



EXTRA

Transcript:

Season 1, Episode 5b: Working with young professionals



HOWELL: I want to mention another picture that you sent to me, which was, I guess, some of your crews in dry suits, and underneath it the caption talked about training “the old guard training the new folks coming in.” Tell me a little bit about some of the folks that are working with you and for you on this project.

HANRAHAN: Ohh, we love to have all helping hands that we can get on our projects. We, as the fish biologists and the aquatics staff, work really well together. When we have a project, it’s “all

hands on deck,” and having young people come and work with us is really important. Not only do we want these younger folks and these young professionals to just take the mantle, you know, and run with these projects when we move on and we retire, but it's just great for knowledge sharing. We also work with other organizations like the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. We work with Tribes and other local organizations. And so just having those young professionals come and cross-train with us is really fun.

And then of course, you know, as we move on, a lot of my time now is spent at the desk and I write NEPA documents and we analyze things. And so, we need these young folks to be able to go out and collect all this data for us! We have to identify the project, we have to collect data about it – you know, what's the issue? And then we use that data to support, you know, gaining funds or being able to analyze the project and really look at all what all those effects are. So having those young professionals come in is just really, really important. And they're also really excited! They're all so excited to do this work, and then it makes me feel excited too.

HOWELL: That's amazing!

HANRAHAN: Yeah.

HOWELL: So how many of them, when they got into this, it's kind of like, “yeah, we're going to send you out snorkeling, but the river's only about a foot and a half deep or whatever.” It looks like they're working in some pretty shallow waters.

HANRAHAN: You have some interesting uh, yeah, contortions when you're doing snorkeling. It's not necessarily what you would see people doing over the summertime. A lot of it's pretty arduous. You spend a lot of time crawling on your belly. You don't wanna plop right into a pool because you'll scare the fish, so there's techniques for sort of easing your way in there. And if you could probably see in the picture those dry suits are pretty substantial: a lot of them have elbow pads and knee pads. It's like wearing a giant baggie. So, you know, you have to carry all that equipment with you down to the stream. Then you get into your, you know, your dry suit, your snorkel, your boots. And then you know, you're hiking sometimes in pretty, pretty warm temperatures and... It's a lot of fun because you get to see the fish where they're at, but it can be pretty arduous work!

HOWELL: Yeah. How did you get into this?

HANRAHAN: Well, I always knew that I wanted to do something outdoors, something with ecology. I was lucky enough, even in high school, to know that that's what my passion was. Getting to this point has been a bit of a windy path: I started in wildlife, started working with hydrology. I found fish really fascinating. I started gaining experience while working in some of these other specialties. And then there was a job opening and I thought, you know, this is something that I really want to do. And I applied for it and I got it! So, my school experience helped me, you know, getting my degree, but then also being able to gain experience on the job training really helped me to get where I'm at.

That's another reason why it's, I think, so important to have these young professionals come and work with us because they can get all sorts of different types of experience. They can work in wildlife one day, hydrology, fish, soils – there's all sorts of these different opportunities. And I find that in the organization now that I'm working in – this BLM office – I also really like working with the professionals. There's people that are very passionate about their jobs and they're really good at it. And so, working on a team of professionals has been very rewarding.