

Interviewee: Tim Caniff
Interviewer: Tina Bucuvalas
Consultant: Kristin Sweeting
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Transcriber: Kristin Sweeting

Abstract: Tim Caniff's family originally moved from New Jersey to Ft. Lauderdale, then relocated to Bradenton a few years later. Caniff was introduced to fishing and Cortez by friends with whom he fished both recreationally and commercially. After he returned from college, he started as a crew member on boats fishing for mullet or bait. Among his mentors in bait fishing was Blue Fulford, who brought purse seining for bait to Cortez. Caniff has worked in several sectors of the local fishery. The first shrimp boat he worked on was with Gilbert Mora and his sons, who were friends. He also spent time fishing for stone crabs with John Banyas, Junior Taylor, Michael Leary, and others. Caniff sells primarily to Banyas at Cortez Bait and Seafood, but also sells to Karen Bell at AP Bell. In addition to fishing with Banyas for some years, he helped him with building and maintaining boats. Although he hasn't seen any real change in water levels in Cortez, Caniff has observed changes in the underwater environment that he attributes to red tide, increasing population, construction, and run-off. He believes that red tides have become more frequent. Other industry problems include pressures from regulations, recreational fishing, and public misconceptions about commercial fishing. Away from fishing, Caniff pursues some interesting hobbies. He used to raise bees and now cultivates award-winning giant pumpkins

[00:00:00] **Tina Bucuvalas:** Okay. So if you can say your name and, and where you are, and then talk a little bit about where you're from whether you're, you have any family fishing background or growing up fishing or anything like that. And then if you could talk about how you got to Cortez and into the fishing industry.

[00:00:24] **Tim Caniff:** My name is Tim Caniff. We're in Cortez, Florida, historic fishing village of Cortez. Originally born in New Jersey, family moved to Fort Lauderdale to start with, and, we worked our way to Manatee County shortly after, a few years after that. So I've been in Bradenton, Manatee County, for probably close to 50 years.

[00:00:44] **Tim Caniff:** I'm 56 years old. Went to school here. Some of my friends in high school had, you know, were from Cortez, so that's how I kind of, you know, eventually got out to Cortez for the most part, Gene Miller, some of the Mora boys they had gill net and shrimp boats. So that's how I kind of got into fishing, uh, eventually to Cortez.

[00:01:11] **Tina Bucuvalas:** Now when you, so you really kind of grew up near here anyway. It sounds, it sounds like, and so could you talk a little bit more about when you were in high school or when and when you went out with them or was it recreational or helping them out commercially?

[00:01:29] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah, it was a little mix of commercial and recreational.

[00:01:33] **Tim Caniff:** Gene had a little kicker boat. We could go out and catch mullet and, you know, we'd actually sell those, make some money while in high school. The Mora boys their dad actually had two shrimp boats and we would shrimp and catch shrimp and he would eventually sell 'em to the bait stands.

[00:01:48] **Tim Caniff:** It's live shrimp, so that's kind of neat little fishing niches here in Cortez. Gill Nettings been going on for years and years. It's eventually banned in 96, but did some of that over the years as well, previously.

[00:02:08] **Tina Bucuvalas:** So, you know, earlier we were talking and I guess could you talk a little bit more about, sort of, well maybe some of your memories from high school and did you get to take fish home or anything to your family and then, you know, going to college and then eventually. How you ended up in the industry.

[00:02:30] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah, I don't recall bringing so much fish home. So much my family isn't related to anybody here in Cortez.

[00:02:37] **Tim Caniff:** Cortez generally is kind of a close knit, fish and families over the years. I'm kind of unrelated to Cortez, but I've actually been a fishermen here for 30 some years now. That's kind of basically how it, you know, went down so to speak.

[00:02:57] **Tina Bucuvalas:** Right. But, and so you went away to college and got a different degree?

[00:03:00] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah. I eventually went to college, St. Louis College, came back to Bradenton, really couldn't find a good business job, so, wound up getting back out to Cortez and eventually started fishing with some different folks.

[00:03:15] **Tim Caniff:** And, you know, over the years, you know, it's progressed and worked out pretty good. Mainly a captain or a crew, mainly a crew person for different, you know, fishing operations, mullet, bait fishing. Bait fishing's kind of been my bread and butter for 30 years.

[00:03:31] **Tina Bucuvalas:** Could you talk a little bit more about the different kinds of fishing and what are the processes in terms of going out? And earlier we were talking about sort of coming back at night versus offshore fishing and things like that, but can you talk about them a little?

[00:03:53] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah. Cortez, they do have some offshore grouper boats who are gone for a week or two at a time.

[00:03:59] **Tim Caniff:** I've always kinda liked a day trips. You know, back in the day we used to gill net for mullet and mackerel and Pompano. There'd be a day, you know, just a day trip out and back. Again, those are some of the fisheries we did, mullet fishing. Some of the pompano fishing was on the beach. Just different nets, net sizes, you're targeting a particular species, Mackerel, Pompano.

[00:04:20] **Tim Caniff:** So each has a little different mesh size. So, different seasons for that. Bait fishing, I kind of got hooked up with some of the Fulford's, Blue and Larry Fulford. They brought purse seining bait fishery to, Cortez, you know, along with some of the other fishermen. But that was, you know, developed into a pretty good fishery over the years. Still, in that business right now for the most part. But that's...

[00:04:49] **Tina Bucuvalas:** Could you tell us what a purse seine is and how exactly you, you operate it and get the fish in?

[00:04:57] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah. Got a, the nets on the stern of the boat, you actually site fish the bait. You're actually looking for 'em, you don't just let the net out blindly, you're actually see 'em or mark them with your machine. You encircle the fish. You heard the phrase, you pull the purse strings, which kind of pulls the bottom of the net together. Then you reboat the net and kind of the fish get pushed down to the, to one end of the net, which is tied alongside the boat,

and you harden 'em up and then you actually just bail 'em onto the boat with a big scoop net, dip net, so you ice 'em off into the fish hole.

[00:05:32] **Tim Caniff:** Bring 'em back, unload 'em on the dock. They repackage 'em, different boxes, different size boxes, particular, you know, whatever they looking for that particular day. And, you know, freeze 'em. And then they're shipped out for recreational fishing or commercial use as well.

[00:05:49] **Tina Bucuvalas:** And, I've heard the name Blue Fulford. Could you talk a little bit about who he was and why he was an important person to this town?

[00:05:57] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah, he, probably born and raised here. His, one of his fishing families

[00:06:03] **Tina Bucuvalas:** could, could you say the name? Blue Fulford.

[00:06:05] **Tim Caniff:** Blue, yeah. Thomas Blue Fulford.

