

**Interview with Phil Sollins, 3:30 p.m., September 24, 1997 at Forestry Sciences Laboratory by Max Geier; Transcribed by Jeff Prater.**

*Phil Sollins received early exposure to ecological research through summer experiences working at Luquillo Experimental Forest in Puerto Rico, which eventually became an LTER site, during summers of his early years. Then he worked in the Eastern Deciduous Biome based in Oakridge, TN, before moving west to join the IBP Coniferous Forest Biome project in 1973. He then moved back and forth between the two main sites based in Seattle and OSU, before settling in Corvallis and OSU in 1975. His initial IBP duties were modeling nutrient cycling and from there he moved on to studies of soils, soil water biogeochemistry, and the DIRT experiment (Detrital Input and Redistribution Treatments), a long-term, multi-site experiment involving manipulations of forest litter delivery to soil to elucidate soil carbon and nitrogen dynamics.*

**Max Geier:** I'd like to start out with a little bit of background, your academic background, that kind of thing, and how you came to be involved here. You started out here OSU as faculty in 1977. Could you talk about the origins of that move, and your personal academic interest at that point to be here?

**Phil Sollins:** I'd just been trying to remember what I did since I left here. I think it was 1973. At that time, I was hired at the University of Washington to work on the Coniferous Forest Biome project. One of my jobs was to build models for the Andrews; the other half of my job was to help with the [Univ. of] Washington program], which was the other IBP site. I was spending half my time here working with the Andrews people, and about half my time working in Seattle, from about 1973 to 1975 or so. In '75 I moved down here full time, but continued to be paid by the University of Washington, and then in 1976, the appointment was made to switch over to OSU. Chuck Grier went up to U of W at that time. We did a switch. Chuck went up there, and I went up here. We actually swapped salaries. In fact, I started here in '73; it might have been '72.

**Geier:** How did you become involved in the IBP program in the first place?

**Sollins:** I was in graduate school at Oakridge National Laboratories working on my Ph.D. there, funded by the Eastern Deciduous Forest Biome, one of the other 5 or 6 U.S. IBP programs. Through that work I met Jerry Franklin, and I met Doug Chapman at the U of W, who was in charge of modeling for the whole program, and I met Dick Waring and Chuck Grier. I think that might be everybody I met from out here. No, I met Bill Mendelson, because he was a professor at Swarthmore where I did my undergraduate, and he was out here by then, and also Mike Newton, because he spent a sabbatical at Oakridge while I was a graduate student there. I had a bunch of contacts with the people out here about '69 or '70. Dick and Mike brought me out here to interview for a post-doc, I stayed at Mike Newton's house, interviewed, and was offered the post- doc and turned it down. I elected to stay at Oakridge instead.

**Geier:** Why was that?

**Sollins:** I just had a whole bunch of things I was working on there, and felt like I wanted to finish what I'd was doing. Oakridge offered a good deal - much money, so why not do it? Later, I became increasingly disenchanted with Oakridge and started to look for a number of options out here, and I discovered that there was a job available out here. At the same time, I wrote to Jerry Franklin and asked him if the previous offer was still available, and he said it was probably available as a half-time job down in Corvallis, and when can I get after it. At the same time, I saw this advertisement for a visiting professor that I made out that they were looking for a fellow up at the University of Washington. Since I knew Doug Chapman, respected him a great deal and really liked the idea with working with him, I called up the University of Washington, and they said sure, when could I come to interview? When I got out here, I discovered that I was in Stan Gessel's office, the head of the whole IBP program out here, and that they'd flown me out to interview for a job that Jerry Franklin had already offered me. Stan said, "Why in hell did we fly this guy out here if Jerry Franklin has already offered him the job?"

**Geier:** Even at the half-time position?

**Sollins:** I didn't connect Jerry's offering me a half-time position with this full-time job available at the University of Washington. I didn't know it was the same money. I had no way of knowing. First thing I knew, the boss was pissed off at me for coming out here for a job I was already offered. So, anyway, that's how I came to be here.

**Geier:** Where you from originally?

**Sollins:** Where was I born? Los Angeles.

**Geier:** Oh, yeah.

**Sollins:** I grew up in Puerto Rico, and then in summers, worked at Luquillo, which is now an LTER site. So, I started working at an LTER site almost 34 years ago. I lived in New York and did my undergraduate at Swarthmore and graduate school at University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and the University of Tennessee, which was really a fellowship from the Oakridge National Laboratory. Now, except for a few years on the University of Washington payroll, I've been here ever since, except two years I spent at Yale as a visiting professor, during which I worked with the forestry department out there. I came back when this place was more ready to hire me into a real position. I have a very weird kind of pedigree.

**Geier:** Lot of different regions.

**Sollins:** Lot of different regions, levels. I did a lot of forwards and backwards and forwards and backwards

**Geier:** Were you researching things consistently at the time?

**Sollins:** To me, it was always a natural progression. The work I did on the El Verde Rainforest Project [In El Yunque N.F. in Puerto Rico] was on nutrient cycling, biomass estimation, stem flow, and water chemistry. I did a lot of computer programs for them in the early '60's. So, I had an interest in computers. I had an interest in math. I was sort of a dual chemistry-biology major in college, and when I got to grad school, I was working with Tom Odum. I got a lot of encouragement to study math, systems analysis, programming and computers, that kind of stuff. I didn't know much about this stuff, and Tom didn't know much about this stuff either, but he encouraged us to come and learn. It was really good. He was interested in nutrient-cycling and chemistry, so primary production was easier to learn. His idea was to calculate how much carbon a tree was fixing, and once that's learned, that's useful information. That's pretty easy. Trying to understand phosphorous chemistry itself, is a lot harder. I started to read these things about biomass and worked with that for my Ph.D. As I got out here, I moved from carbon-cycling into an energy project in hydrology, modeling energy budgets and nutrient-cycling issues. That got me more interested in nutrient-cycling. That is why I started looking into proton budgets or hydrogen budgets, to try to make sense of soil pH. I'm not sure it happened, but I started getting more and more interested in soils. And a guy by the name of Gody Spycher came along. Gody came to me one day in 1977. This was after the biome came to an end at the Andrews. We were trying to learn about writing grants on our own. He said they have a great grant proposal, and here's what I want to do. I said this could be really important. So, I helped him write a grant proposal, and we got it funded – the first "flawless" proposal funded ever by NSF.

