

## sorensen-ron-2017-11-30.mp4

[00:00:10] It was my grandfather actually. So I spend a lot of time with my grandparents in the summer. My dad built houses and my mom was a schoolteacher and she did summer school so I was free most summers of my grandparents were good enough on my mom's side to take us to Central Oregon on primarily on the notorious river. And I spent a lot of time with my grandparents all through the summers. So I was fishing I caught my first fish on a fly when I was five with. My grandfather Montoya. So I spent a lot of time with them all the way through my my teenage years and then fished as well. My mother my parents but you know my dad on the on the weekends and we bait fish and fish whatever. My dad loved to fish and so but he wasn't specific to fly fishing. Like my grandfather was. I. Think it's it's it's a complex attraction I think. I mean I think that there's different facets to it. I mean obviously there's the. The just the innate part of being out in in nature and and. Incorporating yourself within it in order to I mean I think fly fishing by design is a difficult endeavor. I mean it's not built. It's not a sport that's built to be easy in some aspects and the nature of it is is complex and that's the attraction to it. So I think you know in some aspects you can go sit on a bank on top of a cooler and drop a worm in and sit there and talk to a buddy and you're not engaged in the same way in why as you are when you're fly fishing. So I think the demands of the sport demands your. Your involvement in the ecosystem as it's happening. And so the better your integrated into this natural system the more successful you'll be and the sheer act of integrating yourself in that fashion I think does something to your. To your psyche that you know that other endeavors don't do and the same in the same fashion. So I think it's that immediate experiences is the primary attraction and then at the same point you know the parts of. Those family ties and the historical ties to my grandfather and those time spent with my dad and and then later with friends as I turn buddies of mine on to the sport in high school and I think that you know it was an involving my involvement in fly fishing that had different aspects. So you know then ultimately and as such a surprise that you know the whole concept of being able to actually the thought of oh I can work in a fly shop I can make money doing this and and be around it all the time I think was. Not a foreseen evolution but one that felt completely natural. And then once I started with that. And then I ended up getting a part to actually it was it was a school project to donate your time for two weeks at a local business. And so all my friends my mom was trying to get me set up at a bank or with my grandfather's young stockbroker or something like this. And so but I found out some of my buddies were going to spend the two weeks like skiing with ski patrol and at Mt. Hood I'm like I'm getting hoodwinked here. And so Randal Kauffman actually lived in our neighborhood. So I got back from school early one day and I walked down and knocked on his door and I he knew I was doing it just because had seen me passing on in the neighborhood or what have you. So it wasn't. All that odd but I knocked on the door and oh hey Ryan how are you. And as well I had this proposal for him that I was going to work for free for two weeks and he was sure. And so I that's really how I got started in the in the industry was with this school project or what have you. So I worked for two weeks for Randall and then ended up being able to on Christmas break or anytime I needed you know part time work I'd call him up and ask if he needed help or. And from that point on then I could work. You know I've worked quite a few Christmas breaks actually at confidence for them which was which was great. And then I got to know Randall that way. And John Hazel was there at that time frame and and other other. He had a whole staff of great older people that Kaufman's was a heavy heavy hitter. So this was like in the mid mid to late 80s at that point. And then it was because of Randall's helping connections I ended up working for and guiding for Mike Lawson. So that started and I was still in college but I had the went out worked one summer cut my teeth just guiding and then Randall helped. You know helped me get in with Mike class and then

in 92 was the first time I started there. And then. And then guided from there through 2002 for Mike.

[00:05:11] Because I was finishing up school in ninety five. So. But that come back to the actual question was I think that because of all the different facets that. It can take you or that you can you know from the creative side to time flies or if you want to get into conservation work. I mean there's so much room within the general aspect to fly fishing that you can you can find your space in your interests and. That you could sort of add ons to fly fishing that maybe aren't exactly specific you know aren't immediately related to the actual sheer act of fishing. So I think that's a really strong part of it as was that there's so many different facets that it can evolve and mutate or evolve into. A guy. I mean the best thing about gaining is I wasn't humping 50 pound bags of cement like my buddies were all the way through college. You know to get your your money for your apartment or for books or coursework or what have you. So. I mean there was growing up on the metal Yes I did. There wasn't any guiding. So I was it wasn't even a concept that I was. Aware of. Until. Way late until probably I was a senior in high school. And I mean I literally came back to Portland to tired and sat down with Randolph says what's this guy doing. I mean people like will actually pay you to go fishing. I mean it just wasn't a concept that I entered in my universe at that point. And so. But it was certainly of you know it seemed like a great idea that somebody was going to pay you to take them out fish and you could spend all day outside. So initially for sure it was economically no it was better than make a minimum wage at a construction site. And because around all because of some of these contacts I had made I was a of a actually able to get a job. And so it was perfect summer job one I was going to college because I could roll out of classes and go straight to Idaho and pick up the job and work through the through the summer and then go back to college again. But so. But the. Ultimately what the great part was is that I was out in the area that you know doing what I love to do and. And so. I mean the guiding aspect obviously it pushed my fishing beyond well anything that I learned from my grandfather and those were my mentors growing up and I really hadn't been exposed to you know I mean I didn't even nymph for the first time it was like you know it was a new concept down to Neptune at that point you know. So this would be in like the mid late 80s the whole concept of pimping was brand new. And you know fly fish magazine I think it just just come out. So if you didn't see it on the river happen you weren't aware that it existed as a as a tactic or technique. And so. You know so obviously coming to Montana and being you know I worked under a guy named Roman Nyman was the head guy did this dude ranch where I worked in a mini basically was like oh well you've never put on an indicator before. And I mean I didn't know what it was. I mean once you see it set up then obviously all lights go on and you can understand how it's going to work. But you know if you've never seen it before it's you know some is going to put the special glasses on so you can decode the Egyptian hieroglyphs you know and so. So obviously I mean what just being in that environment you know exploded all the different possibilities of what you could do and different tactics and techniques and Rowan was shot I tied flies before that but then to see someone do it because at that point I mean I remember.

