



An Interview with Gerald "Gerry" Gottfried

Gilbert, Arizona

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[00:00:05] **James Wall:** Could you tell me when and where you were born?

[00:00:08] **Gerry Gottfried:** I was born on April 17, 1942, in Astoria, New York, which is part of Greater New York in Queens County.

[00:00:23] **James Wall:** So, from Astoria, New York to here in Arizona and working for the Forest Service, that's quite a journey.

[00:00:31] **Gerry Gottfried:** It's a way of getting out of New York.

[00:00:33] **James Wall:** Growing up in the city, huh? Did you grow up in Astoria your whole life?

[00:00:42] **Gerry Gottfried:** Most of it, yes. We moved to another location when I got to high school, but it was still in Queens. It was in Jackson Heights.

[00:00:54] **James Wall:** And who were your parents? What were their names?

[00:00:56] **Gerry Gottfried:** Victor Gottfried and Beatrice Gottfried.

[00:01:03] **James Wall:** And Victor spelled with a C?

[00:01:05] **Gerry Gottfried:** Yes, V-I-C.

[00:01:07] **James Wall:** And what did Victor do for a living?

[00:01:10] **Gerry Gottfried:** He had several professions, but at the end, he was a marine draftsman or engineer, whatever, working for Rosenblatt and some of the other companies.

[00:01:24] **James Wall:** And Beatrice, was she a homemaker?

[00:01:26] **Gerry Gottfried:** She was a registered nurse.

[00:01:31] **James Wall:** So, what's the opportunities, when growing up in Queens, I know there's a fair amount of green space, but how do you get outdoors in New York City?

[00:01:45] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, I was in the Boy Scouts for quite a few years, and I went to a summer camp at Ten Mile River [New York] for several years, which was in Sullivan County, and in the forests of upstate New York. It's really actually western.

[00:02:07] **James Wall:** So, one of my favorite books is The Power Broker. It's about Bob Moses. I don't know if you remember him. He was the Parks Commissioner of New York.

[00:02:15] **Gerry Gottfried:** Oh, yes. Way back when.

[00:02:17] **James Wall:** Sort of built New York. He built all the bridges and the parks.

[00:02:21] **Gerry Gottfried:** Tappan Zee River Bridge.

[00:02:22] **James Wall:** Yes, exactly.

[00:02:23] **Gerry Gottfried:** Which was a political move.

[00:02:26] **James Wall:** Exactly. Yes, you know. And I was just fascinated by the way that New York was built in these political ways, and certain people were cut out. And he was kind of a larger-than-life figure, I think, for a while. Even took on FDR at one point and got the better of him, which not a lot of people could say. So you were in the Boy Scouts, got outdoors, but had you ever heard of the Forest Service when you were in New York?

[00:03:00] **Gerry Gottfried:** There was an article once, in of all places Reader's Digest, about a young woman who was a lookout for the Forest Service. And that was one of introduced to it. And actually, I was looking for a summer job. I had worked as a gardener's assistant and other exciting things. And so, it was suggested, "Well, why don't you try with the Forest Service? You like to travel and you like the woods." So, I sent out applications all over the West of the United States because I had enough of the East, and, well, that's not really true. And the Plumas National Forest in California, out of Quincy said, "Yes, you can come out here. We got a job for you." So, I went out to Quincy, wherever it was.

[00:03:49] **James Wall:** At the time, you must have thought this might as well be China or the other side of the world.

[00:03:55] **Gerry Gottfried:** My parents had traveled in their younger days, and they were pretty supportive. They said, “Yes, go ahead. And if it doesn't work out, we'll still take you back.”

[00:04:05] **James Wall:** That's a good crop of folks.

[00:04:10] **Gerry Gottfried:** So I went to Greyhound with my duffel bag and came out to—at that time, I could go to Quincy directly on Greyhound, but I don't know if you can still do that—and showed up at the supervisor's office on the appointed day and was assigned to the Boulder Creek Guard Station, working for the engineers as a surveying aid.

[00:04:35] **James Wall:** And what year was this? Do you remember?

[00:04:36] **Gerry Gottfried:** It was 1961.

[00:04:38] **James Wall:** So, you were about nineteen?

[00:04:39] **Gerry Gottfried:** Yes.

[00:04:41] **James Wall:** So, nineteen years old and taking the Greyhound to Quincy, and the next thing you know, you're on the Ranger district?

[00:04:47] **Gerry Gottfried:** Yes. Well, we were assigned to the supervisor's office, to the engineer's group. So, we weren't really district employees, which they told us about.

[00:05:00] **James Wall:** I see. So, were you mechanically minded as a kid and technically minded?

[00:05:07] **Gerry Gottfried:** No, I just learned on the job. I mean, we didn't even have a car until I was in high school, and so I didn't have that chance to tinker with a car.

[00:05:18] **James Wall:** Or take things apart, put them back together. So, what happened? What type of work was that on the first job?

[00:05:26] **Gerry Gottfried:** We were surveying logging roads.

[00:05:32] **James Wall:** You remember your first boss?

- [00:05:37] **Gerry Gottfried:** His last name was Helfenstein.
- [00:05:39] **James Wall:** Helfenstein?
- [00:05:42] **Gerry Gottfried:** He was an engineer, but he was German background.
- [00:05:47] **James Wall:** And that is a very German name. Helfenstein. What type of guy was he?
- [00:05:54] **Gerry Gottfried:** He was a nice guy, real quiet. He was very efficient.
- [00:06:00] **James Wall:** Was he actually German or was he just of German extraction?
- [00:06:03] **Gerry Gottfried:** German extraction. I think he was from Minnesota or somewhere. I'm not sure.
- [00:06:11] **James Wall:** So how long into working your first couple seasonals and things like that? Were you sold on the Forest Service as an outfit?
- [00:06:19] **Gerry Gottfried:** Yes, I was. I kind of enjoyed it. And every now and then, they'd let us go out with say the timber markers, and there was something interesting going on. And it seemed like a nice way of making a living and in a beautiful environment.
- [00:06:39] **James Wall:** So, when it came time to go to college, what were you thinking about where to go and what to do?
- [00:06:46] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, I was thinking of forestry, and so I applied, and I was accepted at Syracuse [New York], which is the state school. But Michigan State offered me a little better deal. And there was some confusion at Syracuse because they thought I wanted to be a wildlife biologist because I had been a – my undergraduate degree was in biology. So, I said, "No, I want to go into forestry." So, Michigan State gave me the opportunity.
- [00:07:19] **James Wall:** So, your undergrad degree was in biology?
- [00:07:22] **Gerry Gottfried:** Biology, right. Straight biology.

