

*Schmieder:*

Well, not surprisingly, I corresponded mostly with Nancy Foster, who was the Director of the Sanctuary Programs Division of NOAA, so it was her primary responsibility to manage the projected development of new sanctuaries as the sanctuary system was expanded. So I interacted with her in various ways, and she was the one, I believe, who authorized the financial support for us.

For one reason or another, I would find some excuse to be in Washington at least once a year and I always made it a policy to go and go to visit the people in the office there, so I interacted with a bunch of staff people there whose names I don't have at this moment, but one of them was Nancy Foster. I did not see her as much as I expected to and thought maybe I should, since we were the most important project going on anywhere. You get the sarcasm? But whatever the details were that I didn't see, the project went ahead.

That is, the apparent desire, and supported actual realized desire on the part of NOAA to establish a Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary was there, and to my surprise, NOAA took this seriously enough to give us money to do something. I don't want to call it official, because it wasn't official yet, but we converted from being a sort of a closed group of people who were just exploring and describing with some vague concept that what we were doing was pushing back the frontiers of scientific knowledge into being part of the bureaucracy of the federal government of the United States of America and having just excavated or exhumed all of the records of Edward Cordell, the records being there because Cordell worked for the federal government.

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Suddenly, everything we did, I knew, if this ever happened, would become part of the permanent records of the federal government of the United States of America, would live forever. And so we were no longer explorers, we were part of destiny, part of history. As tiny and unimportant as all of this is, it has those labels on it, and we took that very seriously.

So, I responded as formally and as completely and as well as I could to the request from Nancy Foster and the Sanctuary Programs Division to provide them with whatever information they

wanted and to do it – one of my requirements as a scientist – I am a professional scientist, I know what data means, I know how to collect it, I know how to document it and describe it. All of that skill which I used in my regular research and physics was applicable to all of this and ensured the integrity of the data that we got.