[00:09:10] Randal would lend me you know at the end of the day you know if nobody rented out the beta and VHS cassette tapes I could take him home at night and watch but that was the first time you could actually see other people do these things and so sort of spent that time with Rowan and then and then going to to the Henrys for it was you know working for Mike Lawson was you know was like jumping into the NFL or the NBA or something. So I was around you know. All Time. Pros like you know Kurt Barker and Bob Lamb and all these guys that had done it for 22 years and all through the 70s and the advent of you know that whole industry and in Montana. And then it is I enjoyed being with

the people. I mean I mean that ultimately if you're not. A people person or enjoy spending time with those people in which you know. The things same things I was able to learn and get excited about then transmit that to them. And so ultimately if if you don't really enjoy that process of trying to teach people in the river you know just catching fish gets old or just catching fish is too frustrating you know with too many people you know because. But if you have the passion of the learning then then or the transmitting that information I think that's what ultimately keeps you with it. You know because I started in 91 and now it's 2017 so. And then starting in. Two in 96 then from 96 on I've done double seasons ever since from Patagonia in here. So that's a lot of.

[00:10:54] Fun. I'd can't remember the last time I added up all the seasons overrated. It's a lot by now. Well I was actually I finished I went to Washington University in St. Lewis where I went to college and had a English literature major with a minor in writing. And then I had actually I planned did another season working for Mike and then a guy that worked at the shop. Brian Ramsey who is actually I mean I think he's placed second in the national casting tournament behind Ray Jeff for. He did it for a number of years and he was going to school in Missoula. And he said well you should go to their graduate writing program. And that was a time that David Duncan was up there. And so the fact that David Duncan was up there was an immediate attraction. And so I looked into a little bit more and it was a it was a good program. And that was actually my idea was I after guiding for Mike all the way through October. And I did a short little my short little steelhead stint that I normally would do and then went to Bozeman and then I went to Missoula and was trying the plan was to spend a writer's winter and then apply to their graduate writing program to start the next fall. And so I was there long enough to get my first dog a chocolate lab Marley the chocolate lab. Molly. Molly lama and calling her and.

[00:12:16] Had a part time job with the grizzly Haskell to help me I'd saved up all my guide money and my tips to do this winter and then I had a part time job that was going to help as well. And got a place to stay a cool cabin up on rock creek. You know one of these tourist cabins that nobody nobody was going to use all winter long so the owner made me. He was a fly fisherman so he cut me a great deal to keep the water and the power on all winter. And so that's that's what I was going to do and then I had a call from a guide friend down on the on the Henrys for that I had met actually on the Henrys fork. I got into bed and Columbia that had gone down to Patagonia the year before. So his parents had given him like a graduation present and. Then. He had just gone down and was traveling and fishing and bumming around and sea bagging and. This was like the fly fish chronicles before it was before his actually realized and put on video he was doing it and so he came through said Martine the Sandy's which is in Argentina in the Patagonia on the Argentine side and basically ran into the job. So he was I met him in that summer in 95 on the Henry squawk and we talked and he told me his experiences. And we hit it off and you're sharing all these crazy adventures that we had done. And another example of where fishing can take you in these great crazy directions you never expect.

[00:13:40] And so he and so I basically said love my plans I'm going to move to Missoula and I want to apply this graduate writing program. But if you ever hear of anything let me know. And and so I was up in Missoula and the phone call came and Ben said hey you know I talked to my boss down in Argentina. And they've got a banner season and he's looking for one more guy. You should call and get your name on the list. And so. He gave me the number at the right time to call in and all the stuff I didn't have a calling card so until lucky those casino and filled up Crown Royal bag full of quarters and and called from the payphone outside of these cabins while it was snowing and pumped all these quarters in and there was this horrid delay. You know this delay is we are talking long distance to

Argentina and until we kept talking on top of one another and this guy or a trucker who is one of the founders of the industry in Argentina along with a guy named Douglas Reid to basically was like So you worked for Mike Lawson. So I tried to give him this verbal resumé quickly to try to get my name on the list. I'm like Yeah Guy did for Mike now for four seasons and you say Oh. Great you're hired. And I was just trying to get my name on the list and. So long story short I mean that was in November and I ended up got out of my lease thankfully for the cabin. The guy was cool about it when I told him I had a job offer to go to in Patagonia and. And. And so that I ended up going back to Portland Oregon to go set my ticket to Portland. And I spent the holidays with my parents and the first week of January I was down in Patagonia Argentina for the first time and that was in 96 and so I ended up working for TrueCar for a year. It was pretty clear there wasn't a whole lot of room for evolution within that situation. So I linked up with another Argentine and worked for him and was able to bring clients through him for a number of years and then starting in 2000 we started our own business down in Argentina. I met an Argentine lady as well from summertime where I was from and so we had gotten married. And so it was sort of a logical evolution to to start our own business in 2000. And then we'd just. Built it up slowly from there. I mean and she was she was actually a graphic designer by trade so I continue to guide for Mike through the early 2000s and through the late 90s and I mean I remember we would you know print out. She designed the brochures and we'd print them out on her Epson printer and we were still living a Pons lodge in a trailer at that point. So we we're licking envelopes and sending them out to our clients and. I still remember when we like mailed out you know one year we finally built up our mailing list of 500 people and we thought we had made the big time. You know that was a big deal. So but it was definitely Mom Pop you know from very humble start you know and just built it up and first year we had one group of clients come down and then the second year we had two and then another year we had four and slowly built it up and then starting in like 2003 we hired our first like you know guy Argentine guy that would then we had enough business that I needed another guy to work with us and a guy named Diego Gazer and then from there until now we built it up to Reno like five six full time guides that work work all through the whole season with us. Yeah I think it's I think it's you end up inheriting that responsibility and by default. I think. Because obviously you know not not both on a business it's double reinforced because of your own. Passion and love for for that ecosystem or for the child themselves. And it's it's a trout's integration into this greater whole. So I mean that's part of it's not just the trout by themselves. They exist in a whole integrated ecosystem. So by loving the trout you you love their place in a whole greater system right. And so from that very sort of existential case or situation to from a business standpoint they both go together and they both reinforce one another. And so I think that obviously if in your business you're destroying what it is that you're living off of it doesn't it makes for a short. Business plan. So I think they both. Go hand in hand and so I mean that's sort of. The beauty is that it's not a business that necessarily has to. Over exploit or destroy what it is that. That. That you're sort of reaping or harvesting. So to speak. I mean that's the beauty is that it can.

