

*“Tales of the Tidewater: Oral History and Environmental Values on the
South Carolina Coast”*

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Interviewers: Anna McAlpine, Katie Semon

Interviewee: James Chandler, Jr.

Location: Chandler’s office, Georgetown, SC

Project of Maymester History 493M, University of South Carolina

AM: Today is May 22, 2003. This is Anna McAlpine and Katie Semon of History 493 Maymester class at the University of South Carolina. We are interviewing Jimmy Chandler at his office in Georgetown, South Carolina.

KS: To start off, we don’t really know that much about you. So, um, if you could just tell us a little about yourself?

JC: I grew up here in Georgetown. This house was my grandparents’ house when I was a little kid. I lived three or four blocks away from here over closer to the river. And when I left here to go to college I was gone about twenty years before I came back. I went to college in North Carolina and then ended up at Columbia at USC, got a graduate degree, a law degree, then stayed in Columbia eleven more years after that. And while I was in Columbia, I met some people. They had just started a Sierra Club in Columbia; I joined the Sierra Club. One thing led to another, next thing I knew I was doing legal work for environmental groups. And I ah... When you are doing environmental law for environmental groups you have to do it at low rates. They don’t pay you much and I was willing to do that. And so one thing led to another and next thing I knew I was doing more environmental law than I could really handle. It was, um, about to bankrupt me. I was giving away my time and eventually I started a nonprofit organization that was called the South Carolina Environmental Law Project that allows me to go out and get donations and grants and basically pays me a salary to do environmental law for environmental groups. And I’ve been doing that full time since May of 1988. So, and we moved down here in Georgetown in um, October of ’88.

AM: Ok, so you’ve been down here for about 15 years?

JC: What is that 16 now, I guess? I was lucky the first year I was here I had an office at the old Baruch lab. Did y’all make it all the way back to the lab?

AM: No we didn’t. We did just the Bellefield and the house, you know, the Hobcaw, so we didn’t go back in the marine science area.

JC: Yeah, the lab that the USC Marine Science Department has down there, it was basically destroyed in Hurricane Hugo. I happened to have the good fortune of being there at the time.

AM: Right! You came back just in time! (KS chuckles)

JC: Yeah, which I knew better. The first time I ever saw that building I went, “Wait a minute. They built this building too low.” Um, ‘cause I knew what hurricanes could do. But I still had a lot of stuff in there that I lost in the hurricane too.

AM: Right.

JC: So, I didn’t get my stuff out.

AM: Well you were gone for so, um 20 years. What had you noticed about Georgetown that has changed, you know, as far as landscape and environment, during your lifetime and while you were gone?

JC: Yeah, the biggest thing that changed immediately after I left to go to college was the steel mill that was built on Main Street right across the street from City Hall. It was a different City Hall at the time, it was still right across the street from it, on Front Street. And um, it made a fairly dramatic change on Georgetown. Yeah, because when that steel mill was built we didn’t have the air pollution laws that we have now, so it was um, there was dust and um, rust particles, all kinds of things that were just basically just rising up in the heat and making steel and was coming out through the roof and settling all over town and that looming presence in the town of the mill.

AM: So visible too.

JC: Yeah, the summer that I graduated from high school, we knew the steel mill was coming. It had already decided it was going to build here. They bought all that land, they tore down all the buildings and moved them away...cleared it all. And so, you’d ride down the street beside where the steel mill is now and you could see all the way down Winyah Bay. It was beautiful. Uh, and then, by the time I graduated from college, the steel mill was opened; it was running. It had just made a dramatic change...

AM: From when you left and even for just the four years of college...

JC: ...on the town, yeah, uh huh. It...I mean a lot of people feel that this was a great thing because it put eight hundred people to work. And a lot of the people I graduated high school with went to work there. And they got good jobs, and they made good livings there. But even the people that built the steel mill say that they built it in the wrong place.

KS: Right, I was going to ask about that. It didn’t have to be where it is, right?

