. How you came to be working on prairie in Iowa and where that first started for you and who were some of the key people in how you ended up.

P: Well, I have to go back a little bit just to sort of set the stage because I grew up in southeast Iowa and as far as I know, I never knowingly saw a prairie. And then when I went to work on my master's degree at the University of South Dakota in Vermillion, I took, I was a Botany major and in the summer-- I believe it was the summer, we went out to prairies for Plant Taxonomy and Ted VanBurgen was my instructor and I was just-- for some reason, just totally fascinated by prairies. I never, I mean, here I am probably twenty four years old and never seen a prairie before in my life and it was just totally taken with it. So that summer I visited prairie remnants in the area of Vermillion and really became excited about 'em and partly I think it was nostalgic because I've always been interested in history and I probably could have been a history major just as easily as a Biology major. And so I think part of it was sort of the nostalgic reflection of visual images in my mind of what the prairie was like before hand so I really became intrigued by prairie. Then I decided to pursue my doctorate at the University of Iowa and I got the University of Iowa and there was nobody there in prairie and my degree was a combination of Botany and Science Education and my major advisor was Robert Yeager and he had done research in plant physiology for his graduate work and then he had gone into Science Education. So I decided to sort of follow that pattern and his major advisor was still on campus Robert Mueller and so I worked with Robert Mueller on plant physiology for that. And so I think I took one course in spring flora from Paul Sorensen who was a graduate student teaching a spring flora course so that was about the only field course that I could get at Iowa. Then I came to UNI in the fall of '67 with teaching accommodation of Science Education and plant physiology and I did that for quite a few years but there was a graduate student here shortly after I got here. Glen Krum.

I: What year might--

P: I came in the fall of '67.

I: K. Thank you.

P: And I'm not exactly sure when Glen Krum came. It might have been the fall of '68 or the fall of '69. Glen was a student-- kind of an unusual graduate student and he was about my age and he was looking for a research project for his master's thesis with Larry Eilers and he sort of re-discovered what we called the Mark Sand Prairie at that time and he kept talking to me about-- I gotta see this place so he finally dragged me out there and so that sort of renewed and sparked my interest in prairies and that would have been about 1970. So then it's just increased proportionately became more and more involved and interested-- some people might say obsessed by prairies and at the same time there was a group here which included Virgil Dou and Paul Woodsen and

Ben Claussen who were trying to get a preserve system started on campus that would have examples of what some of the Iowa vegetation was like and so I became intrigued by this and proposed that we do a prairie planting on campus. Got some summer funding to do some background research in '72 and persuaded the powers that be on campus to set aside about ten acres where we could plant prairie. That had to be approved by the campus planning committee. Interestingly enough, the proposal for my site to do this planting was approved the same time that they approved the construction of the UNIdome, which is kind of an interesting juxtaposition of events. So then in the summer of '73 I seeded the prairie on campus so that was sort of the start of my interest in prairie in Iowa. I could go on with more but that's kind of give you a little bit of a background.

I: Where did you acquire the seed? That was hard.

P: Yeah, that was difficult. Yeah, and when I got interested in this and this is when I started finding out about people like Paul Christiansen and Roger Landers and I actually got the seed from the Jim Wilson seed farm in Nebraska which was was non-local ecotype seed, which was really-- there wasn't much seed available then and the-- one of the things I did then and I'd never do again was that I just planted grasses which were the most available seed and I was in too much of a hurry to collect local forbs seed because there really wasn't any forbs seed available. and so that was what I planted and that was one of the regrets that I had later on 'cause we had to add forbs to the prairie and that made it more difficult so it wasn't-- it wasn't, wasn't the best reconstruction but it's still there and it's gotten more diverse.

I: Can we spend a little more time on that because Jake talked about that as well and I remember coming along and gosh, we were excited if you saw a stand of switchgrass because that was you know, we recognized it as prairie, we recognized it wasn't prairie but we refer to it as that--

P: Prairie vegetation.

I: Prairie Vegetation and we were excited to see more of it rather than less of it for a change.

P: Exactly.

I: So you happened on Wilson in Nebraska. The availability of seed for anything. Jake mentioned Kansas and Nebraska... and..

P: Yeah, there was Stock Brothers seed farm which was another source of one, Jim Wilson-- and probably the reason I ended up with him, he was more tied in with the-- what we call the Midwest Prairie Conference at that time, now North American Prairie Conference. So I had a chance to meet Jim and hear about him and he was promoting prairie more than Stock Brothers and others, there was Ely Seed in Kansas, too. I don't remember all of the ones that were available at that time. But Jim Wilson was really a

promoter of this and so that's why I ended up with-- he was an interesting person. Jim and Alice Wilson in fact they put together a book that-- I don't see it on the shelf right now but it was kind of a coffee table book about the prairie. Their son Steve was a first class photographer for National Geographic so he the photography for this and so they put together a neat little book on the prairie that was also part of the promotional aspect of it. I did have an occasion one summer must have been about, boy, '73 or '74 to visit his seed farm in Nebraska and interesting-- interesting couple.

I: So you are acknowledging that Jim was certainly a good prairie promoter and he was promoting prairie as we might use the word, with a capital "P" with words. Forbs and everything. More than just the grasses. Yeah.

P: Well it was mostly just grasses, yeah, mostly just grasses but-- because that's what he had for sale.

I: Sure.

P: You know, he had the cultivated varieties of grasses so there was more of the grasses but like you say, at that point in time, we weren't being very precise in our terminology. We thought we were doing well if we planted four or five prairie grasses. We thought that was-- and that's probably one of the reasons I elected not to push harder on planting forbs in that first planting in the summer of '73. Later realized that we need to have more of those forbs in there too and now we plant them at the same time.

I: And partly was-- I mean the decision would have been made on-- based on a whole lot of very rational factors. Seed availability, ways of seeding probably, cost?

P: Cost. Time of seeding.

I: Time of seeding. You know.

P: Yeah.

I: 'Cause you get forbs seed and you know if you could find 'em singly or in a mix, they are very expensive.

P: Well yeah, most of the forbs that were available at that time were being collected by what I might call more hobbyist type of people who would go out and hand collect local seed in their community so they weren't collecting very large volumes of seed so as a result as you say the seed was very expensive with what was available for forbs and that was probably another factor of why I went without forbs plantings in those thinking I could add 'em later and we did but that's not the best way. So yeah, that was a real problem so and that problem continued. We'll come back to that 'cause that problem didn't go away very rapidly and the seeds that Jim Wilson and others were promoting were the cultivated varieties that had been developed primarily for range restoration in Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma and a bit further west of here and that was the only seed

that was available in quantities and reasonably priced. That seed was more selected for forage capabilities than it was for native plantings and so as a result they selected seed that germinated readily. Grew vigorously competed well and this sort of thing. I can remember I used Blackwell seed for one of my restoration studies in plant physiology because the seed respired so vigorously and it was probably indicative of why it did so well or partly thinking of why it did so well in plantings. And as you said many of the early plantings were just switchgrass. Particularly in the roadside plantings. They were done by the DOT.

I: And I recognize too that the NRCS early recommendations were often, you know, they were a single species too when they first start getting in..

P: Right. That was a general-- that was a general approach with that and the idea of a more diverse prairie-- I mean, there were people doing it but it didn't really gain-- it didn't gain as much momentum with the agencies and the general population until somewhat later.

I: Yeah. yeah. So you ended up here, you had a grad student then that was able to start working on prairie more and got--

P: Well, he got me interested. He did the flora of the Cedar Hills Sand Prairie and so he's the one who dragged me out there and got me visiting the Cedar Hills Sand Prairie and so that was all it took. You know, it was an infection then that you get and part of that preparation in '72 was I went to the third Midwest Prairie Conference in Nebraska at Manhattan and that was my first encounter with people. And I also, as a part of that study I became aware particularly of what Paul Christiansen was doing at Mt. Vernon at Cornell College and some of the plantings that he was involved with. Made his acquaintance in the summer of '72 and subsequently got acquainted with Roger Landers, called him Roger then, wasn't until later I called him Jake and also about the work of Peter Schramm at Knox College at Galesburg, Illinois. Peter was-- he had taken over restoration-- reconstruction project that had been started in the mid-50's at Knox College by Paul Sheppard and one other, but I can't remember the other person's name. They had connected with the University of Wisconsin where the first prairie planting occurred in the mid-30's and so Peter then was a new staff member and sort of took over this project that had been going at Knox College at their field campus for about ten years and so Peter was one of the early leaders in prairie restoration prairie reconstruction as was Paul Christiansen and Peter also organized the first Midwest Prairie Conference in '68 at Knox College. Four-- unfortunately I wasn't into it yet then. I didn't make it until the third Prairie Conference but Paul Christiansen presented and Roger Landers and a student presented at the one in Knox College.

I: So basically starting in '72 then for you with more focused attention towards prairie and constr--

P: Right. That was sort of my-- I had been introduced to it-- I've kind of thought of this later on I wondered how I got motivated. I was interested in prairie and Glen Krumm had

helped me but why did I get motivated for-- in the prairie restoration prairie reconstruction? I've often thought about that and I think may have been part of it was that Paul Shepard was one of the speakers at our Earth Day. The first Earth Day in 1970 here at UNI and I spent quite a bit of time visiting with Paul and I think maybe he may have sort of peaked my interest and maybe even sort of challenged me to-- I don't recall exactly, but I recall spending quite a bit of time talking with him and fascinated by what they were doing at Knox College and so I think that's probably what really peaked my first interest in prairie and of course once hooking up with Paul Christiansen and some of the other people that were doing that sort of thing-- it built upon that.

I: That's interesting to think about. People and places and events that influence action basically. Action outcomes.

P: And it may be of interest to you-- Paul Christiansen and I were visiting and I had mentioned to you that I had not knowingly seen a prairie until I was in grad school and the same thing was true of Paul. He grew up in the Osage area and he said there was prairie around but he didn't really, really wasn't much aware of it and his first real introduction to prairie was when one of the profs took him on a field trip at Iowa State when he started his doctorate degree there so it's kind of interesting that both of us came to prairie much later in life and really-- plumed onto it much harder than many people would of. Yeah. Maybe people who spent more time on it earlier. I don't know.

I: Uhm, so within the university system then you had navigated getting permission for the ten acres for that planting. Talk to me in general terms or specifics about other support from the university or discouragement or you know, what was that relationship with your prairie interests and--

P: I'll have to think about that for a moment. They let me do it. [laughter]. That's probably the best way to say it. I don't know that I was particularly encouraged to do it all though the group that we are trying to get this campus preserves going certainly encouraged me to do it. Ben Claussen, Paul Witson, Virgil Doul. Couple other people, John Volker was another person. They certainly encouraged me to do it because it fit well with what they were trying to do on campus. So it was sort of a side thing because remember I was teaching plant physiology and science education courses. So I wasn't teaching any of those courses and sometimes general biology courses. So I wasn't teaching any of those courses and it wasn't until somewhat later, I suspect probably '75 or '76 that I proposed what I call Tall Grass Prairie Seminar, which was a one hour course, well, not a course, more of a seminar that that eventually morphed into a two hour mini course and so I started offering what I call the Tall Grass Prairie Seminar and people got interested and started becoming involved with that and so I-- but again I sort of added that to my teaching load it was just something that I wanted to do. And--

I: And am I right, Pauline Drobney was a student--

P: Pauline Drobney was a student-- I think she graduated about in '78 or something like that but she she worked-- she was one of my student crew, I got a small grant from the bicentennial commission in 1976 to work on adding forbs to the prairie and she was one of the students, I think she was a freshman or sophomore at that time. So she was one of the student crew that worked on that and that may have been her-- although she had been introduced to prairie 'cause she lived-- she was from Pocahontas and she had been to Kalsow Prairie as a youngster. She later told me that. So yeah, she was a student there and then she graduated and left UNI and worked, I don't know, Arizona, she was gone for a couple three years and then came back to work at the greenhouse at UNI and as the greenhouse assistant and gradually became more involved with prairie and what we were doing because we were managing the prairie-- they had much of the on site management responsibility through the prairie and then she decided to pursue a master's degree here which she finished about 1990 I think. I may be off a year or so--

I: That's all right. I'll circle back with her on that one but I just thought I would see where she might have fit into that particular progression. So I think at this point it might be helpful before we get too far in the singular story to talk about the LRTF and IRVM. Kind of that evolution that happened. How it all came to be. We know when it actually started but what were the pre-cursors? What gave it legislative oomphf?

