

Gregory C. Friel
Oral History Interview
Makawao, Maui, January 6, 2017 &
Hilo, Hawai'i, February 18, 2017

LW: This is Lynne Wolforth. I am in Makawao and at the Haleakala Ranch Headquarters with Greg Friel and today is January 6, 2017. So tell me about how you got started in ranching.

GF: For myself it was kind of roundabout because my family has no background in agriculture. I was born on O'ahu, grew up in Kahalu'u. So, it was John Wayne that got me into ranching... and Louis L'Amour books. When I was a kid, I knew that's what I wanted to do. I just didn't know how I was going to get there because my family had no involvement, no exposure to it. My brother-in-law Ed Stevens and my sister Betty worked for Hawaiian Telephone Company and he got transferred to Hilo in the '60's. And so I'd go up and spend a lot of time with them summers and stuff. They were outside... out of Kurtistown. So they were in the sticks. Back then that was sticks. He had a co-worker, Roy Blackshear. He was a member of the Shipman family. And so I got a summer job and started working for them I guess my sophomore year. And I worked three summers for them. First summer I started out at Kea'au and then after a week or so ended up working on Mauna Kea,... up at the saddle house... They'd hire maybe about five of us boys to work on fences and...I was about fifteen. So it was my sophomore, junior and then after I graduated, those three summers that I worked for them. And so that was my toe in the door. More so I got the bite that that's what I wanted to do. And it was fun. We'd stay up all week up on the mountain and go home on the weekends. And like I said there were... I think there were five of us. And so all those other boys were all from the Big Island. I'd come up from O'ahu every summer.

LW: So who were those guys?

GF: Robert Branco. Tommy Veriato, who was from outside of... he was from Kurtistown also. Steven Lichter and Eric Pacheco. Eric had grown up on Keauhou Ranch. And that was the mid-'70's already, when I was in school. And so Keauhou Ranch changed ownership and so his dad left there and so they went to Shipman and so Eric... he made Hawaiian saddles. He had learned from... oh, I can't remember his first name but he learned from old man Rodrigues from Hilo. And so he redid one of my saddles and in fact I still got it till today. It was an old saddle I had from my oldest brother. But it was those boys. We were all the same age. We all graduated the same time. And what was funny was that out of all of them, just Eric and I stayed in the industry. Robbie went to school in the mainland for forestry, I haven't seen or heard from him since then. Tommy was a mechanic... diesel mechanic. He ended up getting some cattle of his own and his own horses and stuff later on. And Steven ended up with a flower nursery, I think, was what he ended up with. Then Eric ended up later out at Kūka'iau Ranch. And then I heard he had passed away but I didn't hear for a while after he had passed away and he was pretty young. So that was my introduction into it.

LW: And who was the cowboy that managed you?

GF: Tommy Lindsey was the cowboy foreman there, and he and then Eugene Oliveira would have been the two. So it was funny because we'd go to work... Tommy Lindsey had a reputation as a rough guy to work with. So all the boys didn't want to ride near him because they said he would start screaming at you and this and that. And I figured well, heck, let him scream at you. You might as well be close so you can hear what he's saying. And I'd always line up closest to him. And so when he'd say something, I could hear what he wanted me to do so I could get it done the way he wanted it. But if you were too far away you couldn't hear him. Then he'd start screaming at you and what? These guys would say I don't know how you can work right next to him. And I would say I don't have a problem. He doesn't scream at me because I can hear what he wants. So it was just a funny thing but there were good times and then the last was the year that all the leases were going up on the State lands. And Shipman already was on their way out. They weren't going to renew the leases on Mauna Kea lands. And so that last summer we spent liquidating the inventory. Loading cattle to ship out to whoever was buying them. They were leasing out that Pua 'Ākala property that they owned and there was a group that was buying some cattle there and so I remember we were loading pairs and whatnot and getting them all ready to ship them to Pua 'Ākala and all the cattle were getting sold off and everything was. So that summer was just liquidating all of the livestock on the ranch.

LW: So what summer would that have been?

GF: Summer of '75. And so I had just gotten out of school and from there I was figuring on... I went to school in Hilo... college in Hilo. First couple of years I went to school at the community college. And... took agriculture, animal science and stuff. And it was the thing you were supposed to do after high school. And then that following summer... summer of '76, I went to work for Kahuā. Worked for Monte. And Pono was a young guy, just gotten back from not too long out of college. Alan Wall was assistant manager at that time. And so it was just good. Different place, different operation. You know where Shipman was a company that was phasing out, Kahuā wasn't at any... they were just poking along with a long history. And you know it's continued on. That was almost 40 years ago, I guess, now. Pretty close. But it was great... the summer there. Working with the crew. Kimo Ho'opai... the dad, you know. Kimo boy was a few years younger than me. He wasn't working summers yet. I think he might have been a little too young to work. But there was a summer crew that they would bring on so Tim Richards, Rick Habein, who's now in Oregon. Phillip Hooton... he's a boy from Kohala who I went to high school with. I went to Kamehameha Schools with him. It was kind of a surprise when I saw Phillip that first day, come to think of it, I haven't seen him since that summer. Robert McClure, that's who I stayed with that summer, he and his grandparents. His grandfather, John Kealamakia, and grandmother worked at the ranch. His grandmother worked in the house for Monte and Phyllis.

LW: What was he like?

GF: He was a neat man... John. We never worked with him, but I'd see him load up feed and minerals and the Ranch pastured a lot of dairy heifers, and taking care of those heifers was a big part of his job from what I remember seeing in those days. We'd work with Samson Holeso so we'd go out work on fence, work on spraying poison, trying to maintain control on Christmas berry mostly. Most of that would have been in the gullies in the Makai country. Then some days we'd go out with the cowboy crew and help them gather or sort cattle. There was a branding or two that summer as well that I remember.

LW: What was a big job?

GF: Back then Kohala Ranch wasn't developed, that was before Pono and Kahua were divided. The Makai country were just a few large pastures, so we'd go out with the whole crew to gather and move cattle. Back then you'd have Kimo Ho'opai, Louis Tavares, Larry, (can't remember his last name), Harold (Buffalo) Kailiawa then Alan Wall, Pono and then us young boys would go out with them also.

LW: You weren't working super hard? I'm sure they gave the hardest jobs to you young folks.

GF: We didn't think of it as hard work; you know when there are a bunch of young guys working together the day just flies by whether your building fence or spaying brush. I remember a few times getting to work and watch as the bosses are going through the herd. Watching as Alan and Kimo were making some of their decisions and so at that point you realize there's more to it than just digging holes and spraying poison and there's a thought process that goes into everything.

LW: You remember an example of that?

GF: Well when we were going through and they were sorting heifers for breeding and stuff. Them talking story so you're starting to pick up an idea of what they're looking for in these animals for replacements. Or other times why they wanted to cull these certain animals and get them out and get them off to market. So it was just starting to see that there is a method or system where they make these decisions for the improvement of the herd.

LW: What was Kimo like?

GF: Very quiet. I mean he hasn't changed but very quiet and he'd just give a few words on what had to be done and he'd ride off and that was it. One of the funniest things I remember working with Kimo was at lunch time we'd all sit down. You'd keep your rice with you but you put whatever your meat was out in the front. And Kimo had brought what somebody thought was teriyaki. Grabbed a piece of the teriyaki and no... I took a piece but I took a small piece. When I bit it I said oh... it's liver. And the only way I can eat liver is *aki*. If it's raw, I'll eat it but once you cook it and it dries out you can't put enough bacon or onions for me to swallow that thing. But I just had a little piece I had to

take care of but this other kid had a big piece. It was Bobby McClure. And he was gnawing on it and it took him most of the lunch break to... you know he ate all his rice and he was still working on that teriyaki. There's no way you're going to throw it away, you know. But it was just funny remembering. Kimo just looks at him and says "Hmm, *ono* huh, boy." But it was just stuff like that. Days would be... they had that big reservoir above the house... above the headquarters. And then at that time we were working on it. We were having some problems with the wind. Picking up that liner and making it... whip in that wind that's so common up there. And so we were lacing tires. We were pre-drilling holes in them down at the shop. We had all these tires all pre-drilled. We took them up there and we laced ropes through them and made them so that they were a big mesh of tires across to hold the liner from flopping in the wind. Typical, you get that many young guys together and the last part of the day, just before we were ready to go home, Tim starts whispering and we go and pants one of the guys, throw him into the *pūnāwai*... you know... if you weren't on your way home it would be miserable to be out there in that cold. But it was just silly things like that we'd do to get through the day. That was a good bunch.

LW: And Alan... what's Alan like... Mr. Wall like?

GF: He was very quiet, too. Between him and Kimo you'd be sitting in the pen watching them sort. That's where you learn... you just watch people, watch their horse to see what animals they're going to pick because they're not talking to anybody. You just sit there and then you start to figure out which ones they're looking at. But they were just... quiet... they knew their job, they knew what it was and you just learned to watch them and pick it up. If you weren't paying attention you didn't know what was going on... which is kind of the way I hear I've been. You just get in the pen, you just lay out your instructions, but after that it's just go and do your work not a lot of talk just get the work done... a fellow that works for 'Ulupalakua now... Emerson Makekau... works the same way and that's one of my favorite guys to work with. Just because we'll go in there and start and there's no... you read him, he reads you and you just work without talking all day long. But it's been good. That was the summer after I finished school. Then I had transferred to UH-Hilo and I was taking some classes there and around that time I had met Gordon Cran through my brother-in-law Ed Stevens. My brother-in-law worked for the telephone company. They were discontinuing a telephone line that ran from Volcano down through to Pahala so that was twelve, thirteen miles of telephone poles and copper wire that ran right through Kapapala Ranch. And so for the telephone company, the thing for them to do was to see if the landowner wants to salvage that stuff... those materials. And then if they do, it was a case of selling it to the Ranch. The telephone company doesn't have any responsibility to take down the poles and wire because it has been sold.

