

INTERVIEW WITH: Charles Wilkinson
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A part of the Southern Utah Oral History Project: Oral histories from people who were involved with the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in the early days – from those who helped with designation of the Monument, to those who were the first to do research on the Monument after it was designated.

MH: It is February 25, 2011; I am in Boulder, Colorado at Colorado State University and visiting with Charles Wilkinson. Thank you for meeting with me. It little bit of background information, may I have you date of birth, place of birth and a little about the family you were born into?

CW: Charles Wilkinson, born in Ann Arbor, Michigan in July 29, 1941. I was born into a family where my father's side of the family was very Southern. He grew up in Atlanta. He was Dean of the NYU medical School. I grew up in New York Suburbs. My mom came from a Michigan family, a land owning family until The Depression, where they lost most of it during The Depression. We lived in Bronxville, both my parents died young. My father died at the age of 47, my mom at the age of 56. I have a brother and a sister. In terms of my own adulthood, everything thing changed for me when I came west to law school. I went to college at Dennison in Ohio, came west to Stanford and ended up through a variety of events and jobs, practicing law at the Native Americans Rights Fund. It was a big moment in my life and changed the way I feel about the law, it has made a deep imprint on me. I went into law teaching in '75 and my two fields are Federal

Public Land Law and Indian Law. I have written a book with John Leschy, Federal Public Land and Resources Law that is used in western law schools and a bunch of eastern ones, and a fair amount of the forestry and natural resource schools.

One reason I got involved in this is that I was writing a book called Fire on the Plateau; Conquest and Endurance in the American West. It is a book about the Colorado Plateau. I was writing that book in 1996 when I first got involved in this...I am sitting in my home office in Boulder in July 1996 and was working on Fire on the Plateau, I wasn't behind on the project but I was working very intensely and fully into it. It was the summer; I was coming off a sabbatical. I love that part of writing books, when I am completely into it, with no distractions at all. John calls up; he is the Solicitor for the Department of the Interior, the top legal officer, old friend and we had worked on things before. Then we have our case work together, and co-authors of Federal Public Land and Resources Law. John said that he was working on a project that fifteen people knew about and if anymore than fifteen got to know about it, and then it wasn't going to happen. I would like you to join this but it just has to be an absolute secret. There are fifteen people in a working group at the White House and in Interior. John knew I was fascinated with the Antiquities Act, and National monuments and I was fascinated by the Escalante Monument that almost happened in the 1930s, which would have been about eight million acres, northeast of where it is now, includes what is part of Canyonlands. So, that didn't happen but it was part of a dream that conservationists had. John say this really grows out of this and will be 1.7 million acres. John said he would like me to be working with the team and perhaps do some of the drafting of the presidential proclamation. The first thing that came into my mind, and I don't usually react this way, but I did this time, was I am red-hot on my book. (laughter). Of course this ended up in the book.

When you keep a secret you are always allowed to tell your spouse. I went into Anne, she was right there. I said, "Anne that was John Leshy." I told her what it was and I said, "I just don't know if I can do this, Fire on the Plateau is blasting along and it is July, and classes start in a month." Anne never reacts this way, never reacts this, never heard her use this phrase in any other situation, she just said, "Charles, have some perspective." (Laughter) I called John right back and said, "You bet."

MH: If I may interrupt, two things, I have interviewed others where the wife has made emphatic comments that have changed the course. Wonderful. The other thing is what was the thesis for the book Fire on the Plateau? Did you include some of the proclamation effort in this book?

(Gets the book and hands it to me) So it is wide range?

CW: This gets into it. This was the bestselling book in Flagstaff for a year and a half. What was the thesis? It wasn't a thesis book, it is general audience book and an attempt to write for intelligent lay people about the Colorado Plateau, its history and stresses and opportunities.

MH: I look forward to reading it and thank you so much. So, you are working on a book, looking towards a new school year and classes and perhaps working with a group in Washington D.C. Is that the set-up?