**Geier:** This was after you'd come down here?

**Sollins:** Yeah, this was about 1978; we must have written it the year before. If it wasn't the first, it was one of the first [funded proposal by non-soils PI], and I've been told that it might be the first. It really shook them up. They never had anybody with a real soils background, and the proposal to work on their ecosystems before. I didn't have a soils background, but Gody did his Ph.D. in soils. We got the money and did the work at Mount Shasta and Grande Peaks, and wrote a whole bunch of papers. That helped us understand how soil and organic matter worked. In the process, we learned the rates which carbon dioxide was released for plant growth. Gody and I kept plugging away on it. Gody dropped out. He just decided this grant proposal writing wasn't for him. Next time, we submitted a grant proposal, it didn't get funded. That was a grant proposal that was way ahead of its time. Now, we'd be able to get funded

**Geier:** What was the focus?

**Sollins:** There were two components to it. It was too big and it took 35 years. One was using algebraic analysis to understand soil development. That was 10-15 years ahead of its time. The other was using new chemical techniques that had just emerged for looking at the constituents. In those days, people felt the only thing worth doing was developing the soil as a strong base or strong acid, and somehow precipitating it out. The problems are; we can't really infer anything useful from that, it alters the system, and doesn't bear any claims to nutrients, and it's been

partially abandoned and replaced by this new technique. Gody is the one who got me started on all this. With this pure interest in soils, I went from that to getting interested again in the tropics, and went down to Puerto Rico, working on excuses to get back to the tropics, personally. I discovered out how little the tropical ecosystem scientists knew about soils, less than the temperate-system scientists do, and there was less contact between tropical-soils people and tropical ecology people than there was between temperate-soils people and temperate-system ecologists. So, there was a fertile field to go try to do address something with.

**Geier:** What was the reason for that state of tropical forest science?

**Sollins:** Tropical soils people are predominately agriculturally-oriented, and tropical ecologists I think, are anti-tropical agriculture in those general areas, or they were in those days, and tropical soils people were anti-conservation in those days, and [against] people interested in conservation and preservation, and anything like that. There was no blood lost between these various camps, so there were all kinds of good reasons for not coming in contact accidentally. It took people a pretty substantial effort to get together. This is all not a serious problem anymore.

**Geier:** Was this a problem in the temperate areas also?

**Sollins:** It was less of a problem in the temperate areas for two reasons. There's a huge legacy of so-called forest soils people, and they were very active in forest soil. People like Earl Stone in this country, probably the living grandfather at this point for this kind of concerted collaboration, and a guy by the name of Carl Olaf Tom in Sweden, whose father Olaf Tom was from back in the '30's. Many other people in soils worked closely with foresters, and foresters tended to work with forest ecologists and that wasn't this, as ecologists tend to work on forests in general, and they tended to work with foresters. Everybody who worked with forests considered the soil a part of this ecosystem; it wasn't a separate entity. In agricultural lands, grassland ecologists for the most part had nothing to do with people growing crops. They might talk to the range people, and they might talk to the range ecologists, although in the 1970's the concept of range ecologists might be a little premature, and there were some people that called themselves range ecologists, but for the soils people, most of the money for soils work was from farmers. At ag research stations, these people were doing row crops of corn or wheat, annual type of agriculture, Ecologists didn't have any interest in annual agriculture, so there was this huge gap between the people doing really excellent work in soil chemistry and soils organic matter, but doing it with corn, wheat, soybean, and particularly wheat, and the rest of the community down there – the ecologists and ecosystems people. The place that first came together was Colorado State [Univ.] and the biome [IBP] out there. There was also a Canadian project in which those two groups worked very closely together

**Geier:** What were the Canadian group?

**Sollins:** Matador. That was Elder Paul, in particular. It was an early age for me, a more advanced age for him, so I ended up doing a lot, working for people in the various grasslands

projects; Elder, Merncall, Dave Coleman, Bob Creel, John Steward, Norm Teases, a bunch of people famous in temperate zone agriculture, but, who wouldn't consider themselves to be in agriculture, and who wouldn't consider themselves ecologists. They would consider themselves soil scientists, or Creel would consider himself to be an ecologist, and the rest wouldn't. The more of us that did this [interdisciplinary work], the more it helped breakdown the gap between the soils community and ecosystems community. The gap exists to this day. There are all kinds of politics between the soils community and ecologists. I can get into that if you want to.

**Geier:** Anything likely relevant to the tropics?

**Sollins:** Relative to the tropics, more of the people were associated with agriculture there.

**Geier:** That is what lured you back into temperate studies then?

**Sollins:** What lured me back to the tropics?

**Geier:** I'm sorry, I 'm trying to remember where we started off.

**Sollins:** Well, in the early eighties I got involved in a whole lot of tropical research, because I realized what I was learning and what people were thinking of how tropical soils worked, was completely unknown to the tropical ecologists. I could do a project and get money because I could put the money to do tropical soil work. It wasn't old hat to the tropical soils people, it was somewhat cutting-edge for them, but it was totally beyond anything that the tropical ecology community ever thought about or heard about. We got a lot of money to work in Costa Rica.

**Geier:** Did that pull you away from your involvement up here more?

**Sollins:** Yeah, which was good, too. There's stuff we can talk to about what my involvement has been through the years. It hasn't always been my focus, as with people here.

**Geier:** Maybe you can talk a little bit here about your first questions you had about Andrews when they brought you around?

**Sollins:** Other than the big trees?

**Geier:** Yeah. (Laughter)

**Sollins:** Well, I spent a lot of time in the West before that. I was in California until I was eight, so we had camped in the Redwoods in the forties and fifties. Certainly, some big trees and some bigger trees. That was nice, but it wasn't anything unusual. Every summer, I had been climbing up in the West, in the Rockies and up in to the Cascades and Canada, and so I knew the western forests. Things were certainly wetter, but they were not as wet as the tropical forests.

It was an interesting sort of combination for me; aspects of the western Rocky Mountain forests, the California Redwoods, the Canadian wet forests that I had seen, and the tropical rain forests.

**Geier:** Did they take you down to the Andrews?

**Sollins:** Yeah. I saw Watershed 2 and walked around. I'm probably sure we saw Watershed 10. I'm sure Dick took me down there. Dick Waring.

**Geier:** Did you stay overnight down there or did you do a quick tour?

**Sollins:** It was just for the day.

**Geier:** By comparison from what you were doing in the Eastern Deciduous Biome, what was your impression of the scientists [at the Andrews Forest] at that time?

**Sollins:** Well, you've got to understand, I was comparing life here, to Oakridge National Lab, which was at the time and still is fairly described as a cross between Boy Scouts of America and [unintelligible], with the worse features of both. Lots of resources, lots of equipment, lots of very good people, but a security-oriented mentality and a very structured organization, and people taking orders, and you get notes like, "I was here at eight in the morning, where were you?" I got here and I was surrounded by an endless expanse of dope smoking hippies, and everybody having a great time. I found this to be fun. It was this was a nice change, and besides, I had mountains out here to go climb, and I was pretty bored with the hiking and the climbing I could do in the East. My marriage had broken up and I was ready to go out there and go live somewhere else.

**Geier:** This was the time you accepted the job, or turned it down?

**Sollins:** The time I accepted it.

**Geier:** Oh, okay.

**Sollins:** The time that I turned it down, I was laboring under the impression that life at Oakridge would be the same as life as a graduate student. Life as a graduate student, you have all the resources, you're not regarded as part of a hierarchy, and people don't ask you where you were at eight o'clock in the morning. Then, when you get a real staff position, they feel they have the right to inspect certain kinds of professional behavior. I think they've loosened up a bit. Lots of people have left the place because they couldn't deal with the authoritarian kind of structure.

