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5-31-2009

Interview with Ted Labbe, Depave, 2009 (audio)

Ted Labbe

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PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW INDEX

INTERVIEWEE: _Ted Labbe_____

Interviewer: __Chris Fogg_____

Date: _May 31, 2009__

Location of Interview: _Wayport_____

Research Assistant: _N/A_____

Interview Series: SUSTAINING NORTHWEST LANDSCAPES & COMMUNITIES

Recording Equipment: DIGITAL RECORDER (WINDOWS MEDIA AUDIO FILE) WITH AN
EXTERNAL, OMNIDIRECTIONAL MICROPHONE

| Time | Notes |
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| | Introduction on first audio file |
| 0:00:10 | Born and Raised in Portland, OR |
| 0:00:35 | Schooling at Maine |
| 0:01:00 | Reasons for returning to Oregon |
| 0:01:30 | Connections to natural world (fishing as a kid) |
| 0:02:30 | Passion of plants, fish and wildlife conservation in Colorado |
| 0:04:00 | Returning to Portland, working as conservation biologist in Washington |
| 0:04:45 | Impervious Surfaces and working on stormwater pollution |
| 0:05:20 | Works on regulatory side, too many right angles in Portland |
| 0:06:00 | Land use problems, threat to Salmon, road lengths, impervious surfaces |
| 0:07:23 | Educating the public about impervious surfaces, current “small solutions” (big pipe) |
| 0:09:00 | Source solutions, getting rid of unnecessary pavement, encourage growth |
| 0:10:00 | “No magic bullet”, the issue of stormwater and erosion, cancerous salmon |
| 0:11:30 | Native communities and forced conservation |
| 0:12:20 | Reliance on snow pack, and future reliance on reservoir capacity, “not mining the mountains” |
| 0:13:25 | What Depave is and why they do what they do, how-to manual on website, all |

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| | volunteer organization, “part of the solution” |
| 0:17:20 | Site criteria, form online, importance of solving problems (stormwater, public uses) |
| 0:19:00 | Helping neglected neighborhoods, local partners (PTA, FROGS, Friends of Trees, Groundworks Portland, City Repair, etc.) |
| 0:21:20 | How the groups help specifically, Vestol Elementary’s huge project, problem with Portland Public Schools, vision of groups/community, “mixed-use green space” |
| 0:25:00 | What is Sustainability, “least qualified generation to define sustainability”, “content with not knowing the answer”, bigger than green building industry, Depave wants to redefine sustainability |
| 0:28:50 | Constantly strive to find answer of sustainability, science is a good starting point, pavement can lead to soil problems |
| 0:30:18 | Sustainable goals/achievements of Depave, cleaner product when using hands instead of large machines, old pavement recycled to newly regulated pavement, composts, rainwater storage |
| 0:35:00 | Research about impact of pavement on soil, lack of access to organic material/natural breakdown process, desert like soil, jumpstart system, first earthworm |
| 0:38:20 | Vision/beginning of Depave, begins in backyards, importance of word of mouth, newer and larger sites in the future |
| 0:41:24 | Relationship with City/Government, pioneering programs in city government, permits for development regulations, challenges with program classification and how the city would handle them, developing expertise |
| 0:45:25 | Volunteer outreach for those with the skills to help them the most, relationship with Portland and local communities, want to be a “special case” for the good they do, forced to drywell and what they do, community outreach |
| 0:51:15 | Environmental equality and the need to help lower income neighborhoods, “Urban Green Space Equity Atlas”, lower income areas are underserved by public green space |
| 0:54:55 | Typical workday at Depave, need to focus social infrastructure, party atmosphere but getting things done, Depave culture is being created/growing subculture |
| 0:57:10 | Creating supply for the needing industry demand, word of mouth, need for volunteers, part of larger organization City Repair, one of the most active elements |

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| | of City Repair, other organizations that help, co-housing communities |
| 1:01:30 | Closing thoughts, encouraging people to come to work parties, “Depave your own backyard if you can” |