P: Well, I think we have to go back even a little bit further than that. When I first started investigating prairie and prairie work that was being done, Paul Christiansen and Dave Lyons were working on a project in Linn County where they were planting prairie in roadsides. That was-- I remember there was an article in the Des Moines Register and in fact that may have been the first time I heard of Paul Christiansen. I'm not sure. These two guys in Linn County so I subsequently went down and visited with Paul who was the lead person on that project and they were working with the county engineer and they had done some sample roadside plantings because Paul was-- he had done an on campus planting and he'd done some planting in Lisbon and different places around. He was kind of following the footsteps of the planting that Jake had done at Iowa State and this sort of thing and so that was kind of a first introduction to it and then Paul and Dave subsequently and I don't remember the exact year and I don't think I have it right here but they published a little book at the DOT on roadside prairie plantings and sort of laid some of the ground work if you will for what subsequently became the basis for our roadside program. Now there was also some planting, and Jake may have talked about this, Jake was involved in persuading the DOT to put-- to plant some native grasses along I-80 and I don't know much about that particular aspect but I do know that he was instrumental in persuading them to do some planting of big blue stem and Indian grass and I don't know what else along 80 and maybe some other places as well. So that was sort of the-- and that was that was going on while Paul was working on this would have been in the early 70's on the roadside program with Linn County and I think his publication was '75 or something like that and I can find it. I don't think I have it on a shelf right now 'cause I still have a copy of it. And then also, at this same time I can remember in about '74 there were-- Black Hawk County was one of the many counties in the state who were spraying their roadsides with herbicides for weed control and

having been turned on by the first Earth Day, I didn't think this was a good idea and I can remember going to the Board of Supervisors and asking them to stop spraying and they said, well we have to control the weeds and this woody growth. If we don't you know, they will take over the roadsides and I can remember riding around with the county engineer and him showing me you know, if you don't get rid of this stuff it will cause drifting on the roads and this sort of thing and I think I think I was successful in getting them to stop spraying for one or two years but then the next thing I know they are back seeding again or back spraying again and basically what counties would do is they would hire these crews-- these spray crews who would then hire a group of young college students who would ride the rigs and spray every mile of road on both sides to get rid of the quote-unquote weeds. And as Paul pointed out in the publication that he and Dave Lyons did they basically just pushing it back to early succession and creating more weeds you know, but they thought they were doing the right thing because they were in that mode of better living through chemistry. And then there's a gap for me and I think there was kind of a gap in the whole situation because Paul was continuing to do this. He'd started this project but then we didn't hear much about roadsides until about the mid-80's and then there started to be some more interest and so there's a gap there and you may have to fill that gap in at this-- I don't know too much about it but then in the mid-80's we started hearing a little bit more about it. Wisconsin was doing a little bit, they were talking a little bit about prairie roadsides and it never came to much at that time but they were talking about I think maybe Dane County was involved in some in Wisconsin but there's a couple of articles-- Jake wrote an article that's with another person that's in-- it was in the what-- Conservationist Magazine-- it's changed names. I can never keep track of all the-- but in the end Black Hawk county and Story County then in about '85 or '86 started what they called a roadside program and Bill Haywood who you probably have heard about and probably will hear more about-- he was the Black Hawk County Forester but he sort of was assigned the responsibility for roadsides and there was apparently the weed commissioner resigned or something and they made him the weed commissioner as well and so Bill was an ISU graduate and had taken at least one course from Jake and I don't know how many more and he sort of visualized and I can't-- I've never been able to pinpoint exactly where this word came about, Paul used it in that publication that he and Dave Lyons used but it was used in a slightly different fashion then it evolved to and so not sure what they used but they-- Bill really is the one that put meat on it, this Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management Program that Black Hawk County had and Story County had. Trelen Wilson was the first Story County roadside manager but Bill's forte was promoting the project. I mean Bill could have sold refrigerators to Eskimos and Bill got this program and I can remember and I don't remember the year but it was right in this mid-80's time, I remember he was trying to put together a committee of people in Black Hawk County would be sort of supportive and what he was doing and he asked me to serve on the committee and got this program started. Well, it was one of those things that it had just happened at the right time. All the stars were aligned I think for that. People were getting a little bit tired of so much chemical application. It was getting more expensive too-- it was probably more the deciding factor. It was getting more expensive and Bill said, well we can control weeds-- and I said Bill said because he was sort of the spokesperson for that and we can control weeds and it won't cost you any more than what you are spending

for chemicals now and so that was sort of the basis that was attractive to counties. Other counties became interested in probably-- I don't know whether you got Al Ehley on your list or not to talk to but they can probably give you the specific counties. I know, I think Burlington County was one of the early ones-- not Burlington County, excuse me, uh, Des Moines County where Burlington is. And there was another one north central Iowa. I can't think of which county that was and then Fayette County got it early with John and so there were several counties that got interested but there were a lot of counties, a lot of places asking Bill to come talk to them about this and finally in '87 Bill stopped by the house one day 'cause I was home 'cause I was recouping from by-pass surgery and he said, "I can't keep up with the demand for thinking about this but we need something and can you put together a state wide type program to work with counties. I'll help you." I mean, but he said, "I can't assume-- I gotta get some of this" so basically then Bill and I and then we worked with.. oh boy. NRCS person. I'll think of his name in a moment. Uh, he later was on campus at ISU and was sort of the liaison with NRCS. I'll think of his name. Anyway, the three of us worked together and planted a grant proposal to the DNR in that would have been '87 I guess to start a-- sort of a prototype project to work with counties around the state and it was funding through what they called the EXXON overcharge monies. So NRCS was cooperative. They agreed to supply a half-time staff person if we would get funding to pay the other half of the salary to establish and establish an office here at UNI for the roadside program. So we were successful in getting that grant and Al Ehley was the NRCS person designated to be the staff person here at UNI and then we funded the other half of the project through this DNR grant and so that's what started the roadside program here in '87 but it was still of interest and the DOT was interested in doing something as well and they put out a proposal for a grant they wanted to do to establish state wide IRVM program with primary roads and secondary roads and this sort of thing and they put out a propo-- they put out a request for proposals and Al Ehley and Bill Haywood and Paul Christiansen and I worked on a proposed proposal for this. We were not successful in getting the grant proposal. It was actually gotten by Butler and Associates at Ames. And Butler and Associates then are the people who put together the legislative package for taking it to the legislature. In retrospect, our proposal was much more boots on the ground doing what we were talking about before. Theirs was kind of setting the structure and I think the DOT was wise in selecting them rather than us because it enabled them to put the structural framework together and that's not what our proposal was aiming at so much. Our proposal was getting it done you know, but we were prime for that now-- that. So Butler and Associates and again, I got stuff packed away and I haven't got a chance to dig it out but I've got the Butler and Associates booklet. You got that, too. Okay.

I: I got access to that.

P: Okay. They are the ones who took the proposal to the legislature. Then led to the bill that ultimately established the Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management and the Living Roadway Trust Fund. Living Roadway Trust Fund is-- was the most creative and important cog in that whole wheel that could have been and that's-- that's why other states have not had success I think. I think the reason we had so much success and I don't know who to create the brilliant person to commend for that but whoever did--

whether it was a legislator or whether it was Butler and Associates, I'm not sure about that, but anyway, Living Roadway Trust Fund was put together to fund Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management. I was not actually involved with the legislative work. I subsequently have talked-- there was a senator from Dubuque who was involved but you remember at that time we had a very environmentally acute and aware group of legislators. We had Paul Johnson from Decorah. We had Dave (Osterberg) what's his name from Mt. Vernon? I think it's Dave-- but there were three or four people that were really-- we will have to look up those names, that were really attune for legislative action and then I think they persuaded others to be involved and I don't know exactly the make-up. There were about four or five legislators on the committee that proposed this legislation and I'll have to find those names, I don't-- I don't know those names because I didn't work with them particularly. BUT one of the things that the legislation included was the roadside program at UNI that worked with counties. I mean, that was written into the legislation because we were already established as a result of this grant. We only had a one year grant, but we were-- I guess it could have gone two years but we were established so we were added into the legislation to work with the counties.

I: Did you get called in-- I mean if you didn't work directly with the legislators personally, were you asked to present or testify or anything? Just it all happened?

P: It all happened.

I: Interesting.

P: From my perspective it just happened. I wasn't, we were involved, we made the proposal and actually it was kind of interesting, way back to when Butler-- there was debate I understand on the DOT committee because some of the people who were more close to the situation saw what we proposed was going to be more readily available. You could go online and so there was some debate about which proposal to accept and they went with the Butler and Associates which I said was probably a wise decision in retrospect. And I don't know-- I don't think-- I don't know that Paul or anybody else-- now there may have been some DOT people who were asked to come talk to the legislators I don't know, but it's kind of interesting. I don't know that the DOT was especially interested in it. There were people at DOT who were but the DOT in general. I don't know that they were particularly interested in it because I know when we started forming the stuff, and I think I should back up, I think we may have had an opportunity to call-- I don't know exactly how this came about, we may have had an opportunity to comment on the bill that was proposed. [loud beep] Because one of the things that they had in their was they tried-- and it's still in the legislation to get--

I: Hear a beep it's because my battery is-- nope. Battery is okay. Just keep going. It's flashing for some reason, I'm not sure what that means but anyway.

P: I seem to recall something about being able to comment because they were trying to get representatives from different organizations to be on the LRTF advisory board [loud

beep] and so we had-- might have had some input there at least. And maybe some comments but we was-- it was in the bill form before we had that opportunity.

I: This is a good natural breaking spot. [loud beep]

P: yeah it is.

I:

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I: And we have May 5th, 2016. Interview with Daryl Smith. Interviewer Jean Eells and we can pick up pretty much. We got to the point where we were just talking about-- we'd gotten you here at UNI and but we hadn't gotten as far as IRVM and we hadn't gotten much beyond, we'd gotten through your early career pieces. [interviewer note – this interview had to be redone, keeping the first section done in April and resumed in May, hence the discrepancy in dates and stated number of the interviews.]

P: Had we gotten to the planting of the prairie on campus---

I: No. No.

P: Okay.

I: So we might want to start--

P: Yeah, and I don't know anything about the Earth Day thing with Paul Sheppard or--

I: Uhm, I didn't have that in my written notes so we can just blast away from there. Looks like everything is recording as it should.

P: Well, I 'suppose I would start to try to pick up here and--

I: You can back track--

P: Maybe a little bit because--

I: Sure.

P: When I came to UNI from Iowa, I had been away from prairies for the most part for my graduate studies and started to teach plant physiology in science education and then Glen Krum who was a graduate student-- a non-traditional graduate student came to UNI to work with Larry Eilers and he sort of re-discovered what we later called the Mark Sand Prairie and now call Cedar Hills Sand Prairie and he was insistent that I come out and see this 'cause he had sort of stumbled onto it while he was looking for a graduate research project on wetland species and decided to change his thesis to a species list and a descriptive paper about the Cedar Hills Sand Prairie so I started revisiting that prairie and that sort of rekindled my interest in prairie that had developed in South Dakota which we probably talked about earlier. So as I became more interested in prairies the-- a group on campus decided that we wanted to start a preserves system that sort of replicated some of the ecosystems of Iowa and one of those was the tall grass prairie and I was interested in what the proposals were about that and about the same time or maybe even a little bit before this was-- I participated in the first Earth Day celebration in 1970. One of the speakers who came for that was Paul Sheppard who was on the faculty at Knox College in Galesberg. He had been involved with starting a prairie restoration based upon some of the stuff they had done at the

university of Wisconsin Arboretum and established a field station at-- been involved in the establishment of the field station at Knox College. So I spent quite a bit of time in talking with him and then later in retrospect I realized that he may have kind of peaked my interest, that along with kind of the fact that we were starting this preserves system in prairie restoration, so I made a proposal to the committee that we establish a tall grass prairie planting on campus. Got approval for that in 1972 and then seeded it in 1973. Spring of 73. At that time most of the seeding mixtures were cultivated varieties that had been developed in Kansas and Nebraska and Oklahoma and places kind of west of here more for range land restoration. That was the only seed available if you didn't have the patience to wait and collect your own seed over a period of years, which I was very impatient at that time and I didn't have the patience so I used those cultivated varieties of grasses and planted grasses-- a grass mixture and then later we added forbes to the mixtures through various means-- uh, some plugs. Some special seedling research project that Dave Williams did for his master's thesis and so we added in later. In retrospect, it would have been better if we would have planted Iowa seed and the forbes all at the same time, but I guess you learn by doing something wrong and making sure you don't do it wrong the second time. At least that's been my philosophy-- 'cause I've done enough things wrong the first time to-- don't want to repeat that. Don't want to repeat that error, right? So that sort of got me involved with the prairie restoration movement 'cause I did a lot of reading, talked with Paul Christiansen. He and Dave Lyons were doing the roadside plantings in Linn county and doing other plantings because Paul had finished his PhD at Iowa State and took a position at Cornell College in '67 and had been working on prairie plantings since that time so I met-- I got acquainted with Paul, talked with him at length, did a lot of reading about what people were doing with prairie restoration. Did a reading about what Peter Schramm was doing at Knox College. He had replaced Paul Sheppard at-- or he had gotten on staff anyway at Knox College. Not sure he replaced Paul Sheppard, but anyway he had taken over the field station and restoration project and was really promoting a lot of prairie restoration so I read a lot of the works about him and then in the-- must have been fall of 2000-- excuse me, not 2000 been 1972, I guess. I went to the-- my first North American Prairie Conference was called at that time the Midwest Prairie Conference. It was held at Manhattan, Kansas in the fall of '72 and there I had a chance to meet some of the people who were involved in prairie restoration. Paul Christiansen was there, of course, but Peter Schramm was there also, Ray Schulenberg and I had the opportunity to sort of sit in on the peripheral of a lot of their discussions and was a real learning experience for me and increased my interest and motivation in prairie at that time. Then other than maintaining the prairie, we got some funding in '76 as a part of the bicentennial celebration to add some forbs and other species through transplants into the prairie and that started adding the forbs that I planned to do and worked on a project with the lab school where they would grow seedlings in their prairie unit and then we would put those plugs into the tall grass so gradually we were putting forbs into the prairie but it was a very small process as I said, it would have been better if we would have seeded them originally and of course we had to learn to burn the prairie to manage it and I don't know wither I-- yeah, my first prairie burn was Cedar Hills Sand Prairie which had-- had been-- Glen Krum had discovered it about 1969 or '70 and he had become concerned that some of the small Cedars were taking over the area so he

thought it ought to be burned so we made arrangements with Jake Landers and he came up and supervised the burn and I put together a crew of volunteer students and I believe that would be '75 and we burned the Cedar Hills Sand Prairie and that was my first prairie burn and then within a couple years after that we burned the campus prairie and started burning on a fairly regular basis. And as a part of the planting of the prairie-- in the interest in prairie, I formed what I called a tall grass prairie seminar class of-- I think it started out as a one hour course and then it delved into a two hour course in which students would learn about prairies in Iowa and prairies in general and visit local remnants and this sort of thing and it was a natural inclination that these students would want to be involved in the burns that managed the prairie so eventually we spun out of that a separate course in which we just called prairie management which we would usually do in the spring and burn some prairie remnants which ultimately developed into a course in our curriculum on management, fire management of ecosystems which I taught for a number of years toward the end of me-- I don't know toward the last fifteen years of my career, something like that. Uh, so we were working on the prairie seminar and the burning of the prairie-- I don't know whether I re-counted how I learned how important it was to have prairie-- we did burns to have the proper apparel and stuff but that's kind of an interesting story.