CW: It wasn't to be full-time, but it was quite a bit of work. It was a working group of fifteen. I remember this is when I met Jayne Belnap. One thing, the boundaries of the Monument at that point, so, in other words they were reasonable deep into it, but frankly there were a lot of inaccuracies. I think Jayne and I and maybe one other person, were the ones who had actually been on the ground out there. They had the Dirty Devil about a hundred miles from where it really it and that sort of thing...

MH: There has always been a problem with the exact location of the Dirty Devil.

CW: That is true, it was the last discovered. So,

MH: So, you had spent time there.

CW: Yes, I had spent a lot of time there over my career there, but in writing the book I made many many trips down there, had interviews with people, took my boys down a lot and they are important in the book. I was going to say, the boundaries, which you may know, the boundary as it was originally drafted of the map, had Escalante inside the park. In other words, the boundary was north of Escalante. If you look at the boundary now, it goes south. I may have been the one who said, you have got to change this, unless you really want to make people mad. It will make them mad anyway.

MH: So, then you anticipated this designation would create conflict?

CW: Absolutely, well you know what the reaction was. If Orrin Hatch had known that this study group was going on that would have been the reaction before the Monument, and there wouldn't be a Monument.

MH: And I know from living there, any kind of "land grab" by the federal government will be fought. There is an inherent distrust for Federal regulation on public lands.

CW: And that is what the book was about.

MH: Pushing back in time, specifically to the Teasdale area and south, where ranchers are forced to pull out of the reclamation going on creating Lake Powell. In their heads, it was, they took my rangeland. Now, this is pre-thirties, the land was overgrazed and yet leased. The ownership part of it is really difficult.

CW: They think they own it. And it is very logical because they had complete use of it.

MH: And it not to be antagonistic, but to point out the reality of what you call your land, a part of a federally regulated system.

CW: And a fairly onerous system. Of course, one difficulty is where the State land in-holdings, four out of every thirty-six townships inside the Monument were owned by the State of Utah. Let me show you. (Opening up a map to demonstrate)

See, it is all the blue. It is very systematic. Each of these is a township, each of the thirty-six squares within it are sections and sections are one mile square, and a township is six miles square. Every section, two, sixteen, all numbered, 2, 16, 32, 36 all belong to Utah and came to Utah as a result of statehood. Here is the thing; it is perfectly legitimate Utah State interest. I think it was the same with Tropic. So, there was a big trade of these state lands as you probably know.

This is a legitimate concern of the states because they are not monument lands in terms of being regulated. But, once you have a monument, and you want to build a road in, instead of building a road across plain old BLM lands to this parcel, you now have to build a road across monument lands that are protected for their beauty and wild character, so it is much harder and more expensive to put a road in. This is what killed the mine, the coal mine near Smoky Mountain. This is one of the big ones and one of the main reasons the Monument was made to block this mine.

MH: Now, this was all surveyed and ready to be leased as a coal mine.

CW: Well, they had the leases, but they did not have access, now it is access across Monument land

MH: Now it has all been bought, sold, traded or consolidated?

CW: There is no longer any blue (state holdings) inside the Monument. The State got coal land further north.

MH: These were interesting as well, near Calf Creek.

CW: I am now on the board of Grand Canyon Trust, we own those parcels.

(Discussion continues about land holdings in Monument region using a map showing the actual boundaries from 1998.)

It was all proposed and now it is real.

CW: I was working from home. I probably went to two meetings in D.C. and probably had five or six conference calls. Which is where I first heard of Jayne.

MH: And speaking with Jayne, she mentioned from a biological/ecological standpoint you had to have three examples of biodiversity, to make it science-lab worthy, to make it cohesive enough.

So, back to it, one of the issues you saw right away was that many of this group had not been on the ground there, but there was the idea, this region needed preservation and that stemmed from the 30s maybe.

CW: I think maybe that is true, it was a straight shot from the original Escalante, even though there is no overlap now; this is south and west of it.