JC: Right. It was there because the land that was there was an old industrial site that wasn’t being used. There were some other structures that were being used but it was a relatively minor amount of land that was actively being used that they were able to buy up and put it there. The state came in and made it easy. They built a state port terminal at the steel mill, they dug out the river there so the ships could come right up to the steel mill. If they’d have built this steel mill out near where the paper mill is, everybody

would have been better off because the steel mill...the problems from the steel mill are all a fairly localized kind of thing. It affects a circle of just a mile or two around the mill. So if you had...if you were out in a semi-rural edge of town kind of thing you wouldn't have anywhere near the kind of impact that that had. Plus it's hemmed in. You know it can't go any further on Front Street because it's stopped...on Frasier Street, the highway running beside it. You see they've started using lots on the other side of Frasier Street to store steel but there's no land, there's not enough land to expand their operation and become a bigger mill. If they want to be a bigger mill, they're going to have to just build a new one at another location. It was not set up to grow like you would normally want a company to be able to do.

AM: So you say that the steel mill has had both positive and negative effects you know as far as employment but environmentally...as far as the community, you know pollution...

JC: Yeah, I think it really kind of, you know, Georgetown is a, it's a real tourist attraction now. You go downtown, can't hardly get into restaurants some days for all the tourists. Ah, and busses and people wandering the streets looking half lost. Um, that was the way for a number of years by the presence of the steel mill. Um, before the steel mill was built there was a lot of talk about redeveloping Front Street and doing something like the boardwalk that they've got. Have ya'll been on the boardwalk back behind the stores?

AC: Yes, we did that the other day.

JC: Um, but then after the steel mill was built, everybody kind of lost interest in that idea because it seemed to be that why would anybody want to come down and be so near the steel mill? Ah, it took about ten years and people began to say well, we've kind of gotten used to it, let's go ahead and try doing something downtown anyhow. And they did, they um, rebuilt the street, buried the power lines, built the boardwalk, and it's worked, um, it's worked real well although there's still vacant stores down there and there are little pockets that need um, to ah, have active stores in them and really get going. But all of a sudden you've got good restaurants in town, you've got a lot of um, things that attract tourists.

KS: Do you think a lot of people want to market Georgetown as a tourist attraction, like a majority of the residents?

JC: It's kind of a split, and it really depends on whether or not you work at the paper mill or steel mill or you um, um, are irritated by the paper mill and steel mill. I've seen both sides of it. My mother and three of my uncles worked for the paper mill, and so um, I've never resented the paper mill or the pollution or odors that you get out of there. Um, and I've understood the steel mill. It has not made me angry as it makes a lot of people. It makes them really mad, um, to think about things, the steel mill. It makes me a little sad sometimes to think that with a little care you could have avoided these problems by putting it somewhere else, but I don't get upset with it. But in town when we've had

hearings over, um pollution problems that either the steel mill or the paper mill, they tend to be fairly emotional hearings. Ah, and people are really polarized and practically hollering at each other.

AM: Oh, that's interesting.

JC: And so, um, I've been involved in those, and they're really charged atmospheres that I, ah, have not wanted to particularly be in in my hometown.

AM: Right. Well about those meetings. That's an interesting, when the community comes together. Does it happen very often, about, you know, to talk about pollution, to talk about different... Do you ever talk about development, um, ?

JC: It only happens when there is some sort of a crisis or event that causes that to happen. In the paper mill it happened right after I moved back in '88, um, the EPA came out with a study looking at um, 103 different paper mills around the country that put out bleached paper, white paper. And they were looking at all of them because they were beginning to find that they put out a substance, dioxin, which is supposed to be one of the most dangerous chemicals around, caused birth defects, cancer, all kinds of things. And so they did this study and they found that the Georgetown International Paper Company Mill was the worst discharger of dioxin in the country. And um, DHEC had to come in and put up signs telling people not to eat fish that came from anywhere around the mill. Um, and those signs were up for several years. And so, um, having come back here to do environmental law, we had to be the people, I had to be one of the people to stand up and say you got to do something about this. And so we tried to do it in a responsible way, you know, we had, we went and met with mill management, took tours of the mill, and studied the issue, we joined with national organizations that were working on it. I made I don't know how many trips to Washington, and, but inevitably there had to be hearings on establishing a limit on their permit on dioxin. DHEC didn't even know they were putting out dioxin, so their permit didn't even say anything about it. So we had to go, we didn't even have a standard for it in South Carolina so we had to go through hearings to establish a standard, then we had to go through hearings on establishing what a permit limit would be at International Paper. So, those hearings, you know, the paper company wanted, they don't have to have to do, spend any more money than they have to on the problem. Um, we wanted to clean them up. There are people scared that we are going to them shut down um, and so that's what generated those hearings. The steel mill we had some hearings because, well there were basically two things. At one time they thought they wanted to expand the production at the steel mill, so they applied for a new air quality permit to expand it. And it happened to be right at a time that we were being pushed by a lot of people who had recently moved to town to do something about the air pollution from the steel mill. And it seemed to make sense that if there were going to increase production, they were going to increase their air pollution. And so we had to have some hearings about that. And same dynamics at play. Um, the mill wants to increase their production, they don't want to spend a lot of money on environmental protection. The union is afraid they're going to lose jobs, ah, the neighbors are tired of screen...cleaning this orange dust off their houses. And so it um, it had a tendency to get

