

Interview with Dick and Mary Bishop by William Schneider, Karen Brewster, and Tom Paragi, December 8, 2020 via Zoom with everyone in their separate homes in Fairbanks, Alaska

Summary and Outline by Bill Schneider, 12-15-20

This is the second in a series of interviews with Dick and Mary Bishop of Fairbanks, Alaska. Both have been active members of the Alaska Outdoor Council (AOC) and strong advocates for equal treatment of Alaskans for hunting and subsistence access under the Alaska State Constitution. This interview discusses that theme through the topics of the Public Trust Doctrine, the Federal Trust Responsibility to Native Americans, and the disputes between state and federal management of fish and game and subsistence. Under this broad topic area, they present their views on the recent Sturgeon court case related to federal control and determination of navigable waters, and the State's management tools to accommodate the subsistence needs of all citizens of the State.

00.55 Discussion of the Public Trust Doctrine and the Federal Trust Responsibility to Native Americans

04.52 Dick discusses his participation in a subsistence summit held by either Governor Hickel or Knowles

08.05 Statement that subsistence is a civil rights issue, one of equal rights under the law

15.59 Mary states that "When equality is not the standard, then how much inequality is justifiable?"

19.44 Sturgeon case is mentioned to indicate State's management rights of waterways through federal lands

22.05 Mary distinguishes between rights and privileges noting that rights are given in the constitution, privileges are given by the legislature and can be given and taken away

23.00 Regulations in place to accommodate subsistence needs

30.00 Discussion of Lake Minchumina subsistence research and how subsistence has changed

33.00 Discussion of amount of commercial food consumed in Native diet

34.00 Expression of concern for non-rural people who depend on subsistence

36.00 Rise of village populations and impact on certain resources (beluga in Kotzebue Sound)

52.00 People needing to consider alternative natural resources when favored species are in decline or unavailable

57.00 Discussion of Alaska Outdoor Council, its formation, Dick and Mary's participation in the organization and the issues that the AOC has addressed such as federal subsistence priority, ANCSA Section 7b, the Katie John lawsuit

1:01.00 Discussion of Reserve Water Rights

1:01.00 Dick's lobbying in 2001-2002 for the AOC in Juneau against the Knowles administration's efforts to get a constitutional amendment to support a rural subsistence preference in the state law

1:10.00 Continued discussion of Sturgeon case

1:20.00 Mary describes her involvement with the AOC

1:23.00 Native sovereignty and objection to designation of an Ahtna Traditional Use Area