LW: So who bought it? Kapapala Ranch?

GF: Yes. Ed was responsible for the sale or removal of that telephone line, so he drove up to Kapapala, introduced himself to Gordon and asked if he'd like to purchase that line that they were going to abandon. So I started going out on the weekends with Ed and giving Gordon a hand. We spent quite a few weekends pulling out the old telephone poles, and

rolling up the old copper wire, then all those posts and cross arms and the hardware just all went into fencing for use on the ranch. And so I really got to know Gordon good by spending so much time out there on the weekends. At that time Lani was in college. She's two years younger than me and I was twenty so she was probably in college at Washington State University. I was going to U.H. in Hilo, taking animal science and working out with Gordon on the weekend I was just having problems relating what I was learning on the weekends with what they were trying to teach me in school and there was this one deal with one professor that... he was talking about raising replacement heifers. How much grain you had to feed your animals so that they'd be ready to breed as yearlings. And so here's this report that we have to do on that and it was going to be a big part of your semester grade. Well, I read everything and talking with Gordon and stuff on the weekends he says you know... we can't afford that. Kapapala is a real range type operation and the forages on the lands that they had leased at that time didn't have very strong forages. The good lands had been taken out for sugar cane production in the past, and the bulk of the ranch was very shallow soil with marginal quality forages except for Ohaikea which bordered with the National Park. Gordon and I ran the numbers and there wasn't a chance that you could import that feedstuff to supplement the heifers to get them bred as yearlings...it just wouldn't pencil out. Long story short, I hand in the assignment and flunk it. I talk with the teacher and ask him why I flunked the report and says that I didn't use all the materials and information in the book in writing the report. I told him that the damn book was written in Nebraska and didn't have a damn bit of correlation to ranching in Ka'u. Where the heck was I going to find all that cheap corn by-products to feed these heifers. I was going to have to take three more classes from this guy to get my degree and I wasn't looking forward to sitting in anymore of his classes.

LW: Did he change your grade?

GF: No.

LW: Did he help you?

GF: Yeah, he helped me make up my mind to drop out of college. So one day I was sitting in his lecture and he's rambling on and on. I'm looking up at the mountain. Mauna Kea. I thought you know what... I'm learning more working with Gordon... it was just *kokua* help... that weekend I went out and I told Gordon. "You know what? I'm going to sign out of this college." So I told him what happened and he goes "Yeah. It's hard to find a practical professor. Because they've never done it. They learn it out of a book and they teach it out of a book. And that's about it." So I asked him if I could work for him for room and board. And he says "Well, we'll see what we can do." I worked for him for room and board. I was earning some time. And by the time summer came around he says "You know what? We can swing it. I'll hire you on." Right around the beginning of summer. So I worked for about three or four months for room and board. And then he hired me on that summer. That would have been '79. And then I worked for him I think for about ten years. And that's when my education really started.

LW: Now how old would he have been in '79

GF: Probably mid-fifties. Yeah, he took the ranch over in '77, I think. '77 or '78, a year or two before I got there.

LW: That's when he came back from O'ahu and picked up again and...

GF: Well he had come back from O'ahu and he was partners with Dutch Schumann for a year or two up at SC. And then that wasn't working out so... I think the manager for Parker Ranch at that time was a guy named Hanson. Hard to remember because right at that time there was kind of a turnover. I think his name was Hanson. And Gordon went to him to see if he had a small piece. Gordon said he wanted a small piece to run his own herd. And the manager told him what about Kapapala. And Gordon had worked Kapapala in the '50's as a foreman there. And his initial answer was no, I'm looking for something small. Because that was 32,000 acres and he was looking for something for himself to run and not... I guess they talked and met a while and he ended up taking it over from Parker Ranch. And so...

LW: So that would have been '77 when he took it over.

GF: Yeah, around that. '77 or '78... and so the first things they went through was the inventory and getting the cattle in, getting them branded in to Gordon's brand... and venting the Parker Ranch brand and just making that switchover which probably I imagine would have taken quite a while just gathering that whole place.

LW: You mean in order to know how many...

GF: Animals were there and...

LW: ...and which were needed to be Kapapala's and which were considered Parker Ranch's.

GF: So what they do is bring all the cattle in to vent the sale brand from Parker Ranch...

LW: What does that mean?

GF: It's a sign of sale. You take the Parker Ranch brand and typically what you do is say Parker Ranch's brand for themselves is on the hip. So to vent the brand... when you sell that animal and you're going to vent the brand, you take the same brand, the ranch brand and you put it on the shoulder on the same side that the original brand is. So what that does is that cancels that (the original brand) saying that you no longer own that animal. And then Gordon puts his brand on it you'll see these animals with two Parker Ranch brands and then Gordon's brand on it you'll know that animal had been (sold). Through the corral and then Gordon had accounted for that animal and that he's paying for that animal.

LW: So that's all stuff he did before you got there?

GF: Yeah, that would have been the first.

LW: But it's a big property, not fenced very much so it would have taken a long time.

GF: Taken a long time. Lot of brush. Lot of lava so I'm guessing it probably took them a while to get that done. From talking to some of the guys who were Parker Ranch later... they were telling me they'd have twenty, twenty-five guys there. But back then Parker Ranch had a crew that was... Parker Ranch had Keauhou Ranch, Kapapala and Ka'alu'alu, which... so they had everything from Volcano down to South Point which was a hundred some odd thousand acres there plus what they had in Waimea, Mauna Kea and Kohala. And probably in those days they probably still had a lot of that *makai* Waikoloa country, too. That was a long time ago. So they would have a big crew back then where they could send twenty guys out just to take care of the inventory work. So when I got there a big part of it was just getting the cattle settled. They were pretty wild when we got there. And one of the biggest things I started to learn was... Gordon was real good at... was just handling animals and getting them settled. What we found out early was you can't in that hot, hot country, you can't work cattle in the middle of the day. You can't trail cattle in the middle of the day with just a few guys. 'Cause you know we'd gather up a bunch of cattle and we'd start trailing them... maybe about 8:30, 9:00 o'clock as the sun got up over the mountain... you know the sun comes up and beating down, thing get hot and these cattle just start walking off into the bush. And they just... it's their nature that that time of the day they just go brush up and cool off. And... we just realized real early that at that time of the day with just two, three of us... these cattle they'd just walk off in the brush and stay there. You put your dogs on them, they'd come back into the herd but the next one would just walk off to the next bush. And so it was just a case of we figured out that if we'd be moving cattle any distance, you got to do it in the afternoon. Cooler. So what we'd do is we'd go out in the morning and we'd go work on fences or water or whatever projects had to be done. And then the cattle work... we'd leave the headquarters around 1:00 o'clock in a truck or trailer or horse if it wasn't too far... and you'd start gathering the cattle around 2:00 o'clock and then from there on, the rest of the day it just starts cooling off. And so as you bump these cattle, you just bump them, they'd head towards the water troughs and then you'd gather them up at the water and then you'd trail them to whatever holding pasture or corral or if you're changing pasture... you'd move them then. And so you'd work around the animals' schedule. It made it a lot easier instead of trying to get each one to come out of the bushes in the heat of the day. So it was just my first lesson in learning that you work on the animals' time and not on yours.

LW: So we were talking about working on the cattle time.

GF: And it was like... those cattle were pretty wild back then. So what we'd do, as we'd gather... we'd call it the Big Country because anything that was brush range, which was a good portion of the ranch.

LW: Yeah, that whole side from the headquarters towards the Park is...

GF: Yeah... right around the Park boundary it's all pretty brushy with guava and Christmas berry and... then up on those high flats there's a lot of *a'ali'i* and what not but right up against the Park boundary there were several thousand acres that was really open. And it was funny because when I was a kid and we'd drive down to that part of the island I always thought gee, that's so pretty up there. I'd like to go up there. Never realizing that someday I'd spend so many years of my life up there. So as we'd gather all the young cattle... all of the young cattle were after we'd wean them we'd take them up there. The country was open, it was easy to handle them and we could handle them often. It was smaller pastures. A few hundred acres instead of several thousand. And as we'd handle them more often as we'd rotate them around and they got used to being handled and not...

LW: You mean worked from...

GF: Horseback... everything was horseback. And so the steers, the heifers all got used to being handled and so then you could trail them where ever you need to go without being off at a run.

LW: So when they're wild, they're not used to being handled?

