
Jennifer Stock: Good afternoon everyone! You're listening to Ocean Currents. My name is Jennifer Stock and I bring this show to KWMR once a month where we dive into the big blue and bring the ocean to your community radio station. We focus on what is happening out there on our blue planet, learning about discoveries, explorations, research, ocean policy and ways for us land based folks to get involved. This show, Ocean Currents, is the first Monday of every month and is part of the West Marin Matters series on Mondays at 1.

So, today I am quite pleased to welcome Ed Ueber to the KWMR studio. Ed has recently retired from a long career with the sea, although many that know him find it hard to believe that Ed can retire as he has been working tirelessly and passionately and remains committed. I met Ed through the sanctuary program a few years ago and Ed actually hired me to work for Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary. So, I'm indebted to Ed for that. Thank you very much and as soon as I started with the sanctuary, I knew this was an interesting person and I'm so happy to bring him into the studio today. So, Ed, welcome and thanks for joining us today.

Ed Ueber: Thank you. It was my pleasure to hire you.

Jennifer Stock: Thank you. So, Ed was a navigator. Ed is an East Coast native, by the way--Brooklyn. You'll hear that pretty soon in his wonderful accent, but, Ed, what first drew you to the ocean as a basis for your career?

Ed Ueber: I was always interested in the ocean. We lived right by the Long Island Sound and also, the Hellgate. My granddad was a great fisherman and we used to go every day to the ocean to swim or to fish or to clam or to crab all my life.

Jennifer Stock: It got in your blood.

Ed Ueber: Yeah, I think it does get in your blood.

Jennifer Stock: Yeah, I'm from New York, too and it got in my blood. You were a navigator in the Merchant Marines as a 3rd and 2nd officer. You were a navigator in the Navy on nuclear and conventional submarines traveling to all parts all over the world. You also worked as a shipwright in Mystic, Connecticut at a wooden boat building shop. You also attended the University of Rhode Island and earned a Masters in fisheries economics and was also a fisheries economist with the National Marine Fisheries service.

While you were traveling to ports around the world, what perceptions did you pick up on other countries' relationship with the ocean? Maybe talk a little bit about your experience in the submarines.

Ed Ueber:

Oh, submarines were very different because we didn't let people see us. We tried to hide. It was stealth...the proper people...and we always used to say there are two types of ships: submarines and targets and what you'd find though when you came into port is that many areas, it's incredible beauty and importance people played to the ocean, yet a very disrespectful attitude to how they treated it. They'd say, "Oh, fish is so important in our life," and then they'd throw their wasted petroleum products overboard and the sixties, when I started in '59 sailing professionally, there were a lot of beautiful places I went that were polluted and fish that people would say, "Oh yeah! That's a big one," and they'd show me a twelve inch fish that I'd find out later that they used to land 20 pounders of that species, but they hadn't seen any for 10, 15 years.

So, I think it was a mix because the people didn't really understand the total important of the ocean to humans.

Jennifer Stock:

So, some of those experiences, did those effect you later when you got into management with the sanctuaries and fisheries?

Ed Ueber:

I think they effected my in a lot of ways. I'd love to go to places which hadn't been spoiled and then I realized, well, there's no reason to spoil them. You should be able to go to San Francisco Bay and enjoy the clean, beautiful water and I used to swim a lot in San Francisco Bay and we need to do that. We need to regain the importance of the ocean not only the fact that we love to live by it, but that we effect it and when we effect it, it effects us and sometimes in very, very negative ways.

Jennifer Stock:

What was it like being a navigator in the Navy? What kind of training did you have to do that?

Ed Ueber:

I went to a special school for submarine navigation and I went to three special school, actually. I liked them and I did well in them. You had to be fairly smart. I don't know how I made it sometimes, but I made it and we were on the cutting edge. I used one of the first computers ever developed in 1961 and it was three by eight foot panels or boxes full of electronics and it told you one thing: your latitude. Then you had to reset all the dials and knobs and it would tell you your longitude and when I see the children and everybody walking around with their little computer, realize it's

like 50 times more powerful than these huge boxes we used to have. It's pretty interesting, you know?

Jennifer Stock:

Wow. So, when you came over here to California, you started working for the National Marine Fisheries Service and you were helping to develop under-utilized fisheries looking for potential markets. What were some of the fisheries that you were looking at and how do you go about seeking out if it can be a potential market?