I: Yeah.

P: this would have been about 1980 I believe, might have been-- it was early 80's anyway. We were scheduled to burn the campus prairie like mid-April and it was one of those April days in which we had a warm-front come in, temperature jumped up into the 90's the day before we were scheduled to burn and we had made plans to burn the Iowa Academy of Science prairie near Reinbeck which Roger Landers had planted for the Iowa Academy of Science and we were going to burn that-- so the temperatures were in the low 90's and my students showed up dressed in t-shirts and halter tops and shorts and flip-flops and the only ones that were properly attired was myself who had on cotton shirt and jeans, that was the fire uniform at that time. Before Nomex. and Gary Phillips who was a graduate student who was helping me do the burn. We were the only ones on the crew who were properly attired. So needless to say those students weren't of much help to me in burning because they couldn't get close enough to the fire, but we worked with Grundy county and they had a few people, so we managed to burn it okay and then the same thing, the farm manager who worked for Hertz farm was there and he was interested in what we were doing and wanted to know if he could help and I said sure, you know, and so we were working and he was trying to find things to do and he said he noticed there was kind of fire burning around one of the power line poles that ran along the edge of the prairie he said, "probably you'd like to have that out" and I said "yeah, that'd be good if you want to go put that out." Well he came back and he said, "Boy, it's a good thing I had on these high boots." He had been putting out the fire and kind of kicking it out and raking it out and ashes had landed on his trousers and it turned out he was wearing double knit trousers and it just melted the stuff right on the side of his boot. Didn't hurt him, fortunately but if it had been flesh it of been very difficult. After that burn I said I think we need-- I think we need some sort of a standard uniform for burning 'cause of double knit pants are not good, flip flops and halter tops and t-shirts

are not good. And shorts so that sort of-- we added a unit on what you should wear when you burn. The next day we were scheduled to burn the campus prairie, well, the front had some through full force and by this time it was almost a hundred degrees and the wind was like fifteen to twenty mile an hour and I said that was the first time I said we aren't burning. That was the first time I learned you can't still burn if the conditions aren't right so there was a big learning process at-- that April, but we gradually learned a lot about burning prairies and managing prairies and fitting into the system as they developed to more the fire behavior training courses and the personal equipment that you wear and this sort of thing, so it was a gradual evolution over that so that in the last years I was burning we had Nomex and the whole nine yards you know. Better equipment. Did a lot of burning those early years with just backpack pumps and a rake and flappers.

I: Flappers. yeah.

P: You know, ended up with pumper trucks and-- fire helmets and Nomex suits and this sort of thing so it was quite a transition over the years. So that was sort of one element that went on up with us. In the meantime I became more involved in prairie preservation in the state. Became more networked with what things were going on in the state and developed-- began to develop sort of a reputation of prairie restoration here at UNI and providing information for people who wanted to plant prairies-- this type of activity. I served on the board of directors of the Iowa Nature Conservancy one term, and then I was also two terms on the state preserves advisory board. In fact I was on the board when we dedicated the Cedar Hills sand prairie as part of the state preserves system. I was also-- I think I was chairmen of the board then, I think I was chair when we dedicated Marietta Sand Prairie if I remember correctly, too. Then also Manakowsky Prairie so there were several prairies that were added at that time. Working with the preserves committee was great. Dean Roosa was the state ecologist and he exhibiting real leadership in prairie reservation-- well, all kinds of preservation, but prairie preservation in particular and Sylvan Runkel who was retired but still very active, and a member of the state preserves advisory board. Initially I think when I joined and then became advisor to the board shortly after that. Then I served as an advisor to the board after I went off my term for a number of years and continued on some various projects. I got a contract to do the vegetation survey of the Great River Road to find out what sort of the natural areas were along the edge of the Great River Road. Worked with Paul Christiansen and Dean Roosa in doing that and then also got a contract to survey the vegetation of Brushy Creek State Recreational Area. Discovered some heretofore_unknow prairie remnants in that process and then also did the vegetation survey for the rights of way for Highway 20 crossing the Greenbelt area between Steamboat Rock and Iowa Falls. So I was doing those types of things and still active in the prairie preservation circles and still providing consultation work on restoration and this sort of thing and doing presentations on prairie, I developed a presentation that was first presented at the Mid-West prairie conference at Iowa State and would that have been '76 I guess? And I continued to make that-- called the "Mystic of the Prairie" made that presentation a number of times at different organizations and groups. So I was active in prairie circles, and then in the late 80's-- been '87 I guess. Is

that right? Guess it would. I think it was '87. Bill Haywood would would become-- develop Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management Program here in Black Hawk County, one of the first two in the state. The other one was Story County. Bill was-- he was the weed commissioner, the forester, and the roadside manager all wrapped in one and he was getting a lot of requests to come around the state because there was a lot of interest in the state in this Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management Program 'cause-- for the first time it was sort of an alternative to the broadcast spraying that had been going on for a number of years in which counties would hire a company and they would hire a group of college kids and they would spray all the roadsides in the county and many of the conservationists were concerned about that. I remember going to the Black Hawk County Conserv-- or Black Hawk Board of Supervisors meeting about 1974 and trying to persuade them to stop spraying the roadsides and at that time we didn't have any real viable alternative other than stopping. Then by the mid-80's, began to develop his Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management where we could use prairie planting in the roadsides and that would allow you to reduce mowing and reduce herbicide application and the prairie plants would out-compete the weedy vegetation so Bill Haywood couldn't keep up with that and so he came and asked if I would be willing to put together a program that would help counties across the state who were interested in establishing Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management Programs which would take one big hunk off of his plate that he wasn't being paid to do and provide some relief for him and so he and I put together a grant-- actually to the DNR using some of the EXXON overcharge monies to reduce chemicals in roadsides and stuff and propose that we establish an office here at UNI to provide information for counties who are interested in starting programs and provide support to counties who were-- who already had programs in process. So that grant was funded-- I guess it would have been '87. For a year and then during that year, their interest developed in the state legislature for an Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management Program and legislation was passed in, I believe it was '88, I'd have to check-- always get those '87, '88 blurred. We need to get those tied down a little tighter but anyway, our grant was in its first year and so as a part of the legislation they wrote to the office at UNI into the legislation for IRVM and to work with counties primarily and so we sort of got added to that legislation which provided an ongoing emphasis in some funding to have a roadside office here at UNI and so that was the start of that which would-- we first started it, the grant involved a cooperation between Black Hawk County, UNI and what was then Iowa SCS. And the SCS office said that they would provide a half-time staff member to help organize the office. They would fund a half-time if we could find the funding for the other half so the grant provided the funding for the other half and that's when Al Ehley was hired to-- what we now call NRCS to to manage the roadside office here at UNI and I was responsible locally for the oversight of the office and the management of the office and Al Ehley ran the office and started the program here at UNI. Then after three years, SCS reminded us that this was only a three year commitment on their part and they were pulling out and I sort of becoming-- had become used to them providing half the salary. So I was kind of taken aback and about the same time, I don't remember the exact years, Bill Haywood started his own forestry contracting-- consulting business and so he left Black Hawk County and so he left Black Hawk County, SCS left, and there I was standing all alone. What am I going to do, you know? 'Cause I was teaching full-

time so I couldn't run the office, and so fortunately Kirk Henderson who had returned to UNI for a second degree in Biology had gotten sort of infected with the prairie bug while he was here and actually had done some internship work with the roadside office and Al Ehley and also had done some resea--- internship work with the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation-- was available so I asked Kirk if he would be willing to take on that job and he was interested and so the rest of that is about twenty plus years, twenty-two years, or twenty-three years of work as manager of the roadside program here at UNI. So I made an excellent choice of Kirk. He did a marvelous job of taking over from Al Ehley and establishing the program and putting it on a long-term footing and in the meanwhile we also worked out a little more compatible relationship with the DOT because there was a little bit of competition initially because the initial legislation made it possible for them to set up an IRVM office for the state roadsides at the DOT so here we had the office for the counties and an office for the state so there was a couple years in which we were sort of in competition. Not directly, but sort of in competition and of course that was tied in very closely to the LRTF monies which which provided the funding. So we worked through that and then the DOT decided that they couldn't afford to-- they were supplying some money to this as well. They couldn't afford it so they cut out the state IRVM portion of the program and just maintained the Living Roadway Trust Fund and so then we were the other office going and Kirk and Steve Holland developed a working relationship over the years that I think ultimately became very effective in advancing the cause of the Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management in the state. I stayed involved as manager here, but Kirk was involved in the day to day operations. Sorry I sort of ran out of juice for a moment.

I: That's all right. We were following along on track. I have a couple of things I want to circle back to just in-case it makes some-- jogs the memory. What do you think the Iowa SCS's interest in doing that-- what would have motivated them to do that?

P: Well, there was fellow, I can't remember his name right now. I'll think of it in a minute. Bob-- drawing a blank on his last name. Kirk would probably remember. He was working for NRCS. The state office. He was later the liaison at Iowa State between NRCS and Iowa State.

I: Yeah.

P: Hud--

I: It'll come to you at 2 o'clock.

P: Anyway, he was interested in this and he was helpful with us in writing. He worked with Bill Haywood and I in writing it originally. Part of it was just kind of a personal interest on his part and then he was the-- always get the terminologies-- not the state conservationist because that's the person that's the hear but he was like the number three or four person.

I: Another assistant.

P: Wasn't an assistant. He had a special title. It was-- maybe it was just conservationist. I don't know. It wasn't-- anyway, that was his position and then his position was taken over by Jim Ayen_ and Jim was interested in the program and made a lot of contributions to the program so I think a lot of it had to do with those two people.

I: More personal interest than--

P: Personal interest. Yeah. Names are just not with me. Who is the fella that later became the-- he was NRCS State Conservationist and then he came back and he was director of the DNR under the Governor before Culver--

I: Vilsack

P: What? Vilsack. Yeah. He was-- and I think he stayed on under Culver, too. Maybe. Then when Branstad was re-elected he resigned. Leopold. No that was later. No it was fellow that was before that. Yeah. He was director of NRCS, or SCS.

I: Jeff Vonk?

P: Jeff Vonk.

I: Yeah.

P: Yeah. Jeff Vonk was director of SCS at that time, too and I think maybe he had, you know, he was willing to let these guys go with that sort of thing. I didn't realize his involvement and I wasn't working with him, so I didn't realize his involvement as much, but in retrospect I expect the fact that Jeff Vonk was there and the fact that Bob-- damn, I can't think of his name, and Jim Ayen were interested in it and he allowed that to pursue and he was adamant that it was a three year commitment and they weren't going to extend.

I: Yeah. Very interesting. Yeah. Okay. Let me pop back up just a little bit and catch-- all right. Let me catch a little bit more on your time on the preserves board. I'm after how you were involved with any other prairie areas that you-- you identifying any remnant prairies that needed to be preserved and as I recall last time when we visited there wasn't anything that you necessarily discovered per se but--

P: The only remnants I discovered were those in Brushy Creek and they were never put in-- there was an area put in the preserves system but they weren't included in that. So yeah, and we discovered some partial remnants in the right of way for Highway 20, too. No big discoveries.

I: Had-- I seem to recall Frieda Haffner-Kettlehole. Were you on at the time that was--

P: No. That was already, that was already a preserve. The ones that I specifically recall coming on board and I was probably involved in some of the later ones, but Dean and

Sy were the ones that were discovering were the Cedar Hills Prairie one and-- we put Marietta Sand Prairie in and we put Mankowsky Prairie in. Those were specific ones that I think I was chair of the board because I had to give speeches of those so I remember those a little better.

I: Remember those a little better.

P: Better. Yeah. And I suspect there were some-- there may have been some before that that were already in the works 'cause the first-- I think I was chair my-- I can't remember wither it was my sixth year or my fifth and sixth year. I can't remember. That was a two-three year terms and so the first terms I was just on the board so to speak. I can't remember wither. I think the Sylvan Runkel Preserve at Loess Hills was later.

I: I think so. I think it would be.

P: I mean, I went there for the dedication but I don't think I was on the-- I was probably on the preserves board when we started the process. Some of those take some time.

I: Who were some of the people that had to get lined up for one of those to become a preserve? Tell me a little bit about that process if you remember anything.

P: Well, I remember a little bit about it and that's where Dean Roosa was fantastic. I mean, he was the one that-- he was-- I don't know wither you knew Dean at that time or not. He was travelling the state. I always said to Dean if you ever find a woman that's a girlfriend or a wife, you are not going to be able to do what you are doing now. He was out all the time.

I: All the time.

P: I mean he lived in motels all around the state checking out natural areas and this sort of thing. That was the first one and then Dean would do a lot of the initial contact with the local DNR people. The local conservation people and sort of help grease the wheels in that process. That's where Sylvan Runkel was a great asset to Dean too because he frequently went along with Dean to do that, you know. Again, Sylvan by this time had quite a reputation. Was pretty well known around the state and so Dean and Cy were a good one two punch. Then also, there was really some-- what I would call talented people on the board. Particularly my first term. Duane Anderson who was the director of the Archaeology at the Univer-- well, it's not the University of Iowa but it's the--- what is it? State Archaeologist I guess. He was on it. Dorothy Barringer_who was married to Maurice Barringer_who was a treasurer under Rob Ray. Geologist at uh, the University of Iowa.

I: Jean Prior?

P: Well, Jean was on it too. I think Jean was advisor at that time but-- oh. [ruffling around] shut that off while I look here.

I: It's all right.

[ruffling around]

P: Not thinking of his name right now. I thought he wrote a chapter in here on Geology but apparently he didn't. Jean Prior was involved either as a board member or an advisor and I'll think of his name too. He was a well known Geologist from Iowa. The University of Iowa. And Peter--

I: VanderLinen?