[00:18:40] Even on a great scale because you're you know returning the fish that and it's a catch and release system that you can you can build it up to a pretty big volume and have little or no impact on your on your environment then obviously I think it's no impacts is probably saying too much but. But I think that. As a business standpoint you're you know you you wanna you need do you find yourselves getting laid into conservation projects because there's external pressures you know on that ecosystem that you eventually end up trying to defend and protect you know not only for your own business standpoint but also because you want to pass that on your kid through it's something. You know existentially that you know that. If I can do my little part on this one little ecosystem then

you know we can protect this one little corner and everybody else protects their little corners and and we can have overall a you know a bigger impact or you're hoping that that bigger impact is happening. And you can see it from you know an email you get from better Trout Unlimited that they're doing their part on their river and so on. So you're you're hoping that you're you're part of this bigger collective that's trying to protect to protect. It. Well I mean I think that obviously climate change for as much as some. Fractions want to deny that it's happening or that we have any personal involvement in climate cycles. I think it's to be an intelligent species and not try to implement positive changes is completely ludicrous and stupid. I mean. I mean at the very least we should try to minimize our own impact whether you know the. Earth obviously has greater cycles it's going to go through but to. To effect by our own greed or gluttony you know our environment to the point where we're making drastic changes seems to be to be crazy. So. Those are things obviously that you worry about and you try to you know you try to change your your day to day personal behaviors to have some impact on it. But I think I think too I think that on on a more local or industry level I think that these are and Montana's having these issues of just over how do you how do you distribute and and monitor or. To limit use. And in all senses because at some point you know obviously you can you can love it to death you know. And. So at some point with the ever expanding global population I mean. Whether you know and Montana has seen it like they didn't limit outfitting use or outfitting licenses you know from the beginning and it got to the point where there's so many people running trips at so many different locations that I mean the trout you can make a good case that a lot of you know a lot of rivers are rivers are better now than they were in the 70s because of catch and release and instead of focusing on hatchery trip trucks coming up I mean that's certainly the case on the metal East River in Oregon that we've gone back to wild systems. You know naturally reproducing and catch and release and that's actually I think in a lot of cases helped our rivers. But at the same point a bigger. A big part of the experience of life fishing is not the fact that you're doing it around 30 or 40 other people. I mean that there's some solitude. I mean that's a big coefficient in of the experience I think. And so when there's so many people in the river that even as a conscientious user you're constantly worried all day about all day passed to the left of this guy and we reel up and or do I go in the right and you know you're getting in position and try well do I pass between him and the bank. So I don't go over where he's fishing but then I'm too tight you know. I mean suddenly you're here spending your head the whole time just not to affect other people's experiences or you don't care and use Roe every everybody but that doesn't seem like what it's about you know. And so I think. I think attitudes are really important on the river and I think that that's something that different aspects of the fishing culture either put more importance on or less. And I think sometimes that's. Where you catch two or three or 40 fish. Somewhat unimportant. I think it's more about the experience of being there and so. You know if there's just too many others and it's affecting the experience then I think we have a problem. And how do you limit use and obviously always the guides and outfitters are always the easiest ones to rule and regulate. And I think we look at all the scientific data. I mean we're a percentage a smaller percentage of use. We're a high profile. Percentage of that use but we're not the major user group. Obviously we have the most vested in interested in it. And so you should try it. You know we should use it in a positive way to effect change. But but I think ultimately you know at some point it's going to come down to the fact that how do we manage public use of these of these resources and ultimately you can't just let everybody go wherever they want to an unlimited amount. And what we've seen what I've seen in the outfitting business in Montana is if you don't put those rules in in advance of problems they're harder to manage once they're already a problem. So like an now budding business how do you how do you go to somebody and say well you know there's too many people on the river so you can't guide anymore here. What's easy to do is say Well anybody that wants to it's trying to start a business you say