um, pretty heated, although the groups I work with, we tried to keep it as calm as we could.

AM: What other um, other projects have you worked on as far as conservation? Did you work on the Sandy Island conservation project any?

JC: Only to a minor extent. That was going on. There's another organization very similar to mine that has offices up in North Carolina, and they are also in Virginia, Atlanta, called Southern Environmental Law Center. And they came in and they were interested in Sandy Island, and they did most of the legal work involved. It was in that case around the fringes and they used some of the um, case law, decisions that had been made of some of the cases that I had handles earlier to build their arguments in that case. But um, I was, I can't claim any credit for what happened on Sandy Island.

AM: Ok.

JC: So um, the original thing that I got involved in Georgetown was a proposal to build an oil refinery. And it was going to be out near the paper mill, on the other side, the south side of the river. And that was back right after I got out of law school. I thought that was a terrible idea. I had seen what happened with the steel mill. I started coming to meetings, uh, taking a position that they should not build an oil refinery here. Most people in Georgetown wanted it; they thought it was going to bring more jobs. The newspaper here wanted it and I had people tell me that I could never come back to Georgetown after speaking out against this because I was going to have so many enemies. I worked on that for about six years. We finally...the refinery went away, never got built. And it turned out it was safe for me to move back here so...but that was a wild time. The lawyer on the...that represented the refinery was my father's lawyer. And when he found out that I was working against that refinery he called me up one night and asked me if I had lost my mind.

AM and KS laugh. AM: Small town.

JC: Yeah. And so, it was a very interesting time. My father ended up being on our side and was a big supporter on that issue. But at first, he was a little worried.

AM: What do you think it is, or was, about growing up in Georgetown that may have influenced your career, or you know, appreciation for the environment? Do you have any childhood memories of you know the area, the landscape...

JC: All of the earliest memories I have of, of ah...most of them are about being out on the water. I had an uncle who grew up in this house, who built his own boats, made his own castnets, um and you'd come to his house and there'd be boats and motors scattered all over the backyard. And so, he would take us out to all of the places like North Inlet that are not easy to get to. And growing up we spent a lot of time at Pawley's Island. And my mother would get us out in the plough mud, taught us how to catch crab, how to row a boat. So we spent a lot of time doing that kind of stuff. And then when I was in

high school, I was in the Boy Scouts and we went camping. Um, then bought a boat and went waterskiing all the time.

AM: So do you think growing up here influenced your career decision, or you know, your direction in law?

JC: Yeah, it really was never really a conscious decision. Well, obviously I had to make a conscious decision to take certain cases and to get involved in these things, but I never set out to become an environmental lawyer. I never knew exactly what I wanted to do. And it just kind of drifted that way and fell into place. When I got out of, I majored in Business Administration and Economics and I really didn't know what I was going to do. I thought, my father was a car dealer, I figured I might be a car dealer. But I was just lucky it worked out the way it did.

KS: Do you think a lot of people have the same kind of appreciation around here?

JC: Yep, we have a lot of supporters in this community. There, there are a lot of people who support us sometimes on some issues and not on other issues. There are a lot of people who think we're a bunch of radical crazies. And, I've kind of gotten used to that. And uh, I was at a meeting last night down in Charleston that brought together organizations like mine, the Coastal Conservation League, Nature Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited. And you know, Ducks Unlimited is basically an environmental organization but they're a totally different kind of organization than the ones I do. They're much more conservative, and um, you know they give me a feeling that while we're all sort of on the same side they consider me a sort of the radical end of even the environmental movement. Because in litigation you have to take such, you have to take strong positions and it gives you an image that may or may not be true. You can't go in and be wishy-washy when you're in court. You have to stand up and take a strong position.