P: No. Peter-- he was the head of the State Historical Society-- so Duane Anderson, State Archaeologist, State Historical Director, fella from the University of Iowa, Jean Prior, Dorothy Barringer and myself and the meetings themselves were-- I learned so much talking to those people about the various preserves but Jean knew the things in that book on the Geology of Iowa or the landforms of Iowa and she was very knowledgeable. Duane was very knowledgeable about the Archaeology and Peter-- can't think of his name but it's on record, think it was-- record for a long time. Knew a lot of history and the Geologist from the University of Iowa so it was just-- it was an education just sitting in on those meetings and being involved on those particular meetings. Of course, after Dean got all the people lined up for a particular preserve, then you had to go through a process of going through the board and developing a plan for the preserve and this sort of thing and it was a fairly-- a fairly lengthy process and very important process because probably the highest form of preservation that you can provide to an area and a state. Now, it's not inviolate if the Governor and the whole state legislature voted to take it out of state preserve, they could.

I: They could. hum.

P: But there would be a lot of political flack before that happens. It's an opportunity to provide a pretty good state of preservation to an area. There was another small prairie up in Northwest Iowa that we were also involved with. I can't remember the name of that one right now. It was on a twelve acre prairie. I can't remember the name of it right now.

I: I may have it in my notes from the other--

P: And of course we were preserving other things too. It wasn't just prairies. It was Archaeological sites. Historical sites. Geological sites. I remember going on a trip down to Iowa City when we were looking at the quarry down there where they had gotten limestone for the old capital building and that was being considered for state preserve. So that was really interesting. Probably one of the highlights of that time was Jean Prior and Dean Roosa and I did a tour-- two day tour kind of North Central, Northeastern preserves of Iowa and that was really great to be spending time with those two people and looking at the prairies not only from the biological point of view, and ecological point of view but also from the landform point of view too. That was a highlight.

I: Interesting. Huh. Sounds good. All right. Let me turn to a couple of things. Last time, we spent a little bit of time talking about a little bit more on the evolution of the IRVM and tall grass presenters---

P: Yeah. Okay. I thought of that. Right. Yeah, back track a little bit. I was kind of citing the projects in the early 80's on the preserves and doing the sampling on those sites. The vegetation sampling on those sites and talking and consulting about prairie restoration and prairie reconstruction and that was what motivated Bill Haywood to come to me and ask if I would do it 'cause he knew that UNI had these things going and I was primarily the person who had them going here at UNI so he felt that that would be a good match and it was close by for him, too. So that was part of the reason that we were involved-- or asked to serve and I think I joked at the time. He saw me about a month after I had had that surgery so he had caught me in a weak moment. I wasn't doing anything at that moment. I was just recovering from by-pass surgery and persuaded me to take that on, which I'm glad I did. Then also, in that period of the 80's and I don't know if we talked about this or not, but I was the department head of Biology from '81 to '87. So that took a lot of my time in that period too. There was a period in the 80's when I was doing things, but there was no specific thing to pinpoint. That was also the time I may have mentioned my first wife died in '83 and I was involved at that time with Dean Roosa and trying to establish a natural areas survey of the state and we had several organization meetings and there was a lot of interest in people around the state and getting some kind of a natural areas thing going and ultimately Dean was able to bring that around by bringing together the DNR and the Iowa-- and the Nature Conservancy and put together-- I think it was a two year program which was funding partially by the nature conservancy and partially by the DNR, which, what's now Preserves and Ecological Services, but the idea being that after this-- I think it was two years. It might have been more than that but I think it was a two year period after this period then the state would take over the survey of the natural areas of the state and management. That's never developed as fully as we would like to have had developed. I mean, the people who are involved in preserves and ecological services, I mean, John Pearson is up to here all the time in sixteen different things and he's not the only one but he's the one I know best, you know. They are all heavily involved with a whole lot of different things. They should probably have about three or four more staff members, but that's never happened. One of the things, and I know we didn't talk about this thing, one of the problems with our state preserves systems is that we preserve them, but we don't manage them.

I: Yeah.

P: And some of the management is done by organization-- like Nature Conservancy tries to manage theirs, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation tries to manage theirs, but there's a lot of others that the management could be like Hayden Prairie and Kalsow Prairie and Sheeder and Cayler are all managed by the wildlife management-- wildlife units of the DNR and some of them are pretty good and some of them are not quite-- they've gotten better because they got more people with more prairie training expertise, but a lot of times mainly they would just burn and that would be all they would do and

so-- we still-- when we preserve something we still should have equal number of funds set aside for management and we don't. I think what's happening is gradually our prairies are deteriorating. I mean, what management has done is slowing the deterioration but I think gradually they are deteriorating.

I: Yeah. 'Cause I live close to Woodman Hollow and--

P: They don't do anything there.

I: They don't do anything there.

P: No. It's just there.

I: Yeah.

P: Yeah.

I: They let a contract-- I went back with Bill Watson and looked at-- we pulled yellow sweet clover out of one little remnant that was left and had determined that there were several other areas that Landers had marked out back in the 70's--

P: [The remnant]?

I: Well, they-- he identified them as prairies that--

P: Remnants.

I: Bill and I had walked-- I just got to go along with Bill once-- you could hardly find them. Bill had a fabulous eye for detail and he found several diminutive prairie plants that were-- you know this tall that should have-- yeah and they were so-- it was so interesting [P: Right] but I think you are right that---

P: Well, Bill's been-- I mean, they've been hiring Bill but I mean, one person cannot cover all the of [I: No.] the preserves in the state that need to be covered. Bill's doing good work that one person can do on spots around the state.

I: By contracts that's it.

P: Yeah, but that's about it as far as management of these areas is concerned.

I: Can you talk a little bit more about Paul Christiansen and Larry Eilers as both of them are not somebody that I can capture and you know 'em better than anybody else?

P: Right. I'll probably jump back and forth so steer me a little.

I: That's okay. Yeah.

P: Larry came-- I started here in the fall of '67 and Martin Grant was the plant taxonomist at that time and he taught the fall of '67 and then the spring of '68 he took leave because he was suffering from cancer and subsequently died and I don't know the exact year he died-- would have been '68 or '69 but he no longer taught. So Larry Eilers was hired as the plant taxonomist starting in the fall of '68 so I got acquainted with Larry Eilers from '68 on and he was the major advisor for Glen Krum who re-discovered the Cedar Hills Sand Prairie and Larry probably had a fair amount to do with encouraging me and enticing me to get involved in the Nature Conservancy because he was-- he was involved in the nature conservancy and was chair-- I don't know how many years. He was on mine when he brought the first staff member for Nature-- for full-time staff member on board to run the Nature Conservancy in Iowa. Prior to that time it had been run primarily by the chairman, which at one time had been Jake Landers, another time, and Larry Eilers and I don't know who else. Those are the two that I remember specifically. You know, they did what they could and what other volunteers could do, but at that time I think the main Nature Conservancy holdings were probably Frieda Haffner-Kettlehole and I'm not sure what the other one was. There were two Nature Conservancy sites. I remember Fried Haffner was one of 'em. It took full-time staff members to start bringing and acquiring more nature conservancy properties. So Larry-- Dean Roosa had started what he called Biological Forays and I don't remember the year that he started the first one-- was in the streams-- is that Fremont County in the extreme southwest corner? Whatever county is in the extreme southwest corner. Then he did one in Lee county. I got involved in the one in Lee county because that's my home county and Larry was very heavily involved in these—Forays and it was neat to go to those and interact with the people who are sampling all sorts of biological and geological features for that particular area. Larry-- when we burned the Cedar Hills Sand Prairie in 1975, Larry was the official photographer for that-- he photographed the whole process. So Larry was a good friend that I worked with here on campus. Trying to remember some stories-- oh, I remember one time I was out north, a couple miles north of the Cedar Hills Sand Prairie looking at roadside ditches and stuff and I noticed this area that was real sandy. It didn't have very much vegetation and I recognized some prairie plants on it and it was an area that we didn't know about. It was two miles from Cedar Hills Sand Prairie, it wasn't nearly as big but it was a small prairie remnant and I can remember collecting a plant from a-- it looked like a lead plant to me but it didn't look like any lead plant that I knew and so I brought back a sample of it and gave it to Larry and I said, "This is a weird lead plant. I can't identify it, can you help me with that." Why I used to always kid him, I said it took him three or four days cause he had to press it and dry it so he could put it in-- identify it in two dimensions instead of three dimensions. But he said-- he came back and said, "well the reason you couldn't identify that weird lead plant is it's not a lead plant. It's silky prairie clover that lost (without) the flowers and it had been reported in the state three times previous to that. Hitchcock reported it on a railroad right away when he made a stop in Ames and walked down the railroad right of way when he was travelling-- this would have been like 1890's sometime. Then it had been reported-- the woman (Myrle Burk) who was on the staff here at UNI-- damn, it's terrible when names go out of my head like that. She had found it-- she had found it in deep sand northwest of Cedar Falls and we think maybe it was the same site where I found it.

I: Interesting.

P: I'll think of her in a moment. She's the one who has a grant with the Iowa Academy for birders -- she was a big birder and left money to the Iowa Academy of Science and they give scholarships to students. Terrible when I can't think of names. I have a whole list of names to remember. Anyways, she discovered it there I think in '47 and then Martin Grant had discovered it on the north side of Waterloo in a housing development in about '51 or 2. So far, those are the only records for the state where we've found it. There-- at this location and subsequently at that location has been pretty much overgrown, but we have found it closer to Cedar Hills Sand Prairie since then. It's the only places we've found it but that was kind of an interesting story. He was the one that identified that weird lead plant for me. Wasn't a lead plant. What else about Larry-- We had a lot of conversations-- and like I said, I probably credit him for hauling me to the Nature Conservancy stuff and getting me started in that. After he retired, we started having breakfast once a week until he died really and those were great conversations with that--

I: Did you have any challenges with UNI administration over things? Trying to get stuff or achieve things?

P: No. And I may have commented on this last time. That's one of the things that I felt sort of lucky with here at UNI as far as my professional career is going. I came on board as teaching plant physiology and science education and doing some research in plant physiology and then as I became more interested in prairie after about five or so years, I gradually shifted more and more over to prairie work and prairie restoration work with starting with the seeding of the campus prairie in '73 and then preceding on then and so they were pretty-- I was able to do that. I mean, I did a lot of it on my own, there was-- it was extra, like directing the Tall Grass Prairie Center was more than a half-time job but that's what I got paid for half-time after I had been doing it about five years and no pay for running the roadside program and that sort of thing-- but they didn't stop me from doing it. They let me do it. They were willing to let me do it. The only resistance that I encountered on campus was-- I had been here about nine or ten years and I for involved-- they were talking about running a highway down the middle of Cedar Falls which is now 58 which runs this way, and there was a lot of concern and it went very close to the neighborhood where I was located and I was suggesting that I would like to maybe serve on the planning and zoning commission because they wanted somebody in those neighborhoods and I can remember when I was being interviewed for that they were telling me why they'd like to nominate me for this-- that they said, "How do you feel about the highway?" And I said, "Well, right now, I don't like it." They said, "If you have good reasons why-- will you listen to the reason?" I said, "Oh, I always listen to reason." So I was appointed to the Cedar Falls planning and zoning and then I became frustrated with the Cedar Falls planning and zoning because the recommendations what we made and sent to the city council-- nothing. I never felt they dealt with them very well. So in the fall of '72 I ran for Cedar Falls City Council and won a four year term on the Cedar Falls City Council for-- so '73, '74, '75 and '76 I served on the Cedar Falls City Council. Well, in '75 it was pretty strongly suggested that if I was planning on getting promoted

here that it probably wasn't a good idea to be on the Cedar Falls City Council. Never quite that explicit but-- so I didn't run for re-election. I was promoted to full professor the next spring so I think there was something to it.

I: There might have been something to that.

P: So in that sense there was a little bit of resistance but probably you know back then Earth Day had me all fired up and you know, you knew Dave McCalley didn't you?

I: Yeah.

P: Yeah, Dave and I used to kid each other-- let's see your hands because we both felt like we had a savior complex. We wanted to see if there were any nail holes in our palms of our hands and stuff so I was trying to do too much at that time so probably that was for the better part of that and so I decided that I needed to focus my interest a little bit more and one of the things that I started focusing on more was the prairie stuff and then related to that-- we will get back to Paul Christiansen in a minute--

I: It's okay.

P: Related to that then the department head, John Downey who would have been department head most of the time I'd been here. He took over the second year I was here, got promoted to Dean of the Graduate School and the Biology Department headship opened up and I became a candidate for that, so from '81 to '87 I was head of the Biology Department and that sort of again diverted by energies and then in '78 when I didn't see eye to eye with the Dean and when you don't see eye to eye with the Dean usually you lose and--

I: Didn't go well.

P: So I was no longer Department Head and so that-- at that time, I kind of re-focused again a little bit and that's when there was an opportunity, I went to the North American Prairie Conference in '78 and they were looking for a-- not '78, '88, excuse me. I was department Head '81 to '87. They were looking for a site for the 1990 Prairie Conference, so I thought, well, you know, I'm interested in prairies, that would be a good opportunity to really dive head first into prairies and so as a result of that. I got permission and we ran the North American Prairie Conference in 1990, which probably when we come back that's another thing that kind of kicked me up to another level of involvement with prairies so we can come back to that. Getting back to Paul Christiansen, I read about what Paul was doing in '72 when I was doing all the reading about prairie restoration and reconstruction. I remember specifically seeing an article in the Des Moines Register about the project that he and Dave Lyons were doing in Linn County on roadside vegetation, prairie vegetation planting so I went down, called him up and made arrangements to meet him and went down and met him at Cornell College and we toured around and he showed me the things and I sort of always kidded Paul, he was sort of my prairie mentor, you know, that got-- gleaned a lot of information from

Paul in those early years when I was-- and then when I started the prairie up here and ran into some problems, I would get advice from Paul, Jake Landers, you know, people who I felt knew what was going on in prairies so-- and over the years-- Paul and I-- after I got involved with prairie, our careers paralleled each other and we would frequently run into each other at different places. Paul took some time out. He was on the Mount Vernon school board for a number of years and chaired the school-- the board for a number of years so he was kind of out of it for a while like I was out of it for a while, but we always made contact and Paul is very likable. He's a very likable person and a very knowledgeable person and so we always gravitated together. We were involved in things together at the Iowa Academy. When I got the contract to do the Great River Road, I asked him to help, you know, do the survey with that and some other projects and that was partially-- like I remember one time I hadn't seen Paul for awhile and I ran into Barbara at some meeting in some place and we were talking about some project and Barb said, why don't you guys ever get involved in projects that make any money?