GF: They were used to being handled but probably just not in the right way. It was rough country and in country like that you got to... they head off of the trail... a lava trail or something, you can't get around them. So you got to hope that when you bump them they're going to head where you want them to go and if... whenever people show up things are high stress level for them or they're not going to want to stick around. And so we just had to tone it down in the way we handled them so that every time we handled them, it was a good experience for them. You know then after a while they'd start to settle down. But the big thing was the steers because we were going to have to get them shipped for market and the heifers were going to go into the breeding herd and we had to all settled and used to being trailed and handled without getting into a race everytime that we wanted to move them. And for... in fact... the first herds... in fact Lani was home from school... I don't know if it was a summer break or if she had already graduated but we had gotten the first bunch of replacement heifers together and we were going to trail them down to the headquarters from there so that's twelve miles. Twelve, thirteen miles down the trail and we were on pins and needles because what you're used to handling out on the range and these heifers... we weren't sure if... Girlie and I... Lani and I weren't sure if these heifers were ready to make that trip and that we would enjoy it. But we ended up we took them six miles in the evening, stopped them at one of the corrals, put them up there. Which was probably the easiest part of the trip. It was the most open, it was lava but not a lot of brush. The last six miles the next morning was going to be through the guava and christmasberry. You know we counted them in the last gate and there were three hundred some odd heifers. Whatever we left with we got them all down there and to us that was a big deal. Till today we always still talk about it. That was the biggest deal that we thought getting those heifers that far and not losing any of them you know... at that time of what the rest of the ranch cattle were acting like it was a real big deal to us. Today, you expect every animal to behave like that. Back then as you were

trying to transition these animals it was a big deal. There were a lot of the things that we... when we were shifting in the Big Country, if we were shifting cattle to another pasture it would be a case of just turn off the water one place, let them move over to the new pasture. Then you'd go behind and you'd gather the balance and bring them in. And then whatever left back is typically the bad eggs and you'd go back and rope those. Rope them and they'd usually go straight to slaughter. Predominantly they were bulls. There were a lot of bulls up in up in that forest just because you just wouldn't get everything gathered in because these weren't used to being handled all the time. But I remember we spent many long nights hauling cattle in to Miko and... that was a nice thing. Miko was right there, right outside of Kea'au. Right on the edge of Shipman property. And so we'd go in there and unload cattle and be heading home in middle of the night. I mean it was...

LW: Why was the timing like that?

GF: Oh, just a case of if you're roping these bulls and stuff and by the time you go back because you tie them up to a tree, you go back the next day and by the time you can get them all loaded up into the trailer and headed back into town, it's going to be dark. It's just slow, tedious work. And you would leave where we were roping, too, they were up in some brushy country anyways because if it was in the open country you could work slow enough where you get them gathered. But in that big, brushy country they'd give you the run around and so it'd be a case of you'd put the dogs on them, the dogs would go find them, get up on them and then rope them. Lead them as far as you could to as close to a road. There'd still be a case of a long haul, pulling the trailer up the hill. And if it was way up in the mountain, you'd take a small trailer up because you couldn't pull a big goose neck up. So just... just the time it takes to get up there, the time it takes to load each bull, and then by the time you drive back down and get to the highway and head to Miko, you wouldn't be getting into town till eight, nine o'clock at night and by the time you're back home it'd be ten, eleven o'clock. But you had to get rid of those bad eggs. Gordon gave me a figure once and he said you know, those bulls paid a lot of bills in the beginning because the market was good for them. A lot of them. But on the other hand, like he said it's no way to run a ranch because the time it takes to go rope and load ten bulls, you can spend that same amount of time gathering up several hundred head on the double decker and ship them to the mainland. But you had to get them out of there otherwise they'd just keep the rest of the herd all agitated every time that you went to gather a herd. You'd be gathering a herd down... say you have four or five hundred cows coming down, but then you got a bunch of bulls in there, they got their heads up and they're ready to break, well... they'll break and take off and they'll take something else with them. And basically you can't rope 'em then, because if one guy goes off to rope them, then you'd leave a great big hole and the rest of the cattle leak out so you let them go and just save the big herd. And then go deal with them in the future. But we trapped a lot of cattle. We'd set up trap pens and gates that they would trip and the gates would shut on them when they came in. We'd use either water or in some areas where it was wet and they didn't need water, you could use molasses or something like that. So we just spent a lot of... it just took a few years just getting rid of those bad eggs that wouldn't come in and gather...

LW: So that's what you did in the beginning...?

GF: Yeah... it was simultaneous. The cattle that you could handle, you were handling them. But those bad eggs, you had to get them out so that they wouldn't influence the rest of the herd whenever you were working. Then after years went by, you'd start to get less and less of the problem cattle. And then also is... you'd be gathering them and you'd come across a bull that might be two or three years old, but you'd never seen him and he'd come out of the forest heading down because it was dry and you'd expect him to throw his head up and run but he'd just stand there and you realize that he's never had exposure to man. So he doesn't know what it is so you handle him right, he'll join the bunch. Whereas a few years before that, a bull that age... he'd look at you and he'd throw his head up and next thing he'd turn around and be heading for the hills again. So I got to learn from Gordon how to take those flighty cattle and get them settled and keep them settled. And the big thing was he told me "Never get them to that point in the first place," he said. "Always handle your cattle right and it makes the job a whole lot easier."

LW: So what's an example of handling them badly?

GF: Just if you always got pressure on them. And don't ever release pushing them along just faster than it's comfortable for them. You'll see it... people will be coming to a corral. And the corral gate will fit maybe four or five head walking through at a time. Well they're pushing on them and pushing on them so if you got more than a hundred head, they're just going to balloon on you because there's no place for them to go and then what's easier... to run through the fence and the corral or turn around and run through the horses? Turn around and run through the horses. And they start to learn that it's a lot easier to run through that than to go... and the thing is if you never release the pressure, it's uncomfortable for the animals. And it becomes not a nice place to be. When they see people showing up, instead of saying oh well, we're going to walk down there because our experience with them is always pretty decent. No, these guys they're always ramming and jamming us and that's not pleasant. They hear you coming and they're already starting to head off and hide.

LW: Certainly the terrain at Kapapala is... you're forced to figure out how to handle them well because you got so much wild terrain.

GF: Yeah... all that lava and that brush, you can't outrun them. You can't see them half the time.

LW: Tell me a little bit about working on lava. Kaupō has lava. And so Charlie was talking yesterday a little bit about that. I don't know if I've heard anything about the details like that; what it's like to work on lava.

GF: Well, you just go slowly. You need a horse that really watches where they put their feet.

LW: Charlie said that he liked mules. They work better in lava.

GF: Uh huh. You know... the big thing was like when I was still in Ka'u, I'd ride a lot of horses for other people. Make extra money. And it was one thing to take a horse that was born and raised right on the ranch... 'cause Gordon had a few mares. And those horses, from when they were born, they learned to watch where they put their feet. They're looking where they're going. And the ranch had some old horses that had been there from... see, I think Parker Ranch was there only for a couple of years. But prior to them it was Hawaiian Ranch. And there were some horses that were left there from Hawaiian Ranch days. And those horses had been born and raised in those rocks. And so... especially when you're roping wild cattle, you're running through the rocks. Those horses, whether you're chasing a bull to rope him or whether you're heading away, leading them... you know if you've got a horse that's paying attention to the ground, you're just worried about the bull and keeping the rope from getting tangled or the horse from getting gored or something. I would ride horses... I'd get horses from guys that come from Hilo or Waimea and the horses come off of real easy country and it would take them a while to get used just... traveling in that rocky country. They'd be tripping, stumbling because they just don't pay attention as well. And so you get into someplace like... all of our *makai* country is real lava down to Kīhei here. We've got some property behind near Kaupō... by just north of Kaupō, and it's real rough, rocky country back there, too. And so the horses really got to pay attention when you're going through there. Otherwise they just end up all dinged up from stumbling in the rocks. It was rough. Ka'u was some rough country. But it really taught you the benefit of slowing down. Gordon used to tell me "You got to out think these cattle because you're not going to out muscle them in this country." You're not going to out run them; you're not going to out muscle them. So it was learning how to think like them and get them to behave in a manner that's very manageable. You did learn how to take care of the rough ones but on the other side, it showed you how to keep the rest of them from getting that way.

LW: So once you got the herds... your various herds settled... you know you worked there for ten years so how would you characterize the later part of your time there?

GF: It came to be more routine. You know you're going to go out to gather the herd so you didn't expect the big problems to arise when you're handling the animals. On the other hand, you had Nature that was always throwing curve balls at you. There was the big earthquake in 1983, I think they rated that one a little over 7 on the Richter scale. We had massive damage to the water head. The tunnels collapsed and Gordon hired a crew from Fair Contracting to clean it out, their crew was on the job for over a month just cleaning out the tunnel and while they were working on that we were replacing waterlines that came out of the tunnel down that cliff and up the other side. It was major damage to the water system across the ranch. Had to haul water for cattle for months until we got the system back up and running. There were some bad floods there too, one Christmas eve there was 22 inches of rain in 24 hours. A lot of damage around the headquarters, the bridge was standing but there was no road on either side of it. There were a few thousand acres of sugar cane above the headquarters and their diversions put all of the runoff into the gulch that came through the camp. During these floods that gulch was carrying water from a bigger area than it normally should have been and so there was a lot of flooding

down through the camp. After I left they had some floods there that were even worse, wiping out the stables, saddle room and warehouse. One of the last ones a few years back was running water between the main house and the camp houses.

LW: So where are the drains? Behind the camp?

GF: All mauka of the camp, from when the sugar cane was up there.

LW: Remember exactly... yeah. So that place is a challenge.

GF: That place is. The natural aspects of it with the earthquakes... the vog... the destruction they got under fences is just unbelievable...

LW: From the vog.

GF: From the vog. The waterlines that... last time I was up there, Bill Petrie (Lani's husband) was showing me a coupling that was less than two years old that had rotted right through already. Then they have a lot of highway fence, probably 8 miles or more that they have replaced a few times since the volcano has started spewing out this vog. It just eats the metal so quickly.

LW: What year did you leave Kapapala?

GF: Left there around '88, went to Kipu Kai Ranch on Kauai. When I was still working for Gordon, I got a call from Brian Caires that they were going to be processing some import bulls down at the Hilo Quarantine Facility in Panaewa and if could give them a hand. So I went down to help him and he had a fellow named Lindy Sutherland with him. I helped them process this load of bulls and a few days later I'm in school and this fellow Sammi Younis who was working for Seymour Shingle in Kohala, tells me that "I heard you're going to work at Kipu Kai Ranch." I didn't have any idea where Kipu Kai was and told him that. He said that Lindy had told Seymour that he was going to hire me. The next day Gordon got a call from Lindy asking if he could talk to me about going to work for him. Have you ever been to Kipu Kai?

