

*Schmieder:*

The team talked a lot about sharks. I didn't get caught up, and I tried to damp off all that talk, not only because it was not productive, but it was a binary decision that everybody had to make. If you don't want to go in the water where there may be sharks, you should not go in the water.

And quite a number of people did not. They didn't stay with the project. Out of the original 40 some of them dropped out telling me, "Well, it's pretty sharky out there. I really don't want to do this."

I took the position that I had talked to the fishermen who go out there and they saw a bunch of blue sharks. They saw blue sharks regularly, but never any Great Whites, never, ever any reports of any Great Whites. And those are the only ones we were worried about.

And the reason for this is that they find their food at the southeast Farallon, that's where the elephant seals haul out and there's nothing for them at Cordell Bank.

So we just didn't talk about sharks much. And eventually we did have an encounter or two. There was an El Niño in 1983, the water was warmer and I was hanging on the decompression line and a very large mako shark came zooming. And they are frightening, those fish. They swim so fast, and they appear out of nothingness because your visibility has no transition. It just goes off into fuzzy nothingness.

And suddenly there's a shark coming at you at high speed and then he gets up two feet from you and veers off. It was a bit unnerving. Other than that, we didn't – over the whole time we were there we never saw any Great White sharks on Cordell Bank.