

Interview with Jim Manoha on 8/25/99
Tape 1 Side A

CL: So besides the coast over to the boundary of the Park, have you also fished in the Park area?

JM: Yeah, I fished the whole coastline all the way to Pohiki.

CL: Oh, okay, great. Well let's talk first about this area over to the coast and then over to the park boundary and then talk about the Park area too. So you say you've come in by boat. You have a boat yourself?

JM: Yes.

CL: Small boat, big boat?

JM: Yeah, it's a 20 foot boat, power boat.

CL: And so what do you do? Do you anchor?

JM: I anchor yeah, or depending on how many people I have with me. But I primarily just spear fish and pick opihi. Those are my two.

CL: And is there only certain places that you would go for spear fishing?

JM: There's places that are better than others but primarily the whole coast is pretty decent, depending on the type of fish that I'm after.

CL: Are you going for home use or commercial?

JM: Commercial.

CL: Okay. And what kind of fish do you go for with spearing?

JM: Probably the biggest market is for mempachi. Also for uhus and kumus.

CL: How do you sell em then? Can you do it here in Ka'u or do you have to take em in?

JM: I sell some, before Sure Save folded, I was selling a lot of fish to them and also to, I ship out to Oahu, China Town. It's been a while since I've done that. They were having problems with their market too. And then I sell some around town too.

CL: So you were saying about selling the fish that you spear fish for. Are you still selling to China Town?

JM: No. I haven't sold to them in a while.

CL: So right now it's mostly just around town.

JM: Yes, that's what it is right now. And the water's been so rough on this side that I haven't been able to go too often this past year also.

CL: Do you go out of Punalu'u?

JM: Yeah.

CL: You ever go out anywhere else?

JM: Last year I was going out of Pohiki a lot and coming back into the Park from Pohiki.

CL: So if you go out for spear fishing, do you go for opihi at the same time or is that separate trips?

JM: Opihi is just depends on the tide. I've done both on the same trip but usually it's one or the other.

CL: And if you're going for opihi, is that also for commercial?

JM: Yes.

CL: Do you go with other guys when you go for opihi?

JM: I have gone with other people, yeah before.

CL: Not always.

JM: Not always, no.

CL: So as far as opihi, let's say from this, do you know where the Great Crack comes out?

JM: Yes.

CL: From that area on to the Park boundary, would you say you could pound opihi pretty much all the way along?

JM: There is from the Great Crack to the boundary about, there's four places in-between there that I regularly will go to that the... it's about pretty good just because you have a good place to anchor the boat, you have a good place that you can, a safe place that you can get in and out from.

CL: You swim in and out.

JM: Yeah. And also that the opihi grounds are pretty good there.

It's not real cliffy where there's no place to run and hide from waves.

CL: Do you think you could show me where those are, approximately?

JM: Okay. Right here where the caves are there is a place around there [marked a on the Pahala Quad]. And then, I'm not real familiar with these names here.

CL: You know there's this place called, well that's close to there I guess, the Double Drop they call.

JM: The Double Drop is okay. There's roads that go there so I don't usually go there very often cause the people that come from shore, I let them have that place first where they usually get it. Right around inside, in here [marked b on the Pahala Quad], there's a couple of good spots. It's about half way in. And past the cross, in here is pretty good [marked c on Pahala Quad]. And then just before the boundary [marked d on Pahala Quad], that whole stretch there, there's two places you can go in and out. I don't know exactly where they are but, with these bays. But I can think of just off hand, there's four places in there that I regularly will go to.

CL: So the place near the cross, it's on the Puna side?

JM: Puna side of the cross. They're all pretty good in here because a lot of the places, if somebody wants to come from shore, they have to climb down with a rope or a line and they're not real easy accessible places.

CL: Yeah, I was told by other people that once you get past, maybe a certain ways, then it gets really hard. You have to climb down with rope and all that. And then, is there any particular places in this stretch that you would choose to dive?