MH: And what some of the issues and challenges you were facing as a group?

CW: It was July 96, it wasn't done until April or May and it was done for the election, so that Clinton would have an environmental credential, (chuckles). First of all, both Babbitt and John Leschy acquitted themselves amazingly well, they were very large consummate professionals. I mean a

number of things. Just as an example, the State in-holdings. Bruce Babbitt really cared that the State of Utah was going to have legitimate objections about this. He wanted that transaction to be done before he left office, that the trade was completed. John Leschy was the one who negotiated it. It was tough negotiating, because a lot of that land had very little financial value and of course Utah is saying, "Well it is worth eight trillion dollars, we want all of Montana in a trade. Also they said, a different issue was they did not want that mine to go ahead. We will go ahead and negotiate with them and see that they are compensated fairly, not for the whole value of the mine, but they would be treated fairly and compensated fairly. I do not know what the final negotiated amount was, but I think they may have got some coal land somewhere else also. It was the Andalex mine. The State has its ownership inside and Andalex had leases, not grazing, but mineral leases, but no access rights. It is a fabulous deposit, but it is two hundred miles from the nearest railhead, so it was going to have to go along the highway through Kanab, these trucks were going to go through every six minutes twenty-four hours a day. I don't think, take Kanab as an example, Kanab said we are for the mine, but I don't think they knew the reality of having those trucks go through twenty-four hours a day.

MH: There are those economic factors, jobs for the communities. We see it today with the Alton and trucks going through Panguitch every six minutes, and what is the economic value for us, someone is going to stop and buy a coke, and not hiring people out of the local communities, that are the reality of those operations.

CW: This came earlier when there was less understanding of that sort of thing. I appreciate you telling me that, that shows how far southern Utah has come.

So, other things, Babbitt wanted to be very cautious about Federal Reserve Water Rights. The President had the power and the proclamation to create water rights as of the day of the

proclamation, but of course we know how little water there is down there and how disrupted it could be. Instead declaring reserve water rights in the proclamation, the proclamation calls for a study of Federal Reserve water rights, similar with the road system, that there would be study to see what roads would be permitted and what road traffic would be permitted. That was a big. Grazing rights continued. There were other mineral leases that eventually the Grand Canyon Trust bought out, that were allowed to continue. Every National Monument, it was 1906 when Teddy Roosevelt was in office and all the early monuments were his, every one had always been a national park. But the Antiquities Act, Babbitt realized, did not require that monuments be administered by the National Park Service. It was true and very perceptive, that the local citizens who weren't going to feel comfortable with this monument, but none the less would be more comfortable if it were a BLM monument, instead of Park Service.

MH: Brilliant.

CW: It was brilliant. I had spent a lot of time with the Antiquities Act and that had never occurred to me. Babbitt is a lawyer, a very smart guy and he figured that out. There were a number of concerns, legitimate concerns about different extractive uses that of course no one appreciated at the time. I imagine now some people say, "Hey, it is really good they made that BLM." Also, Bruce wanted the BLM to have it from two other reasons. One, he felt they had become more conservation oriented and ought to be rewarded for it; they should have a place like this. And second, he thought, the creation here would be an incentive for BLM to press for other monuments. Which also proved to be true.

MH: But, it is a turn in philosophy for BLM, isn't it?

CW: Oh, yes. On the other hand there are wilderness areas in the BLM. But, Babbitt was explicit then, meeting with groups and explaining he had that objective.

MH: Was the BLM in Washington on board with this project?

CW: They were not involved and neither was the National Park Service, which would have raised hell. The Park Service was furious. To them, monuments are Park Service, not BLM. And I speak at Park Service and BLM meetings quite often, and people had fun with me in the Park Service, "We are not sure we can trust you..." (Laughter)

MH: You are conferencing on the phone mostly, what were the D.C. meetings like? Was it a diverse group?