[Production crew talking]

[00:06:12] **Tim Caniff:** Thomas Blue Fulford. He, longtime fisherman, probably born and raised in Cortez. I think his, probably his father or grandfather was one of the original, you know, founders of Cortez per se. So he's done a lot of, you know, fishing from, you know, day one pretty much.

[00:06:34] **Tim Caniff:** But, he was instrumental in some of the politics, you know, regulations, trying to, you know, work with Tallahassee on, on different regulations and stuff. But he was, you know, done a lot of different types of fishing over the years, you know, numerous styles and pretty much fished all his life. But I was lucky enough to, you know, fish with him and his son, Larry Fulford.

[00:06:57] **Tim Caniff:** They had a nice purse seine boat and back in the day it was kind of one of the top boats. So I crewed with them for many a year. His wife Wanda used to cook us a nice meal. When we'd get back to the dock, we'd, a lot of times you have to wait to unload down at the fish house, so we'd grab a nice meal from her and head back then to the dock to unload.

[00:07:18] **Tim Caniff:** But that, pretty good little fishing business right there for many a year.

[00:07:24] **Tina Bucuvalas:** What kind of, what kind of a meal did she make?

[00:07:25] **Tim Caniff:** Little bit of everything. Rice and tomato gravy. She'd, fish fingers, you know, snook we used to try to catch, catch quite a few snook under the boat, unloading the boat. So, those are delicious type of fish to have, grouper chowder, snook chowder, she'd cooked deer meat. Everything she made is pretty much about the best I've ever had, for the most part. So wonderful woman, wonderful.

[00:07:52] **Tina Bucuvalas:** And was Blue kind of a character or?

[00:07:55] **Tim Caniff:** No, he was kind of steady, steady, hardworking guy, you know, even keeled, you know, not wild and crazy sort of thing.

[00:08:04] **Tim Caniff:** But, he was older when I met him. He actually, lost his leg purse seine fishing, years previous before I got on there. So he had a, a prosthetic leg for a while, but, he still fished right alongside us and, you know, strong hands, his strong fingers, a lot of mending of the net. You know, he just kept the net in perfect condition for the most part.

[00:08:28] **Tim Caniff:** He kind of taught me how to mend net. So it's, it's a hard little, you know, lot of knots. If we had a nickel for every knot we, he tied, we'd be billionaires for the most part probably.

[00:08:43] **Tina Bucuvalas:** That's something we haven't talked about in, in, in any of the other interviews, but I know that, you know, like the, like some of the menorcans over, over in St. Augustine actually make the whole nets. I mean the old guys. And, but I understand now it's more common to like, get the netting and cut it and then, you know, to the right, how do they, Do, do you know how to make whole nets or do you?

[00:09:10] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah, we've built our own nets for the most part over the years.

[00:09:15] **Tim Caniff:** Gill net, you, you buy the rope and cork and, the webbing and the lead, and you kind of assemble it all yourself. You want to, you know, each little net's got its, you know, how many ties per, how many meshes per tie and how, how you space the corks, you know, the leads as well. Even our purse seine net we build, you know, rebuild a section of that every year or two.

[00:09:35] **Tim Caniff:** And, you know, that's a hard process. You buy the new webbing, you gotta dip it, you know, add the corks, add extra corks, you know, it's a lead, a pound of lead a foot per se, you know, so it's, it's, everything's got a little method to it, but it's a lot of work. The cast nets, guys build their own cast nets and you gotta cut little sections of the pie to assemble it.

[00:09:57] **Tim Caniff:** So it's, everything's got a little art to it, but it's, labor intensive for sure.

[00:10:04] **Tina Bucuvalas:** A couple things. Could you explain dipping? And then also I, I figure if you're repairing the nets, you must actually know how to knit the nets.

[00:10:15] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah. Yep, sure we're, in our bait fishing, you're always, you know, ripping the net at times. You get caught on something or shark bites it, you know, you always gotta repair it.

[00:10:25] **Tim Caniff:** You can zip it or you can mend it back mesh to mesh per se. Or you can kind of, you gotta seam, you just splice it together, you know, sew it together. But, it just depends how technical you want to get with it. When you buy the, the purse seine webbing, it, it comes white. It's undipped. But once you kind of build the net, you, you add what's called shrimp dip to it.

[00:10:48] **Tim Caniff:** It's, you add it, it's a chemical and it just coats the net, makes it last for, makes it a little stronger and makes it last, you know, a lot longer with, just plain, you know, cotton webbing per se.

[00:11:03] **Tina Bucuvalas:** Something else we haven't talked about before in the interviews is shrimping out of here. I'm wondering if you could tell us a little bit about how many shrimp boats there are and your experiences Shrimping, where you went to, where they go, if they go to the same places now. Anyway...

[00:11:23] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah. As far as the shrimping, there's two different styles. There's in shore shrimping, which is little smaller boats, little shrimp in the flats of the bay and they catch 'em live and they'll, that's the shrimp you see at the bait stands.

[00:11:37] **Tim Caniff:** Live shrimp for bait for fishermen to go buy a couple dozen and go fishing. So that's one little shrimpin industry, but there's bigger offshore shrimp boats. You'll see, you know, like from Louisiana, you know, style shrimp boats.

[00:11:55] **Tim Caniff:** We talked about different places in Florida have big shrimp fleets Fort Myers Beach, St. Augustine, uh, there is a couple, shrimp boats outta AP Bell. Deanna Bell I think is one of them. There's not many of those golf shrimpers working outta here so much anymore. But, it's two different styles of shrimping. You know, one's more, you know, food grade, pink shrimp or gulf shrimp.

[00:12:16] **Tim Caniff:** And the other is inshore, you know, for recreational use per se. And I've done some of that in the bays. You, we call it the kitchen. This little stretch of shoreline down the bay. Cuz you pretty much get everything you want there, like the kitchen, you know, clams, scallops, you know, shrimp, fin fish, mullet, you know.

[00:12:35] **Tim Caniff:** So I've done quite a bit of that. There's different places, people, shrimp price is key. All the little spots around the bay where the shrimp are better, bigger. So I've done some of that over the years. You know, that's how I first kind of, you know, one of my first commercial boats I worked on, you know, did some of that.

[00:12:51] **Tim Caniff:** So that was kind of fun. Different style, two different styles for the most part.

[00:12:58] **Tina Bucuvalas:** And,

[Interjection] Kristin Sweeting: Sorry, what was the first commercial boat that you worked on?

[00:13:03] **Tim Caniff:** Probably one of those shrimp boats. Blake Mora was a good friend of mine.

[Production crew interrupts]

[00:13:14] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah. Yeah. The first shrimp boat I worked on was Gilbert Moras. He had two shrimp boats and his son's, Blake Gilbert or Blake, Nick and Patrick, the son's friends with them and we, we would shrimp those boats at night. That's when you, the shrimp come out at you shrimp at night for shrimp, so, or fish at night for shrimp.