**Geier:** Is that still true back there?

**Sollins:** That people still leave occasionally? (Laughter) That's what they tell me. I don't know. I'm not that curious.

**Geier:** So, what you're saying is, the reason you came out here was the atmosphere?

**Sollins:** The lack of authoritarian structure, and I was really excited about it [HJA/new position]. I was given an enormous amount of resources. Probably too much for someone who was 27 years old or however old I was at the time, to handle effectively or efficiently. But that didn't stop it for being very exciting at the time. It was later that I realized that I was probably given too much freedom. At the time, it seemed great. I was really excited about what we were building. State-of-the-art, trips to Europe, and things like that, to meet with people. Petty stuff, petty stuff, but whatever, it was fun. Good people. Really good people. People working really hard.

**Geier:** What was your perception at the time of the standard role of the experimental forest and how does the Andrews fit into that kind of model of expectations?

**Sollins:** Where I worked in Puerto Rico was an experimental forest [Luquillo], also. I had no doubt in my mind that experimental forests were good things. I knew about a hundred books from them, and I had been to Fernow [Experimental Forest] in West Virginia. Chuck Grier was working at Cascade Head [Experimental Forest] at the time, too. I'd been out there with him and knew that these were good things. I guess my feeling is, still to this day, the experimental forest concept is a really good one. The only [potential negative] side of this, is it occasionally seems like the real estate can drive the research, instead of the research working for the right real estate. I think there were occasionally times when we sited things because it was good for the Andrews, but not necessarily the best place to do the research. I don't think that's good. I think most of the time it works out well that the Andrews is the best place. The work that gets done there at the Andrews get done, because it is the best place to do it. There are a lot of things that go into making something the best place or not the best place. Convenience and sight characteristics aren't the only things. The history of data for the site makes it the right place to do something no matter how intricate they may be. The fact the people available from whom you could get a history of the place, find out what's gone on at your particular site. There are not that many places where you can do that. So, there all kinds of reasons why it might not be the most convenient place to do something and, yet, it's the right choice.

That said, I don't know if you've gotten this explained to you, but certainly within the Conifer Forest Biome there was a strong competition, if not jealously, between the two areas of major studies, Cedar Creek [site in Cedar River watershed, Washington, stream site for U of W in IBP-Coniferous Forest Biome] at the University of Washington, and the Andrews here. I would say Andrews was associated with Oregon State University, but at that time, Oregon State University wasn't much on the Andrews. At least, our college did [get involved there], but that has changed radically the last 10 or 15 years. Now finally, I'm proud of it. I should have been all along. But at the time, it was PNW [Pacific Northwest Research Station] with Jerry Franklin as the lead person, and Dick Waring as the site director, who was OSU tenured faculty and all that.

[OSU as institution wasn't much interested.] But the University of Washington was really excited about IBP, and strongly supported it as an institution. Stan Gessel was the founding director. He was a tenured professor at the University of Washington, and by far the senior person in age, of the whole crew. He was a pretty logical person to be the guy for leading the Coniferous Forest Biome project] among the scientists in the Pacific Northwest. Interestingly, he's a forest soils person. He is the product of a guy by the name of Hans Jenny at the University of California at Berkeley, who died recently, but Jenny is widely regarded as the one of the major fathers of soil science in the world. Stan was his student and he brought this forest soils interest to the whole campus forest group. Stan's student Dale Cole was the site director [Cedar Creek]. Dick Waring took over up there. [Andrews Forest]

**Geier:** At Cedar Creek?

**Sollins:** At Cedar Creek.

**Geier:** Yeah.

**Sollins:** Very different philosophies. There were differences in science, managerial philosophy, everything you can imagine between the group down here, and the group up there. At times it felt really good. So, my early impressions of what role an experimental forest can play was tempered, taking into account that I was supposed to be working for all three of these sites. I was supposed to be working on the Andrews, modeling, I was supposed to be working on the Cedar Creek, modeling, and then we had another high-altitude site called Findley Lake, that was a much prettier place, much prettier aesthetically, certainly, than Cedar Creek. It had a road cut out of glacial outwash and rather ugly and boring sort of place in a lot of ways. Bigger than Andrews in high elevation, and surrounded by rock and snow, just beautiful glacial lakes all over the place. For somebody that's been climbing all his life, I had my preference, to spend a weekend, I go up to Findley, not to Andrews. But I was supposed to be working for all three. I was supposed to be trying to get them all producing, doing something with their data that would be useful. Lean towards models of predictive capability and I was had responsibilities towards all three, which I was trying to balance somehow. I looked at this experimental forest as being a site. Cedar Creek was a site, and they had different sorts of institutional infrastructure and were organized in different ways. Cedar Creek is the city of Seattle watershed [municipal water supply]. Findley Lake was also on the watershed, and it was also on the Snoqualmie National Forest. We had a freshwater program, too, for people living on Lake Washington. I went out on crews that and that sort of thing. The experimental forest system is a good thing and Andrews was a great site, but it was one of several sites I was supposed to be working with.

**Geier:** So, you do a lot of traveling around?

**Sollins:** Yeah. Every possible way going from Seattle to Corvallis and back. I'd climbed them all [mountains along routes]. The fastest was driving the long way. No, the fastest was driving from here to Portland, and then flying. The next fastest was driving the whole way. The next



was hitchhiking, which I only did once, but it turned out to be from the bus to the train, and that changed from a train to a bus.

**Geier:** You're talking about the convenience of access. From your perspective, was the Andrews a convenient site to work at or not?

**Sollins:** What do you mean? Moderately, we had some trailers in those days. I'd spend a lot of nights down there, and didn't think that's where I'd be doing. I'd pitch a tent someplace or sleep in the back of my truck, or maybe stay in the trailers. I still do that [camp] most of the time. It was farther from the university than Cedar Creek was from UW. In terms of the traffic we went through, we went through more cars getting to Cedar Creek than the Andrews; it was shorter in time and distance. The facilities were probably about the same. For the time, the facilities were good. The work got done. An incredible amount of field work got done from 1969 or whenever that thing [EER-LTER] started, maybe it [IBP] went from 1966 to 1976. Do you have the dates?

**Geier:** It starts about '68-'69, and goes to....[IBP era, HJA, 1967-76; Application query-1967/68, first grant funded, 1970, program formally finished, 1976].

**Sollins:**...Maybe it was a five-year period. It happened until '76 or '75. We got more field work done there in that 3-4 year period, than probably has been done than some other sites. The kind of money we had available to do the standard ecosystem work; precipitation, solution chemistry, and cutting down trees to get biomass, digging up root systems for biomass circulation through forest roots. We never had it since, and at this rate, we will never have it again. We'd never had that kind of money since. Nobody's had that kind of money since.

**Geier:** When you think of that period of activity, how do describe your level of interaction Forest Service scientists and Oregon State University scientists?

