

Transcription - 2nd part to Don Pierce interview

When editing these shots you will have to find the first shot in this sequence by listening to the first line of his interview. The time code does not continue from where we left off (the first batch)

Part II/III

00:00:00:00 **the floods that we've had...the run offs...Agriculture runoffs that we had.** You know just big storms. Big Celsius oyster bars and you have no recruitment of little ones if we aint got the little ones in.even in us..if we aint got no babies running around we is in trouble huh we is...

00:00:34:15 Damn that's a good one.

00:00:45:09 Personally the challenges we face in the industry is what's mother nature going to throw our way. Cause we're a very Mother Nature oriented industry with floods and winter. Winter kill. I mean our crabs we could have a very severe winter this winter and it could kill a lot of the crabs that we have. I mean it could happen and it has happened.

00:01:11:02 Oh sure that will effect the bottom line on the crab business. I mean there's been seasons when, this was borderline one, if we hadn't had good prices we'd had to quit.

00:01:25:15 Crabs on the 4th of July were \$120 a bushel . But if your only catching 10 bushels then your still not getting much over your expense limit. No of course when the boat comes closer to home, home quarters, the expenses get less because you have less fuel expense. You don't have motel expense and stuff. And sometimes we stay on the boat when its still cool. You know but ah when we're home expenses run us about \$ 400 a day. 420 bait and fuel

Part III

00:02:38:22 We feel like well any business man wants to protect his business. There's about 5000 commercial crab license in the state of Maryland. **There's probably 25,000 recreational licenses. Each one of those licenses can take a bushel a day. I'd say there more restrictions levied on the commercial industry than on the recreational industry because its recreational . There are whole lot more recreational people taking 3, 4, 5, bushels when the crabs will trap or bite over there limits and that right there can trigger over fishery .** All of a sudden you have people.....lets say take 2 bushel...these no way your family can eat 2 bushels of crabs so your gonna take that bushel of crabs and maybe sell it to you neighbor. So that means that...oh great neighbor...oh thank you very much. I don't have to go down to the boat or to the retail store to which tracks back down to me. So you know **I would not like to take nothing away from no one but I would like for everyone to be honest in the deal here.** We are under the scrutiny now

of creditability in our industry cause we are bay rapist or industry rapist. **We fill mega reports out. I just got some reports I gotta fill out from Virginia. I gotta tell the states where we catch the crabs how many I've harvested and on what day, where I'll land them, I mean its quite a paper trail in our industry and none in the recreation industry.**

Part IV

00:05:02:15 **I love about being a waterman is that at the end of the day** when you look into the stir of your boat and you got a very good catch of product, crabs, oysters, fish, whatever it was. The thrill of the hunt is the biggest passion and **you've done the best you can to provide for your help and your family and haven't hurt the industry.**

00:06:00:00 BecauseI wanted to continue crabbing because ...like what I just said the thrill of the hunt . **It's a great industry..its...by far the most satisfying thing that I've ever done and just love doing it.**

Part V

00:06:30:11 At the time I really don't remember what I was considering. Ahh..I really...I don't know. I don't know what I would be considering because my life **at the age of 65 there's no other consideration left. I'm going to stay where I'm at.**

00:07:01:14 **I'm probably gonna do this until my health won't allow me to do it no more.**

00:07:20:23 Well me and my wife want to travel some. We've started to do some . We like to travel. As far as the crab business goes I'd like to, as long as its very profitable...I don't mind the work . That's what I've done all my life. **Some people call me a workaholic...you know theres lots of holics or addicts...well I love to work.** When you pulled up you see some new traps or sets back there...well we build our own pots. So in the evening when I come off the crab boat, I build pots.

00:08:05:06 Well the wire comes in rolls. We buy the wire from a guy in Crisfield and I bring the wire home and we bend it and make into what you see as a pot. It takes about 30, 40 minutes to build a pot. And that saves me about \$20.

00:08:26:22 In both rigs I got 2 different rigs of pots ...About 1600. And that's a high maintenance thing. Every year we probably throw away 300 pots...you know they just get old. Water take an affect on them. Pot life if about 7 or 8 years.

00:09:23:17 I was born and raised in Wilmington Delaware.

00:09:21:11 Actually my mother and father had a boat we come down me and my brother and we started working on the boat . There was a large fishing industry party in the summer and we started working as mates on the boat for aboutah let

me think...\$5 a day. That's what we got and if we got more than a \$10 tip the captain didn't have to pay us the \$5. He didn't want us to get to rich. That was 1960 dededed 3 or 4...