[00:13:35] **Tim Caniff:** So that's kind of the first ones. First, you know, shrimp boat I worked on, or actually another couple guys had boats as well. Wally Lewis, Judy Mora. But, that's probably one of the first commercial boats. And

then a, my friend Gene Miller as well, he had a, a kicker boat, a style boat and that was more for gill netting mullet and Pompano and different fisheries.

[00:14:01] **Tina Bucuvalas:** And you've done stone crabbing also?

[00:14:03] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah. A little bit of stone crabbing with a couple of guys. Jumped on as crew over the years. Junior Taylor, couple different guys. Mike, Mike O'Leary's passed away. John Banyas has a crab boat or two these days, so jumped on there, done a little bit of that.

[00:14:25] **Tina Bucuvalas:** And so what are you doing right now and could you talk about your boat and who you work for?

[00:14:29] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah. Like you said, you interviewed, I fished for, John Banyas, which is Cortez Bait and Seafood. The other big fish house in Cortez is, AP Bell, Karen Bell, per se. Been working with Johnny at Cortez Bait and Seafood for a number of years.

[00:14:44] **Tim Caniff:** When I first, years ago, like I said, fished with Blue and Larry Fulford, they had a particular boat. It was called the Sharon back in the day. But John actually bought that boat after they kind of retired and he fished it for a number of years and I fished it with him, John and I and another crew.

[00:15:04] **Tim Caniff:** We fished that boat and he has since built some other boats. So, *Lily Ann*, and the new *Heidi B*. So mainly purse seined with him. That's my main like summer job and we talked about in the fall we switch over to mullet, we pull the net off the boat and that boat, the, the *Lilly B* acts as a tender boat for little cast net boats.

[00:15:29] **Tina Bucuvalas:** And so when you're done fishing for, for a living. Do you just fish for fun?

[00:15:38] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah, I do. I've got two little sport boats behind me. It seemed like you'd commercial fish all day and if you had a short day or something, you'd jump in the, in the boat, you know, a little sport boat after work and zip around the bay and do a little hook and line fishing.

[00:15:51] **Tim Caniff:** So kind of, you know, work all day and, you know, jump in a little boat and play around a little more towards the evening. That's kinda my, I'd rather hook and line it right before dark, a couple hours before dark.

[00:16:06] **Tina Bucuvalas:** What, what's your favorite seafood to eat?

[00:16:08] **Tim Caniff:** Mainly snook. We used to catch 'em when you unload, the bait fish from the boat, you know, get the fish across the dock.

[00:16:17] **Tim Caniff:** You're dropping a few in the water and those snook, lander there and, and fill up plus a lot of catfish as well. So you're kind of weeding through the catfish to catch a snook at times. So there's seasons for those, you know, they make a, a good meal and I recreational fish as well. Get out like the wade fish, you know, knee deep water, you know, throw artificial lore per se and, and, chase them around too.

[00:16:42] **Tim Caniff:** Grouper I'm doing a lot of grouper fishing as well as a blade, trolling for a grouper in the bays and on the beaches. So that's kind of a my new little fun hobby as well. So, they make a good chowder, fish tacos.

[Production crew interjects]

[00:17:05] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah. My favorite fish to eat is I would say snook, grouper, snook.

[Production crew interjects]

[00:17:31] **Tina Bucuvalas:** What was that kind of fishing you were talking about again? Were you and maybe you could say that you drive your trucks down and leave them, you know?

[00:17:42] **Tina Bucuvalas:** But if you could talk about that whole thing again.

[00:17:45] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah. Currently we're, you know, it's, it's, just turned April. We're, we're purse seining the bait. We're traveling to, we've got another little fish house, satellite fish house out of Fort Myers. So, we're fishing out of there currently. The fishings, you know, fish are in pretty good bunches down there, so we're, we're chasing 'em here, chasing 'em down there rather.

[00:18:05] **Tim Caniff:** The fish off of here, the bait fish are kind of in a juvenile stage so they're too small and they're not quite ready, you know, to, for market ready or to chase. So we, we do move down the coastline at time to time chasing schools of fish.

[00:18:28] **Tina Bucuvalas:** You're, you've been fishing now for 30 years. So, and I mean, we did talk a little bit about your recent, you know, best memories.

What's your long-term best memory, of, of fishing? What, is there something that really hooked you into, I mean, is there some particular incident or something?

[00:18:52] **Tim Caniff:** What got me started in the past? I mean, what got me started, I remember way back in the day, I remember my mom has a picture of me in a little boat at the, at, I think at the, the playground or something, a little boat, you know, just a little statue sort of thing. And I was in there thinking I was, you know, fishing sort of thing.

[00:19:10] **Tim Caniff:** So my dad used to take me fishing. I've kind of always liked fishing, you know, since a young age. And, we, you know, we moved here, we did a little fishing as well and then eventually found some friends who, you know, have ties, you know, direct ties to Cortez and commercial fishing. So that's even, you know, you're fishing all the time.

[00:19:30] **Tim Caniff:** So that's how I eventually, you know, got to Cortez and got the commercial fishing.

[00:19:38] **Tina Bucuvalas:** Now, what's it like living in Cortez? Because it's, it's a historic fishing town. I mean, is this a different kind of place to live and what's daily life like?

[00:19:49] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah. Living in Cortez, it's, it's a little off the road here, you know, our side of town, it's, the fish houses right down the street.

[00:20:01] **Tim Caniff:** Originally the, the village is kind of, you work at the shoreline, the houses are just back a block or two off the water. It's, it's changed a little bit. It's still changing all the time. We've got a new bridge scheduled to come in, so that's gonna disrupt the community. I've lived on, Bradenton Beach and Holmes Beach, and it's similar, you know, smaller scale, you know, communities so to speak.

[00:20:27] **Tim Caniff:** But, it's, you know, you go up to Bradenton and Sarasota, just traveling down to Fort Myers recently. It's just such a rat race, you know, people are up at five o'clock in the morning till, you know, midnight coming and going. It's just the traffic is crazy. You get uptown, it's just different industries and so forth uptown.

[00:20:48] **Tim Caniff:** But, it's a little quiet here. It's changing. We do have some noise. We've got a marina, Sigma used to be a fish house around the corner here, now it's a marina. So, times have changed. There's quite a bit of

activity. It is, you know, the village is based on some houses built by a fishermen, for fisherman, some smaller cracker houses per se.

[00:21:08] **Tim Caniff:** But, for the most part, traffic's picked up a little bit, you know, that we like to think it calms down and it's quiet here at night and at times it isn't. At times it isn't, but..