[laughter]

I: Well, there is that!

P: When I got this contract, I hired Paul to help work with that and I needed his expertise, too. But that was-- so I did get some money there for him but that was kind of the humorous part of it and I think we always were at a lot of the same meetings together-- the Nature Conservancy. Paul served on the State Preserves Advisory Board after I did and so our careers overlapped quite a bit so we would frequently seek each other out at Nature Conservancy meetings, Prairie Conferences, Iowa Academy of Science meetings and this sort of thing and then when I started teaching at Lakeside Lab in '91, Paul would occasionally teach up there at Lakeside Lab too and so that was a real chance to kind of have more time in the evening to sit around and chat and a few times we would grab a spade and go out to Kettlehole or some place and cut the thistles out. Things like that that needed to be done. And I don't know wither I called your attention to-- we I dedicated this book [pause]

I: Yeah. Nice. Nice. Yeah.

P: Then-- and became quite good friends. And he got taken far too early.

I: Yeah. Oh. Great loss.

P: Great. Great loss. I was one of the speakers at his funeral.

I: Jake Landers had written something too for him.

P: Yeah. In fact, Jake's daughter went to the funeral and I didn't know-- I don't know Jake's daughter. I never met her. But I mentioned in my talk something about Roger and Jake doing this and she wrote me a note afterwards thanking me for remembering her father in that, too. Sort of thing.

I: Separate.

P: Our careers overlapped a lot, we were involved in a lot of projects. One of the things I remember specifically-- I often recount when we rededicated the Manakowsky Prairie when I was on the State Preserves Advisory Board, that's in Clinton County and Paul was also one of the people asked to come because they wanted some prairie people there to take people on walks and so Paul was one of the people there and I can remember he was meeting with some father and about a eight or nine year old son and Paul was giving the son a real good education about prairies and you know, knelt down and was really talking right at him and stuff and I thought that was a marvelous thing that he was doing there and I remember that specifically and often recounted that. In fact I maybe mentioned it in my talk at his funeral. As another thing about that, when we dedicated Manakowsky is was September 9th or 11th, one hundred degrees.

I: Oh my.

P: And I don't care if it's September, if it's a hundred degrees on a prairie. It's hot! There was not shade on Manakowsky prairie and the stage was a hay rack and I can remember sitting up on the stage. I think Jean Prior might have been chair of the-- of the board at that particular time but I was up there because I had to give some of comments or stuff and there was some gal who came from, I don't know wither it was Davenport or Clinton or what TV station it was, but she was dressed to the nines. I mean, in a suit and hose and I can remember talking to her and her make-up it was just running.

I: Oh my word. Oh. oh. She didn't get the memo.

P: She didn't get the memo and that was the same time-- you remember that series of TV programs that they did on Land Between Two Rivers in the mid-80's? Well, they were doing the one on prairies and so Paul and I were there and Jean Prior was there and there were several people there and the fellow who was doing that thing thought well, since these people are all gathered in one place, let's go after the dedication ceremony was over to someplace where we can-- cool off and we'll have a discussion 'cause he liked to bring several people together to have discussions about this and so I can't remember the town. We went to a town that's real close to Manacowsky and went in and it was a bar and they'd reserved a room at the back of the bar. Well we had to stop at the bar first bar first because we were so hot and so thirsty and I think maybe I inhaled like three wine coolers

[laughter]

P: And we got into some discussion about prairies and size and quality and this sort of thing and Paul made a point about, well you know when you get down to something that's just big blue stem and golden rod, you know, you've lost a lot of diversity and then they switched to me and I said, well, even if you got big blue stem and goldenrod, you know, it's not as diverse but it's still remnant of the prairie and I look at that picture of me

and I can tell I'm about half-way down the stream. That was only clip that they used from that and I don't think people that didn't know me, didn't but you look at my eyes and my eyes.

I: Funny.

P: That was funny.

I: Oh my. Oh my. That's good.

P: That was fun to make those films, too. They did one that year on prairies and what was it-- prairies, Forbes and rivers I think and then one on the Loess Hills. There was like a four part series for that. Then the next year, those were hour programs. Then the next year, they did like eight half hour programs and what they did is they brought a group of us who had been in the various one hour ones and they formed two groups of people and we discussed the same topics in separate meetings. I think Paul was in the other group and I was in another group. John Madson was the was the-- sort of the person who kept the discussion going you know, and so that was kind of fun too. To interact and talk about different conservation topics. Then they would show clips from the previous shows that they had done for that and so that was--

I: We'll take a break and come back but before we do, since we are talking about like John Madson, and such, did you have any interaction with Doug Ladd from Nebraska?

P: From Missouri.

I: Missouri.

P: Some.

I: Some. Yeah.

P: Not a lot.

I: 'Cause I remember him coming to the Loess Hills Prairie Seminar.

P: Right. We invited him to the prairie conference last summer. I first heard of Doug Ladd-- Pauline Drobney was, you know, she worked here in the greenhouse and preserves for a number of years while she was working on her master's degree. She asked for time off one spring to go burning. This was in the 80's when burning was catching on and she went down to Missouri and worked with Doug Ladd so that's where I first heard of Doug Ladd and again, after I knew who he was I talked to him a couple of times at different meetings but I can't say that I knew him real well. He's a friend of Gerry Wilhelm's and I ran into them some-- but I didn't know him very well but--

I: Then the one I was thinking of from Nebraska is Doug Wade. Doug and Dot Wade.

P: That's Illinois.

I: Wade. Okay. Illinois.

P: Yeah, that was a-- they had-- he was on faculty at Northern Illinois I think it was and then they had a field camp for elementary and secondary kids and there was a connection I think it was with CAVL, Doug was involved with that. I knew Dorothy a little bit better than Doug because he died and I didn't get acquainted with her until later. I knew who he was but didn't know him very well, but I knew him, knew who he was and he was certainly well respected in the community. A person was-- Jim Wilson from Nebraska. He was the person who really was promoting native seeds when I-- in the 70's. They were mostly cultivars, but Jim was quite a profit and he and his wife wrote a book about prairies. I think I have copies of it at home, it's a small book and their son was a photographer for National Geographic and he did the photography for it-- it's a beautiful little book on prairies and I use some of the quotes from them. In fact, I changed one of the quotes a little bit for my-- there's a power in the spirit in the mystic of the prairie that stirs the soul and quiets it. I think he used grasslands instead of prairie. So I substituted prairie for that, but Jim was very active in that and then another person I got acquainted with in Nebraska was Tom Bragg who is at the University of Nebraska in Omaha and we co-directed the 1988 Prairie Conference that was held at Lincoln and got acquainted with Bob Vetts from Illinois who was involved with the farming project--

I: Oh yeah.

P: And had him speak at one of the Iowa Prairie conferences. Most of those acquaintances to those people is I invited them to speak at the Iowa Prairie Conference. Ray Schulenberg I invited over to speak. I had met Ray way back when but I really didn't know him so I had the opportunity to get acquainted with him a little bit. Invited Bob Vetts over, I tried to get John Madson to come over a couple times and he was always too busy. He had a lot of things going for him. Who else? Peter Schramm I kind of got acquainted from Kansas. Then we invited him-- he gave a paper at the North American Prairie Conference here in 1990 and then we also gave him an award at that time for starting the Prairie Conferences back in '68. So those were some of the people that I got acquainted with. Later I got acquainted with Roger Anderson who was professor emeritus at Illinois State. He was at one time director of the arboretum at Wisconsin. I probably recounted to you last time about how I got involved in Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge and got some notes on that.

I: We will come back to that. Yep. We will come back to that and we'll just take a bit of a break here and just..

Smith 3

I: Session 2. May 5th, 2016. Daryl Smith. Shall we pick up on the Mystique of the Prairie Program that you started? (this is actually session 3, session one was in April)

P: Sure.

I: Shift into the..

P: I think I mentioned earlier the mystique of the prairie paper that I presented at the 19-- guess was '74 or '76. Iowa-- or Midwest Prairie Conference. It was at Iowa State. Remember that date-- '76. Gave that mystique of the prairie talk and was asked to give it-- made available to a number of service groups and organizations in the Northwest Iowa and different parts of the state and so gave that program a number of times and then as I worked more with prairie restoration and prairie re-construction and prairie preservation groups would ask me to come and they would like, say-- well rather than just giving a forty minute talk, why don't you do a two hour program? You know, and I can talk for two hours, as you can see, but I always thought it would be nice if I could take along with me, I could do my presentation and then some other things about prairies and then have a film about prairies it would sort of relieve the pressure of me talking and them listening to me for the whole time, but I could never find a film that I really liked. There were some films that-- about a good portion of it would be good, maybe two-thirds of it would be good but the rest of it wasn't appropriate to what we were talking about. There were a couple of films about that and I did use 'em from time to time but I always felt that I kind of had to explain why the other stuff was in there because it didn't really relate. I always thought it would be great if I had a film of my own that I could express some of my own ideas in-- save me talking and then listening to me but I thought of that for a number of years and I just about given up on it because this would have been in '76 and it would have been the next ten or twelve years I gave this and various sanctions and added some different talks and this sort of thing but I was always sort of looking for this film, and I had sort of given up it in about 1994, '95 and then a young man came to see me by the name of David O'Shields and he had recently moved to Iowa. He had been working in Milwaukee. He was originally from Alabama but he had been working in Milwaukee for television stations and doing TV productions and he wanted to be a film producer, documentary film producer and he came here and he kept seeing things about the Iowa Prairie but he wasn't getting a good grip on it. He thought-- conceptually the idea sounded good but he didn't have a lot of information on it and he was telling people he'd like to do something on Iowa Prairie and they said, "Well, if you want to do something on Iowa prairie you need to go up to UNI and meet Daryl Smith because he's-- knows quite a bit about prairies and he talks a lot about prairies and this sort of thing." So he came up to see me and so we talked about it and I said, "Yeah, I've wanted to have a film," and I told him a little bit about some of the things that I wanted in the film. Some historical elements and some conservation elements and different things like that and he said, "Well, I think we can do that." And I said, "Well I think it should be at least a half hour in length." He said, "We can do that." I said, "What'd it cost." He said, "probably about fifty thousand dollars." So I went out and got some grant money. Don't remember exactly where the first grant came from, but

one of the early ones from-- was the Living Roadway Trust Fund for fifty thousand dollars to do a half hour. So we started doing this and as we did it and the more we talked about it and the more we wrote background, he said, "There's a lot more material here than a half hour program. Oughta really be a two hour program," but he said two hour programs are hard to sell to television stations because it just takes too much time. An hour program would work. I said, you know, "What would that cost?" Well, fifty-thousand for a half hour probably a hundred hundred and fifty thousand. Well, to make a long story short we started to develop a one hour one which kind of disappointed some of our earlier funders because a product from them. We got some funding from the REAP Conservation Education program and they became, it wasn't coming fast enough, and the Living Roadways Trust Fund wasn't coming fast enough and we were raising money just as fast as we could and we would raise money 'till we had a pot, then we would go out and shoot, then we'd have to go back out and raise money. So to make a long story short the whole program took about ten years to develop. This one our program that David said a half hour would be fifty thousand and maybe an hour would be a hundred or a hundred and fifty thousand. About six hundred thousand dollars later, we did produce America's Lost Landscape: The Tall Grass Prairie. Finished it in 2004 and David did a marvelous job of putting together all the interviews and the concepts and stuff and we had sort of a standing joke, he said, "Write some background information and then I'll make it so the public understands your academic prose." And so we actually made a very good team on that and I can remember one time we were filming, it was in Mason City and they were having the civil war reenactment at the same time so David got this idea. One time we talked about the Black Hawk War and stuff and so he got the idea that this was pretty close in time to the Civil War and maybe we could do something so he talked to the commandant of the soldiers and persuaded him to assign a company of soldiers to come out to the prairie just west of Clear Lake-- I knew I would remember it.

I: It's by Ventura.

P: By Ventura, yeah. To come out there and he'd film them marching on the prairie. So we did that. Had it all set up and they were all in uniform and they were all set to march on the prairie and Dave had the camera all set-up how they-- he programmed how they would kind of march around this little hill and come around and he said, "Here Daryl take a look at this and see what you think." So I take a look through the camera and all I can see is sprigs of brome sticking up, you know. Now no one else sees them, but I see them. So I said, well just give me a few minutes Dave. So I'm out there plucking the prominent stems of brome out of the way of the camera before they let those soldiers march onto the prairie and so we have a lot of interesting stories about different parts of that filming. I-- one time-- I couldn't go on all the filming because we couldn't afford it, but-- one time he called me and I was writing a grant proposal at my desk and he said, "I'm standing out here in Manhattan, Kansas on the Konza prairie" and he said, "I want to tell you it's just beautiful." He said, "Words can't express it." I said, "I know how beautiful it is Dave. And I know you are down there and I am up here and I don't like that relationship about that." So then when they came back they went on to Oklahoma and did some filming of the tall grass prairie site down in Oklahoma and we made

arrangements to meet at Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge to do some filming there and I had made arrangements to meet him at I don't know, one o'clock, noon or something like that and I was about ten minutes late or so by the time I got down there. They were already there, they had been out walking around and he's shouting, "Daryl, you won't believe it, I see-- found this beautiful grass. it's got silver plumes sticking out the top. It'll just be fantastic film." I said, "You are not going to shoot that, Dave."