JM: Pretty much from Kamehame, back this way is all good, all the way to the border [of the park].

CL: And with that too, you have to anchor?

JM: Yes, you have to anchor. Unless there's somebody who stays on the boat. If it's left alone, then I anchor it.

CL: And is there places where you wouldn't be able to anchor?

JM: It's all pretty much weather permitting yeah. You kind of pick and choose your spot according to the weather. If it's windy or rough, then you have to find a bay. Like Polima Point offers pretty good protection from the trades. And also right at Kamehame. Those are the closer ones. It's really depending on

the weather, how you pick your spot. There's a lot of places that the, like by Kamehame is not too bad cause there's the water's pretty deep. It gets deep quick on the outside so your swells aren't as bad over there usually. Compared to some of the other places where it's more of a direct hit.

CL: And also I guess from Kamehame you're protected from the trades more too yeah?

JM: Yep.

CL: This [map] is going into the Park now. Over to, Halape is over here. You know Halape.

JM: Yes.

CL: So I don't know how you would orient yourself around here. Do you know this place they call Waiwelawela?

JM: I don't know it by that name but right past the boundary there's this bay that goes in here. I don't do much inside there, there's not that much spear fishing and the shoreline is real rough. So it's not a very good place. There's not any long stretches where you can pick opihi. There's just short little areas. So that I don't do too much. Out here where these small points are, by the [K_`_`] ruins, there's some good places in there. I do go there a lot and also Papalehau. I don't know what this area here is called, but. Stone In The Water?

CL: Well Stone In The Water I think is Papalehau because there's a little hat-shaped island there.

JM: Papalehau is right past the Stone In The Water I think. That's the place we've been calling Papalehau now. Whether or not it's the accurate.

CL: Well I don't know. I hear people say Stone In The Water.

JM: It doesn't look like a hat though really. Not to me anyway.

CL: It's a steep island off Papalehau, that what we talking about?

JM: Yeah.

CL: Okay, that's Papalehau. And then it should be these ruins are a ways, I don't know how far that is. Maybe like half a mile.

JM: That sounds about right I guess, yeah. All in that general area.

CL: So that little island is what you folks call Stone In The Water.

JM: Yeah.

CL: I figured it was because...

JM: That's the only one that really sticks out.

CL: You said that these little points [at K_`_`_] were good.

JM: Yeah, these are pretty good. Inside here [Waiwelawela side] I've never found too much. I don't go there very often.

CL: And Papalehau you go.

JM: Yeah, there we go a lot.

CL: And what about spear fishing. Are they good for spear fishing?

JM: Papalehau is good. I don't know how it is, where it is on this map, but after Papalehau it gets kind of sheer cliffs again for about I would say another half a mile to a mile or so. Just a guess. And over there is not too good for spear fishing or picking opihi just because of the terrain, on the shoreline and in the water. But once you pass those high cliffs, and I don't know where it is here on your map...

CL: I think you have to get almost all the way up to `Opihinehe before you get past the...

JM: And then it gets real good again. In here is excellent all the way. All the way down to Halape. There's a couple more places, I guess that would be here. This is another high cliff eh. Just before Halape Is that...

CL: They call it Hilina Pali. It's not really, but that's what they call it.

JM: That's what they call it. Just before there is real good again.

CL: Yeah, you see a shed [Ka`aha shed] up here yeah?

JM: Yeah, by the shack. Right.

CL: Cause there's like a little bay there. So it's low. Yeah, right about where the shed is, it gets lower. So that's where you like go.

JM: That's where it's good too. However I don't make it down

there too often now. See what usually happens is when the water gets nice, you tend to hit the closer places first and work your way going that way. By time you start reaching down here, it's getting rough again. And the same goes for when I was going from Pohiki, you come back and work the areas going this way. And by the time you get down somewhere in the middle here it starts getting rough.

CL: During the day you mean.

JM: No, no. Over a series of days. Like say it stays nice for a week, well that's maybe five places that you can go and take up most of your day in one place.