CW: No, not diverse, it was top attorneys from the Justice Department who were going to have to defend this. No one else from the Solicitors Office except John, no one else in the Solicitors Office knew about this. There were people from the White House, there was George Frampton was head of the Wilderness Society, then went into the Administration as Assistant Secretary of Fish, Wildlife and Parks and George was part of this group. Tom Jensen was in the White House, he was there.

MH: Yes, George is not on our interview list. Here take a look at it.

CW: Yes, Louise Liston, I called her for an interview on the book, and she tried to meet with me. It started out with her being excited about me writing a book, then she wasn't that excited once she realized I was from Boulder, Colorado, but she did agree to meet with me. There was a Justice Department attorney who was head of Lands and Natural Resources, Peter...(Last Name?)

MH: As you are meeting, what do you know about your responsibilities with the group?

CW: First of all, you asked what the atmosphere was like. It was an enormously exciting project. Everybody knew how historic it was. You never knew what Clinton was going to do. I am told

two different people, who I can't remember who they are, but they were reliable people, that this is one thing that happened: The whole package went over in August. Then it sat there. Clinton was up in Wyoming to sign a settlement of the New World Mine dispute, which was going to stop this mine from expanding. It was a really big thing, right near a water course; it was a big deal, a big press conference, signing ceremony at Jackson Hole, peaks in the background. So, Chelsea goes up with Hillary and Bill and they stay in somebody's wonderful Jackson Hole house. Think how neat this would be to be the president's daughter. She now is in college at this time. Really, how exciting this would be, things you would see, some you didn't want to see? She is down at the breakfast table; there are a lot of papers lying around. Clinton comes down for breakfast and Chelsea grabs the Monument Proclamation and supporting documents and says, "Dad, what's this?" He says, "That is some National Park out in Nevada or some damn thing, I don't know." She said, "Dad! This is where I went backpacking last quarter and I told you how wonderful it was and you gotta do this!" (Laughter) I haven't talked to Chelsea Clinton about that, but probably did happen and may have something to do with it.

The signing ceremony was one of the great occasions I have ever been at; it was a time, September 1996, when the environmentalists were losing everything on the Plateau. The Utah people were having their way and this changed all of the momentum.

I am at home in Boulder with a major speech to give on Tuesday, and the phone rings and it is Tom Jensen at the White House. Jensen says, "The President wants you and Robert Redford and Terry Tempest Williams to give the warm-up speeches before Gore and Clinton get there. There were ten thousand people descended on the North Rim for this ceremony. "And the President would like you (me) to write his remarks." It was the same thing originally, "I can't do this." It was a Wednesday, 18th or the 28th. So, Jensen says, "The President usually doesn't use speeches,

but he likes to have them, it sort of gets him thinking. And it can't be more than three pages, double spaced, and I want it tomorrow morning." I realize I will be up all night, so I hang up and switch over to that. The phone rings again, about five minutes later and Jensen says, "Oh, I forgot, you have to use the word God in one the first three sentences; it is a rule of all presidential speeches."

The Grand Canyon Trust rented every bus in Northern Arizona and school kids and elders and so on are flooding up to the Grand Canyon. The night before the White House wanted to meet with me and Redford and Terry to make it clear what the rules were going to be. How long our talks should be, like seven and a half minutes as opposed to seven and three quarters of a minute. We are having dinner at the Lodge, and I am thinking to myself, it will be a ridiculous sound system and there are all these people here; people everywhere, everybody was throwing out sleeping bags, sleeping in cars. I said, "What is the sound system going to be like? Is this going to work?" You could see they were almost waiting for this. They said, "Don't worry the Blue Goose will take care of you." Of course, what do I say, "What in the world is the Blue Goose." They laugh and say that the Blue Goose is the Presidential podium that is blue and has the seal out on front and there is the microphone. They said it is the most advance sound system in the world and they don't use local sound systems, they fly the Blue Goose in. The next morning I would see seven 747s arrive at a little airport that can't take that kind of traffic. The first one, the hatch opened and a ramp came down, and I am telling you a good twenty mini vans came out. The whole thing was just incredible. But, that was the next day. They said the Blue Goose will take care of you, if you speak too loudly it will modulate you and if you speak too softly it will lift you up. It was exactly the way it was. It was incredible. I remember one thing so strongly was looking out in the audience and seeing all the Indian people there. They had come in from all the different tribes. That was very moving.

