

*Jennifer Stock:* So based on your experiences at Cordell Bank and this general region overall and what you hear now in the media about environmental concerns and ocean conservation concerns, what are your biggest concerns for Cordell Bank in terms of the future?

*Steve Williamson:* I'll go along with Dave Cassotta in saying that I wouldn't like to see any type of oil drilling or exploration out there for that. And as far as divers go, I know there was some concern mentioned earlier about sport divers going out there, and I believe that there could be some legislation passed that has a moratorium on only – with a license or permitted diving only that would eliminate the sport divers, 'cause it is too hazardous. As far as the fishing goes, I believe that we should have some fishing there, with restrictions and regulations. And as far as anything else goes, I think it should be here for the next gazillion years.

*John Walton:* I would be concerned about the big commercial fisheries going out there and gillnetting or doing the seine netting over the reef and taking all the juveniles. One of the amazing things about the bank was the number of juvenile fish. It was like being in a giant aquarium. There were millions of 'em.

And obviously, oil drilling shouldn't be done. There's plenty of places to drill oil, not at Cordell Bank. I don't think it could ever become a sport diving place. It's too difficult to find, too difficult to hit the pinnacle, too deep. Diving's out there only during the fall, during a couple months. I mean, you can't stop people from diving, but I think there should be some restrictions, like Steve said, or special permitting by the sanctuary. It should be protected in that respect.

[35:00]

*Dave Walls:* We've really pretty much covered what I recall.

*Steve Williamson?:* Yeah, I think I would just be restating what was stated by somebody else. Everybody complemented each other really well on the stories and gave some validation, confirmation –

*Dave Cassotta:* We've had a lot of life experience, done a lot of things. You take the five of us here, I mean, we could fill volumes of our life experiences of what we've done, and we've all lived fairly adventurous lives. But for me Cordell Bank was the highlight of it all. And really, it's not just the place; it was the expedition and the people involved, because without people, what's the point? So it was these four guys that I've known all my adult life that we share this experience, the closest thing I would have to a wartime companion or being in a foxhole with somebody in an intense

situation. This was a great deal of adrenaline and excitement, and these are the four most talented and bravest guys I know.

And I often think of some of the things we did, even not at Cordell Bank, some of the dives we made – one dive in particular, Jerry and I were diving on this boat that had gone down. And he went down head first, and the water was black. I mean, the lights wouldn't work. And he went down head first. It was freezing cold, and I thought, "Oh, god, he's brave. I've gotta follow him now."

So I followed him down. He's down there taking pictures. I could see the flashes of his strobe going off before I got there, so he was already there. And in the years I dove with John where we could just look at each other and know "We better get outta here" or "Hey, this is awesome" or whatever experience we were experiencing. And with Steve and Jerry and Dave Walls, it was the same way. And I couldn't have ever dove with such a great group of people. And then the other divers on the expedition, too. I had a great deal of respect for Santilena and Kruse and Sue Estey. I mean, what an incredible woman, the stuff that she did. And so yeah, it was really the highlight of an adventurous life.