LW: No.

GF: It sits on the coast between Nawiliwili harbor and Poipu, it's a small ranch. It's maybe 2,000 acres and a lot of it is real steep. Kind of like the Ko'olaus. It really gets up steep. But they were running Brangus and beef master cattle. Raising bulls for sale in the state. My wife Roxane, our 3-year-old son Cody and I flew over and it's a beautiful place. Pretty little spot and it has one little beach that's really good for kids right out by the main house. And there's on beach that's probably about ¾ mile... just long white sand beach. Nobody ever around. Irrigation... because a lot of the floor of the ranch is just sand. But they had put in two wells prior for the drinking water as well but that also went for the irrigation. So it was a big change. A big difference. It was smaller property with... not big herds but because the property was so small they had to really manage the

grazing to be able to make it work. And because they were pure bred at certain times you had to break the herds up so that you were breeding just the Brangus bull to the Brangus cows and the beef master bulls so... you had to really juggle things and Brian Cairns was terrific at that... during the breeding season we would A.I. the cows and heifers, then Brian would put a single sire out to cover certain cows...he had so many little herds... and yet you had to be able to manage the grass so that none of them ran out of grass before the breeding season was over and you put the herds all back into one and go back managing them as one herd.

LW: So were they little fenced areas?

GF: A lot of portable electric fence they were using. And it's probably one of the biggest things I learn out of that was the flexibility that that little tool gives you. In managing and... managing pasture and livestock. It was good but it was rough on me because it was small and so coming out of Ka'u...

LW: It's like the other end of the spectrum.

GF: Yeah. And I loved working there because I learned so much and Lindy and Brian were both really good teachers but I was claustrophobic. I mean you sit on your porch at the house in the morning, putting on your shoes and everything from the porch was what you were going to see all day long. That was it. And so it just... for me personally... my wife loved it. My son, you know he was a four-year-old kid in this valley; he could ride his bike wherever he wanted. He'd go to the beach with mom on weekends and stuff and... you know...

LW: Paradise, huh?

GF: Yeah, it was great but for me I was just going stir crazy.

LW: So what was Lindy like? What was Lindy's last name again?

GF: Sutherland. He's a great guy, he had come up through the plantation. He worked for the plantations for a long time. And then... I can't remember what year but he went to work for Kaupō Ranch under Bredhoff... Soot was the manager back when Lindy was working for him. And progressive as heck. Easy to work with. I mean plenty of aloha... that man and his family. And...

LW: So when he came up to... he was working on the cattle ranches for the plantation.

GF: No, no. He was in sugar. And so like I remember he was on Kaua'i at... what would that have been...? McBride. He worked for McBride out there past Kalāheo and near 'Ele'ele... in that area. And so when he went back to Kipu Kai, he had all his contacts so when we needed mechanics and we needed different kind of guys he had these contacts from the plantation who all were there.

LW: And what was Brian like?

GF: Brian was very systematic. His grazing... he was top notch. His genetics... he loved working with the genetics for the breeding herd.

LW: So how would he do that?

GF: Oh, just always reading up on what bulls would fit the type of cows that we were using. And so... I'm not sure how long but he's at Parker Ranch now.

LW: Does he keep detailed records?

GF: He was very meticulous, especially on the breeding. Even on the grazing everything was charted as to how many days this herd was in this pasture. But he had all his records on it. So we had like birthweights on these calves you know. And he'd tag them at birth. You weight them. You treat them. That was probably the big area of excitement that was calving... tagging time because there were a few cows in there that were... until their calves got to be a little older they were over protective. Personally, I would have gotten rid of them. But they were nice cows. They were his good bull calves and for the ranch that's what they were looking at but some of them you might have to tag them from the bucket of the John Deere tractor. One of us would go up in the bucket and the other one drive in there and lower the bucket down, you'd put a rope on that calf, pull it into the bucket and lift the bucket up high in the air while the cow is over there massaging the tires some but... (laughter). You get it tagged and weighed and recorded, you drop the calf down onto the ground, let it go. And look forward to that every year for that same cow. But learned a lot as far as putting the management stuff together.

LW: A whole different bio-environment there than at Kapapala.

GF: Yeah.

LW: And you maybe didn't like it, you're saying. Too small.

GF: Well that was just for my personality. The claustrophobic feeling was just...

LW: You knew you felt it.

GF: As much as I like the work and learning another aspect of the industry, I knew that it wasn't going to last. And I told them you know what, I like working here but I'm not going to be able to stay here long.

LW: How long did you stay?

GF: Three or four years.

LW: That's a while.

GF: Partway along I got a call. By that time... in fact for a while already Soot had already been at Kahuku Ranch. And so this would have been... '88 or '89. And Soot called Lindy. He used to come over and buy bulls from the ranch.

LW: On Kaua'i?

GF: At Kipu Kai, yeah, to take back to Kahuku. And so I met him on the ranch and stuff. In either '88 or '89 and asked Lindy if he could offer me a job to be his assistant at Kahuku. And so Lindy told me that Soot was going to call me and... he told me it would probably be a good thing for me. So he called me up and I went up and I looked around and talked to my wife. She didn't want to go back to Ka'u. Not that part. If it was Kapapala it was one thing. But she said you know, "Let's not go back to Ka'u. So I said okay. So kept working there and then a year or so later in 1990, I got a call from Hana Ranch. They wanted me to go over there and manage the ranch. And so we moved there in May of 1990. So Cody was in kindergarten, my daughter Cassye was about six months old when we left Kaua'i... to go to Hana Ranch. It was good. It gave me... my own authority to start to do things.

LW: What position did you take?

GF: The manager. And the people... the community was terrific. We still got a lot of people in there... you know we were only there for four years but it's like we go back a lot and folks just make you feel like we've come back home. Just like they adopted my entire family. And real good people. We went in there and the ownership was a mixture. They had bought it from... that's the problem with Hana it's been... you know you had Paul Fagen who started it. Can't remember if it was right after the World War. So he had a long term ownership. And then when he passed away then it went through a lot of different ownerships.

LW: Is it still running?

GF: Yeah. But when I went to work there it was a group called Keola Hana-Maui with some local investors a father and son from Japan. And so I went in to work for them and then within the four years they were already up for sale. They had it maybe a year before I got there and by the time I left they still owned it but it had been for sale already for like a year or so. What they were looking at was taking part of the ranch... in the middle and putting some housing in with the rest of the ranch around it. *Mauka* the highway. And looking at the finances of that place and that place has been battling brush encroachment bad. The weather there, it wants to revert back to forest.

LW: Oh... that's the rainy side.

GF: Yeah. Very wet. So a big part of their battle is keeping back the brush. But it was good. There was a good crew. There were two, three four... five of us. It was the same company that owned the hotel so that the ranch had... Rodney Kalalau... Duke Kahuila,

Lester and Earle Kaiwi... John "Boy" Hanchett... myself. So there were five on the ranch and then you had the hotel with... I don't know... a few hundred employees. And they owned the store, the service station... the restaurant that wasn't connected in the hotel... the one up in town. So it was kind of funny working for an outfit like that.

LW: Whole bunch of different businesses.

GF: Yeah. Hotel thinking that they dictate your rotation... because they had a walkway through the pasture and it came up through the hotel and across and it comes up on the top of this Koki Bay... and then from there they can walk on down to the ocean. Then they had stables, too, for trail rides, which came under the ranch. And so that was for the guests in the hotel and they'd ride across parts of the ranch. There was one place where they'd have a barbeque and a place where they'd have a *luau* and so the trail would take them to those functions and then during the days they'd have regular trail rides. So you had two or three guys at work just at the stables but they reported to the ranch. It was weird dealing with a ranch that had those other components. But the only one who really had an impact on the ranch negatively or otherwise was the hotel. Because we'd have cattle in a certain place and they'd say, "You know you ought to move those cattle because our guests are coming through." I was lucky that the guy who was my boss... his name was Liebert Langraf... and he did not come out of the hotel industry at all and he told them "You know what? You guys work around the cattle. The cattle do not rotate around you guys. Their grazing plan is what it is and they're not going to adjust things so people can go walking through so you can have a barbeque here or there." Without a boss like him I would have left there a lot earlier.

LW: How did you decide to move to Haleakala Ranch?

The guy who got me to move there was... Peter Baldwin, he was the President there. And I'd never met him. I don't even know how he got my name. Called me up one day. Wanted to know if he could come into Hana and visit. So I had to go find out who Peter Baldwin was? If I had been from Maui, I would have known but... my only exposure on Maui was Hana so... so he comes into town and we talk story and I showed him around. I couldn't figure out what he was looking for. At the end of the day he goes "Would you be interested in coming out and work for us and managing the ranch for us?" I was kind of shocked.

LW: What year was it then?

GF: '94. I started here December 1st, '94. I got into Hana in May of '90. And came out December 1st, '94. So we've been here since and probably die here. Not right away! It's good. It's a good family to work for. They believe in the ranch; they believe in the livestock. They believe in conservation.

LW: That's land conservation?

GF: Yeah. So you know... Jordon Jokiel takes care of... he's the land manager. We work together in projects but he's doing some native re-forestation projects and looking at a commercial *koa* project where last year we planted in ten acres. This year we planted thirteen acres. Looking at putting in ten to fifteen acres every year over thirty years and then start to harvest it. But it's a terrific family to work for.

LW: Who's the family then?