MHL So, let's talk about that for them, what did they see in the proclamation?

CW: I think they came to celebrate something for the land, because nobody knew really. And by the way, Clinton was still wavering on the plane, still wondering if he shouldn't just do a study. Babbitt was with him on the plane. Gore came out ahead. And, boy, the two of them, both had lost weight and they are so vigorous and Clinton gave the greatest god damn speech. He said he came out in his senior year in college to the Grand Canyon and lay on his back and out his arms behind his head and looked at all of this all around and then he said the only words that were from my speech about, about ten words, he said, "I can see the hand of God etched on every canyon wall and sweeping mesa top." (Laughter)

MH: So, some speech writing for the President. Tell me what goes into writing a Proclamation?

CW: One thing that I love, that I have been blessed with is to be asked to be do things that I have never done before. I remember drafting my first federal Statute and my first Federal regulation and I had never done a federal Proclamation before, because for one thing they are always drafted by the Justice Department or Interior Department. All the later ones were, after this Proclamation. We drafted mine and I knew a lot about what presidential proclamations looked like. They all had a lot in common. I am a little embarrassed to tell this story, but I will tell it, I guess.

I decided I was going to write the words that I thought should be written for this monument, and not try and do it exactly in the stylized way it had been done before. By the way, my proposed name for the monument was the Wallace Stegner National Monument. I did my draft, which was really, I think, how it ended up; I don't remember many changes to it.

MH: Here is the Proclamation; it has a number, like all proclamations?

CW: Yes. It sparks great memories. "...has a long and dignified human history; a place where one can see how nature shapes human endeavors in..." What you have to do list objects of historic and scientific interest under the Antiquities Act,..."and its discretion to declare by public proclamation historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures," and those are things that are normal, but and other objects of historic and scientific interests. So, there is a lot of stuff in here that are a new kind of object. This finishes up with, "such diverse objects make the Monument outstanding for purposes of geologic study." That is one science. Then, so you do all these different sciences and history. Cryptobiotic crust; Jayne. "The objects to be protected with the proper care and management of the objects" to be protected, and the idea of "wildness" is mentioned in here, that would be an object. So, that is one thing you had to do was be aware of the Antiquities Act and draft around it.

We went back for the second meeting, I am not even back for three meetings, but this was the last meeting I went back for and this is when they took up, since there are a lot of other things to do by the way. The whole package was very thick, lots of technical stuff. This was the first time the group took up draft, which doesn't look like other Presidential proclamations. John played it very straight. I think John liked it, I know he liked it, but he did not want to be an advocate for it in front of the group. If people were going to say, This is too weird and too different, we can't do it this way," then he would have gone with that, I know he would have. John said, "There are two things we have to do here. First, I have talked with the Secretary. Bryce came in a little bit later that day, and mentioned this, but he said, "Bruce just does not believe that major park units should be named after people who have recently passed away, as much as Wallace Stegner would be a perfect person for this. That will not be the title." Then he said, "What do people think about this draft?" There was a very long silence. This is why the Assistant U.S. Attorney for Land and Natural Resources, Peter...?, he said, "Well I'll go first. I am

the officer who would be defending this monument in court and I would be so proud to be defending these words.”

MH: Ah, I have chill bumps.

CW: I know. It could have gone the other way. A different kind of lawyer could easily said, Well there is way a monument is created and proclamations are written and this is not appropriate. When you look back on the proclamations for Antiquities Act they are much straighter, not as vivid, very dry. The feel of them is different. The people you have mentioned would be part of this. I didn't go back to the Monument until 2006 (or 2002?), ten years later, on a field trip, in the afterword of my book. I was so moved because the Monument staff said they wanted to thank me because the proclamation gave them such a clear mission.