- [00:07:24] **James Wall:** And what led you to that?
- [00:07:26] **Gerry Gottfried:** I liked biology. I liked it in high school. I had good teachers, and it seemed much more interesting than some other things. And though I like history, it didn't seem like that was a profession.
- [00:07:41] **James Wall:** Fair enough. Yes. It's a tough one to make a buck at, I'll tell you that. So no idea that you would become a doctor? Even when you were majoring in biology, you had your eye on forestry, is that right?
- [00:07:58] **Gerry Gottfried:** I think my mother would've liked me to be a doctor. And my father would've liked me to be an engineer. And I took the middle course, and they weren't quite sure about that, but it's my life and they supported me.
- [00:08:14] **James Wall:** My parents probably would've liked me to become a different kind of doctor. One that makes a bit more money, probably.
- [00:08:20] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, my mother, being a nurse would've preferred the medical profession.
- [00:08:25] **James Wall:** Exactly. Yes.
- [00:08:27] **Gerry Gottfried:** I put an aside that I have three doctors, MDs, in my family now.
- [00:08:32] **James Wall:** Really? Oh my gosh.
- [00:08:32] **Gerry Gottfried:** My son, one daughter, and my daughter-in-law.
- [00:08:36] **James Wall:** Well, that's quite a record.
- [00:08:39] **Gerry Gottfried:** Yes. Well, the daughter-in-law and the son kind of work it out on their own.
- [00:08:45] **James Wall:** So was Michigan State, was that a graduate school for you?
- [00:08:50] **Gerry Gottfried:** Yes, it was a master's program.

[00:08:54] **James Wall:** A lot of really good foresters went to Michigan State. And so it seems to be a well-regarded program. What was the focus at Michigan State for you when you got to grad school?

[00:09:06] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, I was interested in watershed. But basically, they started me out as a neophyte, taking basic forester classes like mensuration and silviculture and what have you. And then for my graduate level classes, they were more soils and watershed. My major professor was Don White, and he was a soils person, and he kind of geared me into those classes, plus geology. In fact, one of my friends who was a geologist said I should transfer to the other department—I was taking so many geology classes.

[00:09:46] **James Wall:** Well, back at the time, we did a lot of interviews with the wildland hydrologists back in May and the first generation of people, they didn't even have a word hydrology. They called it watershed—

[00:10:01] **Gerry Gottfried:** Yes, watershed management.

[00:10:02] **James Wall:** —management. And those poor guys, they ended up on these districts and it seemed like nobody wanted them there. The -ologists, right? So were you training to become a specific -ologist?

[00:10:16] **Gerry Gottfried:** No, just general watershed management and hydrology.

[00:10:21] **James Wall:** What is it about hydrology that interests you?

[00:10:24] **Gerry Gottfried:** Interested in water. I mean, as you can see, even today, it's a big issue. And I was interested in water and forest relationships.

[00:10:36] **James Wall:** I see. And so when you came out of graduate school, where did you start out?

[00:10:42] **Gerry Gottfried:** I started out, well, I thought I'd continue on for a PhD, but I didn't. So I did the applications everywhere and ended up being assigned to the Tempe lab, which was the Tempe Forest Hydrology Lab [Arizona] at one time.

[00:11:00] **James Wall:** So thrown right into the lab. Did you ever think about what you would've become if you'd have gone for the PhD? Were you thinking going to the academy?

[00:11:11] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, eventually I did get a PhD.

[00:11:13] **James Wall:** Oh, okay.

[00:11:14] **Gerry Gottfried:** From the University of Arizona. I put a plug in there.

[00:11:19] **James Wall:** Great watershed program there.

[00:11:20] **Gerry Gottfried:** And so I thought when I was at the point, I thought, well, I'd work for five years and go back and get a PhD, but it took me more than five years to go back and get a PhD.

[00:11:34] **James Wall:** How long did it take?

[00:11:37] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, I went back in 1980, I guess 1983, 1982. I can look it up if you – but actually, the Forest Service sent me back to get a PhD. It was one of their areas. Let's get more PhDs in the research. So they came to me and said, "We want you to go back for a PhD." And they said, "You can go anywhere in the country." Now I'm going into the complaint section, except ASU, which is where the lab was. Because I had been just transferred to Flagstaff [Arizona] and I was cheating the system. So I said, "Well, I'm not going to go anywhere but the University of Arizona if you won't let me go to ASU." And they agreed to that. I had lots of friends at the University of Arizona, and it was close to home, relatively speaking.

[00:12:35] **James Wall:** So that first year in the lab, how did you find yourself acculturating to that—actually working in the outfit?

[00:12:46] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, I didn't work in the office much. And I got into town and they had a senior technician, Joe Ryan, who kind of took me around Tempe. And we found an apartment which was reasonable, which I took a lease on. But most of my first year was actually spent in the field at Sierra Ancha Experimental Forest [Arizona].

[00:13:09] **James Wall:** And what were your initial responsibility? What was the project that you were trying to work on?

[00:13:14] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, their experimental watersheds up there and a mixed conifer project, which I was assigned to, was gauging three of them for possible future treatments. So I was taken up there, by Bob Embry was a forester on the project.

He said, “Your job is to map these three watersheds and do a timber inventory. Thank you. We’ll see you in the fall.” So they gave me two summer students. And away we went, I think. So we mapped the watersheds and we did the timber inventory, and at the end of the season, the students went back to their homes.

[00:14:09] James Wall: And so would you say you preferred being outdoors to being in the office?

[00:14:14] Gerry Gottfried: It was fun. Yes, I enjoyed being outdoors. Sierra Ancha, I did an article about it for the museum, but it's a camp that dates from the 1930s. And I had a cabin up there and the crew had a cabin, and that's where we stayed. And then the weekends, I would sometimes come into town and clean up and shop and socialize.

[00:14:43] James Wall: Nice. When was that article published?

[00:14:45] Gerry Gottfried: I should have brought a copy. A couple of years ago. It's in the Annals of the Museum.

[00:14:55] James Wall: Yes, I'll have to find it. So it must have been an important stopping waypoint in your career if you were writing about it that many years later.

[00:15:05] Gerry Gottfried: Well, I was lucky that those old timers took lots of pictures, and I found the archive and I wrote my article based on the pictures in the archive, or at least some of them, of course.

[00:15:23] James Wall: And is that camp still operating?

[00:15:25] Gerry Gottfried: It's still there. It is being used by, I think, a technician. Well, he's not a technician anymore. The guy's professional. When we worked in that area, and occasionally university people use it too. In fact, for a while, it was run by Arizona State University has a field station. But even though it's less, they tore down some of the buildings. But it's a pretty place. And my wife will tell you, we used to go up there in the summers with three kids and a dog and spent part of the summers there.

[00:16:06] James Wall: When was the last time you got back there?

[00:16:09] Gerry Gottfried: Well, I've been up there occasionally because they did some prescribed burning and there were some other issues. Because the fellow took over as project leader for the watershed would ask me, “You want to come up to Sierra Ancha

with me and show me around?” And I said, “Okay, sure.” And we actually found some, I don’t know if they were archeological or civil engineer, CCC structures after the fire that had never knew were there. I still don't know which way they date. We had Scott Wood up there. He would've found.

[00:16:50] **James Wall:** Oh yes, we interviewed Scott yesterday. He's a really interesting guy.

[00:16:54] **Gerry Gottfried:** He is a good resource.

