

Project: Elders Warnings

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KT: Katie Turner

AD: Alfred Demientieff

00:00:00:00 - 00:00:22:08

KT: My name is Katie Turner. I'm sitting here on Friday, October 7th at 4 p.m. with Alfred Dementieff. Where did you grow up and what year were you born?

AD: I grew up here in Holy Cross and I was born in 1954.

KT: Did you grow up fishing or participating in fishing?

AD: I started fishing, start to learn how to fish when I was five years old.

00:00:22:08 - 00:00:45:02

AD: Fish camp.

KT: How was fish camp changed from when you were growing up?

AD: Well, well, there's no more fish camps now. But we used to. It was their livelihood. We stay in fish camp all summer and come back in the fall.

KT: Who taught you how to fish and who did you usually go out with when you went out?

AD: I went out with my dad and mom.

00:00:45:04 - 00:01:12:22

AD: Both of them. Yeah.

KT: When you guys were able to fish here, who do you go out with?

AD: Here? When I was a kid. Or when?

KT: Just whenever.

AD: I used to go out. With all my brothers and all my brothers fished with me and wished. We had only a couple of boats. We all band together, cause we had a big family and a whole bunch of us, five families to the fish camp.

00:01:12:22 - 00:01:47:12

AD: So all of a sudden do our share work.

KT: Where did you fish?

AD: Well, five miles from here. Across. Across the slough, went up about five miles. We're heading to where it is. It's here in Holy Cross. Holy Cross area.

KT: How do you know where to set net or toss a drift net?

AD: Drifting. How did I know? But everybody got the same spot to drift into a certain spot.

00:01:47:15 - 00:01:59:07

AD: And there's a few. There's only very few eddies, so enough. Drifting was their main goal around here. So right across the river is the main place to drift.

00:01:59:09 - 00:02:27:25

AD: Five miles up where we could go. 15 miles down, there's 3 or 4 places of fishing.

KT: So salmon like to hang out by eddies.

AD: Yeah, they like to stop in eddies and rest up.

KT: Are there any environmental factors that let you know that fish are close by or they're on their way up?

AD: Well, before that and the old guys used to say, you know, the birds used to whistle along the bank, the blackbirds.

00:02:27:27 - 00:02:56:26

AD: They used to tell us when the fish is coming and cotton in the air. You know, some of the factors and then the bluebells, bluebells are blooming, you know, there's fish out there. That's some of the factors.

KT: Okay. From your experience, how is the regulation and management of salmon changed in the area?

AD: Well, since they're declining and salmon is changing you've given us windows, you know.

00:02:56:28 - 00:03:19:22

AD: But now, there's no fishing. But we have windows for that. We used to fish seven days a week. Now and then, but then we have. But no, there's windows. But before that we just fish, you know, get 27 and then bring that home. And take care of it. You know, we can take care to make a good job of it, you know.

00:03:19:24 - 00:03:35:01

AD: So we didn't get very much time. And that's why we 20 salmon every, every time we go out if we can, all summer long, you know, till we get about 150 fish for my families.

00:03:35:03 - 00:04:03:02

KT: The last summer that they let you guys fish, how much were you getting each time you went out, if any?

AD: The last time, probably about five, maybe. Maybe ten. Because every time they opened up here, the fish were going by and under that it opened up. And there's no fish in the river. So we're kind of scratching for fish, but we still got a few enough to eat, you know, but nothing for the fish camp.

00:04:03:05 - 00:04:33:18

KT: What's your favorite way to eat or prepare salmon?

AD: Every way. Baked. Fried in every way. You could cook it. Even salt fish out of it. All fish. All of it. You know. Well, there's a whole lot of ways to have salmon. The best way is baked salmon and put a little barbeque sauce on it you know.

KT: What does salmon mean to you?

AD: Means life I guess.

00:04:33:18 - 00:05:00:06

AD: That's what grew up all our lives, that salmon. You know, it was. It was one of our. That's so easy to survive. We sell salmon in the summer and we go to the moose meat, then the animals.

You know, if salmon was the main, cause of the oil, you know, keep everybody warm in the winter.

00:05:00:09 - 00:05:20:17

KT: Do you notice a difference in how you feel when you're unable to harvest salmon?

AD: Don't feel too good. It's a big difference. Yeah.

KT: How do you feel about these current runs?

AD: I don't think there's any runs anymore.

00:05:20:19 - 00:05:48:25

KT: Do you remember when salmon runs were beginning to become concerning, when the population started dropping or.

AD: Yeah, this is at 5 or 6 years ago. And you but mainly because the, the bycatch situation, because the, the let me see how it goes. The Magnuson Steven Act. You know there's Stevens. He made boundaries. He set the boundary.

00:05:48:27 - 00:06:15:23

AD: He made boundaries out there in the Bering Sea for 200. And you can't fish within 200 miles. You know. But now, if you're good at it, global, global warming and climate change, know that there salmon are moving further out. You're hitting that 200 mile limit, you know. So I was thinking maybe they could extend their, 200 mile limit to a 300 mile or so, maybe let some fish go by, because that's when we started.

00:06:15:25 - 00:06:44:24

AD: The fish were declining. Since the climate is changing. That's my thoughts.

KT: Did the king salmon get smaller?

AD: Because they're switching to smaller and mesh. We got smaller fish. Yeah.

KT: How did community members respond to these changes.

AD: And everybody's gone and disappointed. There's nothing we could do about it.

KT: Did you need a change where you traditionally fish to in order to get salmon?

00:06:44:27 - 00:07:11:16

AD: No, because we always fish in the same spot of the river. You know, if they let us. Yeah.

KT: Did your elders give you any warnings about salmon or advice on how to behave around them?

AD: Nope. No warnings, no. Just fish when fish are here and and June's our fishing month.

KT: Do you have any warnings or advice for us about salmon?

00:07:11:19 - 00:07:46:11

AD: No, just I'm just hoping they come back so we can fish again. You know? That's it. We're all hoping.

KT: Would you mind sharing one of your favorite fishing stories?

AD: Lets see. Man I got so many that I don't think so because there's too many and which is my favorite.

KT: Oh, okay.

AD: But I got a lot of stories.

KT: Do you have any other thoughts on how, to take care of salmon?

AD: No, just hope for some miracle they come back.

00:07:46:11 - 00:07:57:13

AD: That's all. We were hoping for you know, so we could fish salmon again.

KT: Okay, that was my last question. Thank you so much for your time.

AD: Thank you.