**Sollins:** You couldn't tell who was who. In some ways it was even more so that way then. For the OSU people who were associated with the Andrews project, they didn't feel they had much of a home at OSU. OSU was not exactly proud of us. So, we identified with the Station and I had my office here at the Station since 1974 or something like that. One or two summers I was over at FRL [Forest Research Lab, an OSU facility on Western Blvd], but the whole rest of that time the Forest Science Department was over here in the 1980's or something like that. So, I'd been here 5 years before the rest of that program was [moved].

**Geier:** How did you swing that out of your office?

**Sollins:** Because the university wasn't willing to give us office space, and PNW was.

**Geier:** Do you have any insight why the University was so nonchalant about this?

**Sollins:** At that time the college, the forest industry was concerned about the environmental movement. And felt that it could stop the environmental concerns by burying its head in the sand and pretending that they didn't exist. We were part of that. They pretended that we didn't exist. Or it wasn't until the 1980's. In part it was Carl Stoltenberg, our Dean, who took so much of that attitude with him. Which served its purpose at the time, but rapidly becoming a liability and I think [people began to] realize that. Realized that it was time for him step down and turn it over to somebody else. And George [Brown] came in and he took a very different approach. He just looked for one thing. Partly he wanted to, he really was concerned about environmental issues and about the university's image about being pro-industrial. He just wanted a more balanced image. He also took a hard look at the kind of money in ecosystems and stuff, which didn't get [industry money]. A whole bunch of us really rubbed his nose in it a whole bunch of times, and just kept pointing out that, look when you get congressional mandated program to a FIR program [Forestry Intensive Research], most of the rest of the money is coming from this group. And you might want to take some pride in it. Maybe do some nice things for us to on the side. If nothing else, it's doing you a lot of good, take a look. And they did. They're proud of it now. I think the whole college is and university circle. And it's really changed. So, I think now there's more of a gap, more of a "we versus them." Now at the PNW, university then there was back at the seventies. I don't think it's a problem, there is more now than there was before. I sure feel loyalty to my college and the department. I certainly didn't feel it in the 1970's.

**Geier:** 70's, and 80's until about what you said in 1990's?

**Sollins:** When did George come in?

**Geier:** I talked to him. I think about 1990?

**Sollins:** I think it was before that. About mid 80's.

**Geier:** I'm curious about your perceptions, or whether you had any interactions with forest managers at the Andrews site at that time?

**Sollins:** I remember Steve. He ran the forestry program.

**Geier:** Eubanks

**Sollins:** Eubanks, Yeah. Then before John Cissel. He just shot up here and said hello. He certainly remembers me.

**Geier:** He had a special report.

**Sollins:** Yeah, I was there when Lynn Burditt showed up. Certainly, got to know her fairly early in the game. I actually had more contact probably in the 70's with people at the Siuslaw and the regional office than I did with people in the district. I felt like I had a really good working

relationship with most of these people. It's something I really enjoyed. We fought a lot, but I thought we fought fair and respectfully. Very fond memories of some of the people out there who have retired. I did work much with people in the district. I had this Snowbrush study project and that had the district out there. Those people did a hell of a lot of work. I was just swapping war stories with the fire people down in the district a few weeks ago about that.

**Geier:** What were you doing on that project?

**Sollins:** We were trying to kill everything except snowbrush seeds so nothing else would come back. We'd plant Doug-fir, snowbrush would out compete the Douglas-fir, and we'd be able to study the competition. It didn't work. This was the first time the Forest Service didn't have a serious regeneration problem. We did everything we could to encourage the snowbrush. We got 20, 30, 40, thousand [sprouts] per hectare, germinating, but they never grew. The Doug-fir just took off, totally. Up until the last couple of years it was growing better than everything in the district, and practically anywhere on the Willamette Forest. Our objective here was to create a stand where the Doug-fir grew very poorly, and the snowbrush grew very well. Then we were going to control the amount of snowbrush, and actually weed the snowbrush out of there, on two-thirds of the forest. No visible effect of the snowbrush. The rest of it died or went into the mud. Never got much bigger than this [demonstrating low height], until the Doug-fir was about eight feet tall. At some point, it did grow a little bit. We had various theories into what went wrong. Dave Perry had a student work on figuring out why snowbrush never got going or fully-developed nodules [for nitrogen fixation]. All he managed to prove after five years working on this, was that not a single one of the standard reasons you would expect to see snowbrush not nodulate, was a factor at the site. He added everything into the culture in a greenhouse, but one could see something reasonable the snowbrush was lacking out there. Nothing helped. There's still some nodulation though in the soil out there, so we still don't know what the problem is.

The other thing that happened at the same time, was that the elk herd took off. I'm convinced the older ones had finally stopped, and the elk grazed on the snowbrush. This was the first year they started coming around the Andrews again. They grazed on the snowbrush, they prefer it to Doug-fir. That's my hypothesis, without any proof of this what so ever. I still think it's right, and wish there was some way to follow-up on this. I think the problem of overgrowth of snowbrush in the 70's was the trigger to a herbicide-use controversy. That's when I testified in Washington. People were screaming and yelling at each other. Was the elk population getting to the point where they couldn't keep the snowbrush under control the way it normally did? Once the elk came back, snowbrush wasn't so serious a problem.

We did one hell of a lot of work do down there, also a lot of tree-planting. The district took the lead in all this, getting it down, did a wonderful job. People are still talking about us down there.

**Geier:** Was there abnormal [collaboration] at the time?

**Sollins:** One thing we do need to do a better job on [is the effects of animals]. It is changing. The elk herds are taking off, the bear are coming back after getting wiped out. Their effects are all through the system, and it would be nice if we could get some more work done on this. Work on the streams, and the insects, a lot of work on birds and bats, things like that. Especially the young-growth stands out there. To my knowledge, I think that there is much more growth.

**Geier:** Your perception, has there had been increased hunting recently?

**Sollins:** Something strange. It was my impression that the elk herd really increased the year before, that year, the year after we planted [the site].

**Geier:** Do you remember any of the names of the people you worked on that region?

**Sollins:** At the region or the district?

**Geier:** The district.

**Sollins:** I don't remember their names. I just met one the other day. Bill Jackson is one of the fire people down at the district right now, and he's on the burn. He was telling me who the burn bosses was, and I can't remember [name]. Somebody else came and talked to us. His name I've forgotten now, he was one of the sub-bosses there, something like that. There must have been quite a few people who were there for that fire. It was about fifteen years ago, so I can't remember it, but Bill would remember who was there that night. It was a memorable night. Wish I could I remember who I went walking with under the burning trees. It was so hot that it set off the trees across the road. I went down there walking at five o'clock in the morning with the guy in charge when it was still dark. We were just looking at huge branches falling out of the trees. Not next to us, twenty, thirty feet away. Full moon, beautiful.

**Geier:** Do you think about the people that you work with out there on projects out of the ordinary, in comparison to other experimental forests? Or would you characterize that?