Ed Ueber:

Well, in the 70's, in the 60's, and in the 50's, you'd read an article about every five years, "The Oceans are the food source for the world," and then when you looked at the American diet at that time, I think we were eating one eighth or one tenth of what the Japanese ate, one fifth of what the people in Europe were eating because we wanted white fish that were filleted and no bones ever, no skin ever.

Jennifer Stock:

Had to be perfect.

Ed Ueber:

Yeah, yeah and no fish flavor. Oh, you didn't want to have a taste like fish because, I don't know why, and so, I did my thesis on sardines in Brazil and I got to love sardines and mackerel and these fish that were kind of throwaway fish. The fishermen would often catch large numbers of them and throw them away and they'd be dead and it was a total waste and I felt that it'd be great if other people utilized them and I was really fortunate. I worked for a man named Suzikato and he was Japanese-Hawaiian and he ate all the critters out of the ocean and he said, "We can improve the diets of people and the incomes of fishermen and not really hurt the ocean very much if we did it properly."

Jennifer Stock:

He was responsible for developing the sea urchin fishery, right?

Ed Ueber:

Yes, and he and I worked on hook and line, what we call a Portuguese long lone, we developed a technique that, I think, now is banned.

Jennifer Stock:

And why is that?

Ed Ueber:

Well, it was very effective. It was really a good technique and it really pinpointed rockfish and you could alter your hook size and catch pretty much anything you wanted and instead of it ever getting really regulated properly, it wound up getting thrown out and I worked in gill nets for a number of years because it's a very selective fishery if it's fished properly, but when people abuse the

fishery, then it does very bad damage and the other part is, if you don't have a reasonable feeling as a fisherman that you're going to be arrested and really have a severe penalty, people pretty soon were abusing certain types of equipment and where they fished and how they fished.

Jennifer Stock: And was the number of these nets as well a contributing factor to the abuse, you might say?

Ed Ueber: Always...numbers important, and marginality. The harder the fishermen are affected by the current market or the lack of fish to sell in the market, the more likely they are to want to fish harder, not less, and to fish at times where it's probably not as safe for them and then that's why fishing is the most dangerous occupation in America and the fisherman is just a man, usually, but we've had some wonderful female fishing people, who wants to actually make enough money to feed his family and enjoys being out on the water and things and they're often put in untenable positions and we all suffer and current state of our fisheries on the coast, when you realize we have thousands and hundreds of thousands of tons of fish out there that we can't fish and if we do fish for some of them, we can't get people to buy them and they're delicious.

Jennifer Stock: Yeah. Very complicated. When you were with the National Marine Fisheries Service, you sat on the Pacific Fisheries Management Council. This is the body that's responsible for managing fisheries in Federal Waters in the United States. What was that like?

Ed Ueber: It was very interesting. I've been asked to write a book and so, I actually have started a chapter. So, I'm going back and thinking about it. The first couple of years, it was people trying to do the right thing. I really believe that. The fishermen, the scientists, the people on the council and as money and politics got involved, it became much more of a political institution and it wasn't until the fishermen kind of stepped forward in the late nineties and I was no longer involved at that time, and they put in to the law things about protecting the habitat and protecting stocks that were being caught in concurrently with others.

I have to credit the fishermen with really trying to protect their livelihood, but at the same time protecting the ocean.

Jennifer Stock: Yeah, I mean, they probably have more interest in it than anybody to protect it.

Ed Ueber: They certainly do!

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- Jennifer Stock:* No ocean, no fish, no money. Your career evolved from one of developing harvests for economic benefit to one of conservation. What drew you to the National Marine Sanctuaries and the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary?
- Ed Ueber:* 1980, '79 and '80, I was on the original committee to set up the Gulf of the Farallones. Cal Pillsbury was with the California Coastal Commission. She put together a group of us and there were about 13 of us and I always thought it had the chance to accomplish what I wanted, which was get the benefit from the ocean, but not harm the ocean, but it was very poorly funded. I think we had when I became the manager in 1990 of the Gulf of the Farallones, we had seven sanctuaries and I think our total budget was 3.2 million.
- Jennifer Stock:* It's about the same still, now.
- Ed Ueber:* It's worse now, I think, because we have much more sanctuaries. People expect a lot more and there's a lot more to do now because there's a lot more threats.
- Jennifer Stock:* Interesting. So, were you involved with the original designation at the time?
- Ed Ueber:* Oh yes, both Cordell and Gulf of the Farallones.
- Jennifer Stock:* That's right, I should mention, Ed was the superintendent of both Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary. For 15 years of the sanctuary you were manager of Cordell Bank. It took 15 years before they even funded Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary.
- Ed Ueber:* It was always one of my big complaints because I also managed the northern third of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary from its inception in '92 until when I left in '04. So, 2004. So, that was twelve years. They did things and then they did them for political reasons and then, when it came time to pay for their political largess, they just kind of said, "Oh, Cordell Bank. Who cares? It's out there and it's out there."
- Jennifer Stock:* The tide is changing on that. I think people do care a lot more now. You probably have seen that, especially with a lot of your work. Well, while you were...by the way, for those tuning in, I'm talking with Ed Ueber who is the former Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary superintendent and has recently retired and we're talking a little bit about his career now