[00:21:25] **Tina Bucuvalas:** Is it a lot of the, the old older fishermen and their families that still live here?

[00:21:29] **Tim Caniff:** There is. A lot of those old timers, I'm getting to be the old timer now, it seems like

[00:21:32] **Tim Caniff:** Blue has passed on Larry, he lives down in Myakka on the Myakka River. There's, those old timers have gone, a lot of 'em are gone. So, I'm almost getting to retirement age, but there's a few younger guys up and coming. I'd say a lot of the old timers, they've, they've gone over the years.

[00:21:55] **Tim Caniff:** It's changed a lot. The fishing industry's changed. Gillnetting has been banned and outlawed years ago. That was kind of their bread and butter, a lot of those guys. And if you go way back, it was, stop netting and hall sane crews. So it's, it's changed. The mullet fishery now is more cast net based.

[00:22:15] **Tim Caniff:** The bait fishing still similar. We're further offshore than we used to be with that net ban, they, they pushed us offshore, you know, three miles. So it's changed a little bit.

[00:22:28] **Tina Bucuvalas:** Could you talk a little bit about the whole situation with the net ban and then also about the cast nets that came in afterwards and how they are and, and how you operate them.

[00:22:40] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah. Like I said, the, the net ban was initiated in, 1996 [95], so that's quite a few years. It's before that we did, you know, guys did do quite a bit of different style fisheries with gill nets, mackerel, pompano, mullet, but it's changed. So they, they pretty much cut that right out completely, you've gotta change to a cast net and actually they're, they, you can catch good quantities of the mullet with the cast net, in the fall when the fishes are bunched up during the, the cold fronts. So at times, you know, those guys can really catch quite a bit of fish, but you're not really using a cast net anymore to chase a pompano per se, or try to catch a mackeral.

[00:23:24] **Tim Caniff:** Actually, ironically, they catch a lot of mackeral on the east coast with a cast net. You know, they throw a cast out on 'em and they might gill 'em off or they, it's, it works out where they can, you know, commercially harvest them. Over here really about the only thing with a cast net, or that's harvested, I would say is mullet.

[00:23:43] **Tim Caniff:** And, uh, maybe, you know, you might cast net bait fish, you know, like to go fishing with white bait or green backs, but not commercially per se.

[00:23:54] **Tina Bucuvalas:** How big are cast nets and how many pounds of fish can they hold?

[00:23:58] **Tim Caniff:** Cast nets they have to be within a, a 500 square foot, square footage per se, and that that actually works out to be like a 12 inch or 12 and a half foot, stretched, net, you know, from lead line to, to the horn and as that opens up, it's a, I guess it'd be a 25 foot radius or diameter 25 foot sort of thing, like a big pizza pie. You know, it's a 12 and a half foot radius I guess. But a total square footage is say 500 square feet. And they can, you know, if they get 'em right, you can catch a few hundred pounds of fish in one throw with a, you know, a few hundred pounds of mullet in one in one throw.

[00:24:47] **Tina Bucuvalas:** And you bring that in by yourself or?

[00:24:50] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah. You, you pulled in, with that many fish, you know, generally you're fishing with two or three guys and they help roll that into the boat and get the net cleared up again to, you know, recast. So, it's, it's a lot of work. Everything with fishing's a lot of work for the most part.

[00:25:07] **Tim Caniff:** Icing up the boat in the morning. You know, you're working a sweat a lot of times, everything's hard with the fishing.

[00:25:18] **Tina Bucuvalas:** So, before you even leave, you have, do you go and get the ice in the morning or at night or when?

[00:25:22] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah, we ice, you know, generally ice up in the morning or the night before so even that's an ordeal.

[00:25:27] **Tim Caniff:** We make it a little bit easier. But I mean, it's, I remember back in the day you, you know, you'd be take an hour or two and you'd be dripping sweat trying to get ice to the boat, shoveling ice, and trying to

get it to the boat with augers and, and hoses. We've got a little simplified now, but it still can, you know, be a hassle.

[00:25:46] **Tim Caniff:** And it's risky. You're slipping on ice, you know, you could, there's no telling when you're gonna, you know, get hurt on the job, per se.

[00:25:56] **Tina Bucuvalas:** So I'm wondering if you've seen any changes in, in the Gulf in terms of water quality or environmental issues, that have had, a noticeable effect.

[00:26:18] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah. There has been some environmental changes. Recently we had a, a, spill in Tampa Bay, fertilizer runoff. Years ago there was an acid spill up there in the same spot, I believe.

[00:26:34] **Tim Caniff:** We've had some red tides recently over the years. We had a bad one in Sarasota five years ago. They had one in St. Pete, which they think was tied to that little spill last year. So, killed a lot of fish at different times. And, there was an oil spill 10, 15 years ago up Louisiana that, you know, they think some of that could have come down here.

[00:26:58] **Tim Caniff:** Didn't really see too much but you know, from that particular event. But, you know, there's, you know, there definitely is. Some of those spills in Tampa Bay has surely affected, you know, the fishing and then red tide is more prevalent. We've had red tide, you know, down the coast as well. Even in the fall when it's cooler, which you wouldn't think it'd be so bad, but you've had some red tide incidents, you know, over the years affects the mullet migration killing a lot of mullet up there as well.

[00:27:27] **Tina Bucuvalas:** Do you feel that the red tide incidents are red tide incidents more common now?

[00:27:33] **Tim Caniff:** They seem to be here recently. They have been, years.

[Tim is asked to repeat]

[00:27:40] **Tim Caniff:** The red tide incidents have been more common here in recent years.

[00:27:44] **Tim Caniff:** Last year we had a bit of one here in, in, in, Sarasota Bay, and especially in Tampa Bay. And then the last few years further down south, the Intercoastal has had incidents of red tide and they, you know, they

can devastate the, the sea grass or the, the fishing. You know, the fish die right off. We had a hard one in, in Sarasota Bay five or six years ago, and it was just, you know, no fish you would drive down to look in the water you just see seagrass. Even the seagrass took a beating and you know, that's all part of the cycle, you know, for the fishing.

[00:28:20] **Tina Bucuvalas:** Yeah. Do you, what, what do you think is making these incidents more frequent? The red tide.

[00:28:26] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah, the frequency of the red tide. They, they do try to blame some of the runoff, like, further down, which bay is it?

[00:28:37] **Tim Caniff:** You know, the runoff out of the Everglades. There's a river, runs out to, you know, near sanibel there. They do have some red tide incidents there. I know the other coast has runoff. They're, it's like a green tide. They're turning the water green on the east coast. Some kind of algae bloom, so some of the fertilizer runoff. I even think Mississippi has a lot of fertilizer runoff that gets into the gulf.