MH: They still feel that way. Nothing like knowing what your job is.

CW: In the old style monument type thing, you don't get that, you get legalese.

MH: What has been great to hear, and I have heard it from many people, is how powerful, how exciting how the Monument designation was, in particular because it opened up some new opportunities, new coalitions, maybe a philosophy shift.

CW: Which has really taken off, with the National Landscape Conservation System. And then they ended up with twenty-two of them.

MH: But Babbitt honed the process after the Grand Staircase was designated.

CW: He did. This was a secret and we are not used to secrets involving issues this big in a democratic society. Those are very serious questions and it is really fair to wonder. I believe in consensus building in natural resource policy. I don't believe in dark of the night actions. I believe, though,

that Utah had no right to complain, because they were in the process of ramming through legislation that would wipe all BLM wilderness possibilities in Utah out. I think Utah was abusing the process to a far greater degree, and they weren't having the kinds of honest concerns about the opposite side they way Babbitt and Leschy did.

MH: Utah is unique in some ways; it has a low population density and the long term residents who use and recreate in Utah are a bit of a different breed; ATV, fishing, hunting. But there have been some changes with a more diverse population using the Wasatch Front, but only small changes in Southern Utah. But there is a mind set. Yet, all the scoping meetings were held in major cities, where many had never even heard of the area, and where I first knew anything about the proposed Monument. So, at the time Utah's intention was to reclaim public lands?

CW: They were trying to reclaim public lands, they were trying to prevent any wilderness or conservation designations, which changed the use of those lands, and they were trying to cut back on the regulation of grazing leases and mining, timber harvest.

MH: Who was in touch with Utah's plan that made secret negotiations necessary?

CW: Everybody had that conclusion, that Utah was really going to be pissed. Jayne and I, Bruce, Leschy probably a few others, knew what you just said about the unusual mindset and understanding that it was sixth, seventh and sometimes eight generation people out there who do believe they own it, and for all practical purposes had ownership. And, frankly we had some sympathy for that, and most of the other people were standard environmentalists who don't have sympathy for that anymore than others had sympathy for environmentalists. I think knew that if Orrin Hatch found out about this it was not going to happen because of that attitude.

MH: So, I am interested in your comment about consensus building, and accomplishing conservation goals through consensus. You have some experience doing that?

CW: I have mediated a number of disputes. I am real interested in the watershed movement around the west, watershed groups. It is possible; we have gotten some real good results. That is what Bruce believes in deeply and so all the other monuments were, instead of this secret process, where Bruce coming in and saying, "We want to accomplish this here", Paria Plateau or Steems Mountain in Oregon. "Now let's talk about how we can do that." Of course, sitting behind hi is reality of the Grand Staircase and he doesn't have to say, "Well, the President made us go ahead and declare it the way he wants to if yo don't want to be involved in this process." He would never say that, but it gave him the bargaining leverage. Every other one was negotiated.

MH: Any president could impose the Antiquities Act, but the best way to do that is bring people in and have it a group effort, and that happened after the Monument.

CW: That is right, not before

MH: Interesting that the Grand Staircase would be the one, but regardless it would be controversial in Utah.

CW: I don't think it could have happened with the idea of "Let's sit down and negotiate this out." Orrin Hatch would just stop the appropriation process or something. He now knows that it is a good thing. He is still talking about trying to repeal it, but he would never do it, it would never let it happen. He knows how valuable it is to Southern Utah, I assume. He is a smart guy.

MH: I always appreciated that the Monument never allowed for development within its boundaries, and the front range of villages provide for its visitors. That became really great for those small

communities as a selling point. But, what does it have to offer Southern Utah, not because it has backpackers going in, or its science opportunities? Was that point discussed?