with sanctuaries. Around here, you are well-known for your stance on Route 1. We have to talk about it and the slide that happened just north of Stinson Beach. Your position as a superintendent was to protect the habitat and you told Caltrans that they could not dump slide materials in the ocean and several people saw this as an important habitat conservation measure, but others were livid with the delay. How did you handle this conflict?

Ed Ueber:

Well, it was very interesting because I had been in the fire in the council. I was the chairman of the ground fish team and so, I had been used to people writing things about stupid Ed and I even started believing some of them, I think, but I looked at the data that I had and it wasn't very good, but it showed me that when people dump things in the ocean in the rocky inter-tidal habitat, the damage is long-term. I'm not talking 5, 10 years, I'm talking 30 years later, the re-vegetation and the species diversity, the bio-densities, are less than 20 percent of maybe, what they were originally and so, as I read the act and the law, I just couldn't allow it to happen because it was going to go into the sanitary. It was right on the border of this sanctuary.

There wouldn't have been allowed....slide ranch...it wouldn't have been allowed, low-tree slide is what they called it. It wouldn't have been allowed if it had been in the sanctuary, but it was right on the border. It was a mile and three quarters from the sanctuary and so, I said, "No. What I read is that the material go three and a half miles." Well, I was called an environmental Nazi, I was pig-headed environmental dummy. I'm talking about the front page of the chronicle. The kids would, one time, there was a whole bunch of people met and everybody went one way and I seemed to go the other way and they wrote in the paper that I was pig-headed and my wife said, "How many people were there?" And I said, "Maybe 80 or 90 people?" "And you were the only one on the other side," she said. And I said, "Yes, I was." And she said, "And how much did they get paid," and I said, "I don't know. They all got paid to be there." And she said, "I bet it cost \$10,000. I would have told them you were pig-headed for \$1000."

So, it was, you know, that type of thing, but the thing I learned then was as a government official, you can't respond. You sit there and they write whatever they want and no matter what you say, you can't say anything and, you know, I look at Point Reyes today and I see things being written about the superintendent out here and the scientists out here, Sarah Allen, and I say, "Gee. They can't go back and refute what's being said," and it's just not fair to people, you know? And people in Point Reyes Station were

incredibly kind to me. One of the reasons I came back, I wanted to thank them on the program, but I remember walking in to the restaurant over here, and a lot of people didn't agree with me, but I was thick-headed and they stood up and applaud when I walked in.

Jennifer Stock: Wow. I think people here care about these resources and understand the value of that and appreciate you being the one to stand up to it.

Ed Ueber: Yeah. And I think you have to....I'll bring it back to what's happening in Point Reyes. You have to realize that these are people of high integrity and they're slandered, sometimes, or statements are made about them that are totally untrue. You have to be....people out here are kinder than that and they know better than that and I hope this thing turns around because these people are trying to protect our national park, not someone's commercial interest and so that's important.

Jennifer Stock: That's very important to remember. You've been involved, going back to some other marine protection areas that you worked in, you've been involved in a lot of oil spill responses in your time here in the greater Bay area. What have you gleaned from these command responses and what have you learned and what have you passed on to Maria Brown and Dan Howard, your successors for their current role as oil spills may and will come about in the future?

Ed Ueber: Well, the basic thing is to always be prepared and we have beach watch, we have the programs that Cordell is doing, looking at the assessment of animals and critters, and so, you have to be prepared, but what that requires is money. So, you have to take a very minuscule budget and set aside x amount for something that you hope never occurs. It's very hard to do, especially when you have the public saying we need this over here or we'd like a visitors center over there and you know, "Well, I could get away for 45 years without monitoring these animals." You can't do that. You have to make that commitment and then, the other thing, the lessons I've learned is the chain of command, the incident command center must have the environmental responsible people for the area that the oil spill is in to be full members of the incident command, right? Well, last four or five years they tried to push them out.