[00:16:55] **James Wall:** Yes, he's very committed to the Tonto [Arizona] and to the archeology in general. So remind me, what year was this that you started out at the camp and working for the lab?

[00:17:09] **Gerry Gottfried:** 1966. And then following that.

[00:17:19] **James Wall:** And you can keep those on your lap. We're only from back here up. Watershed in general, we were talking about. I know research is its own silo of sorts within the outfit, but how were hydrologists and watershed people and the - ologists as they call them, did you feel welcomed by the folks in the outfit when you would go to visit people that were NFS and on these forests?

[00:17:53] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, in the early days, the water was still a very important item, and I never had any problems as a hydrologist because officially, I was listed as a research forester.

[00:18:08] **James Wall:** Oh, that's right. They didn't even have the 13-15 until maybe the late 1960s, right?

[00:18:14] **Gerry Gottfried:** Yes. So everywhere, this is my day. So I'm actually listed as a research forester up to the end.

[00:18:28] **James Wall:** Is that right?

[00:18:29] **Gerry Gottfried:** Yep. Because though my degree at the U of A was in watershed management, I was back to being a research forester. Okay.

[00:18:38] **James Wall:** Why not? I guess you can climb just as much in that. And you don't have the title. One hydrologist I interviewed once said he worked on – the first forest he worked on, and the forest supervisor would always do these “show me” trips

and they would bring people onto the forest. And he'd introduce everybody but him, and he would finally say, "Oh, right, he's a hydrologist or something. We've got one of those I guess. That's him." And it was just little things like that that people kind of remember.

[00:19:16] **Gerry Gottfried:** But in the early days, we were working very closely with Salt River Project which manages –.

[00:19:21] **James Wall:** Could you describe that for the people at home? What's the Salt River Project? What was that?

[00:19:26] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, they were interested in the watershed studies, and in fact, they supplied us with a tractor when we needed one, and they helped with the financing, some of the financing, because that's still an issue. And they were very supportive. Can I get on my soapbox now?

[00:19:48] **James Wall:** Absolutely. Yes. Go ahead.

[00:19:50] **Gerry Gottfried:** Because the new generation at Salt River Project doesn't even know about us, which I think is a failure of our leadership. Because –.

[00:19:59] **James Wall:** Yes, fire away.

[00:20:00] **Gerry Gottfried:** I was at a meeting and this woman representing Salt River Project got up there and showed a picture of Beaver Creek Watershed 12, which is up underneath the rim and said, "This is what the Forest Service wants to do." And Watershed 12 was a clear cut. And it was a clear cut to show what's the maximum water yield that could be achieved by removing the forest. It was a scientific purpose for it. It wasn't just "Let's go out and cut some trees." And she said, "This is what the Forest Service wants." And I said, "No, all the literature says this was an experiment. It is not to be used as a management practice." But she was so into her thing that she didn't pay attention to me. But I did get my two bits in on that because it was really a gross misinformation.

[00:20:48] **James Wall:** That she doesn't understand what science is—

[00:20:52] **Gerry Gottfried:** Right. Or even what we were doing. In fact, a lot of the research that was done by our group, I mean, we had several hydrologists and statisticians and range managers and what have you in our group. But we did this work and we did it very conscientiously on watersheds, which take a while to gauge and prepare for treatment. And we published everything. But sometimes we published in

Forest Service publications, which unfortunately not many people read. So then when the new generation at Salt River Project came on, they didn't know about us. In fact, they were ready to support research similar to what we had done at NAU [Northern Arizona University] because we needed this stuff. And actually, one person came to us and said, "Well, how come you guys never studied watershed?" And I said, "The whole reason we had that lab at ASU was to study watersheds." And that body of information is essentially in the libraries. I can go to the library that ASU stored all of our stuff out at the campus in West Phoenix, I can go out there and find publication.

I had to look for a publication. I went out there and there it was. But who else is looking for that? The guy who was the curator, he was happy to see me. "Oh yes, come on. Go at it. Xerox is over here. Have fun"

[00:22:27] **James Wall:** So they didn't do their due diligence to find the paper trail that you had already done a lot of studies that they were thinking of doing.

[00:22:36] **Gerry Gottfried:** Right. Well, not me, but everybody, the whole team. We had done all this work and the people who were supposed to be our clients weren't paying attention. Well, the project actually included work in the Chaparral and a little bit in PJ, not much. And mostly we were in mixed conifer, which is the highest elevation forest through most of the country. We didn't work on the peaks. So we were all over the place and we had pretty competent people, I think, working on it.

[00:23:15] **James Wall:** So at the time, what was the state of just the water systems and water supplies on the forest? In Arizona in general now, of course, everybody knows there's a big looming crisis happening here in Arizona, but were people talking about that then?

[00:23:35] **Gerry Gottfried:** Not as much. It was not critical—we got to do something now. But some of the information we gathered over these years could be helpful in some of their planning because no one talks about the effects of all these fires on watersheds. It's just it happens.

[00:23:55] **James Wall:** And what is the effect when you're having more fires and things like that? What does that do to the watershed?

[00:24:01] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, if you destroy the vegetation, it increases the runoff.

[00:24:10] **James Wall:** I know there were several floods over the years on Tonto and on other national forests and in Arizona. How did that factor into your research in terms of –?

[00:24:19] **Gerry Gottfried:** That was Mother Nature. That was one of the high snow years, and they had to do releases from Roosevelt and the other dams. When it gets to a certain point, Mother Nature controls everything. So like the floods in, I guess, the 1970s or whatever, they were all beyond our control.

[00:24:40] **James Wall:** Yes, that's a battle you can't win.

[00:24:42] **Gerry Gottfried:** Right. Just stand back and get out of the way.

[00:24:45] **James Wall:** Exactly. Mother Nature's undefeated. So from the initial posting that you had at the lab, how did you work your way up and around in the unit?

[00:24:58] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, I stayed in the lab and I got a bunch of—I was promoted along the way. And I just—

[00:25:02] **James Wall:** I see. What was the next step up?

[00:25:05] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, I started as a seven and went to a nine, and then whatever, eleven and then twelve, and then I made thirteen along the way. Then they transferred me to Flagstaff. Someone in Fort Collins [Colorado] or Washington [DC] decided that our work wasn't that vital, at least the forestry part of it, so they transferred me to Flagstaff to be on the Woodland project up there, just to work on pinyon-juniper issues. And I always wondered about that. It wasn't political. So I went up to Flagstaff. My wife stayed here with the three children and the dog. And I commuted. I got a place in Flagstaff.

[00:25:55] **James Wall:** Really?

[00:25:55] **Gerry Gottfried:** And so Monday morning, I loaded my good old Ford with ice chest full of food and drove up the hill. And then on Friday afternoon, I take off a little earlier and come down the weekend.

[00:26:15] **James Wall:** How long of a drive is that? I'm not familiar with it.

[00:26:17] **Gerry Gottfried:** It's about 150 miles or so. And we were talking about travel. It's not so bad. Well, they say now with the number of tourists, but it wasn't bad

until the winter came. And I shouldn't admit it, but I lost the car on 17 [Interstate 17-Arizona].

