



Transcript (Pt. 2) of Video Interview with Lew Reid, recorded August 2012.

This interview is part of Earth Alert's Heroes of the Coast video archive, featuring interviews with leading California coastal activists, past and present California Coastal Commissioners and Coastal Commission staff. For more information, visit www.earthalert.org.

The interview with Lew Reid was conducted at the home of Bill Kortum in Petaluma, CA, in August 2012.

Janet Bridgers: Lew, there's been a lot of question about whether it was necessary to take Prop 20 back to the Legislature, because some of the things that were lost in the process, for example the Regional Commissions and Affordable Housing were dis-advantageous to activists and other people later, what are your thoughts on why Prop 20 was structured so that it wouldn't pass and would go back to the Legislature.

Lew Reid: Well, at the time we really did have a concern about being sure that the Constitutionality of the Act was iron clad. There was case law at the time that suggested that taking such as beach access for developments might be problematic, and we knew that in order to be sure that the that it was constitutional uh, it was necessary to have a well-developed policy basis have it grounded in a policy that had been worked out. That was the reason for having the coastal plan.

Lew Reid: The fact that the initial legislation was not permanent in our mind, assured that we would not lose constitutional fight over the initiative So I think, at the time, we believed we were doing the right thing in order to get the Commission up and running and be sure that it was invulnerable to constitutional attacks.

Janet Bridgers: Great. The initiative itself, Prop 20 that evolved from the Legislation of course as you've told us that law was introduced three years in a row, if you were to assign authorship, was it one person, was it many people, or would you care to name some of the people who were involved in drafting it?

Lew Reid: I think the authorship was vested in more than a committee, a lot of people had input. They had input during the two years the legislation was in Sacramento there was input from environmental groups all around the state. All of that was taken into account, and when 1972 started we looked at it and said, we want a document which is more environmentally sound, and we'll take out some of the compromises that have been made in the legislature and we also wanted document where anything might arguably risk the constitutionality be taken out.

Lew Reid: Now there were a lot of people involved. I had two young lawyers in my firm Phil McDevitt, who still practices in San Francisco and a man named Ron Gilson who now is a law professor at Stanford and Columbia. Both of them worked on the issue, Peter Douglas in Allan Seroity's office worked on it.

Lew Reid: James Aronettei Paul Priola's office worked on it. Allan Pardue had a say in it. And Janet, Janet was certainly right there. So, the process where we got to the text of the bill a lot of people had input and the input was primarily for the two objectives that I just described.

Janet Bridgers: I'm glad you mentioned Janet Adams again, seems like for a lay person she had a very vine legal mind.

Lew Reid: She was a very smart woman, and she had been through the campaigns for the Bay Commission's "Save the Bay" campaign, so she was up to date and adept at the land use issues around the Bay, which were very similar to those raised by the Coastal legislation.

Janet Bridgers: I think that's all I have. I'm good with that.

Lew Reid: You don't want my story about the Hearst?

Janet Bridgers: Oh, I do! Of course I do. I forgot about that I should have been taking notes. So, tell us the story about Mel Lane?

Lew Reid: Janet sent several of us out on forays with Mel Lane to talk to editorial boards at newspapers and I remember when Mel and I went to the San Francisco Examiner, a Hearst paper, and we expected that we were going to have a discussion with the Editorial page editors about whether they would endorse the bill, and in fact, the fella who carried the conversation was a fella named Hearst, who wanted to know what we were going to do with the Hearst Ranch and the Hearst Castle. And we did not get that endorsement.

Janet Bridgers: Do you remember other newspapers who did or didn't endorse, the, Prop 20?

Lew Reid: Well, I remember the Chronicle, Jim Peck was the editor at the time and they were certainly very supportive of what we were doing.

Janet Bridgers: Do you remember if the LA Times endorsed it?

Lew Reid: I don't. Janet Bridgers: Okay, we can look that up.

Lew Reid: I'm, I'm pretty confident they did, but I don't know.

Janet Bridgers: Thanks, this was great Thank you very much. This was great. What you said earlier so concisely I know it's probably going to be the conclusion of the documentary. So, that's why I kinda spaced out there, 'cause I could see it. (Laughter) There's the clip. (more laughter)

[end of this section of interview]