Cape Mohegan spill and before when I was working with them or even the Lukenbach, we'd worked on a program and this is before 9/11 and the Coast Guard was just wonderful, but all of a sudden,

after 9/11 they have a different major thrust, which is the protection of our harbors and ports and people and so, they haven't been as receptive to sharing the responsibility of incident command with the environmental community and I think we all need to make sure that they get back to the way they were before because one, it will help them, but two, it will help us and the ocean.

Jennifer Stock:

I have a little clip here from a friend of yours that you've worked closely with here in the National Marine Sanctuary Program. Let's take a listen here and see what Richard Charter has to say about Ed Ueber.

Richard Charter:

...and I've known Ed Ueber for almost a quarter of a century and in every region, there is always a person who affects certain outcomes. In other words, the results in a historical perspective are changed by that person and Ed Ueber is one of those people and the places that he had helped to save and the outcomes he has helped to favorably influence, there are too many to recount in one interview, but the one most sticks in my mind and for which I think he will be fondly remembered always has to do with a fragile estuary called the Estero Americano on the coast of Sonoma and Marin County. In fact, it serves as the Sonoma and Marin County line. It's unique in all of the world and no one has ever explained to the public or to local officials in the city of Santa Rose more accurately why the Estero Americano is so important and so unique than Ed Ueber and my fondest memory of him is in a little valley called Deer Valley in Southern Sonoma County at an event that was held for a lot of the agricultural neighbors and a lot of the folks who lived in the area put on by, basically, the local dairy folks.

Ed Ueber is standing on the stage that is made out of two layers of straw bales with an audience of probably 100 people sitting on straw bales waiting for the music to resume and Ed Ueber is standing up there on a straw bale explaining how the Estero Americano estuary is unique on the entire planet and doing it in a way that any person could understand, plain English, but complicated science translated for the layperson why the rich upwelling system off the Sonoma Coast and the Mendocino Coast was feeding this unique marine food chain or inter-tidal food chain in that estuary and how that was the food source and a nursery area for so much of the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary and that particular talk, everyone who was there was absolutely blown away by how compelling that presentation was.

It was just absolutely one of the most miraculous advocacy types of presentations I've ever heard for building the case for saving a place that could never be replaced if it was destroyed. The Estero Americano, of course, through this talk and through a lot of other efforts by a group called Friends of the Esteros and several different organizations, did not become the conduit for the affluent from the city of Santa Rosa's wastewater treatment plant to the ocean and now resides safely in the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary. That is changing history, changing an outcome, and that is Ed Ueber.

Jennifer Stock: Thank you.....So, is the Estero safe today?

Ed Ueber: No, it's not. Every couple of years Santa Rosa seems to get new people who forget how important it is and expediency just like offshore oil, all of a sudden, we have to pay a dollar more for fuel and we're saying let's drill the ocean. These are wrong responses. Let's see what we can do to not to have to drill the ocean. Let's see what we can do to not to have to pollute the Esteros. We should come up with solutions which don't abdicate our responsibility to protect these wonderful wildlife and our source of oxygen and food and transport and all these other things.

Jennifer Stock: It seems the issues are coming faster and faster with less people on the ground to be able to respond like you did on that opportunity in being able to convince everybody on the spot. So, we need some more folks like you back in the field here, Ed. So, we're coming up pretty soon at 1:30, but I'll try to squeeze this question in. When you came over from fisheries, you mentioned that you were thinking coming into the sanctuaries that is would be a nice balance of being able to still benefit from the harvest of fish and also protect habitats within sanctuaries. You have always managed to maintain a very good relationship with the fishing community, but one would think that the fisheries community might see you more on the conservation end and they may be worried. How did you manage to keep this relationship balanced in being friends with the fishing community, but also being on the end of the sanctuaries that are looking to help protect the habitats more?

Ed Ueber: Well, I think we established...I went out on the boats with the fishermen. There's not one fishery that I haven't commercially and recreationally fished. I don't take fish or anything. I remember being on one boat and I got a check in the mail for my share and I had to return and they said, "No one would know." But, you go out and you work with these people and you find, like I said before, they're people trying to make a living and we want to maintain

local fisheries that are sustainable and the way to do that is to make sure that you're protecting the environment and so, the fishermen, Zeke Raiders, a person with the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Association, we've been on the same side of fisheries conservation for 35 years and so, we need to remember that the fishermen have a stake in the health of the ocean and we all should have that stake.