I: No!

P: That's miscanthus isn't it?

[laughter]

P: That's not a native grass. He said, "That's beautiful!" I said, "Yeah, but it's not going to be shot."

I: Oh funny. Oh gosh.

P: Yeah, that was a real-- I mean, took ten years but I think we did put together a pretty good blend of history and preservation and environmental messages and little bit about the Native Americans and about the settlement of the prairie and all the topics that I liked to talk about when I was out making presentations-- I think we hit most all the bases and David did a good job weaving all that together in a hour production. We had our first showing here on campus at UNI in 2004 and I don't know whether I went into the story about that, but when we were deciding we were going to do the release we thought it should be here. I think we did do kind of a private showing at the University of Minnesota museum before that but the main showing was at the end of April in 2004. So we got together a group of people on campus as UNI Foundation people and the PR people and sort of made it kind of like a big release of a this film and I can remember David couldn't go to the first meeting so I went to the first meeting and we were talking about where we should have it and then we said well how many people do you expect to have involved and I said, "I don't know, I have no idea how many people will come. I'd like to have three to five hundred people there if I could" and this one woman who was PR she said, "well you'd be lucky if you could get a hundred people," You know, I mean, and she said-- and I said, "I'm pretty sure we can get more than that but I don't have any-- I can't specifically say how many." So we talked. We thought maybe we could have it over in Lange Hall where there's an auditorium that seated maybe five hundred people and she kept saying he thought that was way too many people. She thought it was going to be hard to promote you know and I came away from that meeting and I was really discouraged and I said this PR person just didn't think much of it at all, you know, and I said, I think she thinks we went out in the backyard with a handheld camera and shot this movie. I don't think she really has an understanding of what went into this prairie. Then when our second meeting came up she started on this same route, and I finally said, "Mam, we spent six hundred thousand dollars on this film," and I said, "We filmed fourteen different states and the guy who did it is an excellent director. I think it's better than you think it is," you know. So they said, well we will have it then at the Lange

auditorium and we made plans to have it at the Lange auditorium which seated about five hundred people at two levels, there was a down and then an upstairs level so about, I don't know, must have been about a week before we went over to meet with the guy who was coordinating the Lange auditorium and he showed us around, there were several of us, not the whole committee but several people on the committee and we finished the tour and talked about how we would do it. He said, "By the way, the air conditioning is broke in this auditorium." And I said, "Well, can it be repaired by next Friday." He said, "No." I said, "We can't bring five hundred people into here at the end of April. Even if it's cold outside-- that's too many people in one room." He said, "Well you can open the windows." I said, "That isn't going to cut it." So we left and I went back and said we can't have it there. I mean, you can't bring. I wanted people to not worry about how they feel while they are watching the movie. I want them to appreciate the movie. So they said, "Well, maybe we can make arrangements, we will check and see if we can get into the Gallagher Bluedorn which was a new facility at that time. Seats about two-thousand some people. I think twenty-three hundred. Something like that. So low and behold, they moved heaven and earth and we got it switched over from there, which involved a lot of re-publicizing where it was going to be and getting people located and we had people stationed over at the Land auditorium to direct people over the Gallagher Bluedorn and stuff and so we did have it at the and then and then-- I don't know whether you've been the in the Gallagher Bluedorn_but it's a huge facility. I mean they have symphonies play in there. Huge stage and I said, "Well what sort of a screen do they have?" Well they don't have a screen we will have to bring our own screen. I said, "What are you going to bring" and they said "they got a ten by twelve or a eight by twelve screen." I said, "That ain't big enough." That's not going to cut it. I said, "This is a place that we want as big as possible of a screen." Well we can't get any bigger screen. So David and I got together and thought, "God, we will rent a big screen." So we rented a big screen from [Frat Sound] or somebody in Cedar Rapids and they set it-- I can't remember the size though, but it was a big screen and it cost us some bucks but at that point we felt it was important enough to do that so we got the big screen set-up and that was a marvelous night. I mean, it was probably one of the highlights of my lifetime, 'cause it just you know, it was ten years, ten years in the making so to speak. It turned out good and we were pleased with the product and that sort of thing and sound track was good. Images were good, the editing was good and this sort of thing and low and behold somewhere in the vicinity of fifteen hundred people showed up and so we had a great audience you know. Of course, partly I'm imagining it I guess, but you could just sort of feel the a little bit of electricity, at least I was anyway, feeling electricity and I think I floated up on the stage to make the introductions and floated down to my seat because I don't think my feet were touching the ground. It was a marvelous experience and thank God we had it in Gallagher Bluedorn_and that more than just two hundred people showed up for it. That sort of thing, so it was a marvelous experience and then the other story that's kind of interesting related to that, we-- they, you know the film festivals, how-- this is a whole new world that I learned about. There are film festivals held around different places and one of the places we put in to have it shown was at this-- uhm-- names I-- Robert Redford--

I: Sundance.

P: Sundance Film Festival, well, wasn't accepted for showing there. We got no's like that and then David got something and said, "By the way," he said, "the International Documentary Film Awards are coming up" and he said, "do you think we should nominate it for the Perry Lorenz Award?" I said, "Well, I don't know, what do you think?" He said, "Well, it's kind of in the keeping of what Perry Lorenz did. You know, he did the Plow that Broke the Plains and The River and this sort of thing. He said, "I think it's that style." So I said, "Great" you know and so we sent it in for nomination and we got word back that we were in the top-- we were in the ten that were selected for consideration and we were delighted and then not too long after that we found out we had won the category that we were in. There were five or six other categories-- we had won the category we were in and man we were just ecstatic because March of the Penguins was a well-known film at that time was in the same category that we were in so we felt really proud that we beat the March of the Penguins. I mean, they won the Academy Award later the next spring, after this was like in the fall and they won the Academy Award but it was really a great feeling to go out to Hollywood and get the award and that sort of thing. I got a little bit of humility on how they recognized directors and producers in the thing because when we were going up the lady announced the award and the winner of the Perry Lorenz award is America's Lost Landscape by director David O'Sheilds and then-- David started up and he said, "Come on!" I said, "She didn't say me!" He said, "Come on up anyways." So he dragged me and she said, here comes David O'Sheilds and his colleague.

I: Humbling.

P: Yeah. Humbling. Right. So at the peak there I got humbled a little bit with that. That they pay more direction to directors than they do producers but-- yeah. David and I sort of, he did some producing, too. I mean, he did the fundraising and the directing and I did some of the-- I didn't actually do the editing of the film, but I made suggestions and shots and this sort of thing so a weird sort of a combination but that was-- brought me back to earth pretty fast on that.

I: Oh, that's a great story. Glad we were able to capture that one. That's a good one. Shall we come in sideways on the Neal Smith piece.

P: Okay. Yeah. yeah. That's kind of a long story and I probably bored you with it the last time.

I: Nope.

P: Probably goes back to when I decided that since I was no longer Department Head I was going to focus on the twelfth North American Prairie Conference at UNI in 1990 and we had a very successful conference in 1990. We had about, I don't know, something like five-hundred and twenty five or five-hundred and fifty, I don't remember the exact number but people showed up for the conference. It was very well received. And then not too long after that-- this would have been in August, it was probably in the fall of that year, yeah, I got a call from a consultant firm in Seattle and they said that-- wanted to

know if I had heard about the Fish and Wildlife Services planning on doing a prairie down in Des Moines and I had heard about it. One of the-- I think it was at one of the preserve board meetings where I heard about it. So on my way home I kind of drove through that area where it was going to be-- so I did know a little bit about it. He said, well, we are looking for a prairie consultant to-- on the ground local prairie consultant who would be a member of the consulting team. We are doing a proposal-- we are sending in the Fish and Wildlife and I said, "Well, how in the world did you find me? Why did you select me, you know?" and he said, "Well, I went to graduate with a fellow who works at the DOT, University-- or Minnesota DOT. Bob-- and that's another name I can't remember the last name. Bob and he-- I called him and said, "Do you know anybody in Iowa that knows anything about prairie?" And he said, "I was just at the Northern American Prairie Conference and Daryl Smith directed it and he seemed pretty knowledgeable about prairie--" He said, "He probably knows a lot about prairie and if he doesn't he probably knows somebody that does, you know. So I called you up and if you are interested, we'd be glad to put you on as a consultant if you will send me some of your resume information and stuff." So they did, and they also put on a group called Bryce Thedes and Associates it's gone through several names, it's still a firm in Waterloo that does environmental consulting type work and engineering consulting type work and Martha Woodson who was-- had been an adjunct professor here at UNI and she had a PhD from the University of Oklahoma and had recently divorced from Paul Woodson who was on faculty here at UNI so I had knew her and she was working for them as their environmental consultant and so they said, you don't really have to come to the meeting if you can that would be great and I said, "I don't think I can get away for the meeting," but anyway, Bryce Thedes sent Martha Woodson out and they were doing the interview with the Fish and Wildlife people and she said one of the things that came up in the discussion was that-- I see you have Daryl Smith down here as a consultant but isn't he a full-time faculty member at UNI? And how could he do that, too? And what Martha said-- well, he has summers, you know, he doesn't teach in the summer-- or he doesn't have to teach in the summer and if he says he can do it, he can do it, you know, so that was the comments that they had, so I didn't hear anything more about it and then I heard that they didn't get the-- that company did not get the contract to do the planting so I didn't think anything more about it and then I got a call from a fella who worked for the Fish and Wildlife-- why do I remember first names and not the full name-- Dave, it was Dave again, anyway Dave called me and he said, "Could you meet me at-- I'm coming down to Iowa State to give a talk to the Wildlife group down there." And he said, "Could you meet me down there? I'd like to visit with you a little bit about the Neal Smith-- wasn't Neal Smith at that time it was Walnut Creek National Wildlife Refuge and I said sure. I said, I'd like to get your idea-- some of your ideas about it and if you know anybody that could work there. You know. staff." I said, "I was a consultant on one of the bidders." He said, "Yeah, I know. I read your resume when we were interviewing for it." He said, "I told people that if you were willing that the ones that got it should hire you as a local consultant. I want to talk to you a little bit and see if my judgement was valid or not." So I went down and he was speaking to the Wildlife group and I met with him for, I don't know, half hour forty-five minutes before his meeting and we had a very good discussion but I said, one of the first things I said, "I want to ask you before we start. Are you going to do it right or are you just going to do

it." He said, "What do you mean?" I said, well, I said, "There's a right way to restore a prairie and there's the quick way to restore a prairie. And you can plant switch-grass." He said, "No. We want to do it the right way, he said that's why we want people like you involved." I said, "Well, if you want to do it the right way, I'd like to see if done the right way," So that'd how I got involved in it as a consultant and actually it was a firm that was-- I don't know, they were based several different places. They had people in Colorado, some people in Philadelphia and some people in Louisiana but they were put together a consortium and so I worked with them on that and Pauline Drobney had finished her master's here at that time and so I hired Pauline to do the vegetation because I couldn't do all the vegetative survey so they hired Pauline to do the vegetative survey.

[strange noise.]

I: Phone off. Sorry.

P: It's all right. Was that the phone?

I: Yeah. That's my phone. And that's yours, huh?

P: No.

I: Something. I guess the computer.

P: Yeah. The computer.

I: Sorry about that.

P: So I hired Pauline and her husband Scott (Zager) to do the vegetative-- vegetation survey and analysis of the sites there and wrote up the report and the rest is history and Pauline was for-- as a result of her familiarity with the project was hired on as the first research biologist for the (Neal Smith) refuge development. And Paul Christiansen and I were on the advisory board for that for several years. Once it got started-- after the got underway after I don't know five or six or seven years. The advisory board meetings got less and less frequent but her-- in the early stages advice was very important in what they were doing.

I: Needed a lot of that.

P: And they went through some-- they went through some tough times there because, I can remember Pauline called me up one time and said there's this fellow from Nebraska that came through here and he said, why are you fiddling around with this garden variety type restoration? Why don't you just-- get some-- plant some of these cultivated varieties so switch grass and do it right with stuff that will survive? You know. So she had to deal with that and we had to propose some counter measures to that and I may have relayed the last time the story before Pauline was hired they had their first hearing

for the Neal Sm-- for the Walnut Creek thing and the fellow, Dave Schaffer was his name-- Dave Schaffer had asked me-- if I had any students who could be possible employees and I mentioned Pauline and so when they had this hearing, I invited Pauline and Scott to go down with me. This was before she actually did the surveys when we first had the hearing and there were a lot of local people who were upset about the refuge going in and talking about closing roads and taking farm land out of production and this sort of thing and so it was a little bit on a contentious. Little bit of a contentious meeting but it went pretty well and then afterwards we were standing around there and I can remember I was kind of listening to one of the conversations and some person asked, "Well, how long is it going to take you to do this? You know, you are talking about starting with three or four thousand acres but going eventually to maybe six or eight thousand acres. How fast can you plant it?" And this one Fish and Wildlife rep. from Minneapolis said, "Oh, we can plant a thousand acres a summer." You know, he said, "You know switch-grass goes quick" and uh, I heard that and I went right over to Dave Schaffer who was there and I said, "Dave you gotta straighten that guy out or else I'm not on board anymore. He's planting three thousand acres of switchgrass the next three summers, that's not doing it right as far as I'm concerned." Dave said, "Yeah, we will deal with it."

I: Isn't that something. Whew. Oh my.

P: Dave was kind of a comedian because one time I was late on one of my reports and he called me up and he said, "You know, there was a report due two weeks ago." I said, "I know, I've been working on it. It's just about ready." He said, "If I don't have it in a week from now," he said, "We are at the Minneapolis airport and they got these big cargo planes and I got one with arrangements made to load it with brome." He said, "We will load it with brome and when we hit the Iowa line we will just open the plane and dump it."