[00:26:36] **James Wall:** Did you slide off the road?

[00:26:39] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, I made the mistake of trying to go around a snowplow and lost it. So I hit the snowplow. Snowplow was a lot bigger than my old Ford. And so they haul me back to Flagstaff. Luckily, one of the other people who was commuting, Steve Sackett, who was on the fire project, was coming home. He lived in the valley too, so he gave me a lift home, so I got home.

[00:27:04] **James Wall:** I interviewed somebody who had worked in Alaska. And then from Alaska, he got transferred to Flagstaff. And he said that the winners in Flagstaff were worse than the winters in Alaska.

[00:27:16] **Gerry Gottfried:** Could be. Well, that, but—I've been to Alaska, but never in the winter.

[00:27:29] **James Wall:** Because Flagstaff, Flag's at like 7,000 feet, right? It's pretty high up.

[00:27:33] **Gerry Gottfried:** Yes. And it gets pretty good snow. I mean, this winter you can see the pictures in the newspaper. So the problem was navigating I-17 in these conditions. Eventually, it got to the point where say, "I can take off. I have enough annual leave. I'm taking off today. And wait for the roads to stabilize.

[00:27:56] **James Wall:** Get out of there while you can.

[00:27:58] **Gerry Gottfried:** And then with my replacement vehicle, I loaded about a hundred pounds of sand in the backseat, I mean, on the floorboards, so it gave me a little extra.

[00:28:10] **James Wall:** Did you have a four-wheel drive?

[00:28:11] **Gerry Gottfried:** No. Never had a four-wheel drive. I actually did have a four-wheel drive, but not at that time.

[00:28:17] **James Wall:** Did the Forest Service give you any kind of commuting stipend or gas money?

[00:28:22] **Gerry Gottfried:** Nope. They said, “Flagstaff is your location.”

[00:28:25] **James Wall:** Deal with it.

[00:28:26] **Gerry Gottfried:** Right. Good old—they did allow me to live at Fort Valley. I don't know if you—that's the experimental forest that's just outside of Flagstaff. And then someone complained, I never knew who, that I was getting a good deal because I was paying a minimal for the quarters there. I mean, it was actually the second floor of a building, but it was warm and had a refrigerator. And so I enjoyed it. But then they complained, so I had to move into town.

[00:28:57] **James Wall:** Did you have a TV or anything in that?

[00:28:58] **Gerry Gottfried:** No. I had a radio but.

[00:29:01] **James Wall:** So what would you do after work? You just —.

[00:29:03] **Gerry Gottfried:** I read a lot.

[00:29:04] **James Wall:** I'm sure you had to get a lot of reading done. There's nothing else to do. Did you have a phone?

[00:29:09] **Gerry Gottfried:** There was a phone in the building, so I could go down and call my wife on the phone there.

[00:29:16] **James Wall:** Well, that sounds like not necessarily the ideal of having to commute that far and having to be away from your family. Was that kind of a tough time?

[00:29:28] **Gerry Gottfried:** It was, but the kids were getting into high school and friends and all that other social activities. And my wife didn't like the idea of living in Flagstaff. We went up and checked around and said, “I'm not going to live here.” So I had the choice. I could quit and look for a job. There's not a big demand for foresters in the Phoenix metro. And I did inquire in fact, one of your interviewees, and he said, “No, we don't have any place for you.” And so I said, “Well, I get a decent salary here, so I think rather than be unemployed, I'm going to take the job in Flagstaff.”

[00:30:10] **James Wall:** Fair enough. So how long did that situation go on?

[00:30:13] **Gerry Gottfried:** Nine years.

[00:30:14] **James Wall:** Nine years?

[00:30:15] **Gerry Gottfried:** Yes. But then in that time, I got this year and a half in U of A, so I was closer to home. And there's no snow.

[00:30:28] **James Wall:** Yes. Still, that's a long time to be commuting that far. You must have put quite a few miles on the car.

[00:30:35] **Gerry Gottfried:** I did. Actually, I was tooling along and finally the car gave out at Casa Grande. It blew the gasket. There was oil coming all over the place. I was on my way to Tucson. I said, "I don't think I'm going to make it." So the guy at the gas station said, "Well, if you drive slowly, it won't really affect you." So I drove slowly and went to the dealership to look for another car. And after my experiences, well, I had another car in between, but that's someone else took care of. Crashed into me and it was totaled. So we went out looking for cars and my wife says, "Let's get one of these big SUVs. You'll be protected." So I got an Explorer.

[00:31:23] **James Wall:** You've done some driving in your time. So you said you spent a year, a year and a half at U of A?

[00:31:30] **Gerry Gottfried:** About that? So I actually was working with a fellow who had been corroborating with, Pete Ffolliott, and so he actually—I was supposed to go to another professor as a student, but he said, "What? That's silly. Come and work with me." So I've been working with him anyway, so I said, "Okay."

[00:31:52] **James Wall:** So was that a breath of fresh air to be at U of A again?

[00:31:57] **Gerry Gottfried:** Yes. I enjoyed the academic environment. In fact, they would've said, "Do you want another semester?" I would've said yes. But they said, my boss at the time, Frank Ronco said, "Nope, you're coming back here." So I came back here. I'm a very obedient employee.

[00:32:15] **James Wall:** Well, that helps in the Forest Service.

[00:32:18] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, I was lacking six credits, so Pete said I could do it with special problems. So I wrote some pressing problems, sent them to him and got an A on each of them.

[00:32:32] **James Wall:** Was that around the time that you went back to grad school for your PhD? When did –?

[00:32:39] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, I got my master's at Michigan State, and that's when I went to get my degree. And then finally, I wrote up one of the studies we were working on, the Thomas Creek study, and it was accepted, kind of a private, it was accepted. And then I graduated in 1989 with a PhD.

[00:32:59] **James Wall:** So that was your dissertation, was the Thompson Creek?

[00:33:02] **Gerry Gottfried:** Thomas.

[00:33:03] **James Wall:** Or Thomas Creek. Pardon. And what was that?

[00:33:05] **Gerry Gottfried:** It was two watersheds again, I'm very locked in on that. We were trying a treatment, silver cultural treatment, which fit to the stand conditions. So some areas, we didn't cut, and some, we used a selection, and some, we did patch clear cutting. And we measured the water in that and all the other factors and came out that this treatment produced a significant increase in water yield.

[00:33:37] **James Wall:** I see. And so was this sort of a new intervention or were other people doing studies like this in different programs?

[00:33:48] **Gerry Gottfried:** I think Trundle and his group up in Colorado may have been doing something similar, but in the Spruce Forest. So this was for the mixed conifer. It was a new effort.

[00:34:03] **James Wall:** How did it feel when you finally got to the end of the academic line when you got your terminal degree?

[00:34:11] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, I accomplished something, and the family was proud. And I never call myself doctor, but according to my kids, the only true doctors are MDs. But okay, we'll tolerate you. They don't give me a hard time.