AM: Do you feel that you know the majority, I guess, of the residents understand the, or realize the value of this area, the importance of preserving it? Or is there a conflict with development and tourism, I mean wanting that sort of industry, economy?

JC: I don't know exactly how the numbers break down. There are, you know the head of the steel mill's, the steelworkers' union calls us all a bunch of tree huggers. He really isn't for tourism, he wants industrial jobs. And I can't blame him, um because of his perspective. The steel mill pays a whole lot better than jobs for maids and cooks, uh well some of the chefs around here, they make pretty good salaries. The general kind of restaurant and hotel help don't make as much money as steelworkers make. So I understand his perspective. And there are a lot a very conservative people that believe in property rights in the sense that if you own a piece of property you ought to be able to do what you want to with it and not have some environmentalist tell you that you can't fill a wetland or that you can't do this or you can't do that. And I respect that, I grew up here and I understand that. I grew up with that same attitude. I've just realized that things that you do on your property ultimately can affect other people and other people ought to have a say in it when it does.

AM: How do you...sorry I thought you were going to say something...how do you um, do you see Georgetown changing drastically in the next five, ten, twenty years even?

JC: Well, a lot of predictions, and I think that there's a lot of potential for this...there are predictions that both the steel mill and the paper mill are going to be closed over the next five or ten years. And this is basically because of foreign competition. They're building steel mills and paper mills in what we used to call third world countries. The labor's cheaper where their pollution control laws are more relaxed. And it's getting more and more difficult for them to make steel and make paper as cheaply because it can be made in Southeast Asia and South America and other places and so I've been told by some people around here that are in a position to know that this paper mill is not being, they're not doing routine maintenance on it like they should, that it seems to be on a tract to use the rest of that useful economic life in it and then close it down. Most of the property around here that's owned by the paper company's for sale. They don't have signs out on it all the time but if you want to buy some paper mill property you can go and buy some paper mill property. They're not doing like they were before, buying up land to grow timber on. They're not planning for the future that way. The steel mill's in the same, the steel mill has been right on the verge of bankruptcy for a long time. Luckily the steel mill's got a new owner right now, but I have heard things recently that even he's been having some difficult times. The good news in the new owner of the steel mill is that he's somebody who came here and bought a couple of plantation houses here. And his original thought was, "I wish the steel mill would go away." And he thought the steel mill was a blight on the community. He ended up buying it and owns it and is running it now. Um, but the union was scared to death when they heard that Dan Thorne was going to buy the steel mill, they just thought he was going to buy it and shut it down and they were going to be out of work. He just signed a five year union contract so chances are he's going to keep it open for five years. What he will do, I think he will do, that another owner might not have done is that when the steel mill finally gets where it can't make money, he will redevelop that and turn it into something else that will be an asset to the community. Some of the other people who were bidding for the steel mill in bankruptcy, they would have just milked it for what they could have gotten out of it financially and then closed it and walked away. And that would have put the community in a real bad situation. So I think having Dan Thorne owning the steel mill may turn out to be one of the better things that ever happened to this town.

KS: Since we've been down here, I mean we've heard the rumors about maybe closing it, but they also said something about wanting to make it more environmentally friendly? Is that...?

JC: He has said that, he has said that...and I believe that he's sincere in that. Whether he can afford to, uh he's got a lot of money. He's a very, very wealthy man...he paid something like seventy million dollars for the steel mill most of which he put up in cash. He didn't borrow very much of that. But um, if you want to stay rich, you've got to be careful in business and not pump too much money into it that you can't get back out. So, uh, it's not clear to me that he can make it totally clean and benign on that particular site.

You know it's hard to say. If it were just out where the paper mill is...but the problem that you have with the steel mill is that it's right here...that it's right on us. If it were out where the paper mill is then nobody would have much of a problem with it. Um...so I don't know.

AM: So in terms of you know, the rest of the Grand Strand has grown rapidly in the last ten years, and even you know, Litchfield and Pawley's Island. Do you feel that coming this way, or...?