**Sollins:** I don't have much to compare it with. I worked at one other experimental forest. It wasn't any different from the kind of cooperation and integration we [HJA] had. The level of integration I really noticed here, was between PNW scientists and university scientists. That was complete. Really couldn't tell who worked for the university and who worked for the station. The district [Blue River] was great. I just took it for granted, and didn't think of it very often.

**Geier:** It wasn't a problem area for you at least?

**Sollins:** Yeah, things were never a problem. These were in the days when there were a lot fewer rules and regulations then there are now.

**Geier:** I was going to ask you that. When you were down there to do these things, was there somebody to check in so let them know where you were putting in plots, or where you would work on that day?

**Sollins:** Art [McKee], even in those days, was trying to keep track of that stuff. Al Levno, and Dick Fredriksen, probably up until his last couple of years, did as much as anyone in trying some kind of semblance of order out there. I really felt the biome people took the lead, certainly setting up the data bank and documentation. Who started that? That's a hell of a good question. We had two data bank managers before Susan Stafford was hired by John Gordon [chair of Forest Science Department], Bob Riddell and Greg Koerper, I think. Dick Waring and Chuck [Grier], and probably to some extent, Scott Overton, and I'm sure Jerry, also [had roles in the organization]. I think a whole bunch of people were keeping track of what we were doing, where we were doing it, and who was doing what and when. We didn't want the data to just go into the file cabinets and never come out. There was a very big effort as well, biome-wide, world-wide. This was part of the IBP effort to collate data, organize data, and make data accessible from over the world. We were being told this by staff and the international steering committee on IBP. Biome directors discussed it in meetings, with people in other sites. Dave Goodall, George Van Dyne, people like that, were really instrumental in this. I'm trying to think of some of the eastern [U.S.] people in this. In any case, the concept of a data bank in trying to keep track of things, was a fundamental part of the IBP project. Where do we began? The push for it didn't come from the station. That I remember. No, wait a minute, that's not true. Because the hydrology data were being collected. Dick was working hard, Fredriksen, not Waring, was working hard, on the streamflow chemistry data. All that was being organized and made useful to people. That fit in nicely with the efforts of the biome to put together the data bank. I wouldn't say it was a hard priority for the PNW or university [OSU] administrations. This was definitely a Biome IBP project. Out of that came --

**(Break in tape)**

**Sollins:** [Missing words/tape] -- Those are two names that aren't mentioned much anymore. They were both important people making this all happen; Bob Rydell and Greg Luckini.

**Geier:** Bob Rydell?

**Sollins:** R-Y-D-E-L-L. He died about ten years ago in a very, very unfortunate accident. Greg, I have no idea what happened to him. No idea.

**Geier:** What was his last name?

**Sollins:** L-U-C-K-I-N-I, or something like that.

**Geier:** I never heard those names before.

**Sollins:** I'm not surprised. Scott Overton was another big influence.

**Geier:** I think I've heard that name before.

**Sollins:** He finally left because he and Jerry couldn't work together. Basically, Jerry and Dick couldn't, I mean Franklin and Waring, couldn't work together. So, we post-docs carried on.

**Geier:** What occurred through that? What were the personalities?

**Sollins:** People who were creative, enthusiastic, aggressive, and had different ideas on how things should be, frequently, would want their own ideas to be used, not the those of other persons. You just can't do both. Can't please both.

**Geier:** I was going to ask you little bit about that. If you could characterize your involvement in the decision-making process in the group.

**Sollins:** I don't know how much of that I really want to talk about on the record. A lot of it is personality, and people can be blamed for personality and make judgments about personalities. It's pretty hard to explain my perception of what went on without making judgments of personality, and my job is [scienced]. I will say that, especially back then, I had a lot .....I don't think I'm going to say this on the record, either.

**Geier:** That's fine. So, in terms people being encouraged to become involved in the process, it's not the result of your monthly meetings. But, is there some kind of different equivalent at that time, or did it function differently?

**Sollins:** There were meetings, all kinds of things. There were committees that did a lot of work; there was a logging committee, a few transition committees, and a weekly cycling committee. These were to be across the biomes [categories/sites]. We were supposed to integrate, and we put the river and the lake models into the Andrews. Then, there were inter-biome committees, something like that. I forget what we called them, but they did the same things across the various groups, nation-wide and then, internationally. We all participated all these things. It was just wonderful, as they really gave us [room to run]. This coincided with when phone costs, and plane fares, starting to come down. It was the first time a lot of these people ever met each other, much less give them a chance work together, regularly. Particularly, some of the international collaborations, where people I saw get together and work in the sixties, had been reading each other's papers for ten years, and never had met each other, from all over the world. To meet somebody whose papers you've been reading since you were a graduate student, since they were a graduate student, face-to-face, never having done it before and never talking to them on the telephone, just really changes things. There were a couple of meetings in the late sixties that really set up the first time some of us met. And there were ones who you would meet by chance, that might be of interest to you. I think in the power structure, graduate students and post-docs had far more of a role than they had ever had in any major project. Out of that came an incredible family of people. Some of them to this day, have nothing but nasty things to say about IBP, but they're fun. They wouldn't be where they are if

they didn't have IBP. Some of these people have calmed down, and some I haven't seen in twenty years.

**Geier:** How are they concerned?

**Sollins:** That they were just wasting money. Everyone was sitting around and arguing. Nobody was doing their work. Everyone was being nasty.

**Geier:** Why is your view that these people had a stronger role than other sites? Why is that?

**Sollins:** The morale for the most part [was affected by], the University of Washington giving grants to OSU's post-docs, which was part of the conflict. There were numerous exceptions, but managerial philosophy was central to the conflict. We could go on and on. There was plenty of perceptions that there was money available on the scale of everything. The professors had the luxury of having graduate students. It started in other parts of the country before it did here. The Coniferous Forest Biome was the last one to get started, the second to last one. By then, there was a bunch of graduate students who had done a Ph.D. with funding from the other biomes. Came out here, as did post-docs. That's fine with me. I don't think Fred made it. He went here for his graduate school. He was at U of O. I don't see it associated with an Andrews' situation.

**Geier:** I've talk to him. I think you are right.

**Sollins:** We had a couple efforts at the U of W. Perhaps I'm overstating it. I think there were the only two who had IBP graduate students fellowships, who came out here. In any case, there was a lot of work that needed to get done. There was money to do the work and a lot of work that needed to get done. It was clear that the faculty, basically Dick and Jerry here, had this money. They had work to get done. They just didn't want to give it to faculty members who would use it to continue whatever they were doing all along. The idea was to do this integrated project, and that meant you had to do something different from what you had to do all along. Well, graduate students are real easy to talk into something slightly different. Post-docs were into different [work and ideas]. Faculty members weren't. That's where the conflict came from. So, the model here was using post-docs to do the work. The model up there [U of W], was graduate students hired by two or three faculty members integral to the project, and who did the work. In either case, the money was available, and because these people were doing the work, they were the ones knowing what was going on. They had a lot of say about the direction of things here.