[00:34:31] **James Wall:** Yes. Whenever somebody introduces me as doctor, well, I always say, "Yes, if there's a medical emergency, you should still call 911."

[00:34:40] **Gerry Gottfried:** It was a goal. And my mother was very proud. She even came out for graduation.

[00:34:46] **James Wall:** I'll bet. Really?

[00:34:49] **Gerry Gottfried:** Yes. From New York.

[00:34:51] **James Wall:** You said that was around 1983 or so?

[00:34:54] **Gerry Gottfried:** Yes, well, the degree was in 1989 because I had to write it up and do the analysis and stuff like that. In fact, I was the only one doing the analysis on that, so they were happy to put a conclusion to that study.

[00:35:08] **James Wall:** They were happy to shuffle, yes. Get that done.

[00:35:10] **Gerry Gottfried:** Yes. "Hey, thanks. Now we can justify all the money we put in there."

[00:35:14] **James Wall:** And you said after you got the PhD, this was when they gave you the, you can go anywhere you want except for –?

[00:35:23] **Gerry Gottfried:** No, that's before I went to –.

[00:35:24] **James Wall:** Oh, that was before that. When you got the PhD, did that open more up for you?

[00:35:27] **Gerry Gottfried:** No, I went back to Flagstaff working with PJ, had a crew up there at John Yazzie and Henry Sanchez, and we did our work.

[00:35:40] **James Wall:** So you just went right back into the same project?

[00:35:42] **Gerry Gottfried:** Yes, we had no special parties of [unclear][00:35:48].

[00:35:48] **James Wall:** So Flagstaff must have had some interesting sort of watershed issues and things like that because you get from year to year, different snow packs and snow melts and runoffs and things like that. What was it about the forests up there that you were working on?

[00:36:07] **Gerry Gottfried:** Before I went up there, it was a lab in Flagstaff, and they were doing watershed management in the ponderosa pine type. So this Watershed 12, which I criticized the young lady from SRP, was part of that treatment. They had, I'm not sure twelve or seventeen watersheds where they were doing different types of prescriptions. So they were working on watersheds, and I was not doing watershed

management. For that forestry part, I was doing silvaculture and ecology of pinyon-juniper woodlands. So why I think it was political because one time, the director talked to the regional forester. He said, "What should we study?" And he came off on top of his head, "Do PJ." So that's I think how we got into PJ. Because they were very ignorant about that. And actually, people are pretty ignorant except for the people who have to work with PJ. And we worked with the BIA [Bureau of Indian Affairs] and for Pueblos on PJ problems along the way. And so they were interested in PJ. And we also were asked to work on the Durango [Dolores] district [unclear] [00:37:34] in with mastication treatments.

[00:37:36] **James Wall:** So for the average non-dendrologist, can you describe pinyon and juniper? PJ is what you're calling them, right? That's how they abbreviate it. Pinyon and juniper trees. What type of trees are they, and what are the kind of problems that you're tackling?

[00:37:55] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, they're smaller trees for one thing. They're in the dryer area. The pinyon is very valuable because it's a nut producer, which the indigenous people harvest for meal and ceremonial purposes. The junipers are just hanging around there, but there are a lot of them. And they're important for some wildlife species, but they're just part of the mix of dry land trees. And in fact, some of the areas that burned up by Heber [Arizona] are converting slowly to juniper stands because this, well, some of them sprout, so they've come back pretty rapidly after the fires. And you wonder, are they going to be proactive and try to reintroduce ponderosa pine in these areas or are they just going to let succession move along?

[00:38:51] **James Wall:** I see.

[00:38:55] **Gerry Gottfried:** The pinyon is particularly important. In fact, there's people who used to collect pinyon nuts in Arizona and New Mexico and send them back East for the candy manufacturing. I think now a lot of the pine nuts are coming from China.

[00:39:17] **James Wall:** Really?

[00:39:19] **Gerry Gottfried:** Because they have a similar tree there.

[00:39:22] **James Wall:** I didn't know that.

[00:39:26] **Gerry Gottfried:** Maybe they'll cut off the pinyon nuts supply if we complain about their support of Putin.

[00:39:37] **James Wall:** So how do the PJ trees, how do they behave with fire? Do they light up like a candle or are they a little bit more resistant?

[00:39:46] **Gerry Gottfried:** Depends on the fire. If it's just a kind of ground fire, I've seen them ignite, and then the fire goes out in the junipers. Pinyon, I think, is less survivable than the junipers. But I've seen junipers survive fire on prescribed burns. And I know that they will spread. Some, depending on the species, will sprout, so they're coming back no matter what you do.

[00:40:15] **James Wall:** So the juniper, you said, they just stand there most of [].

[00:40:20] **Gerry Gottfried:** They stay in the area and as they –.

[00:40:20] **James Wall:** So it's not a timber tree.

[00:40:23] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, the thing is they are used for firewood. So people who cut for firewood for the Phoenix metro area and from the Flagstaff will cut in the pinyon-juniper under permit.

[00:40:36] **James Wall:** I see. So did you feel like you were doing the work that you had trained to do when you're working with the PJs and the silviculture?

[00:40:49] **Gerry Gottfried:** I figured that we have, like you said, a toolkit and we go into the toolkit and adapt to what we need to do. So they wanted PJ, I can give them PJ.

[00:41:02] **James Wall:** So you became a PJ, pinyon-juniper expert, I would say?

[00:41:05] **Gerry Gottfried:** I worked in PJ.

[00:41:07] **James Wall:** So your team that you were surrounded with when you were up there in Flagstaff, what are the different type of folks and specialties that you're working with up there?

[00:41:19] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, I was working basically by myself. But I had the two assistants, as I mentioned, Henry and John. And I couldn't do anything if I didn't have some assistance because I am kind of slow, and these guys, when we did inventories or counts or things like that, these guys would sail along and give me the data.

[00:41:44] **James Wall:** They're doing a lot of number crunching for you.

[00:41:47] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, I did the crunching, but they gave me the data. I mean, we all worked together. But if I had to do all these areas, plots that we had by myself, I'd still be out there, except they probably would've fired me.

[00:42:06] **James Wall:** So who did you report to when you were at Flagstaff?

[00:42:07] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, at the beginning, I reported to Frank Ronco, who was a silvaculturist. And then he retired. And then when they brought in Alison Hill as a project leader, I reported to her.

[00:42:21] **James Wall:** I see. And was she in research?

[00:42:24] **Gerry Gottfried:** Yes. She had worked up through the Washington office and then into Flagstaff—into Fort Collins rather. And then eventually they moved her from an AD slot to the project leader.

[00:42:38] **James Wall:** And did they keep a close eye on you? Did they say, “All right,” like your first boss did, “Okay, we got these PJ trees. You go do whatever you want to do.”

[00:42:50] **Gerry Gottfried:** Basically, well, Frank would work, in the beginning, we worked together, so we'd discuss projects and things. But when Frank retired, it was pretty much – because I needed money, I had to talk to – Bill Block was the one project leader, so I'd have to ask them for money and I have to get a study plan approved. I had to do all the formal things. But very few people ever came out to see what I was doing. And one of the problems, I think, with Block was that because our project was a multi-resource project, we had wildlife people working with us too. And he decided that he didn't want to finance those guys anymore. So he moved them to another area, and that was the end of the wildlife. But I thought we were doing pretty interesting work.