JC: There's no question of it. That's really the biggest change over the last thirty years. In the city of Georgetown the population has been static, it has not gone up since 1970. Up in the Pawley's-Litchfield area the population was about 3000 in 1970. It's about 16,000 or 17,000. And so you've got five times as many people there, you've got an elementary, a middle school, and a high school that were not there when I graduated from high school. And I graduated from high school in 1968 so just before the '70 census. And when I was a kid Debordieu wasn't there. The property that is Litchfield by the Sea, right across from Willbrook Plantation, which is the most densely built area on the neck, that was totally vacant. That was woods and beach and the only that was there was picnic shelters and an old beach cabana that had been built by International Paper. Most of the lots at Litchfield hadn't been built on um, I don't even think Litchfield Country Club had been developed when I graduated from high school. And so, I mean, that's been the most dramatic change. Did you say one of y'all grew up around here?

AM: Ah, I'm from Murrells Inlet, but I haven't grown up here.

JC: Back near the river there's a road called King's River Road. That when I was in high school, when I was in college it was a dirt road, it was a sandy old dirt road that when we um, we get an old car on a Sunday afternoon and got drink beer and ride around, slide around out on that old dirt road and we never had to worry about running into anybody. Now that's a major thoroughfare. And its getting more and more built out and developed.

AM: Well do think that development of this area would be positive for the town, for you know Georgetown, or do you think that we should, you know conserve what we have as far as...I mean, I know that the Baruch area is preserved and the Sandy Island area is not going to be disturbed, but I mean, in essence. But there's stuff around it that would disturb it, I guess.

JC: Yeah. I'm not, I mean, with regard to Waccamaw Neck, you know the area across the river. With the Baruch property, with the Brookgreen Gardens and other places, there's a good bit that is preserved and set aside and will never be developed. Um, it's getting to be a traffic problem, it's getting to be a hurricane evacuation problem. There's a little more development than I would like to see. I don't know what is the maximum that ought to be there. Ah, I wish there were some kind of formula that could figure that out. There are a lot of good things that comes from it. There are good schools up there. There are good restaurants up there. Pawley's Island is still, the island itself is about like

it was when I grew up. So, I really never spend a whole lot of time thinking about whether or not development should happen because its going to. And the main thing that we try to promote is, having people just stop a little bit and think about what they're doing because most of the time the things that they need to do to make the difference between a bad development and one that's relatively good for the environment just means stopping a little bit and thinking a little bit. And usually when they do that, developers end up being more proud of what they've done. Um, the Litchfield Company that did Litchfield by the Sea, Willbrook, a lot of those projects, ah, for about four or five years we were constantly in court fighting over their developments. We were lucky. We won two really major cases against them.

AM: Oh really? What were those like?

JC: One of them was when they were doing, originally started the Willbrook development, they wanted to go in an dredge about two miles of canals through the old rice fields because the property they had was ah. (noise) They're property was back on the river, but very little of it was right on the river. Most of it was separated from the river by the old rice fields, the swamps back there. And they wanted to canals to come in so that they could have...

(tape switch)

JC: (continued) The agencies like Coastal Council, the agency's staff wanted to deny those permits. They had a lot of political connections. They got permits granted, we appealed them, and we won. And so they never got to dredge that canal. While the canal fight was going on they went in a bulldozed a bunch of wetlands. That when we found out about that, we sued them again, and we won that case. And after we won the second case, we got involved in a third case over the development of the very southern tip of Litchfield Beach, which is basically just a long sand bar. And then we settled that case, and about the time that we settled that case, there seemed to be a changed of attitude in that company. And ever since then when they have wanted to do something, they have called me up or called up one of the clients that I work with, and they say, "Let us come show you the plans that we've got, let's talk about it." And when they did the Reserve golf club at Willbrook, we were in on that from the very beginning. And when Greg Norman, the golfer who designed the course. You know, I told them, I said it would make it a lot easier if y'all let us meet Greg Norman. And so, when Greg Norman came down here the first time, we met him and we walked over the property with him. And so for about a year, at least once a month, I would go out to that property and go around that golf course and watch it being built because they were building it around some wetlands. And we were, we had settled, after we won the second law suit it didn't resolve all the issues. It basically said we were entitled to a hearing, and so we settled and they gave us some rights to protect those wetlands. And so we had to negotiate that golf course. And we ended up working that out, we worked out several other things with them. They reduced the densities. Willbrook was originally supposed to be something like 4,600 homes. It's ended up being a little over 2,000. And they have made plenty of money.