[00:29:03] **Tim Caniff:** There's like a dead zone on the mouth of the Mississippi River there. But, you know, some of it's naturally occurring. Some of it's influenced by the fertilizer runoff. I would say a little bit of everything. You know, it's getting hotter, a little global warming, you know, the water temperature's a little hotter possibly.

[00:29:22] **Tim Caniff:** But again, in the fall we've seen red tide with cooler temperatures. So it just, once things get started it's, you know, gotta run its course a little bit.

[00:29:33] **Tina Bucuvalas:** Yeah. Have you seen any changes in terms of water level or rising sea levels or anything?

[Production crew interjects]

[00:29:49] **Tina Bucuvalas:** Have you noticed any changes in, in water levels? So like, rising sea, sea level?

[00:29:57] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah, that's a new talk, the sea level rising, around the world. I haven't really seen it particularly here in, in Cortez.

[00:30:05] **Tim Caniff:** Maybe, you know, then I think about it, maybe over the last 20 years or so that I've been here. It may just be a little, you know, a couple

inches higher possibly. But, you know, I know they're keeping track of that and, you know, have stats where they, they're showing that the tide is rising, per se. And, and it's a big concern.

[00:30:23] **Tim Caniff:** I, you know, we talked a little bit about, they want to build more sea walls to, you know, protect the cities. And I see they're doing that in some places. Miami and, Charleston, South Carolina saw a place a show on that they were trying to, you know, get ahead of the curve, start building sea walls.

[00:30:42] **Tim Caniff:** But I hear again, the concrete production, that's one of the worst carbon footprints as well, you know, so you're kind of, you know, hurting the environment, you know, trying to save your, the coastline. So it's kind of a catch 22 and not the best solution, I would think. But that whole, it's more higher sea walls is gonna solve the problem doesn't seem to be the right approach, but you know, that's what they're planning and hard to say. It's definitely gonna be an issue. You see the icebergs, you know, melting at critical, you know, critical losses each year. You know, countries, world's warming up quicker than you think.

[00:31:31] **Tina Bucuvalas:** Yeah. I'm afraid you're right. I'm afraid you're right. You know, I wanted to go back. It occurred to me and talk about what you did in what you do in relation, like, like that St. Pete thing, where you are, so you are sort of subcontracting almost to, to the, well, you can talk about each of these. How about that?

[00:31:51] **Tim Caniff:** Okay. Yeah, I did have a few photos to share some of the fishing that I do here. This is mainly the current boat that I work on. The Lily Ann, John Banyas owns the boat, fish for him, catch the bait. And then in the fall we will pull the net off the boat and turn it into a tender boat per se for smaller cast net boats, which I discussed about a little bit.

[00:32:18] **Tim Caniff:** Here's one that'll actually come to me to unload their catch. We've got a scale on the boat. We carry extra ice, write 'em a check for their catch on the spot. So let's them turn around and get back fishing. This is in St. Pete to Clearwater. I'll do that for the mullet run and some of these, you know, get these fish back to Cortez where a lot of these fishermen might resell 'em somewhere else up there.

[00:32:44] **Tim Caniff:** So we're just trying to get a few of those mullet that we'd like back to Cortez and using our company boat to do it

[00:32:56] **Tim Caniff:** Another fisherman here, Harry Moefield, picture of him unloading his, his, sardine catch or thread herring is our main, bait fish that we catch. Harry's been fishing longer than me even, so well-known fisherman in Cortez. And, this is one of the, this is the *Lilly B*, which used to be blue. And Larry's purse seine boat.

[00:33:20] **Tim Caniff:** John bought it and extended the stern and, we fished that boat for a number of years as well. He's got a newer boat now, the *Heidi B*. as well and we're catching bait on that.

[00:33:34] **Tina Bucuvalas:** Have you ever done any boat building or anything?

[00:33:37] **Tim Caniff:** John's actually, John's building his own boats for the most part.

[00:33:43] **Tim Caniff:** We'll help him along. Every year we, we might, recoat the deck with a gel coat, fix some, do a little fiberglass repair. John's built a number of boats over the years and, I, you know, mainly just helping out. I haven't really built my own boat from scratch, but, you know, a number of fishermen do, you know, build their own boats and fish 'em, especially back in the day, they were built a lot of, you know, a lot of wood boats before fiberglass came, became so popular, a lot of fishermen in over the years, you know, especially way back in the day. They pretty much built their, had to build their own, their own boats.

[00:34:20] **Tina Bucuvalas:** I know this happened down in the Keys, I'm wondering if it happened here, but yeah, guys would just build boats in their yard and then, did that happen in Cortez?

[00:34:28] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah. Oh yeah. Guys would build their own boats here in Cortez, you know, lay 'em up, you know, a lot of times they'll, it'll start with a wood hull and then they'll put a layer of, or two of fiberglass, up to, you know, above the water line on the outside, just kind of give 'em a little extra, protection for the boat.

[00:34:45] **Tim Caniff:** But yeah, shrimp boats, uh, skiffs, little skiffs, little kicker boats. That kicker boat fishing's not around any much anymore. It used to be, you'd have the motor up in forward, you know, instead in the stern you'd have it like mid deck. It would just help prop the bow up and, and made for shallow water running.

[00:35:07] **Tina Bucuvalas:** Could you talk a little bit about, we were talking with Kristin earlier about, about building up the wall, on the one side of the boat was that for offshore fishing?

[00:35:17] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah. She mentioned one of the boats, the *Eagle Eye*, I believe it is, it's parked down at AP Bell. It's, they may do some fishing.

[00:35:27] **Tim Caniff:** There is a little bit of a sword fish fishery in the upper Gulf of Mexico. And that boat, you know, sometimes, they'll fish on the East coast for, dolphin or Mahi mahi. There's a little fishery of that. And that boat even may make it up to the Grand Banks or off New England for sword fishing as well.

[00:35:45] **Tim Caniff:** But, sometimes those guys will, will build a particular wall. They'll knock down waves, like when they come home, they know their boat will be, you know, laden with fish. And they might usually have, like, they might be nor Eastern might be chasing them to port. So, they'll have a wall to, knock down any extra waves that would crash over the, the, the bow to, you know, keep from swamping the boat per, per se.

[00:36:11] **Tim Caniff:** It's kind of rare that you see that especially around here. Actually, a lot of these kicker boats or a lot of these mullet boats will build a little platform to knock down some waves off the boat instead of swamping the boat. So, you'll see some of these Carolina skiffs, which are popular little, cast net boat.

[00:36:27] **Tim Caniff:** They'll build a little break in case they, you know, if they catch a few thousand pounds of fish, you know, you're prone to taking a wave over the bow and you don't want it to swamp the boat. So, a lot of those guys will fish in the gulf, during that mullet run, so you get too many fish your kind of pushing it to, you know, get as many fish safely on the boat and try to get back, but it's pretty popular.