[00:43:45] **James Wall:** And what was your favorite part of that time in that job? What was the best time of doing work? Getting out in the field?

[00:43:54] **Gerry Gottfried:** I liked getting out in the field, and I liked seeing new country. In the PJ issue, we worked with the BIA for tribal lands. And then we were asked to work on with the Durango, with the National Forest, San Juan National Forest on a mastication issue.

[00:44:18] **James Wall:** And what is mastication for the folks at home?

[00:44:21] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, they were trying to eliminate PJ, and they were using heavy equipment to chew up the trees and get them, you know.

[00:44:33] **James Wall:** Why were they trying to get rid of them?

[00:44:34] **Gerry Gottfried:** One of the problems with PJ is there's a lot of good grass there, and livestock interests would like to see grass versus trees.

[00:44:43] **James Wall:** Oh, I see. So were the private industry, private livestock people pushing the Forest Service to get rid of those stands?

[00:44:56] **Gerry Gottfried:** I had no direct contact in that role, with the range of people. But the district had a program of mastication, which has been duplicated for San Carlos Reservation. So they want to know what the effect of it was, at least some of their people did. So they asked us to come up to Durango and set up a study, which we did. And we looked at—Peter Overby looked at the soils—I think his study was more interesting. And I looked at the trees and then we had another contract person looking at the assorted vegetation.

[00:45:42] **James Wall:** So how do you really truly get rid of them? Even if you chew up the trees, like you were saying, with this heavy equipment, how do you keep them from growing back?

[00:45:52] **Gerry Gottfried:** You just continue doing your —.

[00:45:55] **James Wall:** Just saltier?

[00:45:56] **Gerry Gottfried:** Take care of the junipers. Hopefully, you'll have enough time to get your grass to grow and your cows to get fed.

[00:46:06] **James Wall:** It's all about those cows. So take me through the rest of your time there. What happens after Durango and after these studies?

[00:46:18] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, we were doing these things simultaneous with studies in the Flagstaff area, so it wasn't everything tied. It probably would've been more efficient to be tied in with that. But we were actually still working at Cedar Ranch, which

is north of Flagstaff. So it was just a part of the puzzle. We were doing this work and trying to do everything with two technicians and me.

[00:46:51] **James Wall:** Wow, that's a pretty small crew to be doing all that.

[00:46:53] **Gerry Gottfried:** It is. And that was sometimes, I would say that if we would've had decent crews—but no one at that time had decent crews—we probably would've accomplished more. But I was happy to have those two guys. And then Henry decided to retire. And so I was left with John, who was a very good worker. Actually, he was Navajo.

[00:47:23] **James Wall:** It sounds like you had a good working relationship with the tribes up there and the native peoples.

[00:47:28] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, the BIA was the intermediary. So they said, “We're doing this study out here on this mesa, and we have people from research.” And they said, “Well, if they're with you, they're okay.”

[00:47:43] **James Wall:** These tribes, did they have their own sort of foresters and people like that?

[00:47:48] **Gerry Gottfried:** Some of them did. So the Pateah, which was a Zuni, had a forester working for them. I don't know about Acoma—if they had one, I never met him or her. And the Apache one had a forester, but they were tied in mostly with management, not with research.

[00:48:18] **James Wall:** So were there any other projects that you branched out into that were really exciting or anything like that?

[00:48:27] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, all the work was interesting. I mean, even though we had our weather problems and had one issue, it's not important, but with a bear. But it did turn out okay because the bear didn't like me.

[00:48:46] **James Wall:** You encountered a bear when you were out in the field?

[00:48:49] **Gerry Gottfried:** Yes. I encountered a cub, which was even worse.

[00:48:53] **James Wall:** Oh no.

[00:48:54] **Gerry Gottfried:** And it was the last plot on top of the hill, so it was a huff and a puff to get there. And I said, “I don't think I'm going to retreat. I've worked so hard to get here.” And luckily, there were only four trees up there. So I took my measurements, and luckily, the cub ran off barking into the woods that way and away from me. And so I never saw mama, but I knew mama was there.

[00:49:26] **James Wall:** And that's when you really don't want to see bears when there with their cubs because they'll mess you up.

[00:49:33] **Gerry Gottfried:** I've seen, I wouldn't say a lot of bear. I've seen bear on every place I've worked. In fact, we'll go aside again, but I had a summer student who worked at the lab in ASU milking rattlesnakes to get the venom for the—

[00:49:52] **James Wall:** Yes.

[00:49:53] **Gerry Gottfried:** So he was working with me and we were going down this hill, and lo and behold, up the hill comes this bear, a really big, red-faced black bear, but coming up the hill, and we were going down just like that. If you ever saw The Longest Day, they had the German patrol on one side and the British patrol on the other side. And you know who's there, but they're not shooting at each other. They're just, “Go away, go away.” Well, that's how we were with that bear. Just keep going up the hill and we'll go down the hill.

[00:50:31] **James Wall:** Everybody gets along and nobody gets hurt.

[00:50:34] **Gerry Gottfried:** And then his mother back in New Jersey, the student's mother, complained, “What a dangerous place.” And I said, “My goodness, if you're milking rattlesnakes, that's the dangerous place. I'd rather deal with that bear.”

[00:50:47] **James Wall:** Yes, that's an odd job to be. What are you doing? Oh, I'm milking rattlesnakes. So how did you finish up? When did you know that you were getting close to retiring? Was it a year's thing? Was it you'd done all the sort of work that you wanted to do?

[00:51:10] **Gerry Gottfried:** No. They made me retire because they said it cost too much money for John and me. And so I was retired. You will be retired on this date. And that was like the—did I write that down? Anyway. It was like—anyway.

[00:51:38] **James Wall:** So your boss came to you one day and said essentially, “You and John cost too much money, so you're going to be retiring.”

[00:51:47] **Gerry Gottfried:** “You're retiring. You have your years in. You're not going to take a cut.” And John, they kept, but he actually quit soon afterwards. And then they let me go on a volunteer agreement for two years. But I think, bad rotten eggs, but I think my project leader, Alison Hill, had something against me. I don't know what. And I think she initiated it, but actually, I should be fair. I said they offered me a position in Ogden, Utah before they retired me.

[00:52:27] **James Wall:** What was that going to be?

[00:52:29] **Gerry Gottfried:** The assistant director of the Forest Inventory Analysis group.

[00:52:36] **James Wall:** And why'd you turn that one down?

[00:52:37] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, I didn't want to go to Ogden. I've been to Ogden. And my wife and children now, they're already on their ways, but my wife had no desire to go to Ogden.

[00:52:51] **James Wall:** Fair enough.

[00:52:51] **Gerry Gottfried:** She says, “I'm happy here in Tempe. You go to Ogden.” But that's a longer commute than Flagstaff.