you know here he can't do it over there you can and over here you still can and there's still space but here no we're tapped out. So you either need to buy somebody out that's in existence or go somewhere new. So that's easier to implement but it's hard to say there's too much you so you can't work or you instead of doing 50 days now you can do 20 days. Well you know I can't send my kids to college if we're going to twenty days. But those those things are much easier to implement ahead of time as opposed to in arrears. There's a lot less backlash. It's a lot easier to push those rules regulations through but I think there's a lot of. You know there's a lot of issues in the future with the public and the guides and outfitters and all user groups on these resources. How do you mediate use to protect the experience in that and when you start getting into um. Quantifiable number you know you can attack a problem and say oh we're down to nine hundred fish per mile and that's because of these diseases or water flows. I mean those are things you can attack scientifically. But how do you get it. What's too many people. Like for somebody that's lived here for a long time. That's a number and if you bring somebody from New York and they oh well there's only one we only saw like 15 20 people around us the whole day. Let's not that many. I mean there's five times out in New York City block so I felt more space here. So those are relative and those are you know those are those are ephemeral. You know no they're not numbers. They're there their senses and feelings. And so those are really hard I think try to implement policy around that. But it's it's. It's ultimately it's got to be done. To protect what it is that we do and. What I see with the advent of the internet in my in the time course that I've been in the business and around fishing is the fact that you know everybody's going to the big hole for the same if I hatch and so there's a lot of people there at one time and then they all leave and for the rest of season there's not that many people. But there's a lot of abuse on the fishery in the peak easy times and they pound all the fish in and then they go to the next spot that's hot and on you know and so you're getting a lot of abuse and a lot of use on the rivers or a lot of use on the river a particular time that then converts into abuse basically. Sure. My sense of it. So but I you know. Like on the Deschutes for example they've implemented projects on the systems on the overnight flow trips that are that are pretty effective. And I think that what we're going to see is more of those types of projects. So. Well I'm we're an easy target group because were were licensed by the state. So then you have something to you know sort of like grab on to. You know legally. At the very base level. But I mean I I mean I think and not to say that it's incorrect but I think. That very valid reason is you're taking a public resource and we're benefiting personally based on that resource. So I mean that's that is a you know a bit of a dichotomy in and of itself. I think for sure. So that makes it easy for us to be pointed out for certainly. But I mean yeah I mean it's like the ground you know fly fishing disaster you know whatever Lake you've got but it's that's done the same thing for the real estate market in Bozeman and you know there's a lot of people that have. Benefited by that. You know in a sense as well you know and so it's a whole. It's a whole the whole ball of wax I think I think it's it's it's a tricky year it's a complex. Again you get back to these sort of complex issues where you know for example Bozeman is growing like crazy but there's a lot more people professionals that could work outside of the office and so that can free you up to. Move your family into a nice little town and it's quiet and you can play soccer and basketball and the kids can ride bikes and you're not worried about safety and you know you eliminate a lot of you know. Dangers out there put it in a simple way for your kids you know and you put them in a smaller town environment and you can still you know work and maybe you know once a month do a short flight to Salt Lake or Seattle or Portland and doing meetings and come back again. So you know culture is changing in and of itself and enabling facilitating these types of movements. But. But yeah I mean I think with fishing guides are always going to be. You know that we're the ones where the sort of the ambassadors of the sports and a lot of ways I mean we're turning people on to the sport or educating about the sport where you know in most cases you know where at least some of

the main people trying to protect that ecosystem. So in a lot of different ways you know sort of high profile when it comes to when it comes to sort of public opinion or what have you or. Are.

[00:30:13] Visibility. So we're always going to be an easy target. I think. Well I mean. In Argentina everything's hard. I mean just everything's tricky here with your cell phone you can order your lunch and your shuttle and I mean you can do just about everything except throw the ice in your cooler. Whereas down in Argentina everything's hard you know. So we've got you know here and you know you can call it Dorothy's shuttle services on the Madison for your float trip and leave the keys in the gas cap and hop in your boat and at the end of the day you know your truck's there waiting and the keys are there and you know she invoices you at the end of the month and it's all easy done. And we've got guys that just babysit the vehicle all day. So you've got somebody that you know for the off chance that somebody is just going to come by and break a windshield and. Not to say that doesn't happen in Montana every once in a while. But it's I mean I know a lot of guy buddies and a lot of friends and I think I've heard of. You know one person's vehicle because they let their iPhone on their seat. You know some guy opened up the vehicle and got their iPhone but that's about it. So. But were you usually because of communications issues in Patagonia. I mean we've got like. Two thousand dollar worth you know VHS systems in the truck because that's our only lifeline because we don't have a cell phone signal. So you know you're going to radio communications. If you get in trouble if you need help. So that's an important piece of equipment that's in the truck that you know we just can't leave all day. So that's you know that's a big part of it. I mean. It seems like everything and design you know everything by design and Argentina's is complicated bureaucracy is complicated paperwork's complicated.

[00:32:14] It's not always logical but that's you know that's just really matter. It's about having the bureaucracy there to sort of keep this big system. Running to validate having all these people work at the municipal or what have you. So but the great part of it is that there's you know just aren't all the people you know. So the beauty is you know you drop in the river and we get back to this you know the experience of fishing. I mean I would say that fishing in Montana you know fishing in Patagonia is no better than Montana. It's just not affected by all the people. So. So you know you have rivers that are nearly as rich in Patagonia as they are here. But you don't have all the people so to have day where the rivers on and the fissure less experienced more opportunistic them down here in the States then. I mean that's the beauty you know the beauty that you can float all day long and not see a single other person is you know is incredible or you're floating down a valley and you look around there's not a power line there's not a road line there's not a house there's you're in total wilderness and it's a relatively easy drive to get there. I mean you don't have the helicopter back in in order to have the sort of backcountry experience because you know once you step outside a little town everything's backcountry even if there is a you know national highway that runs down the valley you know because it's you know 10 15 miles on the other side of the valley you wouldn't you wouldn't even know that it was there. So I think that wildness is what is what makes it so so unique and so special and I think that's what people love about it. I think the fishing. Anybody that fishes long enough. It's really. It's not about the fishing's. Better or. It can be different. And you have new challenges that are different but it's hard to quantify and say oh it's is just that much better. Because I think ultimately the people that come back year after year after year it's it's you know the fishing has to be good enough but. It's not really about. How many do we catch. You know it's obviously it's fun and you have shots in Patagonia you know relative to hear that you know you have shots of fish that are just frankly way better than what you'd be able experience and these sort of you know neither Rivers I know you know