00:10:40:06 You were listening to the Smith Island drawl. The guys from Smith Island they're very hard to understand. Lots of times them guys will talk in reverse. Like if something's good they will say it was terrible. Crabbing is off and you gotta read between the lines.

00:11:52:14 In 1970 we had about 3 million ppl living in the watershed in the Chesapeake bay. Now I'm talking about New York to Virginia. I talking about 5600 square miles of Watershed....and now you got like 17 or 18 million. Yes I understand.....I know that they're probably 50 yrs behind schedule on serious treatment. An older gentleman and myself many years ago when the medical field came out with the birth control pill and the Prozac and all this. HE just jokingly said its going to start showing up in the fish then our bodies don't consume of our medications. And damn it its doesn't it. It has shown up in the male strip bass. The male White perch...all the male species of fish.....see the juvenile fish all start her in the Chesapeake Bay. And then Strip Bass, when she gets about 4 or 5 yrs old he will start to migrate. He goes out in the ocean and up the coast. Got Strip Bass that go all the way to Main that are born here. They migrate and they will back here every spring. They come back once a year once they start that migration they be back here every spring to spawn. They come once a year.....I mean these fish get like thisthey get 60, 70 lbs. But that's been our biggest downfall in the agriculture industry. For years they didn't know the effects of the weed killers they were using and when they would get into the bay it kill the Bay grasses and Bay grasses is the food chain for all of Marine life. Cause when the bay grass dies it creates Zoplankin and the Zoplankin feeds the baby fish baby crabs everything depends on the Zoplankum . If Zoplankum is not in the estriarum when the baby fish are born in 4 days baby Rockfish starve to death. He looks like a little guppy but he swims upside down and as his yoke sack, which is his stomach is devoured he'll turn upright and swim like they do naturally. But

Part V

the 1970 water quality would be the ultimate answer and our Bay would probably recover within less than 10yrs. That would be my ultimate dream. My business would be....I mean you would have ample supplies of everything.

Part IV

In this Harbor right down here when I was a kid there was 70 workboats working everyday would be doing something different. Now there's less than 15. And I'm one of the 15 and %75 of the time I have a place down here to tie my boatMy boat's been there for 20yrs and its been out 1 time in 20yrs.because Immigrates much

00:15:46:11 The Stripe Bass in their reproductive organs are showing signs of left overs from the birth control pills

00:16:14:12 Oh I have seen he she fish we call them he she fish

00:16:42:19 Medications going into the Chesapeake Bay...we're probably over medicating the Chesapeake Bay Just because of the medications our body's not using is going into the Bay into the water system andended up into the fish. So we've got to do something better with our medication. We're over medicating Chesapeake Bay, we've over medicated the sewage systemand there's too many ppl in the watershed.....Our sewage treatment plants are not set up to take medication out of water....Phosphorus and nitrogen is what they are working on but not medication

Part IV

00:17:49:08 When we lost dad 4 or 5 yrs ago we had several bottles of medication the doctors just told us to dump it down the toilet. That they couldn't reuse it cause it was already distrusted and they're afraid of it being tainted and I agreeDeath is a common thing and medications and the elderly just dump them down the toilet. Its just like many years ago just dump the motor oil down the storm drain. It goes away but it ends up here. Everything that we put in the water system comes to Chesapeake Bay that's coming out of the watershed and if that's the case, eventually I'm not going to see it you ladies might see it...it might run red. Chesapeake Bay may run like a cess pull and stink terrible. It's a proven fact....we won't allow our grandchildren to go into the water. <y wife goes to Annapolis and talks to the legislature of the environmental minors committee and when she touches on them grand children then the ladies that are delegates in there ...when you say I won't take my grandbabies into the Chesapeake Bay to swim because of the algae bloom and those ladies in the legislature who have a lot more power than my wife does ahh that opens their eyes. And when them ladies say "what are you talking about you wont take your grandbabies into the water" and when she relates to it...I mean there are several delegates who now email her on her thoughts on water quality

00:19:55:18I don't know what we should do with the medication. They should be turned in or burnt...I don't know what to do . Who knows what to do with them. Because they say they're safe but if you burn them they might put something in the air.....I haven't a clue what to say they should do with the medications. They said that the birth control pill was safe for the environment but 40yrs later we got them in the male fish