**Geier:** Do you know why UW went with the grad-level work as opposed to post-docs?

**Sollins:** Probably, ultimately, because UW was a university, and this was a PNW [Station] stage.

**Geier:** In other words, it was the fact OSU was not that locally tied to the project. You said there were some benefits to that?

**Sollins:** Yeah, sure. Grad students are great. They work hard, they get a lot done. And they go on and do great, wonderful things. I'm very appreciative, but you have to spend a lifetime taking courses. And, to an extent they feel [exploited]. We spend a lot of time doing stuff other than taking courses. Sometimes you have to pay them to take classes for three years, before they can ever start working on a project. And they went results in two years, but there's no efficient way to get them to do that. And with graduate students, you have a little bit of an unknown factor, your taking someone on who hasn't proved themselves as much, taking more of a chance with somebody. Post-docs have made it through Ph.D. That proves something. I don't know what, but that proves something. So, fewer post-docs drop out and say, I can't stand this, I'm going off to farm tobacco or have a baby. Then you get graduate students who say I can't deal with this. I've just had it. There's much more pressure on graduate students then there is on post-docs. It's a harder thing to do. Get a Ph.D., and then do a post-doc afterwards.

I feel we got a lot more work out of the post-docs than out of the graduate students. There were some exceptions, three or four really exceptional grad students at UW. All of them could have gone on to be heads of departments, things like that. They were great. We had some graduate students do a whole hell of a lot. Some never wrote it up, some never finished, and some never did much of anything. We [HJA] didn't have any post-docs that couldn't produce, but we had relatively few graduate students. We had some graduate student failures, but we didn't have very many graduate students. You can't have no graduate students. You just can't ignore the concept of graduate student education. So, at some point you have to bite the bullet and say, "If the work didn't get done as quickly and professionally as you like, you still must have money for graduate students. There's pro's and con's, and there was a lot of hard feelings about that.

**Geier:** I was going to ask, when you joined the faculty, how involved were the students?

**Sollins:** I didn't have to [advise grad students] because I was soft money. I just didn't have to. I was fortunate. I had to get work now, not two years from now after they take classes. I was lucky to get a grant that lasted two years. Two years was just enough to get a PhD. Student were just reaching the point where they could be doing some work. I didn't start getting graduate students at all until I got on tenure track until the university started paying my salary here. I couldn't afford the luxury of graduate students. It's great. You can't be funding [grad students] with your own salary, very effectively. I had a few.

**Geier:** From the perspective of the Cedar Creek and Andrews programs, you talk about the student vs. post-doc [issue]. What impact did that have on the integration of the degrees into the Biome projects?

**Sollins:** There was always a [flap] whenever anything went wrong. Around here, that's because there weren't graduate students. This place [HJA] said they were using students, and something went wrong here. The place up there said they weren't using students. Just gives



people just one more excuse to bicker with each other. There were all kinds of other excuses, but that was one, strictly convenient.

**Geier:** I was thinking that with professor and graduate students, it might have more continuity then having a string of post-docs who may or may not finish your research?

**Sollins:** Well, that's true. I say that now because I've been here 25 years. At the time I didn't want to identify with the leadership. I wanted to stay a neutral course. I had a lot of respect for people in those times. Still do. Some of my best friends are at the University of Washington. We may have worked harder on the data bank system here, very recently. We felt more susceptible to people leaving and flunking out, moving on, [becoming] dope heads. That's the continuity that tenured professors at U of W had to deal with.

**Geier:** More emphasis here on the documentation and stuff?

**Sollins:** My feeling was there was more emphasis on it here.

**Geier:** You mention that you didn't often spend the night down at the Andrews. I was curious about your level of involvement with other people down at the Andrews site, and how important was that kind of interaction to your research project?

**Sollins:** Well, the people I worked most closely with were Mike McCorison, Fred Glenn, Dick Fredriksen, and Bob Fogel. Didn't work with Fred [Swanson]. Didn't work much with Jim Sedell. Didn't work much with Jerry. I thinking I'm on the Waring side, instead of Franklin. The person I worked closely with was Chuck Grier. He came from UW, not OSU. He was the most important person. When I published the nutrient cycling data from Watershed 10, Chuck was the second author, and also, Bob Fogel or Fredriksen [other authors]. It might have been McCorison. Fredriksen didn't much do much in analyzing the data, but was very supportive. Chuck was the one who really worked on the data. Chuck was my focal point who worked on data for me. Then, I got interested in the [plant/habitat groups?] refining a classification system, about '76 or '77.

**Geier:** I'm curious of all these names. These are people who were good collaborators originally, from your interaction with them? You're on campus or involved in field work somewhere?

**Sollins:** We would go down there [Andrews Forest] to work on specific things. Then we developed interactions on campus. I only went down there when I needed to.

**Geier:** How commonly was that?

**Sollins:** Every week or two, something like that. The data were conveyed, something like that. I had three grants for field work at the Andrews, and the crews did research for months and months and months. Mostly, they took the lead on that and I didn't have to be down there as

much. Steve Cline and Tom Verhoeven [grad students]. Tom is somebody that might be fun to interview, and Steve Cline, too.

**Geier:** Tom?

**Sollins:** Did you ever hear of Peoria Gardens?

**Geier:** Not much about it?

**Sollins:** Across the river. Peoria Road. He used to work for me down at the Andrews. Quit his job at OSU to found a national seedling distributorship. Steve Cline worked down at the Andrews for 3 or 4 years back then. After the biome [IBP], after they took the watershed grant. I don't need to brief you about that. He left and went to EPA in San Francisco. Now he's back at OSU. I saw him interview the other day. But he's back in town.

**Geier:** Is he in Corvallis?

**Sollins:** I think so. He's around here somewhere. You might try the phone book and see.

**Geier:** C-O-E-E-N?

**Sollins:** No, Cline. There's always been social groups evolving around the Andrews. And then, a number of people who did a lot of work down there who aren't necessarily part of these social groups, and who I think play a real important role down there. I'd like to see these people and their contributions remembered. Have you talked to George Carroll at all?

**Geier:** No.

**Sollins:** He's at U of O. He runs the program down there, for 7 or 8 years.

**Geier:** George?

**Sollins:** C-A-R-R-O-L-L. Professor of biology at University of Oregon. He worked with Bill Denison, who's name you might have heard. Denison worked on the tree climbing thing. George was down there for many, many years, and I think all these people made a substantial contribution. That's why I bring up people like Steve Cline and Tom Verhoeven.

**Geier:** What you are saying is that there were different groups that would collect around certain personalities, individuals or different studies?

**Sollins:** Didn't necessarily work with those very much.

**Geier:** Not necessarily a lot of interaction, but any formal, structured integration of that work later? Any interaction at conferences and efforts the Biome, that brought interaction between Cedar Creek and the Andrews?