whether it's the Henry sport or of Madison or the Missouri or Beaver head or what have you. I mean. Your shot over a given week it's it's not that it's Alaska and you just stand up and they're stacked up in front of you in your run and you know eggs by their face to catch a pounders. But you know it's still kind of real fishing but yeah that's legitimate shots you know in every single river there's fish there. Twenty three twenty four to twenty eight inches and all the rivers. So I think that Luers kind of. Puts a fun spice in this you know an experience for sure. Well where we are in Patagonia in Patagonia in general you know the townships if you date these cities and towns like your you're sitting at like I'm trying to remember if 17 was founded in.

[00:35:43] 1920s or you know who Nene which is the oldest township in our areas ten years before that you know the relatively young city. So the trout were being brought at the same time as these first cities. So it wasn't the area. While there they're certainly natives there. The natives were more migratory. They were like hunter gatherers. So they were bouncing between the Argentine and Chilean side the outdoor O'Connor's and the more Poochie Indians were bouncing back and forth and fishing at least in even for native fish in that area. To my knowledge isn't something that's that I've seen reflected in their art or culture. So it wasn't it wasn't that the trout displaced any important native species. So in many regards the cities of today have evolved as cities along with the trout because the trout were brought down and introduced between 1885 and 1911 was when they had an active program of introducing these trout and then essentially from that point on there's not been any other constant you know hatchery program since that. So introduced them. Lot of BEE and they sort of you know migrated and filled all the available niches and in the environment and the ecosystems in the watershed. And then have existed all by themselves essentially until now. So even today you know these are what's kind of neat about is that these are. McCloud strain rainbows for example that they brought down in this timeframe in the early nineteen hundreds and now the genetic strain of MacLeod's that we have in Argentina is genetically more pure than the McCloud River because they took so many with such a popular strain and they were putting MacLeod's into the Henry's work and all over the place that they ended up bringing fish back into the McCloud from other rivers as well I understand. So the minute they introduced trout from a cantaloupe strain or a red band strain then then that genetic purity in the McCloud is lost. And so places like New Zealand and Patagonia are some of the last best students of this peer strain. MacLeod river rainbow. So that's kind of neat. You do. Fishing in Argentina compared to like for example like Chile the Argentines as a populace just aren't big fish or people. They're ranchers and if you open a menu and give an Argentine a chance to choose whatever they want on the menu the trout or fish isn't going to be it. I mean the Argentine Atlantic coast has incredible banks like what we have off of Nova Scotia and all the courting big outer banks up there. They're the same thing off the east coast of Argentina. So incredible shrimp and cod and.

[00:38:35] Then the Argentines don't eat it they export all of it. So trout they're certainly sort of a local small band of like poachers that mainly what they're doing is smoking the trout and. They do a lot of damage. I mean 10 guys with trout lines and bait all night long and all year long. And especially like picking them off on their spawning beds and stuff can do it you know they do a lot of damage but but it's on a pretty small scale and it's not while people obviously would eat a trout if they caught one. It's it's not a big enough of a culinary attraction that it's a major focus all the time. If somebody went out and they happened to be on the lake and out a bob and worm and got one they'd take it home. But you know unless you're talking about like the kids in the summer with the chimp wing that runs right through town I mean where it's easy to get to and the kids don't have anything to do then they'll go and they'll fish out those two miles that run through town. But it's not the same.



Focus that you'd have maybe in other places but you do have certain individuals that will rack up a lot of damage you know within a small group of the populace but it's not everybody going out on the weekends and killing trout foraging. Well we have we have clients that come from all over predominately from the US. But that's just because we're all our contacts are. But we've had people come from Ireland and England and Scotland and we just had people from Belgium that were there for a week in Australia. But. I think. I think that there are these destinations in the world that are you know just. Are those perfect travel. Environments you know and so yes those perfect trout environments grow big trout on top of it. And it's certainly. You know for somebody if you're fishing 10 days a year or 20 days a year or you know you don't live it do it all the time then then. And I'd certainly remember looking for my first big ginormous fish. It was a. It was a focus. I mean it was like a life. Destiny was to try to get a trout that would almost scare you know. So that's certainly part of it. But it's if those clients don't catch that fish it hasn't then it'll go away disappointed either. I think it's especially now you know when I first started going to Argentina a lot of people didn't really even didn't even have it on their sort of the register on their. On their on their G.P.S. really. So I mean I remember the questions I get in the mid 90s you know you know was Argentina dangerous or there you know like Bandidos around. I mean they sort of they weren't. You know is it Colombia or Bolivia or whereas Argentina is actually much more European than people realize. I mean it's the same waves of immigration that hit the U.S. hit Argentina as you know were European immigrants were looking for opportunity. Argentina had lots and lots of. Of. Of rich farmland. So we had the same ways of immigration you know staggered toward Spain and Italy in Italy. But but what people are looking for I think again is. Are these great health the unpopulated fisheries. I mean I think that's what the byproduct of that is the fact that because they haven't been overfished then the fishing's good because the fish are easier to catch so they kind of go hand in hand. But I think hands down people it's much more important the.