CL: Okay, so taking maybe five days

JM: Before you start getting down in here.

CL: If you're pounding opihi like that, would you give a place a rest before you went back there?

JM: Oh yeah. Like I said, the weather pretty much keeps everybody in check as far as going down. I would say you get to go to one place, if you're lucky you get to go there once a year or so. And you can pretty much tell if somebody's been there or not. If you get on the rocks and it looks like somebody's been there, there's no sense sticking around. You might as well go somewhere else where there's going to be lots of game. But I would say that mostly the weather keeps, Mother Nature keeps a pretty good eye on things there.

CL: Good.

JM: Yeah it is. Guys complain about the ramps and stuff but it's kind of good because they keep outsiders out too.

CL: Well it's the same like Pohiki, a lot of people don't like to go Pohiki because if you don't know it

JM: Lose your boat.

CL: That's right. Even people that know it. Like Ula, I don't know if you know Kuahiwinui.

JM: I don't know Ula, no.

CL: He died.

JM: Was that the canoe?

CL: Boat.

JM: Yeah was a boat but was that the one he was either escorting or going...

CL: I think he was escorting. And he fished out of that place for years and years.

JM: Yeah, it's pretty unforgiving. To say the least.

CL: So if you go out of Punalu'u, have you ever gone as far as Halape from Punalu'u?

JM: Yeah. That's about the farthest I go from Punalu'u.

CL: You go for opihi there too? Have you gone?

JM: I haven't picked opihi at Halape. Done some throw netting and a lot of diving there but I haven't picked opihi there. There's so much back here [Punalu'u side]. There's not a whole lot of competition picking opihi there on this coastline. But there is a lot of competition, or more competition diving. A lot of times to dive you gotta end up going a little farther. But to pick opihi, it's loaded with opihi on the coast.

CL: Yeah, that surprises me. I guess I just haven't talked to anybody who's been diving. And that's probably because I haven't gotten hold of many guys who go in by boat. In most of the, I guess it's just different people. The crowd that knows the shore fisherman, they don't know the boat fisherman.

JM: Right.

CL: And I don't think from Kalapana side, I don't think any of those folks go diving.

JM: Not too many divers there. When I was diving out of there, there was a couple guys, you know Obed Kuahiwinui? Did you talk to him?

CL: I haven't.

JM: I don't know how he's related to the guy who died but.

CL: Yeah, same family I'm sure.

JM: Obed would take me out on the boat and bring me down this way and also Steve Fowler, the one armed guy.

CL: I guess I didn't talk to either one of them because it's the Kalapana folks that I've talked to and Obed would be from Opihikao. Let's see what else I can ask you. Did you learn about this coast from somebody or just start?

JM: Yeah, I mean over time I've went, I've learned a little more about the coast I guess. But nobody in particular. It's not like you sit down with somebody and discuss the coastline. But you go with different people and everybody's got their favorite spot so when you go you kind of learn a little bit more about their places and what they know about the place. And it works the same way the other way too.

CL: Teaching them. Yeah. I guess if you're not going by foot then you'd never be using water holes.

JM: No, actually I was looking at your map here. I don't know where those water holes are.

CL: Yeah and they're brackish water so not everybody wants to use them anyway, except for washing off. The one at Halape is a good one. That's probably the best one. Did you go throw netting anywhere besides Halape?

JM: Inside the Park no. On the outside of the Park. I don't remember throwing net inside here anywhere, but outside of the Park, yeah there's some. There's some flat areas between Kamehame and Palima that I've been over there. I don't throw net too often, just once in while. It's been years since I've done that. More or less it'd be like I'd be picking opihi and come across a moi hole and come back with a net another day or something like that. So I'd bring my bag. I know a lot of guys go all the way down to Halape to throw net. I see people that do that.

CL: Oh from Ka'u side,

JM: Yeah. I've never done that though.