GF: Well Peter's been retired from the ranch for a while. But he's not involved so much with the day to day. Now on the Board of Directors is Charlie Crowley. His mother-in-law was Maizie Sanford who just passed away. Her brother would have been Colin Cameron, who was Maui Pine. The there's Christina Lyon. Her grandmother would have been Peter Baldwin's auntie...his father's sister. Peter's father was Manduke Baldwin, who was the ranch president, ranch manager. I think Peter took over after him as the president and the manager but he left the manager position after a while because he was doing some other business stuff. But he was still the president and so he had some non-family members who were managers for... I'm not sure how long a period of time. So I think there were three different managers Bard Peterson, Mike Banfield, Brian Dellen and then I came on after that so I'd be the fourth non-family manager.

LW: Are there other people on that board, then?

GF: I'm trying to... Richard Cameron...

LW: They're family?

GF: Richard Cameron, Richard Silva... Christina Lyons... Charlie Crowley... so there are four family members and three non-family members and... David Pietsch. I don't have to go to the board meetings any more so I'll have to...

LW: That's okay.

GF: No, no, no. I got to remember. But the three non-family members are all businessmen from the state that are helping to guide the Ranch in that direction. Oh heck... there's one... Don Horner. And then confound it... he's the one been here the longest with us. And he also sits on the board for Palani Ranch and Parker. I can see his face... Art Tokin...damn getting old.

LW: So what was the first thing you did when you got here?

GF: Learn the place.

LW: It's big. How big is it?

GF: It's about 32,000 acres. And it's not contiguous. It was bought all at different times so the original was the mountain, which at that time included what's the National Park now.

And that would have been in 1888. Then there's a piece that runs from Kula Highway right down to Kihei Waiahono / Puu Hao country. South of that we boundary with Kaonoulu Ranch, then comes Hawaiian Homes land and then our Kamaole Makai lands that run from Keokea down to Kihei. That Kamaole lands we boundary with Ulupalakua Ranch. And then we got another few thousand acres out south near Kaupō. Country called Wai'ōpai. So it's good. It's got its benefits and its drawbacks of not being contiguous. Big part of the drawback is time it takes to travel to different areas. Instead of one perimeter fence you've got a lot of perimeter fences. And then you end up with subdivisions that border with you. The neighbors think that thousand acres came with the seven thousand square foot lot that they bought. They think it's their personal dog walk, park. So even now as this urban sprawl comes in it really impacts us. But there are different environmental zones where at times you can move cattle around if it's too dry in one area. But what we used to do was with the mountain herd, we were running a thousand cows up on the mountain. As you get into the winter, the growth of the grass really slows down. So what we'd do was we'd bring them down. So then we'd start the winter rains... or middle Kula country would come on and although there was a cow herd down there, once the winter rains came, we'd put up so much feed down there that it was more than those cows could handle. So we'd gather the Mountain cows to the corral, we'd wean their calves off, we'd pregnancy check them. All the cows that were pregnant we'd give them a couple weeks so that we'd forget about their calves and then we'd trail them down the highway and we'd take them down into that lower Kula country. And then we'd give this whole mountain a chance to rest and then those cows would start to calve around May, so around early April we'd trail them back up the mountain before they'd calve. And they'd get back on the mountain and start calving out and the feed would be perfect for them. But then we had to quit doing that because traffic got to be so bad and a thousand cows walking down the road, they'd leave a lot of green. People were not happy. All these cars with the green splattered up on the side doors were not happy.

LW: That's kind of silly but...

GF: Yeah... it is what it is. It's the times and the people have changed.

LW: Even I'd say two years ago, right? And it's changed in two years. Okay. So what's your system now for that group?

GF: The cows stay up on the Mountain all year long now. Things have changed a lot over time in the mid to late 90's we had a stretch of dry years. Six years of drought followed by one or two decent years and then another prolonged drought. We had 4,200 breeding cows in the late 90's and between the prolonged drought and the axis deer overrunning the country we dropped as low 1000 cows. Part of that decrease was also a change in marketing strategy, where we went from a cow / calf operation that shipped our calves to the mainland to grow and finish to keeping the calves here and growing and finishing them here to be marketed on Maui. So we dropped to 1500 cows and grew out their calves and finished them on the Ranch.

LW: Where did you process them?

GF: DeCoites Packing Facility.

LW: You process them right here?

GF: Yes, they are harvested there and then Maui Cattle Company has the actual processing facility where we take the carcasses and the beef is fabricated so they can go either wholesale or retail, right into the supermarkets with the price tag and completely shelf ready.

LW: So the supermarket puts them in...

GF: Maui Cattle Company... the Maui Cattle Company is made up of Haleakalā Ranch, Ulupalakua, Hana and Kaupō. So we got four partners and our cattle at that time, in the early years were going to Nobriga's feed lot down in Waikapū and he had a lot of the pineapple by-products that went into making up the ration along with some grains. Corn and barley. So we had transitioned from shipping all of our calves out to the mainland, to where we were still shipping some but the bulk of it was staying back on the island and we were feeding them there and I think at the peak, we were marketing, I think, forty plus head a week through Maui Cattle Company as a fed animal.

LW: You get a better profit on that?

GF: It was good. The big thing was the demand for the local product had been a solid demand. But what happened was...

LW: So you knew about 45 could go every week?

GF: Yeah. And you know when we started... we were looking at the... that we wanted to transition to grass finish. But it was something we had in mind down the road because we still had to change the genetic make-up of the cattle. They had to be of a more moderate frame... the animal. Not as big as the animals that we were running.

LW: You mean to go to...

GF: To be able to go to grass finished. And so they had to be moderate framed, they had to be able to make it their entire life just on what they could graze. And so we started to change the genetics and started to artificially inseminate to a different type of animal.

LW: So what type were you choosing?

GF: They were Angus but they were smaller framed. More moderate.

LW: You could specify that in...

GF: Yeah. By different sources of semen, you could get different types of animals. And so we started that transition, but before we were anywhere near there, Maui Pine closed up and so that abundance of pineapple by-product is now gone and so we had to start to make that transition to grass finished sooner than we had anticipated. And a big part of the problem then was when we hit the droughts, about the second... you can manage through about two years of drought. You get into that third year and things really start getting tight. And then the other thing that was happening simultaneously was the deer population was really starting to explode on Maui. And what would happen then was here now you have all these deer out there competing with your cattle for forages. And they had really, really made it tough to manage through it so that it got so that we had to save our cow herd. We had to market a bunch of our stockers who were on the way to becoming grass finished. And so we had to ship something like seven hundred stockers to the mainland so that we could move our cows from that real dry Kīhei country up to where the stockers were up here on the mountain where although it was less than normal rain considerably, there was some moisture and so we had to bring the cows up so we could save them. And it made a big difference. We were putting in some extra electric fencing to be able to manage them more intensely and basically it allowed us to keep from having to supplement any of those cows. The cows still stayed productive. They didn't lose calves or anything and we just had to shift them up the mountain.

LW: So those were all the factors that contributed to the smaller herd.

GF: Smaller herd size. And then during those drought years, you're not retaining heifers to grow out. They were either going to the feedlot or to the grass finish program. Or when things got really bad the we'd just have to ship them out of the ranch and so... you're continuing to breed your cow herd, but you're not retaining any heifers to build those numbers up and you're culling whatever's comes in open or for any other reason and so you just start to contract that cow size. We got down as far as 750 two years ago. Now we're back to 1,200. And the projections are to get back up... push it back up to about 2,200, but that won't be until probably about another five to six years. But that's by retaining all the heifers in house. Not by buying any cattle from outside.

LW: That's a delicate balance, huh?

GF: Yeah. The deer throw a whole other kink into the deal. We got a fellow who's doing some contract work for us harvesting deer. I think last year he took out 1,200 plus does. That's who I was meeting with this morning... besides just the does now we got to incorporate taking out the males, too, it helps to spread the cost out by harvesting more animals. He records whether the females that he harvests are pregnant or lactating, what he is finding is that because of the fact that our day length change from summer to winter is minimal, the females are cycling twice a year instead of just during the spring like in the mainland. They might not necessarily be giving birth twice a year but the young doe is able to breed before it turns a year old. You'll see a spring and late summer / early fall fawning season.

LW: How long is it? How short is it?

GF: It's probably about five months. Similar to like sheep and goats. So they can come into heat and breed more times in the year here than they can in the mainland. So they impact our forages... he'll do surveys for us with his infrared equipment and so often... the last survey he did for us in our *makai* country, it was the equivalent of another additional 200 plus animal units. So it would be like a thousand plus deer that are in that area where our cow herd is so they... they're eating enough grass to sustain another 200 to 250... set of cows. So we got to initiate control measures on them.

LW: But I notice you're not using the word "eradicate."

GF: It's impossible.

LW: Oh, doesn't that make you want to strangle the people that brought them in?

GF: Who turned them loose? Yeah, you can't eradicate them. They're too far gone. But if we can control them, reduce them... so that we're able to maintain a grazing program down there... that's the main thing. And so the bulk of the product... for now... goes to dog food.

LW: The deer?

GF: Yeah. But he's been having a hard time... to get Federal inspection... his facility is already approved and certified. USDA approved. 'Ulupalakua Ranch got their property site already USDA approved. And we're scheduled to do it but they don't have a person in place to do it so we've been waiting for over six months already. Hopefully they're going to replace that person because that person's not working there anymore. He had to leave because of family health problems. But we need to get our property certified USDA approved so that we can start utilizing the animals he takes in for human consumption as well. A better return, but then also just he has more market where he can then start harvesting more animals.

LW: Oh, there's certainly prejudices against venison, yuh? Is that what the meat would be called for human consumption?