CW: I could be wrong about that, it is speculation. We don't call it big sky country but it is. I think part of it is its immensity and views and good driving, a lot of its use is this. It is scenic, and it will stay that way. It is not like Arches.

MH: The fact it was assumed the Monument was destined to become a National Park, it is unique.

CW: Park designation is a political statement. Congress can make anything it wants to make a National Park. If a movement were to develop to make it a national park, it might become a national park. It is unique, different than other national parks. It has some things that Canyonlands has. You will like what is in the book about it.

MH: And the idea of linear village along Utah's only All American Road makes it so many visitors view it from a car. And that part of the Monument would be hard to take away because that part is the cultural history. (Discussion continues on the attributes of the Monument)

How long did you spend on this project, several months?

CW: Well, I could say the hours; that is how lawyers calculate time. (laughter) I am going to guess I spent including travel to D.C. and back, probably fifty or sixty hours.

MH: But your specific knowledge and understanding of the Antiquities Act?

CW: Right, and of the Antiquities in Utah. That is what Escalante (proposed in 1930s) would have been, and I was always fascinated by that.

MH: Therefore you accomplished your assignment with the Monument, they asked you to write the language for the proclamation and you did, and it was a beautiful thing. How did you approach the writing of the proclamation. Was it easy?

CW: I did not whip it out, I cared passionately about it. I started in private practice when you would dictate into a dictating machine. Oh my God, I can dictate. I had my assistant in this morning and I can blast stuff out, but since I started writing real books instead of law books, I went back to ink and pen yellow paper. I love the feel of it, I have a different kind of desk at home, but I spent a lot of time writing that (proclamation?) here. I just lay that yellow sheet out and have a cup of coffee at seven thirty in the morning, take my ink pen and lose myself in it and certainly here.

I wrote an essay called *Law, Language and the Eagle Bird* and took the position that law wasn't evocative enough and that the reason it is not is the vested interest don't want emotion and passion in laws. They want it all to be very business-like. "Let's not get excited folks, let's,,,"

I have had a few opportunities to do that, and the proclamation was the best. I wanted the land to be represented the way it really is, instead of writing in abstractions where you don't feel as though you are there, where you don't feel you actually understand what it is.

MH: It is so clear in this proclamation, you can feel it, see it, and you can taste it. It makes it real and Chelsea knew it. At this point in time, how do you think the proclamations directives are being fulfilled? Was it worth it? How do you see it now?

CW: I see it as a great institution. Babbitt came out with twenty-two more monuments. We have the Landscape Conservation System, and as you say, the BLM is a changing agency. The Grand Staircase itself it just exactly what it ought to be, it ought to be loved and revered and respected for its uniqueness, its distinctiveness. I think we are very lucky to have it. My role in it was a

certain role, but Bruce Babbitt's was much larger and more textured and very courageous. He kept at Clinton and wouldn't let it go; this is not just going to be a study.

I was there, I watched him sign it at that little desk that Teddy Roosevelt used, signed right on the edge of the Rim. Clinton signed it and he kind of hung out with people for awhile. It was nice because I did not go over and talk to him, although when I got near I shook hands with him at one point. They were catering it, a lot of good food around, but I heard him go over to one of the guys serving up the food and ask, "You got any ice cream?" And I am sure he wasn't getting much ice cream because he was really thin, god he looked great in great shape, but of course he wasn't really. He and Gore at their best.

MH: Anything else you would like to add about your time working with the Grand Staircase, even in that limited but important capacity.

CW: I have always loved working with John. We still stay in touch. We are both on the Grand Canyon Trust Board. He teaches at Hastings, University of California, San Francisco. You should meet with Leschy. Great moral fiber, by which I mean, there were a whole lot of Solicitor's opinions that people were urging him to overrule as soon as he took office, although the first Bush Administration was better than the second, but they did some late midnight stuff. HE didn't do it. He got around to some it later, but he did believe in respecting the institution and respect the people, meaning other Departments of Interior.