Jennifer Stock:

What do you say about these international fisheries and these huge corporate fisheries coming in? It seems like our local fisheries are in threat...based on these huge corporations and how can we help protect these small community-based fisheries in these small towns?

Ed Ueber:

One of the things we should do is have truth in labeling. You shouldn't be able to bring in bright salmon. You should have to put down some way that you know where the fish is from and what the species is. That will tell you a lot. When you buy a fish that's been caught in Chile. You're just paying for gasoline. You might as well just give the money to the people in Saudi Arabia and stay at home and make bread because you're not doing anything for the environment. You're not doing anything for the fishermen. You're just paying for fuel, a lot of cost to go get it and then to ship it. If you're buying fish that's been caught 50, 80 miles away, it's not a big deal, but when you're buying fish caught 2,000 miles away or they've torn up the mangroves to raise shrimp because you like shrimp, think about what you're doing to the environment and think about the people who are doing it because the people in these far and away places are treated abysmally and ten years after the shrimp are gone in the mangroves because they polluted it so badly, these people will have to stay there. The person who made the money, he's in the Caribbean.

Jennifer Stock:

So, keeping it local is our message here. We did a show a couple months back on sustainable seafood purchasing and how to go about finding out how to do that. Well, we're going to take a short break and thanks so much for sticking with us here. We'll be back in just a moment. You're listening to KWMR 90.5 FM in Point Reyes Station and 89.7 in Bolinas. Please stay with us.

(Music)

Brian O'Neil:

Hi, I'm Brian O'Neil. I'm the superintendent for the Golden Gate National Parks and a very close colleague of Ed for many years and I think rather than sharing a story, I'll share a trait of Ed's. Ed is one of the greatest relationship builders that I've had the

privilege of knowing in my career. He just has the ability to be the common guy. He's the guy that prepares the fish and grills it and serves it and he's the guy that really knows that often that policymaking is the ability to connect with all diverse audiences. He has a wonderful ability to connect to people of all persuasions and to be very persuasive in terms of how he respects their point of view, how he educates them through that and as a result, brings support behind important issues that we address that are always controversial in the environmental arena.

Jennifer Stock: So, you worked with Brian O'Neil most recently right before you retired closely, huh?

Ed Ueber: Yeah. Actually, Brian is kind of like the nicest person to work with. When I took over the sanctuary, I had met Brian before I took over the sanctuary. We were involved a little bit with cleanup of the Loma Prieta earthquake and he has a dignity about him that's incredible, but he always gives you the bow and I think that's what he was doing and always treated me as though we were equal, even though if you look on the government hierarchy, he was way up there and he had more funds than the whole sanctuary program, I'll put it that way, and yet, he was always when Kofi Anon came, I got to sit down with Kofi Anon because Brian invited me as his guest. When Al Gore came, I went to the breakfast with Al Gore. When the president came, he made me the person to meet the president although he certainly, it was his park in his area. He certainly had the right. He was there also, but he made the president feel like I was the person that he was the guest of, rather than himself and I think he does that with everyone.

Jennifer Stock: That's wonderful. Well, you certainly are good at forging those relationships and making them strong, as well. I want to play this one more segment here because this is a good transition to the next part I want to talk about here. So, let's stand by for this.

Maria Brown: I'm Maria Brown and I'm the superintendent of the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary and one of my memorable moments with Ed Ueber, the previous superintendent, was when I first started working at the sanctuary a little over ten years ago and he was taking a reporter from the Los Angeles Times out to the Farallon Islands to do a story. He asked if I wanted to go along and I said, "Sure, I'd love to." So, we went up to Bodega Harbor and the sanctuary had a little boat.

It was a 27 foot Farallon and we get on the boat and it's a really foggy day. It's pea soup out there, but it's calm, the water is calm.

We get in the boat and it doesn't have any navigational equipment on it and we just started heading off out into the fog and I start thinking, "Am I crazy? Is he crazy? Are we going to survive this?" But I trusted Ed because of all of his experience on the sea. He definitely seemed to know what he was doing and talking about. So, after two and a half hours of seeing nothing but steely grey water and fog, all of a sudden these jagged peaks come out of the fog and we're there. We're at the north Farallones and there are stellar sea lions barking and he got us there and it ended up being a great day. It was crazy. I couldn't believe he could do it without navigational equipment and just a chart, but that's Ed.

Jennifer Stock: You have quite a fondness for the Farallon Islands.

Ed Ueber: I love 'em. They are wonderful.