[00:52:59] **James Wall:** Yes, that'd be a bit of a hike. You could say that. Yes, that would've been too much.

[00:53:03] **Gerry Gottfried:** But I already had a full retirement.

[00:53:08] **James Wall:** Yes, when you got your years in, your ability to put up with crap gets, I've noticed, very diminished among people who have their years.

[00:53:16] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, I had forty-nine and a half years. And Alison wouldn't even give me the half a year to make it fifty. So my plaque says forty-nine and a half years of Forest Service.

[00:53:27] **James Wall:** Oh, that's so –.

[00:53:29] **Gerry Gottfried:** I even appealed to the director at the time and he said, “Well, that's life.” So I cleaned out my office, moved my data up to Flagstaff and –.

[00:53:44] **James Wall:** And left.

[00:53:44] **Gerry Gottfried:** Left. I have some data I'm working on, but very slowly. I have some of the studies that we had.

[00:53:54] **James Wall:** Forty-nine and a half years is a long time to work for the same company, basically.

[00:54:00] **Gerry Gottfried:** Outfit? Yes, I enjoyed it. I mean, I liked the work. I liked getting out, maybe too much. And I liked working with the data to say, "Eureka." Well, not really, but "Hey, there's something here."

[00:54:15] **James Wall:** Following the paper trail, following the numbers and the data.

[00:54:20] **Gerry Gottfried:** And mostly, I enjoyed working with the people in the lab, in both labs, the Flagstaff lab and in the Tempe lab. So it was a friendly environment, basically. I mean, until Alison came.

[00:54:41] **James Wall:** How do you think the Forest Service treats research? Because I've interviewed some people in research and they would say they would go to conventions or things like that, and they'd say, "Oh, you're research. Oh, okay. You're not a real Forest Service person."

[00:55:01] **Gerry Gottfried:** No, I never got any. In fact, depending on the people at the conference, often, well, people who work in PJ's say, "Oh yes, did you publish that? I'd like to kind of read this." They were kind of positive about the PJ part of it. But actually, I had another assignment. While trying to finish the PJ, I was assigned to the Southwest Borderlands project where Carl Edminster who you'll – and he knows all.

[00:55:33] **James Wall:** And what was that project? Southwest Borderlands project?

[00:55:36] **Gerry Gottfried:** Yes. The ranchers down there were trying to improve management of the lands to sustain them. And they were trying to use fire as a tool. So they managed to convince the Forest Service to get involved, and Carl was a person, and then I was his assistant. So I went down there and I set up a study looking at the mechanical treatments and fire. And then I also set up a study looking at the fire and

watershed issues. And I should say that in addition to John and Henry, I had, Larry [Taus][00:56:26] would work with me occasionally, and he was the lead technician.

[00:56:32] **James Wall:** And what did you find with the fire and watershed study?

[00:56:34] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, we found that, again, Mother Nature wins. We started the study just as we hit 2000 drought and the drought and the drought. And the grass that we seeded didn't—except maybe for one species—didn't do too well under these drought conditions no matter what we did. But that's a negative reply is a negative reply too. So the conclusions were, hey, we can't control the weather. One, we should maybe use a new mix of seeds that is more drought-resistant, or we shouldn't really go into this. And actually, the seed mixes were selected by the NRCS for us because they're the local experts. So we worked closely with the NRCS on that as well as the Malpai Borderlands Group.

[00:57:37] **James Wall:** So were you living down there on the border?

[00:57:41] **Gerry Gottfried:** I would commute.

[00:57:42] **James Wall:** Again?

[00:57:43] **Gerry Gottfried:** Just me, but now they let me use a government truck. And so we'd live in the various motels. We stayed at one motel, which was decent, Motel 6. And then they built a fancy motel and we all moved over there even if it was a little more expensive.

[00:57:59] **James Wall:** The Motel 6 is workmanlike at best, I would say.

[00:58:04] **Gerry Gottfried:** The only time I complained is when I asked for no smoking and I got a smoking room. And I complained and the young lady went and sprayed everywhere so I could tolerate because it was the only room left. And I had ordered it in advance. So we worked with the ranchers. We met with the ranchers periodically. We gave speeches to the ranchers at their—they have a science conference every year—and so we would present at the science conferences. And they were basically supportive of us. I mean, we were working on their land. We weren't working on forest land, except one place where we were working on forest land, but we had to cross private land to get there. And the rancher, being very possessive, didn't like us crossing his land. So we actually had planned a route we could get in there by foot without killing ourselves. But at that time, they just closed the project.

[00:59:02] **James Wall:** Really? So it came down from on high that this is done?

[00:59:09] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, I don't know if it came from on high or from Alison because she never really was supportive of it.

[00:59:17] **James Wall:** What was her objection?

[00:59:19] **Gerry Gottfried:** She never told me. Well, she told me that I was spending too much money, because even though I was a volunteer at the end, I had to say, "Could you give me a few bucks so John and I can go out to this flat or that flat." And she would, but then she got, maybe money got tight or she just got tired of me. She gave me special assignments along the way to run tours of Fort Valley. I did two of those for her. And she gave me an award for one of them. The other one, she'd never found my report until after I retired.

[00:59:50] **James Wall:** Oh man. So what was it like after forty-nine and a half years to essentially not be part of the active Forest Service?

[01:00:04] **Gerry Gottfried:** You adapt like everything else. And so I work around the house. My wife has a beautiful garden. I work there. We have a pool. I do whatever's needed. I took one class at Mesa Community College, which was interesting, and I might take another one in the future, but it was an archeology class and I've always been kind of interested in archeology. And so I enjoyed that class.

[01:00:36] **James Wall:** Yes, retire to something, they always say. And you said you had some data that you were still processing? And what does that deal with?

[01:00:45] **Gerry Gottfried:** It deals with pinyon germination and early growth.

[01:00:52] **James Wall:** So the PJs now up in Flagstaff and around where you were working, what's happened since then? What do they look like now?

[01:01:01] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, some of it burned. And I don't know, they just move. Trees are doing their own thing.

[01:01:11] **James Wall:** Just sitting there, huh?

[01:01:12] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, growing slowly. What was interesting, we found some old plots from the 1930s, and one of them, we were able to inventory and we got a

publication out of that. All the trees were marked, so we knew that Tree X was two feet tall in 1938, and now it's five feet tall. And so we knew that—we got that information.

[01:01:43] **James Wall:** So still getting those publications out. How many publications did you have throughout your career?

[01:01:50] **Gerry Gottfried:** I don't know. I had three recently, but I think about 208.

[01:01:56] **James Wall:** 208? Wow.

[01:01:57] **Gerry Gottfried:** They include government publications and journal articles.

[01:02:02] **James Wall:** Did you have an article where you felt really, really good about it? What was the best journal that you ever published with?

[01:02:13] **Gerry Gottfried:** Journal of Forestry had several articles in that. The article I wrote about Sierra Ancha with Lowell Rich I think was pretty good. And then we had some other studies that should have been turned into journal articles. But my co-authors, because it took so long to get a journal article out, you may have heard of it.