CL: I thought you told me you went

JM: Not throw net, just spear fishing at Halape.

CL: Oh okay. Then on the [other map], if we go from Halape east. Do you know Keauhou?

JM: I'm less familiar with that area. When I was diving out of Pohiki, I was going with Obed and Steve Fowler and they kind of had their own names for every place. So I'm not real familiar with land marks even on that side. There was a place, there was somewhere in between Apua and, there's a goat pen.

CL: Oh the goat pen is right here.

JM: Oh yeah, goat corral. So I did a lot of diving from here back this way.

CL: Toward Apua.

JM: And then Ka`ena, like I said, I'm not too familiar with the names.

CL: You know where Keauhou is?

JM: I know where Keauhou is.

CL: Did you go diving there though?

JM: I've been diving in Keauhou yeah, couple of times, two or three times. In the neighborhood there. Yeah. It was pretty good. That time I went from Keauhou, the last couple of times, I went with a guy on his boat. It's a little bigger boat. We went from Punalu'u. I don't think I came back to Keauhou from Pohiki. But that was a long ride. There was a lot of fish there.

CL: There's another place that's famous, they call Twenty Minutes. That's

JM: Never heard of it.

CL: I don't know whether you'd go diving there or not but it's a really good place for pole fishing. And there's a submerged crater there. I wonder if you might have gone there. It's, well from the goat corral, and then you know where the flow is gone to now?

JM: The new flow?

CL: Yeah. It's probably about half way. Well actually you can see where the road comes.

JM: Right where the road reaches the bottom yeah.

CL: So just a little bit before that. It's a twenty minutes walk. That's why they call it Twenty Minutes. I don't know if you might have ever gone diving there.

JM: I don't know. I don't remember. There was a couple of places we went from where the flow, near the flow back Ka'u side of that, that were pretty good. I don't know the names though. But I know you could see the cars passing by.

CL: Yeah and high pali, pretty high pali yeah.

JM: And a pretty high pali.

CL: Yeah cause it's all high in here. Til you get to the goat corral pretty much.

JM: Have you been along the coastline here?

CL: I know it pretty well as far as Apua and then from Apua I haven't, well I've walked but not along the coast. I've gone to Keauhou and I've gone to Halape. But the trail goes inland here so I didn't go along the coast.

JM: What shape is the trail in?

CL: In here? It's good. It's a great place to go. Keauhou, I suppose that's the best place. Keauhou and Halape are probably the best places to camp, cause they got trees.

JM: Right a break from the lava.

CL: I guess the other question is, what do you think about, this is not a problem for you access into this area but some folks have been concerned about being able to keep access from the highway down to here, to get access. And about controlling who comes in too. I suppose that could matter to you too because

JM: Well, I mean, I never really, you kinda had to know somebody to get access in there anyway. So it's never been a problem for me. I just go when the water's good. I guess if the National Park takes over, then it could be a problem for some people yeah.

CL: Well they're thinking about putting a road in along here which would give access to the coast. And then probably station a ranger down there.

JM: When are they talking about doing this?

CL: Oh it'll be a few years I suppose, yeah. Not right away. Cause I understand people do end up down there with four wheel drive. Drive over the ruins.

JM: I guess I've seen trucks. There's some guys in the past who were going down with the motorcycles. I don't know where they were coming in from but I could see the motorcycles parked on the top. And down in this area I guess.

CL: Well they were probably coming in along that,

JM: I think through the macadamia nuts.

CL: Yeah, there's a road from just below Fontes place. That's the Park's access road actually. And they blocked it with a berm. So it was hard for vehicles to go down but then motorcycles could, yeah. And I hear that people want to go down there for ulua. Especially the Big Island Casting Club. Well I can't think of anything else to ask you.

I guess maybe, who else can you think of that goes along

here by boat to dive or to pick opihi that I talk to?

JM: Boats that go diving, most of the guys are from Kona, the commercial guys anyway. There's one guy (end of interview)

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