GF: Yeah. Most of the guys that have visit here from the mainland; they prefer it over elk or deer or white tail...

LW: Anyway interesting. That's a whole other marketing issue... how to market deer.

GF: Yeah. And we looked at it... how do you turn a major problem into an opportunity. And so I talked to guys who farm deer in New Zealand and Australia. And there is only one... and I think it's in Australia... that farms Axis deer, which is what this one is. And it's because of their temperament. The other types of deer that they work with become semi-domestic. They'll settle down, but they say the Axis deer don't.

- LW: So do those Axis deer that are on your property belong to you... belong to the ranch?
- GF: They belong to whoever's property they're on. Because the State introduced them and I think it was in the mid-fifties and permitted... the cattlemen at the time went to the State not to release them. Because they knew they were a problem on Moloka'i and Lāna'i and they didn't want them released here. And while they were going through the hearings of trying to get that stopped apparently... they got out or branches fell off... whatever manner they got out. When I move here in '94, if you want to go hunt deer you had to go walk and hike. Now you can drive down one of the ranch roads and pull out your rifle and shoot them from your window... ridiculously. And we were just trying to get them controlled to a point that they aren't so prolific 'cause you know... those first ten years... well, maybe the first six, seven years... even with the drought it wasn't the impact that... the negative impact that we have now. But the population got to a point where it just all of a sudden just... blew up. The mass... the numbers got so high that now every increase of 30% is a big number.
- LW: I think there's probably a lot of information about your time here that you'd love to record.
- GF: Yeah. One of the big things here is the opportunities I've gotten to travel and go to seminars.
- LW: I think you host them, too, don't you?
- GF: Yeah. We host quite a few. And what we do is when I travel and I go to these programs, if I find one that's really, really something that I think really comes home for the people back here, then we'll set up and we'll bring the guys in, and that way the whole crew can go through them. Or what we'll do is I'll talk to the other ranchers or Maui Cattlemen's Association and then we'll bring them so that the entire industry can. So we had one... it was an animal handling guy...
- LW: Yeah... Lani (Cran-Petrie) came over for it. I was talking to her.
- GF: I can't remember... was it December? Early December... I guess Steve Cote out of Idaho... and he's just... the guy's terrific. So he came in and did a classroom setting in the morning for thirty guys. Parker Ranch sent over four of their guys and Keoki Wood came over with them. So in the mornings we'd be in the class and he'd be showing videos and discussing stuff and then in the afternoons we'd go out to the corral and go work with animals. So he did that two days with the big group and then he worked two days just with our crew. But that kind of stuff, it's just really to not only have these guys read stuff, but have them look at it and see it hands on and the big thing is seeing the transformation in the animal's behavior in just in the way you're approaching them and the animals change in behavior was a big deal.
- LW: Could you see that in those animals?

GF: Yeah. And it really, really works out.

LW: Now I forget what his approach was. This recent guy.

GF: It was just a case of... I mean you take the animal's point of view. Like as he's approaching the herd, he'll see if there's a cow that's lifting his head up and looking at you. You stop and you wait till that animal resumes eating or ignores you. And then continue your approach so that... it takes you a little longer to get things started, but it's speeds things up. But the big thing I was looking at is the deer had become such a problem with us that fencing... we get a lot of fence damage. Especially... a good portion of the mountain was electric fence... permanent electric fence. And then we utilized portable electric fence in between to break these bigger pastures up into small pastures but it's gotten so you put these cattle up on the mountain... they'd rotate through this area where there's permanent electric fence and they'd go out into some of the other pastures that don't have electric fence, by the time that they come back around it might have been ninety days. The deer have come through and they just trash the permanent electric fence and...

LW: And eating the forage?

GF: ...and taking the forage. And not so much that they've taken all of the forage. The big thing is it'll take me like two guys, two weeks getting the fences all back up so that we can bring the cow herd back in again. So the repair and maintenance on fences, stone walls... has gotten to be so big and this guy Steve Cote... part of his deal is he works with ranchers in the West that are on public lands that don't have much fencing, but they have grazing standards that they have to maintain. But he's come up with this ability to take a herd here, because of the way he handles them, and he can get them... say this is the water in here... and you got all this feed across this range. So you bring the cattle here and he'll settle them and if you settle them right they'll stay there in that area. They'll go to water and come back where you had placed them.

LW: Without a fence.

GF: Without a fence. And then what you do is you look at that and say okay, you've got enough forage to graze here for two days, three days, four days. Whenever that forage reaches a stage you feel what your limit is, you shift those cattle... just like you're changing pasture but there's no fence. Settle those cattle there again, and then they'll go back to water... pass and come back to the same place.

LW: So do you think it really works?

GF: Yeah... we fooled around with him... the second day that he had the big group, and we went and we settled a group. The next morning when he came back just with our crew, we went up and they were within seventy-five feet of where we had bedded them down and they were up there grazing. Some were grazing, some were just bedded down. And the water was maybe... not real far... maybe three to four hundred yards away. And then

as we were working with another group during the day, you could see some of them come down and drink water, and then they'd walk back up the hill. And so you know it works and it sounds too simple, but it's just all in the approach, the way you handle them. And basically the animals... just with a trust in you, that wherever you place them, it has everything that they need. And he says if... what they had in the mainland was the riparian areas, wherever the creeks were. The cattle would come and settle down there and so the government agency, whether it be forest service... fish and wildlife or BLM, their regulations state that you need so much growth of grass down in this area. Well these cattle are hanging down here and so the riders that come decide well they got to push them up so that they stay off of the riparian. Well, if you just come in and push them... physically push them and you know... these animals when they're down here on the bottom before you get there, they're relaxed, they're content. It's a nice place to be. You come behind them, and push them up the hill and push them up with dogs or whatever manner of forcing them up there, when you stop forcing them, it was a negative experience for the cattle all the way up this route. So as soon as you leave them and ride away... ride away, they go back to where they felt safest, which is right back at the bottom at the creek.

LW: So how do you make them feel safe?

GF: Just in the way that he handles them... slowly, slowly walk them up so that...

LW: They follow or just...

GF: Well, either way... they can either follow or you can push them. But it's all in your mind as to how it's going to work or whether it's going to work. And so it's something that we know we can do it, we've done it with a couple of small herds. Our problem now is to figure out how we're going to schedule a guy or two to be able to go out and do those things as a rotation. So I know it's something we'll work on, but we got to figure out how we're going to schedule it in.

INTERVIEW 1 ENDS

LW: Today is February 18, 2017, Interview 2 of Greg Friel in Hilo. I wanted to ask you what year you first started at Haleakalā Ranch.

GF: I started December 1st, 1994. I'd just come out of Hana, and so the first couple of months was just to get acquainted with the layout of the ranch because it wasn't one contiguous piece. It was the large area on the slopes of Haleakalā as you drive up to the park. There were parcels that would run from Kula down into Kīhei. One of them, the first area of Waiakoa had boundaries on the north with HC & S cane fields, and on the south side a boundary with Ka'ono'ulu Ranch. Then south of Ka'ono'ulu you would have a piece of area that is Hawaiian Homes, that is leased out to the Sakugawa family for a cattle operation. And then you pick up another portion, Kama'ole Makai, a part of Haleakalā Ranch, which comes from Kēōkea down into Kīhei, right down to the highway. And then on the south side of that property would be 'Ulupalakua. About forty-five minutes

south of 'Ulupalakua is several thousand acres area called Wai'ōpai that is out between Kahikinui... which is Hawaiian Homes, and on the other side of it would be some State lands... Nakula. Another neighbor out there is Kaupō. I spent time just learning my way around the ranch, learning the names of every place, so within six weeks or so, we knew where everything was and which pastures were which. In those early days there were three cow herds on the mountain, two breeding herds in Kama'ole, and one breeding herd in Waiakoa. And one of the big things as I started to get more exposure to grazing management practices, you realize that the more you could combine those herds, into one bigger herd, it would cut down on the time it took you to manage those herds. It also lengthened the recovery period for the grasses since you had one herd of a thousand cows instead of three herds of 300 plus cows. What we needed to do was increase the water system to be able to water the larger herd at one time instead of just having to water 325 cows at a time. We needed to increase the size of the waterline and more storage capacity in the way of tanks.

LW: Are these changes you implemented?