[01:02:32] **James Wall:** I know. Yes.

[01:02:35] **Gerry Gottfried:** And the Forest Service will do it in a month. So my co-authors, several of them will say, “Go to the Forest Service. We'll get it out. Let's move on.”

[01:02:46] **James Wall:** Yes, you don't want to go through the multiple reviews and stuff.

[01:02:48] **Gerry Gottfried:** But actually, as they rate things, the journal articles rate more than the Forest Service articles, no matter how good they are.

[01:02:55] **James Wall:** Yes. Well, precisely because it takes longer and they are more rigorous.

[01:03:01] **Gerry Gottfried:** All publications were reviewed for statistics and subject matter. It wasn't like we were putting out our notes while we were driving. So

they were good studies, but my co-authors were always against publishing them in the journals. They took them in the government publication, of course, took credit for them.

[01:03:30] James Wall: Did you get any – because in academia, you have to publish or perish, and it's essential to getting tenure and promotions and stuff like that. But was there any incentive within research? I know it's almost impossible to get fired from the Forest Service, so there is a tenure of sorts, but did they incentivize you in any way to keep publishing or was that just your own curiosity?

[01:04:00] Gerry Gottfried: That was a job we needed to publish. And I never had anybody come in and say, whack me on their side of the head and say, “You haven't had a publication in the last month.”

[01:04:10] James Wall: Well, you had 208 publications. I would say you were doing all right.

[01:04:13] Gerry Gottfried: Well, these are also called co-authored publications. I'm not claiming all them from me.

[01:04:18] James Wall: How many first author articles?

[01:04:20] Gerry Gottfried: I don't know. I could go look. It's in here, but we don't want do that.

[01:04:27] James Wall: All right. So are there stories that we've missed that you'd like to get on the record?

[01:04:36] Gerry Gottfried: I don't know. I've told you about my bears and working with other agencies was interesting. And I don't know, I enjoyed, frankly everything. There's none that I said “I don't want to go.” I mean besides Flagstaff.

[01:05:02] James Wall: Maybe that. That commute might've been too much.

[01:05:05] Gerry Gottfried: Kind of I did it and I survived, including the wreck of my Ford.

[01:05:13] James Wall: And so your little team got – what became of it? So Alison, you were told to retire because you were too expensive. And then you said shortly after that, John retired too.

[01:05:28] **Gerry Gottfried:** Well, he didn't formally retire. They kept him on. But according to Dan Neary, who I've worked with, John stopped showing up. He had an office, kind of cubby hole where he liked to work and they hired a younger person. And actually, I checked with civil rights because they hired—they said that I could have a case because they hired or transferred in a younger person to take my slot. But I said, “Who needs it?”

[01:06:06] **James Wall:** That's a fight. So the team itself, the work that you were doing, was it carried on by the younger person that they brought on?

[01:06:17] **Gerry Gottfried:** No. Because Dan tried to continue some of the work on the Borderlands with the watersheds. But he's pretty overextended too. I don't know. I don't think you're interviewing him, Dan Neary.

[01:06:32] **James Wall:** Dan Neary? No, I don't think so.

[01:06:34] **Gerry Gottfried:** Anyway, so it never got the attention I requested. We kind of maintained the flumes down there for a while. And I don't know, he was working with a fellow named Jackson Leonard, and I know if Jackson's been involved down there. I know he is been involved with Sierra Ancha. They invited me back, the Borderlands Group, for their science conferences, but I don't know about driving all the way down—four hours down to Douglas.

[01:07:11] **James Wall:** Yes, that's a hike.

[01:07:13] **Gerry Gottfried:** And if I'm not just to sit there, I can get this. Actually, I can eat it on Zoom now.

[01:07:18] **James Wall:** I would say you're making the right call. Well, let's see. So the lightning round of questions is always, did you have a favorite time in your career, when you were having the most fun?

[01:07:30] **Gerry Gottfried:** I always had fun. I mean, some days, sitting under a Douglas Fir while lightning was crackling over my head and rain was falling on my poncho were best—but generally, I liked going out in the woods. I mean, that's why I got in this, moved over from Boy Scouts into this. And I liked working with the crews and trying to get some information. We also did snow surveys, which I also enjoyed either by snowshoe or on this, we worked closely with the ARS with their hydrology team. And so then we got a Ski-Doo ride to our points of interest. So we would take snow readings, and that was always kind of fun.

[01:08:23] James Wall: So you got to do some good work. Was there a favorite mentor or boss early on in your career that put you on the right path?

[01:08:32] Gerry Gottfried: Well, that was a question in your handout. And I don't know if I really had a mentor. I looked in the dictionary because both Bob Embry and Lowell Rich pretty much said, "Go. This is your job." And Bob tried to work with me for a week before the kids showed up, young adults. But that was no real true hold-your-hand and this-is-what-you're-supposed-to-do. My first publication, Lowell, I thought I was a good writer from my life in Michigan State. And he said, "Well, it's an interesting article. I think this is too wordy." And he went through the whole article and it got published, but it was a station note. But we developed a temperature sensor for snow. I don't think anybody ever used it, but we did it.

[01:09:36] James Wall: Was there anybody that came after you or that worked under you, people that you mentored that you were fond of or had a good time with?

[01:09:43] Gerry Gottfried: Well, it was pretty static. I mean, I worked with Larry [Taus][01:09:48] and I worked with Joe Ryan for a time. Joe actually was ex-military. And so if they involved heavy equipment or a rifle, we were shooting cones out of trees. And he was "I'm your man." And Taus was also ex-military, but he was pretty practical and I enjoyed, and he told a good story and so I enjoyed working with him. But Joe was actually pretty helpful. Then we got crossways, but it was nothing new. It was just personalities. But he was very helpful after, in retrospect, he's now passed on.

[01:10:32] James Wall: Do you think the Forest Service changed you in any way from when you started out to when you came out the other end?

[01:10:42] Gerry Gottfried: I don't know. It may have improved my work ethic because I knew I had to finish these jobs in a reasonable time. But I don't know if it really changed the basic me. You'll have to ask my wife.

[01:10:59] James Wall: Well, the last question's always, what does it mean to you, the Forest Service? Why is it important or why is it important in your life? What do you feel when you think about the Forest Service?

[01:11:10] Gerry Gottfried: I feel proud that I've been a member of the Forest Service. And I hope that our information was useful to management, not just management in the Forest Service, but in other entities like the BIA or other districts. I hope we were a service to these people because we weren't doing it just for fun. We were

hoping to get a useful product or products out of it. I think the mission of the Forest Service is sound. I think we have a beautiful resource out there. We need to manage it the best way possible. We need not to do harm. We need to improve it where we can, and that's where we go into the regeneration issues. And I always felt proud to be in the Forest Service. And no one ever gave me any static, except one time we were on a fire at the Wallow Fire on the A-BarS, the biggest fire in Arizona history. And one side of the road said, "Yay, Forest Service. Thank you." The other side, "Forest, go home. Forest Service, go home." So I think our public had different opinions.

[End of Interview]