I: Dump it!

P: "Will that encourage you to move along a little faster?"

I: Gosh. Oh gosh. Uhm, yeah. That's been a nice project.

P: It has been. It's-- there's been bumps and stuff, but it's basically a nice project to have and the Broken Kettle project Nature Conservancy Project has going and Loess Hills is a good one.

I: Yeah.

P: I've had less involvement with that with Scott Moats one of our grad students been running it since it started. Scott's done a great job I think with that. One time when they first decided to get Bison, he said, it's partly Smith to blame. Said I was talking to him and we were talking about grazing and stuff and I said, you know, we are using cattle to graze in that fills about eighty-five percent of what a Bison does but I said, Smith kept

saying but it's not Bison, Scott. It's not Bison. He said, he repeated that enough times that the point was it wasn't Bison even though they were doing some of the same thing. He got me thinking a little bit more seriously about Bison.

I: Kind of neat, there was a Facebook post this spring of the-- of a calf-- a bison calf born. So it's kind of neat to see that all coming around now that's.

P: Right. They had some neat photos of the Bison there.

I: Between Broken Kettle and Neal Smith, they've got some nice coverage out there, which is good. Good deal. I think you've hit on most of the things that I wanted to make sure that we recaptured in our re-recording here. I don't think that there's a whole lot more and we were able to condense the pieces well because we searched a lot through that first round for some things and I had more questions and I probed on things that you didn't-- well you said, I didn't really do a lot of that or I didn't really do a lot of that. The only thing that we haven't talked much about from your perspective is the development of the center here so if we can kind of cruise through that.

P: Okay. Yeah. And I actually, probably, I think I probably did that. I'd have to go back to when I planted the first prairie as part of the biological preserve system because that was the thing that first got me thinking about planting prairie and restoring prairie and got me sort of-- reactivated my prairie-- I mean not completely because I had been going to the Cedar Hills Sand Prairie and been involved in restoration-- really got me more into the restoration, reconstruction part of it and I stayed in that part of it as-- and that was I think our interest and stuff that we were doing in prairie was the reason Bill Haywood came to ask UNI to develop the program for working with the counties. So that was all part of this building up into that and of course once we got the funding for the roadside office here at UNI and it took off so well, you know, it gained statewide, national, international recognition. Kirk probably talked about some of that, I'm sure. Reputation on campus. I sort of consider that all sort of a sequence of development and the fact that we had the office here and then I could work with Kirk and interact with Kirk and we had some other people working on projects that really-- that along with involvement with Neal Smith and the North American Prairie Conference hosting in the 1990, I sort of often felt kind of kicked us up in the next level of involvement with prairie and we became more and more involved with prairie, I continued to do my restoration and reconstruction in that aspect and then-- after the roadside program got underway, we realized that there wasn't enough seed available for-- if you are going to have a prairie based program statewide you got to have seed available because the roadside managers are going to buy cultivated varieties of grass seed because that's the only thing available or it's the only thing available reasonably enough, you are going to have to buy from local collecting like Dorothy Barringer had a native seed-- I can't remember the name of her-- but she collects seed locally and sold it but she couldn't-- small quantities and they were very expensive and so it wouldn't be sufficient for a roadside manager to plant. It'd be too expensive. Anyway, that's how we developed what we called initially the Iowa Ecotype Project and then ultimately now we called it Natural Selections project. So I was working with Kirk on the roadside office, I was trying to get

this Iowa Ecotype project underway and the first three years were mostly graduate students who were involved with the pro-- Pauline did it for a year. Then another student kind of partially did it for a year, Keith Franzen and then Paul Bochenstead who was working on a masters degree and is now an environmental consultant in Minnesota worked on it. So, we were kind of just working with graduate students and then Greg Houses came back-- his wife at that time was working on a master's degree, was going to come here and was looking for jobs so Greg part-time to work on the ecotype project and then eventually we were able to develop that into a full-time job for Greg and so we were working with that and pushing on the roadside program but we needed facilities because we just kept getting-- we started out with an office in McCullum Science Hall and then we got moved down to an office complex in the Center for Energy and Environmental Education but we still-- it wasn't sufficient, particularly it was limited for the Natural Selections 'cause we had to go outside and do the seed cleaning and didn't have good storage and this sort of thing and that's the time ear marks were really big and we persuaded through our local legislative liaison person, Pat Gettleman to persuade the federal highway administration to provide funding for a Native Roadside Vegetation Center at UNI and that was in the late 90's and we got seven-hundred and fifty thousand dollar award to do that and I can remember we were looking, do we want to buy land, where do we want it, you know, we are talking about, well the university, this was an old building that they bought from a manufacturing company and they wanted to renovate this little bit and make it more useful so they saw this as an opportunity to use that money to do that and the more I looked at it the more I thought we can get more bang for our buck by renovating an existing building than buying land and a new building so we ended up as a result putting together what was known as the Native Roadside Vegetation Center and that provided us an opportunity to bring what Kirk was doing with the roadside program and what Greg was doing with the Iowa Ecotype project and the various consulting research type projects that I was doing as far as prairie restoration and management in preservation I guess. Wanted to add to that which kind of enabled us to bring it all together under one umbrella. I was involved with all three of them but they were kind of three separate things so this provided an opportunity to bring them together under one individual-- one umbrella and we really liked that idea and of course we were new and we were formulating new things you know and it was an exciting time as we tried to develop a mission statement and pull this whole thing together and the funding enabled us to renovate a good portion of what I don't know I suppose thirty-five to forty-five percent of this building and we renovated for the Native Roadside Vegetation Center and then Dave Williams came on board, he was a graduate student. Came back to graduate school because he was interested in what I was doing with prairie here and he wanted to work with something with prairie here and so he came back and then we were able to add him to the staff so then we had three full-time staff people who were working on-- and we sort of assigned-- Greg initially worked with Dave on the ecotype project but then eventually as Greg got that more under control Dave took over some more of the prairie restoration prairie planning type stuff but I was getting more and more administrating because I'm still teaching half-time, well I was teaching full-time then. I was teaching full-time. I didn't start teaching half-time until about 2002 I think. So we got the funding in '99 and we started renovating and we moved into here in 2002. And with three major programs, the IRVM program,

that Kirk was in charge of, we called Iowa Ecotype, now called Natural Selections and Greg was in charge of and sort of a prairie research consulting type program that Dave was in charge of and I was sort of administering the whole thing. So we worked on that. We went through quite a bit there-- probably a story with getting the Iowa Ecotype project. I don't know wither we went into that last time or not. There is a story there, too. Anyway, we were working with all those things but we were suddenly realized-- hey this is a Native Roadside Vegetation Center, but we are doing more than just roadside vegetation management. It's prairie, but we are doing a lot of other things in addition to that so perhaps we should consider a name change and so we started kind of floating that name out there. Well there were some people concerned-- does that mean you are reducing your effort in the roadside program? We said no, it doesn't. We don't plan on reducing it at all. In fact, we will increase it if possible but we feel that this title, if we call it the Tall Grass Prairie Center it's more representative of a broader thing that we are doing than just the Native Roadside Vegetation so in 2006 we re-named it the Tall Grass Prairie Center and so that's been operating as that since and we found out there were some limitations with the funding that we got for the first renovation more work needed to be done and we were fortunate to get a second grant from the living road-- from the federal highway administration to sort of finish what we had started with the earlier funding and we finished that in 2012 and then we added Mary Weld as a half-time officer manager, projects manager type person and then continued with that vein and then as I said, sometime around 2002 half of my assignment was granted for administering the Tall Grass Prairie Center or the-- then the Native Roadside Vegetation Center out there. So I did that and taught half-time and ran the center for the other half-time until I started phase retirement to-- in the fall of 2010 and then I stopped teaching and just managed the center. I continued on that until 2013 when Laura Jackson was hired to be the director of the center and then I finished out my phased retirement as an advocate for the Tall Grass Prairie Center.

I: Okay. Last time you talked a little bit more about the development of the ecotype.

P: Yeah, that was-- that kind of is a story in itself. You know, soon after we got going full-blown with the roadside program, we realized we didn't have enough native seed. Enough diversity of native seed available to really provide a service for the roadside mangers, you know, that, I think I said the temptation would be to buy cultivated varieties of grass seed from Nebraska and Kansas and that area and 'cause the other stuff was too expensive and there wasn't much available so we felt that we somehow needed to increase the amount of availability of seed and make it at a more competitively priced and so I can see the idea in 1990 and made a proposal to the Living Roadway Trust Fund for what we called the Iowa ecotype project and the idea was we would collect native seed in Iowa, bring it here to UNI and increase it to a sufficient amount that we could make a quantity available to native seed growers that they could then increase and market. That was the general proposal that I made. As I said, it was operated the first three or four years primarily with graduate students and of course it takes a while for that to get started because seed that we collected in 1990, doesn't start producing until '92 or '93 and I think we did our first release in maybe '94 and we released it to some of the native seed growers but it really wasn't catching on. In

fact, one of the native seed growers down by Burlington had a fire a couple of years after they released it and they called us up and said you know that seed you gave us two years ago is burned. We said, we gave that to you two years ago. How? Well, you know. Doesn't seem to be much demand for it. So I talked to the other native seed growers-- Dan Allen from Allen Seed in Winterset and Ion Exchange.

I: Howard Bright.

P: Howard Bright. And primarily them and some other people, and I said, what, these guys hadn't even planted the seed! They said well, there's no place to buy the seed. It's a good idea Daryl but there's nobody to buy the seed and so then I would talk to people like Mark Masteller at the Iowa DOT and I'd say we really need to have Iowa seed native seed, rather than these cultivated varieties planted. He said, nobody is selling it. So here we are. Nobody is buying it. Nobody is selling it. You know, somehow I gotta get these two people together, you know. I kept talking to them and I kept pushing on it but the final thing that really made it happen was-- Kirk was able to get a grant from the federal highway administration through this Ladybird Johnson idea where you have to have a certain percentage of every highway project has to have native seed planted so he was able to get a grant there that's been under various names I think it first started out under ISTEA or something like that or T21 or something like that. It's been going for about fifteen or sixteen years now but Kirk got some funding. Sufficient funding between two-hundred and four-hundred thousand dollars every year to buy native seed and so he specified that we should have Iowa grown and Iowa Seed-- not just Iowa grown but Iowa cultivated-- Iowa source seed. And about this same time the idea of source identified seed was developed by the-- well branch of the NRCS people where they said we won't certify this seed as a cultivated variety but we will identify it and we know the source where this seed came from. Well that fit like a glove with our Iowa Ecotype project so we adopted that in about '95 or '96 so that became an important ingredient with the program and so with Kirk specifying that seed- it's amazing. Suddenly there were people growing it! Because there was somebody buying it.

I: Yeah!

P: And so Kirk specified that seed and kind of stimulated the market and then a few years later then Ole Skaar who worked for the DOT started buying it for some of his-- little bit different specifications but still wanted Iowa source identified seed and so now we got two big groups buying it and since then it's really taken off and it's done quite well and Greg could tell you the exact amount but we released fifty some species of seed over the years since then. I think we've had a real impact on maintaining the seed industry in Iowa as a result of that and so I can remember we were at a meeting one time and somebody asked how this whole thing happened and Dan Allen said, well it wouldn't have happened if Daryl Smith wasn't so damned hard headed. Just kept pushing on it. He said, it probably wouldn't have happened.

I: Thank goodness. Kept pushing.

P: Yeah. He said he wouldn't take no for an answer and finally persuaded us and of course the money-- that was the big thing. I always joked I went into this whole thing because I was interested in the environmental aspects of native seed and getting the right seed on and then suddenly I'm now in this whole thing I'm trying to worry about market share and how much control, how much seeds available and this sort of thing. More economic concerns than they are environmental concerns. We had a big of a fracas with DNR for a while there too because- I don't remember the woman's name but they hired a gal who had this idea that they were going to provide seed to farmers or lowans and they would grow seed and mark 'em and they saw us as a real strong competitor and they didn't like us at all. She moved on to Minnesota and DNR does their-- they do do their own seed production but it's for their lands and stuff. So they were going to grow it, make it available to the DOT, and all these seed growers that we had nursed along so slowly said there's no market for us if we do that you know. So we had some meetings with DOT personnel and DNR personnel and stuff trying to work that whole thing out and we were able to maintain our model and DNR-- and I think DNR realized it was a bigger project than they really-- they got plenty to do with just supplying seed for their own state owned lands.

I: Yeah, the yeah. It's different.

P: And again, that's a project that I think has national potential. The model of the Natural Selections project could be used in every state. I mean, the model its there. You collect local seed from remnant vegetation and you increase it and you use native seed growers to increase it for marketing. Some states have picked up on it but I've been a little bit disappointed, not everyone-- not as many as I've thought would pick up on it. We've had interest from Oklahoma and Florida and Washington, Utah. Probably a few more, but it hasn't really caught on as much as we thought it should.

I: Yeah. And that's directly related to the seed part, as-- corollary to that then is the IRVM itself.

P: Yes.

I: The roadside program.

P: And that's another one that has a lot of potential, particularly in Midwestern states. Some concern out in the east, but I've even said in the east what you do is you go find-- you've got open meadows everywhere. Go find the species that are prevalent in those open meadows and increase the productivity of those and work those and they'll work on roadsides. You don't want to buy our seed and take it out there, you know. We haven't ran into that lately but early on we had some fellow from Kansas and he was going to sue us because we wouldn't sell him Iowa seed to grow-- for Kansas. Yeah. There was a lot of stories related to that because Kirk ran into some of that, too. Some company from Vermont when he sent these bids out they bid all of these things real bad. They had the low bids. Kirk called them up and said I specified Iowa source seeds. They said, well we bought it from Iowa. They had bought cultivated varieties from Iowa.

I: Yep. Yep. Yeah, you kind of got to track those things down.