[00:42:25] Experience of fishing there is more important than the fishing there or at least those are the clients that we tend to have are the clients that tend to come back. I mean we have some great fishing but. And I would say it's it's awesome to see some of the best fishing I've seen anywhere in any of my travels. But ultimately the people that tend to come back year after year after year which is what our businesses has always been based on. I mean we don't have some massive international marketing scheme you know where we clear out the lodge one year and fill it back up with new people the next year and that's not our business model our business model is saying you know 65 percent your return clientele coming back year after year just because of the quality of. The service and the quality of the people that we've assembled that work with us and the quality of the service and the dependability and and when you have a team like that then it just runs easy. And so that's what people feels that. Like there is this whole structure around you but you don't really feel it you know because everything just kind of goes smoothly and and you just fish in that oh it's time to eat again and oh here's more red wine and it just the whole thing flows so it's not like on this force schedule or I think I think that that experience of the trip is equally as important and then for them to be able to do it you know in the winter months where it's cold and the days are short up here and you wouldn't want to travel this year and you can go somewhere with long sunny warm days and and wet wade and fish down there I think it's like a perfect you know a perfect destination.

[00:44:01] So for lots of reasons it makes it the easy destination you know as well where we're at in particular is some of the best you know Hatch driven fly fishing in South America which you know if you're from Montana than you're used to it's expected. Well you know when's the mother in Kansas hatch on the Yellowstone. The same applies in the big hole. And you could go through a hole you know Moveable Feast of all these hatches in

Montana and you're just sort of accustomed to it but that's not really in a lot of places that it's not really the norm of how most people's experience of trout fishing goes. And in South America it's for sure it's like that you know a lot of destinations are efficient woolly bugger and a big beetle and you covered all 10 days you're fishing whereas because of we have more bug driven rivers than that creates a lot more diversity that makes it a lot more intriguing from day to day. You're fishing so that you can you know because it's so long to get down there.

[00:45:06] I mean it's a full commitment of a full day of travel so it's rare that people are gonna go for a long weekend. So people come for seven eight nine days so if you can create a diverse experience every single day that you're out that makes a lot more engaging. So you know you can go down the river and the typical bounding you know pounding your banks and your pockets buying the trees and behind the rivers with tractors. But if suddenly you can interrupt that and break it up by or you know we found a hatch situation behind this Willow and you can spend an hour and a half you know with a four Wade and 5 x in sight fish and all these trout rising. You know you've broken it up and you're mixing in different experiences or. You know because you have intimate knowledge of the river you can get oh this is a sweet spot to get out here and walk a bank and you can do site fishing and you know and target individual fish as opposed to you know we're just going to roll down the river and hit the banks all day and six o'clock you're done because we got to run back to the rat back to the lodge which. There's lots of operations that that's exactly what they do and.

[00:46:12] They sell it for nineteen ninety five and they're the best greatest thing ever. But we try to do something different and that's by you know we go down lab three or four different rods rigged up and we're looking for those. Microcosms or those little you know hidden corners or those special experiences or keeping an eye out to offer that sort of diversity within a given day. So that takes real knowledge of your river. And so that's what we've always tried to do. And I think that that's what our clients appreciate is is. That you know just I think. Anybody sharing their true passions always attractive. I think and I think that's that's ultimately you know if you share your enthusiasm and your passion for something it's it's unavoidable like a magnet you know and people especially if you're share like you know interests like fly fishing then they're immediately attracted to that. And I think that that's what we've always. Transmitted and tried to share. And I think that's what's been effective is.

[00:47:22] And that's also what keeps you fresh is because the river changes and instead of again just forcing your game plan onto the river every day you're going out hoping that it's going to reveal something new today or you know I wonder you know are the mahogany starting to hatch yet or are they inch worms getting going you know so we'll go look on this little side channel see if they're going yet. And I think that's what keeps it fresh is from a guy's perspective because every day is truly different. And then that's what it's transmitted to your clients. And so that's what makes it engaging as opposed to you know you just hop on the Matterhorn for another ride today and that's gonna get boring for everybody. Well I mean.

[00:48:13] We certainly had a higher percentage of of more beginning an intermediate anglers like working for Mike Lawson and working at five shops or you know running an outfit outfitting business up here just because it's easier and cheaper to go try for a day or two. We still get you know but what we've got more is like a family old client that I'll have that I met you know in the early mid 90s now has done well and as a successful business

and he decides he's going to bring his family and his three girls down to Patagonia for a week. And so. Like the father's an experienced angler.

[00:48:57] But what we're doing is now we're picking up the second generation and then helping him teaches kids. So that's kind of like where I'm at my career as I'm starting to see the kids of all clients now. And so those are beginners and turning them on to the sport. So we don't get as much of that in Argentina but we certainly we certainly get some and I think to as is Argentina's got more exposure as a tourism destination in general than you're starting to get people that will go down and do other tourism activity so we'll go look at it was you falls or Khalif out there. Go look at the Australia whales and mother and or the the penguins down in interactive way or newswire you know birders for example is a sweet place for birders you know or they're going and doing wine touring and Mendoza then they'll combine it with like two or three days of fishing. So if you're already down there to do other stuff then then that's easier to tag on. You know maybe they have some interest in fishing or they want to go do some hiking and some routine then they'll tag on a day or two of fishing. So we're starting to see more and more of that is Argentina's becomes more exposed as a as a general tourism destination.