**Sollins:** Well at the time of the biome, definitely. Once the biome ended, the money for travel disappeared. The requirement, the responsibility to NSF, that we collaborate, disappeared, in terms of a huge sticker project with one PI and a pair well-defined organizations with national and international connections, and us post-docs writing proposals so we can stay here. So, the whole tone changed a great deal. It became much more insular and fragmented. By the time George got his NSF grant to the U of O, even Bill Denison had dropped out of the scene. I was working with George. And no, we didn't have meetings that crossed the line between George's group and what other people were doing. I talked to a hydrologist here now and they don't know George's work. They never heard of him. They didn't know somebody built the model for tree fall dynamics on Watershed 10, back in '78 or '79. Some integration certainly managed to take place as well as it could have. I think this largely Fred's doing, a combination of Fred and the fact that LTER came to be. LTER came to be, in part, to a reason well outside the Andrews and this group. There were national and international groups reaping fortunes that brought LTER together. Make it come to be. Some of those forces were here. Jerry certainly played a major role in both LTER nationally, and creating a site here, perhaps the major role. But, once it came to be, we had more of a..... Fred would remember this better than I do. Trying to remember the month when it started. I forgot now. Seems to me to be around the same time as LTER.

**Geier:** How it fast did that happen?

**Sollins:** Or maybe they started it as a way of putting the LTER grant together in the first place. There were four to five years where there was not in the way of organized maintenance, '76 or '77, once the watershed grant ended. We got the equivalent of \$700,000, the equivalent of about \$2 million now. We continued the biome series in 1976, and the PI of that grant was Kermit [Cromack]. Now it's Stan and Fred, I guess. Once that changed hands, things fragmented. I dropped out of the group scene, totally. I didn't want to deal with it anymore. That's when I started getting other grants. I don't remember how, by what mechanism or to what extent; Fred, Jim [Sedell], I think Stan [Gregory] was on the scene, Jerry was still here. Dick Waring was well out of it. Fredriksen had retired. I don't recall what kind of mechanisms they had for meeting. I think it was the '80's before it started to happen here. Talk to Fred about this. I'm curious.

**Geier:** This is the EER? [Experimental Ecological Reserve] Or do you use that term?

**Sollins:** Maybe that was for site funding. From the site-funding point-of-view is how we would have looked at it. I would have seen it as a combination of the "golden years" and "dark ages."

**Geier:** Golden years, because there was more freedom?

**Sollins:** Oh, no, money was easy. Money was easy. There were a lot of people.

**Geier:** Somebody pointed out the question I'm not sure applies here or not, but you didn't spend a lot of time down there? I'm curious, for someone who drops down in like that, how important is being at the Andrews for what people do for relaxation in the evenings? You mentioned that it was alluring the first time you came out here, but when you decided to do the job?

**Sollins:** But, it wasn't the social thing down there. It was the social thing here that I didn't find great. No, I had interest in it down there. It wasn't something that allured me at all. In fact, in a lot of ways it turned me off. I don't know, I was just silent. I was used to serious outdoor people who seem to be interested in sitting around camp fires and that kind of thing. Chuck was my friend. He and I spent a lot of time climbing together. We climbed all over the Cascades. We climbed over the Coast Range. All over the Washington and Oregon Cascades. We were serious climbers, downright serious climbers. These people were afraid to stay out in the woods.

**Geier:** Places like Wolf Rock up there?

**Sollins:** Shit rock. Shitty rock. Shitty rock. We used to go over to Mount Washington and climb up the southwest ridge. That was nicest rock in the area. Chuck and I found it very beautiful and the most elegant place around. Just beautiful.

**Geier:** When did you start rock climbing? Was that when you were out here?

**Sollins:** Since I born; 1962 or something like that.

**Geier:** Hearing about these hiking expeditions, several people went on there. I think Jerry went out on some.

**Sollins:** They'd go out backpacking, and I don't know what they'd do.

**Geier:** We'd talked about before Chuck Grier, and you'd spent a lot of time with him. What were leisure time activities? Yours were different?

**Sollins:** That's still true.

**Geier:** The focus for you, if I'm characterizing this right, and if I'm wrong, let me know. The primary focus for you was you are at the university [OSU] and the people that left you out?

**Sollins:** It was the same thing at the UW back in the early '70's. I had two lives, two social lives; one up here and one down there. Chuck stayed at both of them. All my other climbing buddies were either up there or down here. And the climbing, the serious climbing, was in Washington, not in Oregon. That's my view.

**Geier:** You entered this building before the rest of the department by 4 or 5 years. I've been talking to other people about the impact of that move on coordination. I think they moved over here in 1980.

**Sollins:** That's sound right.

**Geier:** How would you characterize the impact of that on the relations here?

**Sollins:** Start of the college's inability to [ignore the Andrews]. You can see it as the nail in the coffin of the college trying to ignore the Andrews. That certainly became increasingly difficult. It also became much further when Logan became part of it, because he used to be sort of boss. [Logan Norris was leader of the PNW Station project responsible for Andrews Forest, but moved to be Chair of the Forest Science Department in OSU-COF]. Then, Dick Fredriksen and all that. I knew I was going to be his project leader. Logan came to talk to me. I was 26 or something like that, and Logan was 30 something or 40, and a project leader. We actually had a pretty good relationship, even though he was Forest Service and I was OSU. And we blew up at each other. But we actually found a [way] where we'd started talking, and I was in the line and got the job. I don't think John [Gordon] ever had offices with me. John left [OSU to go to Yale], and Bob Tarrant became PNW Director. He became department head, for a dollar a year or whatever we'd pay him, something like that. I think those things happened simultaneously. That was serious training for me. I just wasn't part of the department to play with soft money. I really didn't have anything to do with department politics, governance as we call it. I was fighting to make sure people told me what's going on, so I could manage my grant, managing three times as much money as most full-time faculty were. There were times when nobody would tell me the rules had changed, something like that. All I cared about was being kept informed, I didn't want to influence or anything. And it certainly became easier to keep informed when your department head was keeping something over you. It had a big impact on people. I was really not much a part of the department, anyway. I was more a part of the station, and all these other people in the Forest Science Department were somewhere over here with me. It was nice to have the company, and was nice to not have to be running back-and-forth to somewhere else. It didn't have much of an impact on me. I'm not the right one to talk about it. Susan [Stafford] might have a right feel for it. She's pretty good about noticing people's feelings and reactions, things like that. Dave Perry would be really good to talk with, if you have a chance to catch him.

**Geier:** Susan Stafford?

**Sollins:** Yeah. She'd be a real good one I'm sure, because she'd moved at that time. She'd probably had as much hassle to her move as anyone, because she was running the data bank operation. I would be curious to hear what she'd have to say about that. I think it was a long, distant move. I think it cemented the relationship between the college [College of Forestry] and the Andrews, which was on real shaky grounds through the seventies. This was not that John Gordon didn't support it, but he didn't have the history of being associated with us, as

Logan did, as George Brown did. Are you aware that George worked his undergraduate on the Andrews?