P: And there's always-- and there's still an amount of trust in there. I mean, when I buy seed from Allendan, I got to trust that what's on the tag is what they are doing. When I buy from Diversity Farms I gotta trust that that's their seed. And most of the people are trustworthy. We got a few-- there was a fellow up in southwest Minnesota that was non-trustworthy

I: For a while, yeah.

P: For a little while, yeah. I ran into that when I was teaching up at Lakeside Lab. Teaching prairie ecology and I went to visit this one remnant across the river from Little Sioux and I'm walking through this stuff and I thought God, I'm seeing *ratibida collumnifera* and some species like that and I said, there's a few of those in southwest Iowa, but it's not a common plant and it's certainly not in northwest Iowa and some other species like that and so I got back home and I called John Pearson and I said-- what's-- there's this planting on DNR property up across the river from Cayler prairie and I said it looks to me like it's one of these mixtures from a prairie in a can type thing and he said, well what they had done is they had harvested seed-- this was before the state got involved in raising their own seed. They had harvested their own seed from Cayler prairie I think and they had sent it up to this guy in Minnesota who we later found out was a crook. He was going to clean the seed and then they would pay him for the cleaning and ship it back. Well, he shipped back whatever he felt like. Probably sold the other seed for a premium someplace or something like that. So they basically had to tear that whole planting up and start over again.

I: Oh my gosh, yeah, you get the wrong things showing up and you kind of go, what? Where does that come from. Yeah, cleaning out the planter or cleaning out the seeder is pretty important.

P: We are probably going to talk about my teaching at Lakeside, too. I was-- that doesn't directly relate to restoration, that's more prairie ecology.

I: Brush on it. We've got a little bit of time.

P: Uh, well, I was-- down at Lakeside Lab advisory board for-- I became advisor when I was department head and I always heard good things about Lakeside Lab but I never could go when I was a student. So then it was kind of neat to be on the advisory board and then they wanted to activate prairie ecology 'cause there had been a fellow who had taught it for a number of years who moved to-- I don't know, someplace in the south and they hadn't offered it for a while and Paul offered it. Paul Christiansen offered it for one year, maybe two years. Paul said, well he didn't really want to teach that much at Lakeside. He would do, maybe plant ecology or something like that once in a while but he didn't want to do it that much. So I volunteered in '91 to start teaching prairie ecology at lakeside lab so I taught prairie ecology at Lakeside Lab for about 22 years then and up to I think my last class there I think was two years ago. And that was a really-- an

interesting experience. I really think Lakeside Lab is a marvelous place to teach and work and you get to meet people. Interact with people on a day to day basis for an extended period of time and it really gives you a chance to immerse yourself and prairie ecology-- I mean, I look forward to that. I go up there-- when I first started it was five weeks and then they eventually cut it to four weeks but to immerse yourself-- and I like that style of teaching where you spend your-- focusing on one class and that's all you do. You eat, sleep, and breathe that particular class. Even at the dinner table if you are with other people they are doing another class that they are eating, sleeping and breathing so you can interact on that basis, too. So I really enjoyed those times of teaching at Lakeside Lab and you know I talked to Paul about what he had taught and that and some of his ideas and one of the things that we did was we did a lot of sampling of-- trans-sex sampling of vegetation along the transect and of course that means you are looking at a tenth of a meter squared thing and you are identifying everything in there. Well it's not all in flower, so you learn to identify from vegetative characteristics and that was a learning curve that I had to meet. But then you eventually get a feel for that and I tell my students-- I tell them we are going to spend a lot of time on the prairies, but you are going to spend a lot of time with your nose right down in the prairie. I said that's where I think you really-- you see stuff that you wouldn't normally see you know, I often think Ben Claussen when he ran the Conservation Camp at Springbrook what he called those twelve inch hikes or something like that where you get down and report everything you saw within the foot of those things and so I really think that was a good-- and I felt like we did enough sampling in that four or five week period it was only one sampling technique but they were pretty well trained in that particular technique and they could learn other sampling techniques if they wanted to, but they are learning the plants as well and Larry Eilers taught for a number of years at Lakeside Lab. He was done teaching up there by the time I started but he had taught for like, probably like twenty years before that and he probably-- I probably got some of my interest in it from him.

I: So with the Lakeside class then, how many students were in a class?

P: Well, you shoot for about eight. That's another nice thing, too. Now I did have two or three classes as big as twelve. And I think I had one that was three, which was a little small but twelve is too big. It's really strange. I learned that real quickly. You know, 'cause I thought well eight, I mean, that's a small class around here and that's one of the problems Lakeside Lab has because you have to justify those smaller class sizes to people who look at numbers of students-- but I found when I had twelve with eight, you are maybe showing them something here and they are looking at it-- well you can get a circle of four and a circle of four and that's pretty good. But when that third circle of four back there. They ain't in touch with ya. You know, they may pay attention to you or they may not pay attention to you.

I: They can't see you.

P: Even if they can't see it well or they are not really in there and so twelve is too many. Twelve is too many. But eight is about right. Nine-- you can give a little bit. Nine is

probably okay. Seven you know, but when you get down below five, for sure below four, then it's too few. You can't sample enough and get the feeling for it. And included in that I kind of maintained a tradition at Lakeside Lab. We would take a six day trip out through the Bad Lands. Spend two days in the Bad Land. Two days in the prairies at Wind Cave and then a day and a half or so on the prairies in the Sand Hills in Nebraska on the way back. That was always a highlight of the class, too. Also gave them a look at different plants, but also a look at a more landscape type prairie then we are used to finding around here in Iowa because most Iowa prairies are postage stamp type prairies so yeah.

I: And those were students that came from...

P: From the major-- from UNI, ISU and SUI. Mainly. But we also got students from other schools, too. Buena Vista was another school too that frequently had students coming and later on we got a few from Iowa Lakes College. I think my first class I had five people in it. I had I think I had one from UNI. Two or three from-- No I had two from UNI. I had two from Iowa State and one from Brown University. She was a native Iowan but she'd gone to school-- and so there was. There was always, and one year I had three students from Northwestern College up in what is that Orange City or wherever?

I: Yeah.

P: So they come from different places but primarily the three major Regents institutions. Drake. Sometimes students from Drake, too. It's what's really interesting-- I've probably written more letters of recommendation for those students that I have for students that I've had-- well it's certainly percentage wise it's higher. Maybe number wise it may even be, but certainly percentage wise it's much higher and I think it's partially because they have a feeling that you get to know them because you are living with them five days a week, eight hours and then that trip we go on is twenty-four hours a day, six days. Yeah, so that was a very rewarding experience. I really enjoyed that.

I: Just a wild guess, and if you want to think about it and maybe do some calculating you can. Over all these years, would you hazard to guess how many students that you've had?

P: No.

I: Isn't that interesting when you think about in a career...

P: I've got probably-- I don't have the Lakeside Lab grades because I have to turn those in up there, but I could go through my grades and find out but its you know prairie ecology students for twenty-two years at Lakeside Lab. Restoration ecology students here for probably fifteen years. Twelve or fifteen years. Prairie seminar for twenty some years. Fire Management-- so yeah, there's a fair number of students. Right. Just with prairie. Well with restoration and prairie. Yep.

I: You put all those things together and then the North American Prairie Conference.

P: We hosted two of those and the Iowa Prairie Conferences. Yeah. Yeah. 'Cause we started, well, Pauline and another student and started the first Iowa Prairie Conference in '86 and then she ran, Pauline and her ran that pretty much on their own and then I think I helped them with the next couple a little bit and then when Pauline left, I took it over for several years and then we finally decided to put it on the road and start moving it around the state. We did that, I don't know how many years we did that-- last year was the first time we had it back at UNI in quite a while, but I still get a grant from the Living Roadway Trust Fund that help funds the conference so I sort of, I've been an advisor to the other people who are running the other conferences, at least initially to help them get their-- it set up. They run it but to help them get set-up and that sort of thing. So it's their conference, it's not my conference but-- it helps to have a continuity I think. In fact one of the things that we found with the North American Conference you know, we had the 2012 one at Winnipeg in Manitoba and no one came forward to do the 2014 conference and kept talking to people and there was some interest from Carni State but they had done it twice fairly recently and then the person that was interested didn't step forward so no one did it in 2014. So I thought we need to step this up a little bit more, I thought boy it'd be nice-- haven't had it in Central Illinois. That's where it started with Peter Schramm at Galesburg and so I talked to Stew Allison who is the Biology Restorative-- in charge of the field station there now and he was sort of interested-- so I ask-- how about if we form a committee so Stew Allison was on it, Roger Allison from Illinois State and Beau, I can never pronounce Beau's last name-- Dizek from Augustana. Moline College. So we were making plans for having it at Knox College and met over there at least once and looked over the facilities and stuff. After we looked over the facilities, the plant services people told Stew we won't run it here.

I: Wow. Wow.

P: I said Oh crap. So I sent an email out to Beau and Roger and I said, where do we go from here? Roger said, well maybe we can pull it together at Iowa State-- or I mean Illinois State. So Roger is pulling it together so we are going to have a 2016 conference-- but I'm afraid-- we haven't had anybody that's interested-- well there is. I'll take that back, there's the Des Moines Chamber of Commerce person called me and said, what can we do to make a proposal for running the North American Prairie Conference in Des Moines. And I kind of mentioned some stuff and she said keep me informed. You know, then she-- and I said well talk to-- if you are going to have it in Des Moines you probably need to involve Drake or Grand View-- you need to involve a college somehow. Well, she hadn't done that when I had talked to her the next time so I was a little bit more explicit about how-- what a college has to do because it's not just running the convention and deciding the facilities it's more than that you know, so I don't think they are going to be able to do it and Tom hasn't been able to get the support at Drake to do it-- maybe he would have a better chance now but see when we had it at Mason City in 2000. It was supposed to be at Drake and Tom couldn't generate enough support at Drake to run so Carol said she would do it at Mason City and so I don't know-- there's places it should be. It hasn't ever been in South Dakota. It hasn't been in North Dakota

since '84. Then it was Moorehead State and what-- right across the river from Moorehead State in North Dakota. Last time it was actually in North Dakota was 1974. Or no. yeah. '74. It was '76 at Iowa State. So and it's never been in Oklahoma.

I: Back to Manhattan, Kansas.

P: Manhattan, Kansas. Been there twice. Been in Nebraska once. Been in Missouri twice. Then in Illinois twice counting the first one. Wisconsin twice.

I: Have you seen-- I'm sure you have, but have you seen people that had attended that kind of spun off from there and that was a key-- a North American Prairie Conference was a key thing for kind of getting a spark. I mean, it certainly worked for you.

P: It certainly worked for me, I think maybe it worked for Tom Rosberg 'cause I can remember I first met Tom at the 1988 conference in Nebraska and he certainly went big into prairies. He was just starting his graduate study. Wither that conference did it or not it's hard to say, it's difficult to say about--

I: And a conference exposes you to so many different people and different kinds of things sometimes it performs a different inspiration than a mentor.

P: Right. Right. Right. Exactly. Yeah. That's true.

I: Helps you see that the world is a bigger place and that there are other people involved.

P: And you know that it took some reflection on my part-- you know, I counted prairies when I was in South Dakota as a graduate student and I think that's on the first part and then I kind of went to Iowa and there was no one in prairie and so I really-- I took one class in spring floral and we visited some prairie remnants and that was kind of neat, but no interest there, nobody I could work with and stuff and then I often wondered how did this interest get re-discovered? Well, Glen Krum discovering, re-discovering Cedar Hills Sand Prairie certainly-- that kind of got me back in prairies but what got me back into prairie restoration and that took a long time and then I said one Sunday was kind of like ah ha! I spent two days talking to Paul Shepard and I kind of had forgotten about that you know but he had talked about what they were doing at their field station in Knox-- I think it's called Green Hills or something like it, but their field station there and I think that probably triggered my thinking a little bit you know so sometimes it's just you know, that was a two day conference. And I don't know I probably spent a couple hours talking with him. Yeah, how those things happen I don't really know. Then the involvement after, you know, probably salving my ego is being dismissed as department head is probably what motivated my interest in the thing but by god I can show you I can do some other things, too. You know, that probably motivated me a little bit that-- I know it motivated me to host a North American Prairie Conference here in 1990 and that I really felt launched me into another. I mean that wasn't intentional, but launched me into

I: Another dimension.

P: Higher orbit. Yeah. With prairie restoration, yeah. Trying to think. Yeah, we covered South Dakota. That's where I first got interested. I don't know wither we got this or not but it's kind of one important thing. Paul Christiansen and I were visiting one time, you know, and our careers parallel each other because we both started-- he started teaching at Mt. Vernon in the fall of '67. I started teaching at UNI in the fall of sixty--- and I was in plant physiology and science education but Paul was already in prairies and stuff and we were sitting around talking one time and he said, "You know, I wonder what would happen if you'd of come to Iowa State at the same time I did. That would have been an interesting thing working with Jake Landers." I said, "that would be interesting." You wonder how that would have affected your career because that would have been a key turning point. Then we talked a little bit more and I mentioned how you know, I had never knowingly seen a prairie until I was in South Dakota and Paul mentioned well his first introduction to prairie was when he was a first year graduate student on his doctorate at Iowa State. So again, here's two people who really became involved in prairies and prairie restoration who never knew a prairie growing up at all.

I: Yeah.

P: And there's probably more prairie around where he grew up than where I grew up but he said he never really got into it until they went on a field trip and I forget what the field trip was, but he said some fellow took him to a prairie remnant and he was just like I was, just fascinated with it.

I: After that. Then going forward.

P: So yeah that's kind of interesting.

I: What it is it catches fire.

P: Yeah. Yeah. Some people-- I say I become increasingly interested in prairie and other people might say I became obsessed with prairie.

I: Well there is a little bit of that and that's all right.

P: That all depends on your perspective. Right?

I: That's right. That's right. Well, yeah.

P: One thing is one person's obsession is another person's interest I guess.

I: Yeah. Gentle interest.