Jennifer Stock: I heard we have a very good friend out there. It has a black shell. It can't talk and it has a big foot and it's stuck on the bottom of a rock somewhere. Can you tell us about this friend?

Ed Ueber: Well, I have a black abalone, which weren't supposed to be out there. Peter Pyle of PRBO, a bird biologist, showed me a black abalone out there one day and I said, "Well, there must be more." So, over the course of two or three years and many, many trips, I actually swam around the islands and went in to every cover and nook and cranny around the southeast Farallon Island and I found black abalone, which weren't supposed to be there and I actually had one that was huge. It was 8 and a quarter, I can't remember, it was roughly....that's incredible size for a black abalone. A five incher is considered big and I'll tell you where it is. It's right out in the ocean off of this big rock.

So, if anybody can find it and it was just...it's a magical place. It's outside of the realm. I remember when the current director for the National Marine Fisheries Service, he...or National Marine Sanctuary Program, he decided that he was going to have a weekly phone conversation. Well, when I was on the Farallon Island, he still wanted me to be on the phone and that was the last thing I wanted to be doing, listening to 20 people say nothing for two hours on the phone. So, I get the phone. I go down to the carpet shop, which was the only phone reception direct because you had to be direct in those days and I'd bring a little bit of bread or something and I'd start chumming up the seagulls so they would make all this noise and about five minutes into the conversation, he'd say, "If you can't get a clearer signal...it's so loud. Those birds

are so loud. You better hang up." I said, "Oh, alright." Then I'd stop feeding the seagulls.

Jennifer Stock: I gotta try that sometime. That's a good one. You were one of the few people that actually snorkel around the islands pretty regularly. What was it like?

Ed Ueber: It's captivating. Anything you could imagine for beauty...coral reefs are really incredible places to dive, but they're for wimps and they're for people who don't get the beauty...I mean, a coral reef...Cordell Bank, by the way, according to a professor at the University of California Berkeley, he said to me, "Temperate reefs produce biomass five to seven times greater than a coral reef," because they have this cold water and the flux and everything. You can see it.

You see three, four, five layers of algae. You see 5 or 6 different invertebrates, one on top of each other, abalone are being crusted with barnacles, barnacles will have something else, then there'll be tube worms on them. I mean, it's just magic that the water is very clear, usually. Sea lions are there. You have to watch out for some...there's some bigger toothed animals out there. I wouldn't do it now. When I used to do it, we didn't have as many white sharks as we do now, but I would...I know areas where you could snorkel where they're just beautiful.

Jennifer Stock: You think they come in that close?

Ed Ueber: Yeah. I've seen them that close.

Jennifer Stock: I'm hoping to bring on Rob Elliott some time in the next few months to talk about his experiences out there diving and we'll hear more about diving at the Farallones. If you could do it all again in your career with the sanctuary program or fisheries, is there any decision or moment or action that you would do differently?

Ed Ueber: Gee, I don't know. I can't remember all the things I did. I would...I worked long, long hours, 80 to 100 hours a week. I'd probably cut down.

Jennifer Stock: Is that a good recommendation to other people, would you say?

Ed Ueber: Yeah. I think it is. We need to start funding these sties like they're important to the people of America so that people don't have to work 60, 80 hours a week. By the way, you don't get other time in the government no matter what people think, you don't get them

anywhere at the level I was at. We need to start empowering our nation with the words that we keep on telling them. The ocean is important. The ocean is important and it is important, but we need to start getting funding at a level that shows it's importance. One rocket ship to anywhere is probably more money than we've ever had in the ocean programs, the National Marine Sanctuaries Program, since it's beginning and it's 30 years old. Come on, how important is it?

Jennifer Stock: Yep. The only ocean...it's the only agency that actually has responsibility for managing oceans and we know more about outer space than we do about our ocean. I keep telling people that and they don't get it even though the ocean sustains us. What do you feel is the greatest accomplishment you've made to protecting the ocean? This is a big question.

Ed Ueber: Yeah, I think it's making people aware that the ocean produces food and the ocean produces oxygen and once we've screwed with the ocean, it isn't like a land. You have a land dump, you put terrible things in it, you seal it up or whatever. By the time you realize the terrible things you've put in the ocean, they may be covering 200 million miles of water and it's too late. Once we get the temperature of the ocean up four or five degrees Celsius, it's way too late. We need to know that...the most important thing I could have done, I don't know if I was that effective...make people aware that the ocean is important to the survival of humans.