They're very happy with what they've done back there. Um, we reached a compromise over their marina.

AC: The river marina?

JC: Yeah, the marina back on the river. You know, it's open to the public and not too many people know it. Everytime I go back there I feel guilty, I feel like it's a little private thing because I never see anybody else there. But um, that's been a better process for them and for us. And some of the other people still do that too, although you know, there's just that big, there's not that much land left for big developments here. Arcadia is the last thing, the tract between Baruch and Pawley's.

AM: That's yet to be developed.

JC: Yeah, and there's a lot of talk about conservation groups buying that up to keep that preserved. So I don't know whether that will happen or not. That's in a different part of the environmental movement than I'm really fully involved in but I understand Ducks Unlimited and some of those groups are looking to try to buy some of that land to keep it undeveloped. So I hope that happens.

AM: Would you say that development is inevitable but if we could, if its possible to keep it as environmentally friendly as possible? Is your goal?

JC: Yeah, I don't think we're going to stop it at all. It's just a matter of trying to keep it under control so that, you know, since my background is business and economics, I look at it in terms of long term value versus short term profits. And you can go in and do a quick and dirty development and make more money up front but the property may not be worth as much in the long run as if you do it carefully and then you really build long term property values. Um, that's one of the reason that Pawley's Island, the houses on Pawley's Island are so in demand and so expensive because the island is very protective. And um, there are very serious limits on what you can do on Pawley's Island.

AM: We talked a little about this week, we are interviewing some residents of Sandy Island on Saturday and we've toured, you know, the Hobcaw Barony and that area. And we've, you know, how are those lands now that they are preserved, how can they be used, you know, best utilized, or best, you know, I guess as educational opportunities or, do you have any thoughts on that? Or ideas?

JC: Um, not totally in terms of use as educational. The way that I, those properties come up an awful lot in conversations with people and they constantly talk about tax base. And collecting taxes and keeping everybody's taxes down and you hear from some people in town saying that you know, the Baruch property of course it doesn't pay any property taxes, Brookgreen Gardens doesn't pay any property taxes, the Yawkey property doesn't pay any property taxes. And they go, and people act like that's this big weight holding down the county because that properties not on the tax books. And I've got a totally different view of that. I think that because that property is there and because it is set aside, it makes every other property in the county worth more. Because people come

down here to put their boats in this bay and go out there because you've got Baruch on one side, you've got Yawkey on the other side and it's a very productive and beautiful area because of those properties. If you developed all that it might be on the tax base but then you'd have to provide services, more police, you'd have more governmental expenses, whether or not it would pay for itself is a big question. And whether or not you'd still be able to have shrimpers and commercial fishermen work that area. Whether it would be as productive for just recreational fishermen is a big question. And so, it's like Brookgreen Gardens. Yeah, it doesn't pay any taxes but how many people does it bring in here that pay for hotel rooms and restaurants and beach houses and um, everything else, and so it is, they provide public benefits that go way beyond what kind of taxes they can pay. And there is the age old dilemma in terms of using it, the more you use it, the more, the less value it has as just preserved property. I'd like to see more public access to it, to those properties in some ways. It's kind of a big conflict in my mind because...

AM: Any public access would have some sort of repercussions.

JC: Yeah, it has impacts. I mean, I get to use the Baruch property on occasion because I am a research associate with the Baruch Institute. So I get to go in the gate sometimes, and I get to go use their boat ramp. And I love doing that. I feel a little guilty about it sometimes that I get to do something that is, pretty doggone special that not everybody else gets to use.

AM: We had talked a little bit about you know, some sort of tourism, developing tourism in a different direction towards environmental tours.

KS: Kind of like the ecotours.

AM: But even that would have repercussions because you would have to provide access to those places.