**Geier:** Yeah, I talked to him once about it.

**Sollins:** I think it was '63. So, even though there was still, I think, a belief in a lot of people's minds that the Andrews group was a bunch of crazy ecologists, the idea that we were determined to shut down the timber industry in the Pacific Northwest, is ridiculous. May have been crazy, but we weren't determined to shut down the timber industry. And we were crazy and still crazy. That must explain everything. People like Logan and George had a history of association with that thing. Just made it easier for them to be a little more open and objective about the whole thing. And they had the tendency to see the cup as half full instead of half empty. And a bunch of us really fought to for getting the college to adopt the Andrews. And finally, it worked. The college takes a great deal of pride in it and it shows.

**Geier:** I talked to George Brown little bit about this, on Friday, about the whole college program. There's a lot of money that could be used better. I was wondering how the cultural awareness treaty that worked to better the Andrews? A good way to deal with that was to have them go and talk with the scientists. I was wondering if you ever ran into that.

**Sollins:** What did you say?

**Geier:** That one way of the easing the donors' concerns would be to go talk to the scientists involved? Did you ever experience anything like that?

**Sollins:** We talked about this. I'd given a presentation to the FRL advisory group once [Forest Research Laboratory advises OSU College of Forestry], and got into a real pleasant conversation with a couple of people, the other Norm Johnson, the VP at Weyerhaeuser, and somebody from one of the timber families down here. I wanted to continue to finish the conversation and I felt like I had the opportunity to finish. I'd think it worked. But, I'd don't think it's happening. I thought it would help.

**Geier:** Because someone is not interested, do you think?

**Sollins:** I don't think George was pushed for this. He may say he has, but I don't feel he has. I think there are two real sources of conflict: one is, the college gets money from industry [via a timber harvest tax], and industry is worried about environmentalists, relating to being shut down. Some of that has some basis, and some of it long-term I think would be good for industry, and then, the long-term turned out good for industry. They changed the plate somehow. I think there are people in industry who recognize this, probably people in industry who recognized this from the very beginning. Not like they can speak up. Some environmental things were overblown and not good. We can go through this sometime. The college gets caught in the middle. And you can argue about how effective a job that it's done in steering a middle course through this. But, the fact remains, it had to try. They argue about its success,

but it's been a real challenge. And there's a second conflict that involves the university, or more specifically, the college [Forestry], which is very caught up in it. They control the research the faculty does, their lifestyle, to the extent the money we as faculty use comes through FRL, and the legislature and various industry-sponsored initiatives and funded initiatives. The college feels it has a right to tell us what to do. Or at least, not tell us what to do, but to be part of some partnership, setting what to do together. That's probably being kind. When we as faculty go out to get our own grant money, we don't feel the college has the right to tell us what we should be doing. College administrators have a hard time explaining to the legislature what their scientists are doing, when at worst they don't know, and two, they don't have any role in it. They ought to feel like they are a part of it. When we go out and get grant money on our own, do our own things, and tell them about it, when they ask us and don't tell them about it, otherwise. They're not part of it and it's not a very comfortable feeling. Kind of makes them wonder what their role are as administrators. It makes it hard for them to work with industry in Salem and that kind of thing. Things are going a lot better, but there was a period of time there when we were doing [things with] FRL money, and doing what the FRL and the dean wanted you to do, or you were a soft-funded [person] and you were a maverick who didn't even talk to them FRL structure. Do you know what FRL means?

**Geier:** Forest Research Lab.

**Sollins:** I'm not talking about the building. I'm talking about the institution.

**Geier:** Okay.

**Sollins:** We are the research arm of the state, and the forestry research organization of the state. The distinct group is the Forest Research Lab here, ODF [Oregon Department of Forestry] manages the Oregon state forests, and George was the head of the Forest Research Lab. In this capacity, he reports to the legislature and not [OSU leadership]. And the money comes from the legislature directly to George, not through the university. There's a very well-organized, old established, power structure here. Well-organized. What I'm trying to say, not old, established in a bad sense. It's got a long history of working that is the Forest Research Lab. It's not going to matter of if we close the building over there on Western and 30th. That's what people think of physically being the Forest Research Lab. But in fact, a group of scientists within the college who are paid by state money, not by the general fund, but by the state timber tax, money that comes straight from the legislature to the college. Now, the Peavy Forest is the other source of money that has to do with the university. All I'm saying is that after 15 or 20 years ago, people worked in that Forest Research Lab structure, or they were soft money from their own grants, or Dick, who was one of the few people who was hard money without grant monies, in the FRILL structure. He has broken down some of these structures and gotten away from this tribal anatomy in the last 15 years. It is something Logan, I, and a bunch of others here, including Susan, have done in the College of Forestry, and have worked hard to accomplish. We've got a really good system. It's one of the best departments I know of in terms of people working together.

**Geier:** Yesterday, Bob Tarrant spoke about how well the Andrews group had been working together.

**Sollins:** For research ecology, yeah, it was. If you look at the ESA, the Ecological Society of America, look at the membership list and number of people in Corvallis, physically in the United States, and the world. ESA is the home of the world's ecologists, somewhat the home of all American ecologists, and only to a slightly lesser respect, Canadian scientists. There's not just university, but EPA and PNW and USDA groups, and a lot of people here who would call themselves forest ecologists, soil scientists, hydrologists, entomologists or something like that. Even working at the Andrews – a lot of members of ESA. There's a lot more than are listed here.

**Geier:** Sounds to me like what your saying is during that period of the '80's and '90's there was a [large population of ecologists here].

**Sollins:** Well, towards the early '80's and '90's there was a change for the better and it happened slowly through the late '80's and the early '90's.

**Geier:** For a while there was a period when there was discouraging unto keeping of the ground?

**Sollins:** Oh, I wouldn't say that. The money was there, so why would you need to. I think they would delighted that people have done this. Only if specific people became too independent.

**Geier:** How?

**Sollins:** Well, the Forest Service has horrible growing pains with Jerry and they couldn't tell him what to do. He had all this grant money and they didn't have much control over him. They didn't like it. So, all I'm saying is, when you talk to a dean or talk to a station director or somebody like that, you've got to realize that they have a number of jobs to do and have a very difficult line to walk between giving people the support and freedom to just do what they want. Just making sure they're doing something and making sure what they're doing isn't embarrassing the organization or making it difficult for you as a dean or as a station director to get by. It's a very difficult line to walk. Some of our station directors have succeeded and some of us have done better jobs at this than others.

**Geier:** Getting onto about two hours here. I can probably come back.

**Sollins:** We can talk some more sometime. Yeah, it might be a good idea. How are you going to know when your done?

**Geier:** I've got a time line here. By December I've got to pretty much wrap these things up.

**Sollins:** Oh, that's good it gives you some time.

**Geier:** I've got about three months to finish up. We're about on schedule here.



**Sollins:** I'd like to know more about your background, too, and how you got involved in this. Pretty candidly, if you can. In return, I'd like to know a little more about you sometime.

**Geier:** I'll be working up here, hopefully, my transcriptionists will be using the office here for the next few months.

**Sollins:** Well, hopefully, they won't be playing the radio while they do it.

**Geier:** I'm not sure. I've not met them yet.

**Interview Completed**