GF: Yes. We had worked together... myself, and in the beginning, with Peter Baldwin, who was the president, and he was the person who hired me to come to Haleakalā Ranch. We shared the ideas and he felt that that was the thing to do. So we went ahead and implemented that. It took several years because it was a pretty good investment on infrastructure... waterlines and troughs and up-sizing the pipes, replacing the smaller lines with larger sized pipe. But it paid off. It was easy. It reduced the amount of time it took to manage those herds and instead of having to go out and move three separate herds; you just moved one herd and it would take the same amount of guys a third of the time to move the same amount of animals. But the biggest thing it did is it increased the amount of rest period that the grasses... the forages had to recover. Because instead of three herds being spread across the mountain, now there's one herd using all of that acreage so the period of time before you came back to graze a pasture again, might be 90 to 100... a 120 days, and so the recovery period was probably close to doubled. What that did was start to enable some of the more palatable grasses to get the rest they needed to be able to compete with some of the other grasses that were starting to be a little more predominant that were a little less quality than what was being grazed harder. The cattle might go into one of these pastures and stay for a month under the old management. Now what's happening is they go in there and they might graze for ten days to fourteen days, and then nothing would be back in there for 90 to 120 days depending on the time of the year and the growth rate of the grasses. So over about a three-year period you started to see more of these palatable grasses coming back and becoming more dominant in the pastures. And the other thing was we started to see grasses that some of these old timers that were working for us at the time hadn't seen in the past twenty, thirty years. So the seed bank was there in the pastures. But the grazing environment wasn't allowing these grasses to be as prolific. And when I talk about those old timers, there was Sonny Boy Manoa. When I got there he was the foreman. So his dad was George Manoa, who's in the Paniolo Hall of Fame. Sonny Boy was a taskmaster, drill sergeant type. Well respected by the crew and I really like working with him. He taught me a lot about the country and that environment. We'd be talking about moving cattle up to a certain

area, he goes... no... he suggests that maybe these calves are kind of young. Let's not take them up in this area this time of the year. When they get into winter... those cold, rainy periods it might be better if we don't take them up there until they get to be older like say after branding, where they're hardier and able to put up with that type of weather. So he was a big pool of knowledge. I'm guessing that when I got there I was 38 years old. He probably had at least 30 years of experience on the ranch already. So I used him a lot as my encyclopedia for the place. And I remember the first time asking him something, he was in shock. And so it took him a while to answer me. When he finally did I go what's the matter? He says "Nobody ever really asked me my opinion before." I said "Well I tell you what... you forgot more about this place than I know so... I hope you don't mind but I'll be picking your brain a whole lot." Then on the other side Ken Freitas... everybody calls him Blackie. He was on the ranch I think about 38 or 39 years when I moved there. So most of these old timers were working there either the year I was born or right around then. And so it was good I had that kind of knowledge right at my fingertips. And so the big thing was just to utilize it. There was a Henry Silva, Blondie Freitas, who was Blackie's brother. His real name was Leroy. So it was Kenneth and Leroy. And Ken was Blackie, and Blondie was Leroy. Then there was Glenn Souza, who was probably the youngest one on the cowboy crew at the time. And the funny thing was Glenn spent about twenty years working for Hawaiian Airlines. He had a connection. A good friend of his was Harold Amaral, who was a retired cowboy foreman for the ranch and while Glenn was working for the airlines, when he'd go on vacation, he'd go up to the ranch and spend time with Harold and Henry Silva and he... after spending all that time on the ranch, he just realized that he didn't like dealing with people, and part of his job was at the ticket counter, so as time went on he just got disgruntled with his work and told his wife he wanted to see if he could get a job on the ranch and to her credit, she realized that he was a lot happier when he was up there and on vacation doing that stuff and she backed him up a hundred percent. I can't remember when he started because it was a while before I got there. But by the time I got to the ranch in 1994, he was already on the cowboy crew. He had started on the spray gang but he worked his way up till he was on the cowboy crew and he was the youngest of the cowboy crew. There was Ed Uwekoolani, who took care of a lot of the fencing and water projects with Kenneth Freitas. And John Naauau, at that time the bulk of his work especially during the summer, was working with the summer crew for spraying gorse... gorse control and weed control, young Eucalyptus trees... whatever were the problem... plants. And then when he was off, and the summer crew wasn't there, then he worked with Ed and Ken, or then he'd go cowboy crew, too, during certain times, especially doing bigger jobs. So they were all older fellows. Now in 2017, Ken is still working. I'm 59 so he's got like 59 years on the ranch and not looking to be retiring any time soon. Just talk about a wealth of knowledge. His brother Blondie passed away a couple of years ago. Sonny Boy passed away quite a while ago. Henry Silva's retired. And he's home. He finally quit shoeing horses. I think that was his... probably one of the sad day's for him was when he had to quit shoeing. I think he can still shoe horses but he's finally slowed down and he's not doing as much. He used to do a lot of rawhide braiding. Whether it be saddle work or braiding *kaula 'ili*. He did a lot of rawhide work... he and Glenn. Glenn passed away on the younger side. I think he was about 56. It's been about 9 years, I think, now. So like I said, out of that original crew, Ken is the

only one left. As we went along we hired in younger guys. And just exposed them to the way we wanted to work and so we got a pretty good crew now, I think. We got Ken. My son Cody is 32. There's B. J. Cabantin. He's a couple of years older so he might be 34, 35. Roland Kehano... he's maybe early 40's. Andy Aipa... I know he's 49. He's getting up there. 'Cause he's ten years younger than me. Mike... young Mike Abreu. I don't think he's 30 yet. We got two boys that are just strictly on... well, three... land management and brush control. They work under Jordan Jokiel... Kurt Yamamura... David Amor and Kepa Cardoza Vida and so those boys I really give them credit because I remember when I was young and on a spray gang... it's mind numbing work. But these guys are dedicated and they understand that it's a big part... an important job on the ranch... trying to keep those invasive weeds from getting much more out of hand.

LW: It used to be that part of what made working on the ranch... any of the ranches, worthwhile was that you'd get a beef portion. Do you guys do any of that?

GF: Yes. In our word, we get beef for the boys. We've got a lot of hunting privileges... a lot of deer. When I first got there, goats were the big thing. But now... nobody wants to eat a goat when they can eat venison. There's a good compensation package for the boys. There's full medical benefits, dental benefits, 401K program... clothing allowance for work stuff. So you know it's a good package and so... it makes for a team that's happy and content. And then we try and mix it up. Especially like those boys... Kurt, David and Kepa. Try and mix things. If they get a chance they get in on the brandings and some cattle work and what we typically do is when things... right now the schedules are so tight on a lot of the cattle work. This past week we were just weaning and pregnancy checking the cow herd off of the mountain. Next week we're semen testing bulls. The week after that we're starting to process... replacement heifers to be AIed. We're getting them synchronized. And then in another couple of weeks we'll be branding that *makai* herd, which is a different breeding season. And so... what we try to do when the guys on the cattle work most of the time aren't busy, is we'll slip one of them out into that land management crew. We'll try and throw an extra hand in there for them to help them. Because it's as many people as we can keep on it, it's beneficial for us. And then, too, it's the same thing. Even my son loves jumping on the land management crew because you don't have as much pressure as when you're working on the cattle. He's just going out there to go spray weeds. It's a change of pace for everybody.

LW: How does the ranch manage the horses for the crews?

GF: The ranch has some horses that are ranch owned. And I run my own horses, personal. So my son and I ride those. And I have those. And some of the boys utilize the ranch horses and some of them might have one or two or their own as well.

LW: Sort of a mixture?

GF: And so long as they're used on the ranch, the ranch covers their expenses as far as vet work. And so the vet will come in twice a year to do their vaccinations, their annual... semi-annuals, check their teeth and what have you. And then if horses are hurt or

anything, they do need veterinary care. 'Cause they're all used for all work they're covered by the ranch. And then who else... we utilize stock dogs for our work. And so it's the same thing. The ranch will cover the dog food and medical for dogs that are working. Of course, I'm the judge of whether it's a work dog or not. If the dog doesn't pull his weight, he's not on the payroll.

LW: Makes sense. He's not a working dog; he can't be on the payroll.

GF: Then he's a detriment. (Laughs)

LW: So the land management... you have quite a variety of land. You must have to have different strategies depending on where it is.

GF: Yes. And that's why we have different breeding seasons. Because the rainy season is the same throughout the ranch. It's basically from November through April, May... May on a good year. And then on some years there's no rainy season but it is what it is. But normally, which is getting to be less than a term which we can use because things aren't "normal" any more. But historically is the way to put it, I guess. Rainy season came around November through May. And anything from a 2,000-foot elevation *makai* you'll get growth. It's warm enough that you'll get forage growth as soon as you get rain. So if you get the rains in November, by December you're kicking up a lot of feed in that *makai*... anything below that 2,000 foot *makai* elevation. So that herd in the *makai* country... they start calving right around Christmas. Rains come in November; they put up all this feed; those cows start putting on weight and they'll calve... and they'll be on a rising plain of nutrition because there's good forage. Before they calve they're gaining weight. Even though they drop a calf and they're starting to lactate... and trying to nurse their calves, they're still gaining weight and going into breeding season is March 15th. It starts and it's a sixty-day breeding season. And those animals are on such a good plain of nutrition that breeding is very successful as long as you don't have people leaving gates open. As long as the animals are confined to where they're supposed to be that the bulls are able to cover... get to all of the cows... typically you'll get a 92% conception rate... 90 to 92% on these good years. Then on the mountain, where the pasture is above 2,000 and they stop at about... top of the ranch goes a little over 7,500 feet, but the grazing stops around 6,500... 7,000 feet because the upper limits of the water troughs are right around 6,500 feet. And then it gets pretty steep, that last section. And what we find in that country is the rains come in November, but it's cool, it's winter... it's cold for the Hawai'i grasses so we don't start to get growth until the middle of April or early April. So those cows on the mountain are... like I said, we just weaned them... this past week... that was February 16th. We wean the calves. Then we pregnancy check the cows a few days after that. So now the cows don't have any calves on them. They'll be able to recover. Most of them are in good body condition even when we pull calves. And those cows will have this time to rest and get back in good flesh. And they'll start calving May 7th. And they'll calve for 60 days. And then they'll brand in early August. Bulls will go on them August 1st for 60 days and that's the difference in the breeding seasons and the calving seasons. It all has to do with the timing of optimal nutrition for the cattle. And this herd, right now there are 530 cows that we've pregnancy checked. The conception