[00:50:19] They're all Argentine all Argentine our whole staff is what's nice of my wife's from town where where we're based. And she's third generation in town. So her father was like the first justice of the peace and they've been the family's been there for a long long time. And so it's been nice. We've built a business out of friends and a lot of those friends are childhood friends of my wife's that I've gotten to know and then became friends with or I met through the fishing business and it turns out that there. Their significant other. Your wife your girlfriend is is friends with Vanessa's family. So in many regards I met my wife through friends that are I'm involved with in our fishing business and then inversely. So it's it's been a great network to. Meet a lot of great people. So that's been I think one of the things that's. The possibility of building something that's our own be your own boss and you know. You're supposed to be able to dictate your own hours. But that just means that the hours dictate you because you're running your own business. You just work all the time but you're building a business out of friends. And so the day to day work experiences is fantastic because you're. You're working with all people that we've been with for 10 years 12 years and our kids are friends were you know godfathers to each other's kids. So the that experience of working together has been. Has been great too because it's got such a tight knit group but we've avoided you know going out and just looking for employees because my wife is from there and so we had an identified need and then we would work through our networks of known people you know so we were always getting known and entities that were coming into our organization. So we. Never had all that much. You know we have had like no turnover basically or very little. I mean if they lasted the first year then usually they'd stay for quite a while. So. It makes a great because everybody knows their role they know what their jobs are supposed to do and so it works really easy it's fluid so that makes it a great experience to which.

[00:52:38] You know. Otherwise I go to sell health insurance or something. Well I mean actually they felt great regulation since the mid 80s. But they can't. Know like Argentina in general like the fishing is just one. Microcosm within a whole system you know. And there have the same problems in the fishing as they do in all their other aspects of government. So the problem is they have great regulations have been there forever. I mean they've been there since the mid late 90s when you really didn't honestly have that many people fishing nor you didn't have that many clients coming Argentina deficient you didn't have any money but many Argentines fishing. But they just haven't been able to consistently. Fund the fishing game to. To regulate it. So if the rules are in place but nobody's enforcing

them then they don't really. They don't really have a lot of bearing or you do a one or two years and then the governments switch you know it switches parties and then they like they have the sort of odd. You know they have like these political posts and then like so everybody from that team gets fired and then the new guy comes in he puts everybody in charge from you know the secretary of tourism and you know the head of the fish and game. You know it's like throughout the whole. System the whole bureaucratic system so that's sort of odd. So they so they lose their continuity or their focus or trajectory they lose it and so they start all again from beginning and then print a whole bunch of new brochures to. And they love to have you know a brochure stacks of brochures and informative pamphlets but if nobody's out there on the river every day to implement you know. Regulations or try to educate the people you know to have a process of look you know we can't kill fish anymore or this section you can't kill efficiently more you can go to Lake or you can go here or whatever you know that clarification is if they can't bring through people through a process and say hey look you're gonna get two warnings one warning then we're going to have to give you a fine.

[00:54:43] So let's not get to the fine but if you lose that continuity then then you start at zero again. So you have to do the whole educational process again and. You know and again for example like you know probably if you. Looked at the numbers like fishing guides get more fines and tickets written up because we're missing some little paper in our licensing. Booklet then you know guys killing fish you know. So. Again it's the guys that are killing fish oftentimes might be armed or they're going to be gnarly about it. We're in front of our clients. So then of course we can't you know make a big stink or getting a big argument so quietly take the. Cause you forgot this little paper. It's. Silly but. But that's that's their biggest problem is that you know they. I don't think they fully realize what an important resource it is for for the province in the summer. As far as tourism goes. Those studies are done. That information is available. But like the politicians just don't don't give it the importance it should. So for example I mean we raise in our province we raise more money I think through. Fishing licenses than any other province in the country. And yet the money just goes into this sort of central provincial pot and disappears and none of it gets redirected. Even if we could get like 20 percent that just came straight to supporting and protecting the infrastructure ruling and regulating the fishing industry we'd be great. But it all goes in this general pot and you know it goes to repairing streets or building houses or funding a hospital or whatever and none of it ends up coming back to the resource. So. Those are things that seem like it'd be easy to change. But to have such abrupt and total. Political. Changes every time a new party takes power or gets in power it's really hard to get any sort of long term project. On the tracks. And with any steam that can maintain and implement any change. Because you just any project to implement real change usually takes lots of time and you need a plug away in order for that to reap benefits. But if you can never have this sort of consistency because the government is changing every four years and you have a new secretary of tourism and a new head of Fish and Game in the region and you have to start from zero. So it's.

[00:57:24] That's really tough you know. But the value of it's you know for the province is really important. So you know it seems it seems like a shame when it's so obvious. For sure. I mean I think that it's a it's a it's a great it's a great. Project or program or entity to have in place for four for sure. I mean video where you can block off and protect and have some. You know. Pop more powerful laws to keep industry out and regulate use I think obviously that the man that's it comes back again to the same of having you know this experience of pristine places. And obviously if if you know the native fish is is still there and protected then that's something to be. To be maintained obviously. I think. In cases for example like the South Fork or in some places you know protecting. Cutthroat. You know

is. My humble opinion is somewhat of a lost cause to wage war on rainbow trout in the South Fork of the trying to benefit this cutthroat trout where most scientists will tell you that it's an impossible battle to ever win. It seems to you know. To hurt a fishery in general to the benefit of a native species that really I don't know that we can ever.