[00:36:51] **Tim Caniff:** You know, that's, you'll see that more, local design trying to knock down a wave with our local boats.

[00:36:59] **Tina Bucuvalas:** Did you ever have a particularly frightening experience out on the water where it was like, I'm just glad to be alive now?

[00:37:07] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah. It gets rough out there sometimes. Like I said, generally we're off, just go out for a day and come back.

[00:37:14] **Tim Caniff:** So, I know those grouper boats that are out there, you know, for weeks at a time they go through some, you know, really rough weather. It's kind of funny to see the Alaska Deadliest Catch that they're, you know, they're going, they leave fishing, you know, and it's blowing a hurricane out there. So, I mean, if it's blowing for us more than 20 or 30, we're generally staying in port.

[00:37:37] **Tim Caniff:** But, we've been caught a few storms, you know, it's, or you got a lot of fish on the boat and you're trying to get back. You're beaten back, you know, trying to get back to port. Actually, this past fall I was in St. Pete with a catch of fish and I was beating back across Tampa Bay during a cold front, and it was pretty little sketchy, you know, just getting five miles across Tampa Bay back to the Cortez.

[00:38:03] **Tim Caniff:** So that, that was probably my last scary moment, I guess, fishing. But there's times when, you know, you're really, you know, beating to try to get back home, or even sometimes you're, you're fishing, you know, during squall breakout and you're really, you know, the gear slamming around. It's a little dangerous at times for sure.

[**Interjection**] **Kristin Sweeting:** So, when you're caught out in those storms with the current bridge that's there, do you ever worry that you're gonna get trapped on the side that's not your side? Can you not be able to make it through?

Tim Caniff: Oh, like Karen mentions. Yeah. No, I don't think that's a problem. You know, I mean, unless it's really like hurricane conditions.

[**Production crew interjects**]

[00:38:49] **Tim Caniff:** Unless it's really hurricane conditions, the bridge tender will open the, you know, bridge for you, you know, on demand per se for the most part. One of the, with the new bridge that's being built, I know one of the arguments Karen Bell particularly had, you know, if a storm's coming, apparently they, they're not gonna raise the bridge. So some of her boats will seek port, like up in Palm Sola Bay, some of these canals.

[00:39:13] **Tim Caniff:** So, it's kind of a little tricky, you know, situation. She's for the, the new bridge because of that, you know, she wouldn't have to worry about getting some of her, you know, big boats safely, you know, secured in a good location, you know, during a storm.

[00:39:35] **Tim Caniff:** But, generally, you know, we don't have to deal with that too often, getting back to port.

[00:39:46] **[Interjection] Kristin Sweeting:** So when we were talking about, environmental changes and red tide and you mentioned sea grasses and things like that. I was wondering if you had any like specific examples like where you went out and you saw X, Y, and Z.

[00:40:02] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah. I think it was even last year with the red tide. We, we had red tide last year, you know, Sarasota Bay. And then previously to that, like five years ago, it was really a bad red tide, but you can just ride down the bay, in your boat, look in the water, clear water, you know, 2, 3, 4 foot deep. And the grass is just, almost dead in, in places.

[00:40:28] **Tim Caniff:** Like no life, you know, you generally see pin fish, little fish, you know, scurrying around, it's like a dead zone almost with some, sometimes after these red tides. So, you know, luckily it, it generally comes back, you know, somewhat quick. Ironically, the shrimp, the bait shrimp after a red tide, they kind of thrive in that they have a little, a, a bloom per se.

[00:40:50] **Tim Caniff:** And, they'll be very, you know, pop, you know, populous, populous of, of bloom. But, definitely signs you can see the seagrass, you know, dead zone for sure. No fish, you know, the fishermen killed you see 'em all floating on top of the water for, you know, a week or two or a month, and then it finally kind of clears up. But the, the after effects the, the grass is certainly, you know, dead or scarred or, you know, no, no sea life at times.

[00:41:25] **Tina Bucuvalas:** Have you noticed over the, the 30 years or so that you've been fishing, has there been a substantial change in the underwater environment?

[00:41:37] **Tim Caniff:** Generally over the years, like I said, mostly incidents that I'll see is just after that red tide. I know I've seen that, you know, recently, even last year, you know, construction is sea walls. I mean, you're still getting a lot of developments and you see, you know, Florida's has been booming for the last 30 years for sure.

[00:42:00] **Tim Caniff:** So you know that a lot of that population, extra runoff, you know, more concrete, more. That, you know, that has an effect as well. You know, surprisingly, you know, things are rolling up pretty good. Those red tides really hurt, you know, really hurt the bay. Tampa Bay really took a beating up there. There's still a mullet run, you know, those fish can get at, you know,

mullet can get back into some fresh water and kind of get through that red tide period.

[00:42:27] **Tim Caniff:** But, you know, it's certainly killed a lot of fish. And you know, the good part is generally it kind of comes back, you know, after a little bit of time.

[Interjection] Kristin Sweeting: I had one more question. When it, what about like, quality of fish like after any of those environmental topics discussed? Like, have you seen any effects that have lasted past the season?

[00:43:05] **Tim Caniff:** After some of these red tide events, you know, people are worried about are the fish safe to eat? You know, generally we're, the thinking is if it's alive and look healthy, you know, it's fine to eat. You know, you might have had a red tide there a month or two ago. You know, generally the fish, you know, is healthy and looks good, you know, you know, should be no trouble, you know, eating it.

[00:43:30] **Tim Caniff:** You know, like I said, the, the seagrass does, you know, shows signs of dying off. It can go from, you know, at times this looks like a desert. You, you see the old remnants of the grass and, you know, sponges and things are just kind of, you know, really hurting. But, you know, the good part is they kind of regenerate and, you'll see it come back to life and, you know, fish will move in, you know, a lot of fish migrate, you know, from down south or will migrate. The cycle gets started again. Mangroves start producing, you know, juveniles and you know, to repopulate, but it's been more frequent, certainly here lately, you know, than you'd, you'd like to see for the red tide.

[00:44:16] **Tina Bucuvalas:** So, something we didn't ask you is, do you see young people going into this profession as much as they used to go into it?

[00:44:27] **Tim Caniff:** Young people coming in these days fishing, there's a handful of younger guys. Nathan, who I think you're gonna interview. Yeah, you do see, you know, there's a handful of younger guys.

[00:44:43] **Tim Caniff:** They've gotta be, I mean, you need younger guys to do a lot more of the, the back lifting and so forth, but it's changed. The regulations have changed. Some of the, you don't see, you know, see many new, you know, people getting into the bait industry per se. It's kind of a little specialized, you know, you can't just, you know, you know, it's expensive.