Jennifer Stock: Excellent. You couldn't have said it better, Ed. We need it. I'd like to just take a second here to thank you for sharing your stories. I feel like this could have been a three hour show today and your time and the incredible impact you've made in the sanctuary program, you've definitely been a model to all of us at Cordell and, you know, putting your foot down when it's time to put your foot down and I'll just share one thing that I appreciate about Ed. Number one, when it came to work at the sanctuary, the first day was like some fish barbecue and I was told, "Boy, you better like to eat if you like here.." and it sure was true.

Every other week there was some special event happening and Ed was cooking incredibly amazing food, but one of the things I appreciated too was that you walked the talk about environmental behaviors and there's no Styrofoam allowed in that building and I just thought that was so important because nobody believes that you actually have to do the things we say we're going to do and Ed would do those things and still does and I think those are incredible

other ways that you have led, maybe not so directly in sanctuary management, but being a real leader with making good decisions.

So, thank you for doing that, but thank you so much for coming in today. We're going to break in just a few minutes, come back to tell you a little bit about some of the albatross tagging. We've had a naming content going on. I've been receiving all of these amazing names and I wanted to definitely talk about that a little bit towards the end and Ed actually has some albatross stories of his own that I asked him if he could share, but we'll take a short break and we'll be back in just a moment.

(Music)

Jennifer Stock:

So, we were just talking with Ed Ueber, I still have him here, by the way, because Ed has some fun experiences with albatrosses that he had to share, but for those of you just hearing about this, we've had the Cordell Bank Sanctuary has had a black-footed albatross naming contest going on for the last week and we have been accepting nominations for naming some birds that are hopefully going to be tagged in the next week with satellite transmitters out at Cordell Bank, but we do have a caveat of that wonderful wind that we need to thank because it actually is creating quite a bit of productivity with upwelling, but it does prevent us from getting out on the water to tag the birds. So, that may be a little bit of an issue, but we do have the top eight names that were submitted and I wanted to share those with us today, but Ed, can you tell us some of your albatross stories because when you were in the Navy, you stopped at some of these remote islands where these birds breed before you even knew they came to California. Tell me a little bit about some of their funny behaviors.

Ed Ueber:

Well, I was in Midway in the Navy and it wasn't a place where people went ashore and I was the skipper of the motor launch because we had a dive club and it was not a big ship, but I one of the nine people then the dive club and the senior person and the boat handler and so, we had gone ashore and I'm watching these birds and I'm going, "God, they're beautiful," you know? You see them flying all the time when you're at sea and they're incredible. They seem not to move. I mean, they seem to be a part of the air and so, here they were coming into land and they need to spend a lot more time landing because they were just clumsy. I mean, they would just crash in. I saw one just land and smack right into a building.

I saw one land and start tumbling and go through a whole bunch of other ones and, you know, squabbles everywhere. Their mating dance is beautiful, of course, and intriguing how they ever developed that, but I was flabbergasted when I was told that they flew from Midway to Cordell Bank and the Gulf of the Farallones to eat. I mean, that's a long way for breakfast and I just think that maybe they should find a closer feeding area and practice their landing more often because they don't do well on landing.

Jennifer Stock:

They're quite beautiful when they land on the water, though. They put their landing gear out and they skid along the water and it looks like they belong there. Those are great. I dream to someday be able to visit those areas where they breed and watch those dance. So, here we go. Here are the names that we have selected and I'll just say that these are only if we actually get these tags on the birds. You can stay tuned at cordellbank.noaa.gov in the next week. We'll see what the weather allows us to do, but we've selected names in case we do get out and we'll see what we've got. So, the first one is Ibn Battuta and this one was submitted by Collette Armayo.

I know you know her, Ed. She's a beach watch volunteer with the Gulf of the Farallones and I liked this name that she selected because of her wonderful description that this is a long distance traveler making unbelievable long journeys covering great expanses on his journey and he actually did this all out of Tangier, Morocco in 1303 and this is way before any types of transportation. So, all by foot and maybe horse and other animals. He began his travels out of Morocco, went to Mecca when he was 20. Over the next thirty years, he traveled roughly 75,000 miles. I figure not likely to have been surpassed before the age of the steam engine, visiting somewhere around 44 modern countries and he's the only known medieval traveller who was known to have visited the lands of every Muslim ruler of his time. He traveled through several other continents as well and died in 1369 and I was pretty amazed by the distance covered and it was analogous to black footed albatross covering. So, Collette, you are number one with Ibn Battuta, a wonderful name. Hopefully we'll get to name it.