[00:58:59] Bring back. You know it seems a bit misplaced energy and time whereas if you can identify places where they are still pristine and intact then all the money should be spent of you know to maintain that as such for sure. Yeah those you know beautiful pristine protected places or or. You know. Or something to cherish for sure. And I think as much as important with national parks and what's so special you know if you when you start to spend time outside of the US is where you really realize how much how much different types of public lands there are. So you know maybe you can. I mean you certainly have national parks where you know you can't hunt they you're allowed to fish. Maybe there could or should be national parks or parts of national parks where we shouldn't even fish maybe. But the benefit in the US is that we have such a wealth of public lands with different types of use that. I mean I don't want to you know part of me would say I don't want anywhere I couldn't go fish but I could at least entertain the concept because well if we blocked off the thoroughfare for example in Yellowstone Park to protect the Yellowstone cut throat Well there's all different kinds of other places it's not like protecting that one spot that you know you'd lose fishing everywhere else. I mean that there's BLM land in state lands and I think that's what the real wealth of this is from being in Argentina and other places. This is where. You really come to realize is what what a true asset and resource all the public lands are not just the public not just the the national parks but all the different kinds of public lands and the fact that you know. National parks might be the most restrictive on the different activities that you could have. But all the other public lands or in some regards equally as important in some ways maybe there aren't as pristine or. As glossy or but they serve a really important role as well you know. So that and that's what you just don't see in Argentina. In Argentina there's national parks and the private land and there's nothing really in between. And so. You know.

[01:01:18] Yeah I mean they you know again they were created in the same time frame in the early nineteen hundreds and you know obviously after our national park system was created. But they use that as a as a model for example. And essentially what happened was I mean they were in more or less they were you know in what a series on this big map and just big lines around where they wanted all these national parks primarily on the east side of the Andes and. In many cases there were already people that had homesteaded in these places. And for the most part they're just designated as such and it means that the that the that the. Park system you know manages those they don't. They don't cut timber in them like we do although they do they there are some hunting that they allow and you can fish in the in the national parks. You know. But it's not like. Yellowstone Park where you know you've got a whole system integrated set up for touring in the park. And these parks are set aside and there might be a road that runs through them and blocking trails would have you but they're they're not nearly as developed as is as ours are. But those are essentially for the public in Argentina. That's really if you don't have contact with the landowner or but the majority of your public access opportunities are to be found in those national park systems. Why me and I was I mean I remember reading a big two river from Miami when I read that. I mean. Back in again and back in again I read all of Hemingway's others works.

[01:03:12] But those stories I remember reading again and again and again and David Duncan was another one that I've always enjoyed. But to be honest I've read. You know. Obviously love trout fishing but. But in my reading it's not something that I. Focus on my

reading on. Because I'm out doing it all the time. Then. It's not nearly as as attractive. But I mean unfortunately it won't be nearly as much as I did in college. But at that point you know. James Joyce. Herman has see it as a whole. Pretty bright you know pretty wide variety of writers that timeframe but yeah as far as the writing was. You know as I was just right as I got out of college and before I went to Patagonia and then once we started Patagonia then. The focus at that point on I always been will. You know how long can I. How long can I do this double season before I need to go get you know you keep saying getting like a real job you know. I mean it becomes a real job. Real is what you make it. But if I could develop this to the point where I could you know raise a family on I'm running these fishing businesses then I would seem to be the criteria. I could give my kids the same opportunities my parents gave me then I was fulfilling my. Parental. Duties and my responsibilities and I could continue my life path. You know somewhat guilt free as long as I maintain providing our kids the same opportunities. So we worked really really hard to build those businesses to a point where where we could do that. And. So being able to do the double seasons business taking a lot of work and so having to sort of abandon what I was up to Missoula initially to do I completely Amanda. And it's only been the last couple of years where I started. You know he'd always have. These lucid moments we go back and jot some ideas or a couple of lines down or what have you but it's not something I've been able to dedicate much time to and you know my wife's encouraged me.

[01:05:29] But it just takes time you know and it takes a lot of for me at least it takes a lot of time and those are hard quiet hours to set aside especially you know where. I mean it's not like. Maybe a building a fly where you can just leave a fly on half a whip finish and go and help get the kids in the bath or run them down to school or. You know and this is in the down season writing just doesn't for me it just doesn't work that way. I mean I've got to encapsulate myself in and you know go under and and work on a piece or an idea and then you know I can pop back out and then leave it alone for four or five days or so. But. But it's not something that you know and I've never been where I just get up you know like. Certain writers Kafka's for the you know you write every road every night or every morning before you went to the bank or he and some like regular job you know and you just did it every day for those hours. And the most joyful of authors. Exactly. But you know different writers have different relationships whether writing right and mind just was in a way where. You know it's something I've always loved to do and actually what I've started to come up is I've tried. You know tried to put a more reasonable. Limitations on our business because if you're running your own business then it's 24/7 and never ends. And you know for all those years you couldn't afford to turn away a single opportunity or single possible booking or sales so you get it ingrained in working all the time and then the greatest best thing happens and then you've got this problem on your hands of you have a successful business and you never stopped working. So. You know. We're trying to get a point now where you know dedicate some time and in the off season like we cut the office at six o'clock at night and have regular dinners and eat with the kids and try to have a sort of normal job. But. And so what's happened is actually gone a little bit more back into writing because we've had like Jim Clunes asked me to write a piece. And we've been sort of presented with opportunities to help and collaborate on projects. And so that's that's been. Great. It's been a lot of fun. It's something I hope to do more hopefully as I can earn more free time or for as much as I love being out on the river and on the sticks. You know it's also not something you can do. You know double seasons full time forever and expect your body to hold. So you have to get to a point where we can you know.

[01:08:18] Have a different role in the business and then also start you know having a different role in other projects that we want to try to attack and take on. For example.