[00:45:06] **Tim Caniff:** The gear's expensive. You gotta have some kind of, you know, deal with the fish house to unload your fish. You know, for the mullet industry, a lot of that is, part-time. Folks that'll just take a little time off in the fall. They know the mullet runs coming, so, alot of those guys have other full-time jobs during the year.

[00:45:24] **Tim Caniff:** It's kinda, you know, you get some people coming and going, you know, in this area per se, that really aren't gonna be a lifelong fisherman, you know, compared to maybe Alaska or rural true fishing port where you got a lot of opportunity for, you know, fishing all year round. Here it's kind of spotty on the different fisheries that are available.

[00:45:48] **Tim Caniff:** You know, you got a stone crab season that's, you know, over the winter you might get some guys crewing on a boat, you know, cracking the crab or pulling the traps. But generally the guy driving the boat or he's kind of, you know, the, the longtime full-time fisherman where you get more transient guys, you know, jumping for a, you know, a day, a week or a season.

[00:46:08] **Tim Caniff:** So, and then, you know, yeah. Just not a lot of opportunity for like to make a full-time living. Some guys are doing it, you know, they switching different things time to time during the year, what they can chase and catch and, you know, make enough money to kind of be feasible to, to stay with it. So, it's kind of a fine line.

[00:46:30] **Tina Bucuvalas:** What and what about we were, we were hearing yesterday, I don't know if this was more in the past than it is in the present, but besides the local people fishing are there people that come from up north and then come down here to fish in certain seasons? Commercially?

[00:46:46] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah. Mainly for the, the mullet.

[00:46:49] **Tim Caniff:** The mullet run, you get, you know, there's a mullet run on the east coast as well, Jacksonville. It starts in the Alabama and the Carolinas. Louisiana has a little mullet run and it kind of later in the year, the, the migration it goes off further south. So, some of those fishmen will come down from the east coast or, you know, from up the coast and, you know, just work it, you know, like I said, later the season, the further south the season goes.

[00:47:15] **Tim Caniff:** So, you do get a lot of guys who are, are chasing those fish from out of town, per se.

[00:47:20] **Tina Bucuvalas:** Does that affect your harvest?

[00:47:22] **Tim Caniff:** Well, like I said, I kind of depend on some of those guys. I, you know, I take our boat, you know, from here up the, you know, St. Pete and Clearwater, there's a little run up there. Whereas, you know, Longboat Pass and Manatee River has their own little mullet run.

[00:47:38] **Tim Caniff:** I'm trying to bring some of those extra fish back to Cortez for Johnny there. So I kind of depend on some of them fishermen, you know, a lot of these full-time, you know, fishermen, you know, they got all this competition, you know, that shows up, you know, overnight when they know when the front's gonna hit, you know, the, the fish are gonna move.

[00:47:58] **Tim Caniff:** So, you know, the fishermen are on the case. They all kind of communicate, you know, little groups of guys that, you know, are chasing the fish though it's kind of a, you know, bonanza sort of thing. The runs on and, you know, overnight it just changes. So,

[00:48:15] **Tina Bucuvalas:** Yeah. Right. You were, you were talking before about, I'm not sure if we got this on tape or not, but, but if you could talk about it again, how the fish are just kind of hanging out, you know, when there's, when it, when everything's calm and then it gets colder.

[00:48:29] **Tim Caniff:** And, yeah. For the mullet, for the mullet run, they're spawning, their spawning season or operation. When the weather's pretty, they're, they're just kind of milling around waiting.

[00:48:43] **Tim Caniff:** But when, when a cold front comes, that's when they try to tighten up and make their way to the pass, any particular pass. And then generally they'll go offshore miles, you know, 10, 20, 50 miles, a hundred miles offshore and school together and spawn together, you know, at a big ball. So, and then if the weather does, if, if it's not quite right, they'll work their way back and, maybe hang along the beach.

[00:49:06] **Tim Caniff:** You know, people fishing along the beach. We talked about a little bit haul seine possibly there. But, it's all the mullet run is kind of weather dependent, you know, the worst, the weather, the tighter they are together and, you know, making their way, you know, out the spawn. So, you know, and that's kind of a lot of fisheries like that, probably the swordfish fishing or the tuna fishing offshore, like the full moon.

[00:49:31] **Tim Caniff:** There's a lot of different things that affect, you know, when fishing may be better at times than other times.

[00:49:40] **Tina Bucuvalas:** So overall, how do you see the future of fishing, taking everything into consideration. The changes in the fish, changes in the gulf or water changes. How, where do you think it's everything is going in the future?

[00:50:01] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah, the future of the fishing. It's, you know, people are struggling all the time. The regulations seem to get, be getting tighter and tighter at times. Particular, you know, fisheries. So it's hard to say how that's gonna progress. I know, they're looking at the bait fishing industry a little more as, something they wanna manage, you know, the possibly the catches.

[00:50:20] **Tim Caniff:** I know it's really been curbed that they used to purse seine a lot of fish off the Carolinas, the shad for the oil and oil production and, you know, fertilizer per se. But, it's always, you know, fishing's always really under a lot of regulations. The sport fishing, you know, seems to be, you know, as a big battle there, commercial sport fishing.

[00:50:40] **Tim Caniff:** So, it's hard to say. It's risky, you know, it's very risky, you know, young people getting into it, you know, you're, you know, some of the grouper, there's, there's quota systems and that's kind of an whole different can of worms there. You know, it's, it's, it's a risky business. You know, crabbin's good at times and, you know, sometimes it's good, sometimes it's bad.

[00:51:01] **Tim Caniff:** It's kinda, you know, it's peaks and valleys. It's kind of a tricky niche, but a lot of these guys, they kind of love it. You know, I've kind of, you know, loved it all my life. So you kind of stick with it and just take the good with the bad and, you know, hope, hope for the best. I guess.

[00:51:20] **Tina Bucuvalas:** Do you, do you have kids that are in the fishing?

[00:51:22] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah. No, I'm single. You know, I've never been married, no kids. But no, I've, you know, you know, don't have to worry about them, you know, trying to get into it.

[00:51:34] **Tina Bucuvalas:** Just off on another subject, we're so impressed with your, with your, your pumpkins. And your bees. Could you just talk a little bit about these couple hobbies you have or have had?

[00:51:49] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah, I do have a few different hobbies. I'm trying to grow these, you know, giant pumpkins per se in my spare time. Just kind of a, that's kind of a little beer drink project. I was in the beekeeping for a, a few years ago an old girlfriend kind of got me started on that and I kind of learned through YouTube and tried to you know, create a number of hives.