JC: Yeah, well to a certain extent there's a heck of lot of it already going on. Um, twenty years ago you couldn't find a place around here to rent a canoe or kayak. There are half a dozen of them now. Ah, twenty years ago there were a couple little minor marinas down here, you know, we go this, the marina keeps growing out here by 17. And to the extent that people come down here to get their boats and go out, in a way that's ecotourism. Its not quite what people have in mind when they say developing that but um, you know you've got, millions and millions of dollars worth of boats down there. Not all of them are on the county tax roles, more of them should be, I don't know how people get them registered. But ah, that and the people that come down and rent the canoes and kayaks and just come around here to wander around and soak this place up. Most of the tourism we have here is ecotourism in the broadest kind of sense.

AM: Right, they're here to be in a special place.

JC: Yeah. Not to many of them really get out to see the wild areas. And there are places around here that you can get in a boat and in five minutes you can feel like you're in Africa. Um, and those are the kind of places that when I'm there I don't want to see a bunch of tourists around. And, but I like to take people out there and show it to them, show them the places, so.

AM (to KS): Do you have any more questions?

KS: Not any that can really be answered.

AM: It's a struggle for us.

KS: Like how do you steer away from stuff, like developing, stuff like Broadway at the Beach and stuff like that? But I mean that's not something that anybody can readily answer.

JC: Yeah, the biggest thing that we have going is the threat of legal action. We have not taken on Burroughs and Chapin that did Broadway at the Beach and...

AM: Have they come this way any? I mean, Burroughs and Chapin seems to be pretty content with Myrtle Beach but...

JC: Yeah, I mean I'm convinced that they violated the law at Broadway at the Beach. They dug ditches and they drained wetlands. They did that at the new mall that they're doing. What advantage they have that not every developer has is that they're big enough, they're rich enough that they can hire the lawyers, they can hire the consultants, so that they're dancing, they're just tiptoeing. They go over the line, but not in a way that you can prove it with the kind of clarity that you need. When we go to court, if things are gray we lose. We got, we have to prove our case almost beyond a reasonable doubt, even though that's not supposed to be the standard. It's a conservative state and if we have not proved our case very, very solidly, we lose. And so they have the advantage of every time that they have violated the law, they have done it in a way that to attack it would be enormously expensive and risky. And so, I mean my organization, a lot of people think that developers are scared of us. I don't know that they're scared of us. We um, we get by and we try to do things as efficiently as we can and we've had some success. And we have steered people into doing some things. Just like Willbrook, it's a much, much better development than, I mean, when they were talking about 4,500 units and condos and dredging canals. After they dredged the canal they were going to come back and dredge a marina out of a swamp. They ended up not doing the canal, they ended up doing the marina out of high ground. They lowered their density. A lot of the wetlands they were planning on filling got preserved.

AM: Is that the first time do you think, that a developer has been stopped from doing things like that because I mean, I live in, in Murrells Inlet they dredged in Mount Gilead, those canals. I mean that was years ago, so?

JC: Yeah, that was before the Coastal Zone Management Act.

AM: Right, ok.

JC: And one of these days Mount Gilead is going to come wanting to dredge those canals and that's going to be a battle. You know, Debordieu dredged a bunch of canals before the Coastal Zone Management Act and they came back several years ago with a proposal to dredge those canals and we, we basically stopped them from doing about 90% of what they wanted to do. They got to dredge a little bit, but nowhere near the scope that they wanted to do. And um, they were pretty mad about it. We stopped a, there's a huge development, not a huge development, um, there is a development up in Cherry Grove that we turned around from some bad plans and ended up getting a third of it set aside as a public park couple of years ago because of a case we won. And um, when we won the first Willbrook dredging case, at the same time we had a second dredging case going on at Caledonia, which is now just a golf course.

AM: Near True Blue?

JC: Yeah, it's right next to True Blue, Caledonia. Um, and we stopped a dredging project going on there. There was a third dredging project which was different from the later one out at Debordieu. They wanted to dredge a new section of canal at Debordieu to create some more waterfront property and we stopped that. And so, I think we have had an impact. It takes, you have to hang in there. Um, all of the fights take a lot of time, they take a lot of careful planning. You have try to find the most efficient ways to do it because we just can't match up with the developers in terms of experts, throwing money out at the way they do.

AM: Some pretty good information. Thank you.

JC: Well, thank you.

KS: Thank you so much.

AM: Do you have any questions for us?

JC: What are y'all going to do with this?

KS: Well, that's what comes next.

JC: (laughter)

* End of tape *