The second one was Fred Astaire from Tracy Gill who actually works with NOAA and based on the beautiful dances that these birds create and do on the islands when they're meeting each other, I thought that was a special name. The third one is Addison submitted by another local person here, Charles Gain in Vernus and he put down that, first of all, it's named after a person they know that travels all over the place in Nepal and what not, but I

liked the special story they included about their special memory of their own albatross visitation in 1977 when they were sailing from Hawaii to Seattle on a 73 foot ocean racer and when they sailed out of the southeast trade winds into the dead, flat, calm waters of the Pacific, they became dead in the water and the albatross that had been following them could no longer soar and just landed near them and they swam and got to visit this albatross before they were able to start moving.

So, I thought that was a pretty cool story. So, Addison... Charles Gain in Vernus, that's number 3. The fourth bird is Charles Lindbergh, submitted by Charles King, the first to fly across the Atlantic Ocean and managed to survive and this bird could be called Lindy for short. So, we'll see about that. The fifth one was submitted by Bob Wilson, an acting FIMSA executive right now and Gulf of the Farallones volunteer and he submitted Cordi, which is a combination of Cordell and Hawaii, linking the two areas this animal spends time. They actually spend time all the way over to Japan as well, but that was a nice combination of breeding and feeding areas. So, that was number five. Number six, this one just seemed to fit. Albert Ross. I don't know. It just sounded good to me. I liked it and that was submitted by Phil and Jean Warren. They are marine mammal center volunteers and they've come out to Cordell Bank several times.

Number 7 is Oski. Oski is a great part of California and University history. Many fans of Oski travel all over the world each year. So, Oski the albatross is another traveller from California and that was submitted by Ed Ricken, also a beach watch volunteer and then, number eight was Alb C.E.U. My version of "I'll be seeing you," submitted by Jack Onup. Very creative. I loved it. So, those were the names we chose for the albatross, the black-footed albatrosses that will hopefully be satellite tracked from Cordell Bank in the next year.

I want to thank everybody who submitted names because they're really fun to read. I wish I had time to read the rest of these. Great, creative thoughts. The purpose of the tagging project, by the way, we've talked about this in past shows, but there are some scientists from Hawaii Pacific University and a nonprofit group called Oikonos Ecosystem Knowledge that are interested in looking at the black-footed albatrosses area that they spend time on the high seas when they're not in breeding season. They call this the post-breeding season and there's not a lot known about where these birds spend time when they're not at their breeding sites and it's a

bird in pretty serious decline due to interactions with long-line fisheries and ingestion of plastics.

There's a lot of very good proactive work being done with the interactions with fisheries and trying to reduce that by catch, but by getting a better sense of where these birds are spending time, this group of scientists is hoping to figure out ways to help mitigate some of the declines these birds are facing. So, stay tuned. You can go to cordellbank.noaa.gov on the homepage and we'll have a link to the Oikonos website where they have a special race for a clean ocean where you can see the distance of the birds traveled each day.

You can see some of the birds from the previous tagging, which took place out at Kure Atoll earlier in the year at the beginning of the post-breeding area and see how they traveled and there will be a race everyday. So, let's keep our fingers crossed for good weather, reduce these winds just for a little bit so we can get out and see these birds out in the sanctuary and please do keep track of them and see where they're going and find out how you're connected to the albatross. Why are these birds so important? They are very important to our whole marine ecosystem.

Again, Ed, I want to say thanks again for being here and your wonderful contributions to ocean conservation. Is there any last words you'd like to say for people to get involved or what's their role?

Ed Ueber:

Yeah. Learn about the ocean. Support the ocean. I think my goal when I took the job, they asked me, I said, "I hope some day we won't need any sanctuaries," because I think every piece of the ocean should be treated like a sanctuary and Linn Woolsey's bill to expand the sanctuary is a marvelous opportunity to grant minimal types of protection to things that we depend on for our lives. So...and thank you for having me. I hired the right person. I can tell that.

Jennifer Stock:

Oh, good. Good, good. That's nice. If you'd like to hear this show again or other past Ocean Currents shows, we have all the shows archived on the Cordell Bank Sanctuary website, Cordell, C-O-R-D-E-L-L B-A-N-K, dot NOAA, N-O-A-A, dot G-O-V. You can also subscribe to a podcast there if you are so inclined to subscribe and hear all the shows, but until next time, tread lightly on the Earth and be well. Thank you for joining us.