[00:52:12] **Tim Caniff:** I had 'em here at my house, but I eventually moved to my, actually my neighbor got stung up pretty bad. I was telling you that story, which is a terrible event, but those bees are a whole another can of worms. And that's an expensive hobby. Pour a bunch of money into, that's like worse than owning a boat, you know, I mean, the equipment's expensive, probably, you know, you're buying all that lumber, you know, to make the hives and a lot of it's pre-made you buy it kind of pre-made or you can do it yourself.

[00:52:38] **Tim Caniff:** But, yeah, a couple little hobbies. I've kind of, luckily I used to, you know, do a lot more sport fishing before I got into the bees, and luckily, I've you. Pass these bees onto another beekeeper and I'm doing a lot more sport fishing, you know, in my free time. So that's working out a lot better. And you know, actually the sport fishing has been pretty good, you know, when I get a little time.

[00:52:59] **Tina Bucuvalas:** And I don't imagine the pumpkins are very labor intensive, unless you just wanna watch them grow.

[00:53:03] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah, they're not too bad. They just take a little time, you know, you gotta baby 'em a little bit, a little bit of wind protection, which is, behind it there. But every few years I get lucky with a bigger one. So we're hopeful This is something to play around with a little quirky little hobby there.

[00:53:22] **Tina Bucuvalas:** Is there, are there things we haven't covered that you would like to talk about? Or is there anything you would like people to know about fishing in Cortez generally?

[00:53:39] **Tim Caniff:** Yeah, Cortez, you know, it's still kind of, we have a festival each year, you know, we get a little bit of exposure, you know, still, like Florida's tourist tourism, you know, state, a lot of northerners come down, but, you know, our festival brings some tourism to Cortez. People be surprised actually, how much fishing's actually done outta here.

[00:53:58] **Tim Caniff:** You know, but it's still comparable. What you might eat in a restaurant, you know, some of that fish, this shrimp might be local. You know, the fish might be imported or, it's hard to say, like a lot of the, you know,

a lot of groupers caught come into AB Bell and that's a lot of makes it to some of the restaurants.

[00:54:14] **Tim Caniff:** But other, you know, fish you see on the, on the menu may be from, you know, somewhere else per se. But a lot of fish, you know, do come to the shores of Cortez and, you know, it's got a long tradition here, so people are plugging along. We're just trying, you know, survive, make a living. It's got, it's got a future to it.

[00:54:35] **Tim Caniff:** You know, you got a few good people. Karen and John are doing their best to kind of keep business going, you know, and keep fishermen employed and employees working at the fish house. So there's a future to it, but you know how it's actually gonna turn out, you know, development, they're wanting to develop so much.

[00:54:54] **Tim Caniff:** So luckily we've got a preserve that's gonna stay as a sanctuary there. And, you know, Cortez is changing. I've been in the village, off and on over the years I've been at this little house for, you know, 10 years now. So it's just, it's hard to say, you know, how it's gonna look, you know, years down the road.

[00:55:12] **Tim Caniff:** But, you know, it's got a unique little character, but it's surely changing, you know, every year.

[00:55:21] **Tina Bucuvalas:** Anyone else? Any other questions?

[**Interjection**] **Kristin Sweeting:** One last question. Tina kind of said it, but I'm going to rephrase it a little bit in case it brings up another thought. Is there anything, commercial fishing has a lot of misconceptions around it, so in, in kind of thinking about what the public should know in that way, is there anything.

[00:55:46] **Tim Caniff:** Misconceptions in fishing, over the years I know with like the net band back in the day that there's kind of a big media smear. You know, they portrayed us as having miles and gill net out there, just stretched out catching dolphins and turtles and manatees and whatever else. And that, you know, could be, couldn't be further from the truth.

[00:56:04] **Tim Caniff:** You know, a lot of that inshore, gill net fishing, you know, you actually see the fish. Pretty much all the fishing we do, you're pretty much site fishing in it. You see a school of Jacks, you know, cutting on the water. You're, you know what it is, you know, you try to get around it, but we

just don't run the net out and pick it back up, you know, a week later sort of thing.

[00:56:24] **Tim Caniff:** That was, you know, portrayed, you know, in the media years ago. Kind of good, I was kind of thinking, you know, everybody used to read the paper and there'd be a sport column, you know, oh, the fishermen commercial guys are killing this and that, and yada, yada yada. But, you know, you don't really have. You know, people don't read the newspaper anymore.

[00:56:45] **Tim Caniff:** They're not hardly printed anymore, but yeah, there's still, you know, people don't really actually see what we're actually doing so much. But, you know, a lot of it, you know, we're on the water. Actually, back in the day before the net ban, you'd see, you know, you'd run down the bay and fish and you'd see fishermen, you know they'd be checking you out.

[00:57:05] **Tim Caniff:** So, that style fishing, you know, has kind of gone away anymore. Guys are in little small cast net boats. You're not, you know, have a lot of gear in the water per se. So there's still some interaction with sport fishermen on the water. But, you know, generally we're, you know, sticking by the book and, trying to catch what we can and, you know, legally and stick with the regulations.

[00:57:34] **Tina Bucuvalas:** So do you think the regulations are coming along to be being fairly, being reasonably.

[00:57:41] **Tim Caniff:** Regulations these days, like I said, the bait fishing is not under too much regulation. We've gotta be so far offshore. They don't really, quantify us on our, how much catch we can have or sort of thing.

[00:57:59] **Tim Caniff:** But, different industries like crabbin and they're, they shorten that season down a little bit, which I think is probably good actually. General, it used to seem like the board would actually have their mind made up. You'd have a hundred guys saying, oh look, this is not the problem. But, you know, they tell the, you know, the commission about it and they'd still, you know, go the other way for it.

[00:58:24] **Tim Caniff:** So, I see on TV PBS, they kind of cover some of those commission meetings that are talking about blue crabs and you know, things you don't even think about. There's like a turtle, you know, some kind of turtle harvest of people are, you know, people who do that have their concerns and, you know, it seems like they're, taking care of the regulations pretty good.

[00:58:45] **Tim Caniff:** Mullet, you know, they're, you know, they want to keep the fish on ice, you know, they're trying to, you know, be particular about that, which is good. They really can't regulate it too much more. I mean, they've got a, a tight little, you know, tight little, you know, there's no gill netting per se, so you can only do so much, on their little trip there.

[00:59:09] **Tim Caniff:** For the most part, I, from what I see, you know, like I'm not involved with every fishery, but seems like things are going okay.

[00:59:21] **Tina Bucuvalas:** Anything else?

[Interjection] **Kristin Sweeting:** Nope.

[00:59:22] **Tim Caniff:** That's it for me. Okay, how'd I do?

[00:59:26] **Tina Bucuvalas:** You did, you did great.

[Interjection] **Kristin Sweeting:** Thank you so much.