rate was 90%. But that was a combination of replacement heifers and older cows. So when I break it out, 90% is all right for the whole herd was like... just a shade under 91% and... the replacement heifer rate was lower than what we really want. It was at 70%. But we're breeding them as yearlings and so what I got a feeling is that some of them were not sexually mature when they were exposed to the bull. And so there were... 70% conception rate on them. Which you know for yearlings is all right because everyone that does conceive, her calves will be carrying that trait of being an early maturing animal. So with them at 70%, then I calculated what the cow numbers were and they ended up 95% conception. But the overall average of the two combined herds... two groups was 90.8% or something like that. The heifers, it's their first time they were exposed to bulls. And so they'll be having their first calves come May. And then... the rougher ones would be... the hardest time for a cow is her two-year-old year, which is right now for these. They'll become two years old when they calve. And for them, the biggest stress is breeding back to get pregnant for their second calf because they're still growing themselves. They're nursing the calf. And got to be getting enough nutrition to be able to come back into heat and breed for her second calf. And so that's the biggest nutritional demands on her in her entire life is that period of time. So once they get through that, then it's a lot easier on them. But it's something that you keep the type of cows that are moderate framed and be a frame score of 3 to 4. And they're able to just be very productive on just the forages that they have available to them. Because we can't afford to supplement-feed them anything. Costs of any supplemental feedings here in Hawai'i are just astronomical. And the other thing is basically if 75... 80% of them can do it on grass alone, you don't need the other 15%. Because it'll just pull down the quality of your herd. The ones you just cull religiously... the ones that can't do it... you don't want them. So we had of the replacement heifers... we got 34 of them... that were open out of the 120 something, 130 something that were exposed and at preg check, 34 of them were open. But they're coming two year olds so what we'll do with them is we just put them in with our herd of steers that are grass finishing for our market with Maui Cattle Company. And they'll just fall right into the grass finishing program so they haven't lost any ground. They're that many more grass finishing animals that are for the market.

LW: So that's what you mean by culling religiously?

GF: Yes... no second chances. No second chances because like I said... at that age if 70% can do it, you don't need that 30%, and if... on the cows... you know they were better. They were at 95%... if 95% can do it, that 5% is just going to pull you down if you breed them again.

LW: So it's also about managing the genetics, in a way?

GF: Managing the genetics, but the biggest thing is managing your nutrition. And that's why... we want to be able to calve when the highest nutritional value of the forage matches up with the highest nutritional needs of the animal. Especially for Hawai'i. But even to a degree on the mainland now, in the cost of fuel and equipment and everything else that it takes just to make hay, I know guys in North Dakota that barely feed hay.

And they don't even produce it themselves. What they do is they'll purchase it from somebody else and they'll bring the nutrients from somebody else's property onto theirs. And it improves their pasture and soil conditions because really these other guys that are selling hay, they're exporting their nutrients. Taking it off their land. Then they're having to buy it back in, in the form of fertilizers and other inputs. So these other guys are buying the hay, which is an input cost, but they're bringing nutrition in with it, for their land and their animals.

LW: When you were in Kapāpala, the soil is so young there you have to supplement some of the minerals. Do you do that at Haleakalā?

GF: Well, we do supplement with minerals. That's a given. The animals need those. So basically the way we formulated our mineral mix was we took, forage samples, on the mountain and in the lower country and looked at what nutrients were short. What minerals were short in the forages and then the mineral mix was determined... by people a lot smarter than I am... they formulated the mineral mix that would offset those deficiencies. And so it is costly. Shipping that stuff adds a lot of cost to it. But we feel it pencils out. That the animal production is worth that cost. Because without it, we'd lose production. Conception rates, weaning weights... just the time it takes to finish a grass finished animal would be increased.

LW: I was hearing on the DVD you gave me that part of your land management is also to diversify your herds... some other form of animals to help with the weeds

GF: There's the fire weed... that Senecio that's been around Hawai'i and Maui for... it's been on Maui maybe a little over twenty years. But it's been on the Big Island quite a bit longer because before I left the Big Island, I'd see it out in Waimea. And the bulk of that fire weed was introduced by the Highways Department when they were doing some construction work; they used that hydro mulch to shoot grass seed onto the sides of the highways when they were doing construction jobs to kind of get some grasses established there. To stabilize that bare ground. And apparently that hydro mulch seed was contaminated with fire weed seeds because that's where you see it all popping up initially. It was all along those construction sites. And then after that, it's a case of highways equipment moving the seed around. And so it was pretty bad already along Waimea when I left here in '87 or so. And so when I got to Haleakalā in '94, a couple of years later they were doing some highway by-pass work coming up Haleakalā Highway as they were redoing the highway. I saw it starting to pop up along their construction sites. And so we got the Maui Cattlemen's Association and went to the State Department of Transportation on Maui and talked to them about this and they made absolutely no effort to control it. And it just spread over the years and now it's just... you can't control it now. It's too far gone. And it would have been so easy to have stopped it at that point. They did it on Kaua'i. When we were on Kaua'i, I was living there from '87 to '90, something like that. And there's a bridge between Lihu'e and the turn-off to go to Po'ipū called Halfway Bridge. And they were doing some construction work there and we saw some fire weed popping up from that hydro mulch. And so we got in touch with... it wasn't the cattlemen. I think somebody went directly to the Department of

Transportation and they jumped on it and that was it. It never got established on Kaua'i. So that could have happened for Maui. But it didn't and so now fire weed is a major problem. They have introduced some biological control... this Secucio moth. Time will tell how successful it is. Because it has to get its population up to a point where it will be able to impact it. I can't remember how long the release has been on that... it's been maybe three years. So you know it's a case of the population of that moth... caterpillar to build its population where it'll start to make an impact on it. The good thing on Maui is the University Station in Kula, gal named Pam Shingaki... she and her crew cultivate those caterpillars and moths and every couple of months they'll call up the ranchers and people that are looking for them and they'll give you six hundred caterpillars to go out and release. And so she's doing a lot of work to try and she's got the directive and so she stays on it and has been going for a couple of years.

LW: You don't run goats with your herds any more?

GF: We do. But not at the numbers that we used to. Up until the beginning of... around the middle of 2016, we were running a 1,800 breeding does. And about 500 ewes and we were utilizing them to help us with weed control. Two of the reasons why we could utilize those herds was that we had some Peruvian herders who were here under the H2A. Imported workers, you know. And so it was kind of an expensive proposition, you know. There were costs involved with them. Supplying them room and board, insurance. But they were able to herd those animals or utilize portable electric fencing to get the stock in density that you needed to impact those weeds and 2014, 2015... the federal government was starting to mess around with the H2A program and my boss was worried that it would get shut down. If it got shut down and all of a sudden we'd lose these workers, then what are we going to do? And then we were having problems with the animals. Those goats would run on the gorse in the summer months up on the mountain. And the gorse would be growing rapidly because of that warm weather. So the goats were up there eating it. We'd come in if it got too big, we'd mow that area and as that young regrowth was coming back up it was very palatable, and then we'd run the herd through there to go in and browse it. But what happened in 2014, '15, and even '16, the summers were really wet and goats at that altitude and just wet days, it's hard on them. They can't take it like sheep can. And we had to move them lower on the mountain to a lower elevation where the rain wasn't as bad during the summer. So they weren't up there being able to do their control work and so we had to use more mechanical means to keep it in check. And like I said, too, we had some health problems with them being up in the wind and rain and wet. And so there were three summers in a row where we weren't able to keep them high on the mountain where they were supposed to be doing their work. And so that along with our worries about that H2A program being shuttered, we liquidated the sheep and goats down to 100 ewes and 100 does now and we run them with some of the grass finishing cattle in that lower country, around the 2,000-foot elevation and they're doing some work around there. It's not anywhere near the scale that we were running at, but then we don't have those herders here anymore. Once we cut those numbers down, the herders went back to Peru.

LW: So the grass finishing operation... is it a co-op or what is it?

GF: It's a partnership. Maui Cattle Company is made up of Haleakalā, 'Ulupalakua, Kaupō, Hāna Ranch. Originally it included Olumau Ranch, which was kind of a genetic arm... they'd produce bulls that you could buy from them. That was Lindy Sutherland and Bobby Ferreira. At the time they were operating on Kaua'i at Kīpū Kai, and later at Olumau, outside of Kīpū Kai, neighboring Kīpū Ranch on lands that they were leasing from Grove Farm and I can't remember what year but they'd lost their lease. They had a job on renovating that old cane land into pasture and then Grove Farm came along and took the lease back and sent it off to somebody else so Olumau... their seed stock enterprise basically they sold out. Then the other entity that was a part of Maui Cattle Company was Nobriga's Wailena Farms on Nobriga Ranch. And they were the feedlot on Maui. And what they had was access to all of the pineapple skin by-products from the cannery. And so that by-products from the cannery made up a large part of their feed ration and so Maui Cattle Company... we'd have these nutritionists come in and they'd do an analysis on the ration and then they'd look at the cattle and they said well luckily the cattle can't read because according to this analysis these animals aren't supposed to do very well. But there was so much in it. It was the pineapple peels, some of the cores. And then they would add whatever imported grain that they needed to make the ration balance. And then... and I'll have to get the dates... Maui Pine closed all of a sudden. And while we were feeding we knew that our plan was, in the long run, that we wanted to go to grass finished beef, because it was where the consumer was looking and so, the consumers should drive the decisions of the producers. Often it isn't the case but for us we knew that the consumers wanted a local product, and so we had that in that pineapple base feedlot finishing cattle. But they were also looking for a grass finished animal. A local grass finished product. So we knew that we were going to head in that direction. So we were starting to artificially inseminate our cows to be able to transition to that type of animal in a moderate frame, easy fleshing and there was some of that type of genetics around the country that's available and so we were starting to breed to that. But we were nowhere near that transition in the entire herd when Maui Pine announced that they were going to be closing. So when they did close, Hāli'imaile Pineapple stepped up, which was a group of what were managers in the old Maui Pine and decided that they thought they could make a go of it. And so they, I think, took over a lease on 800 to 1,000 acres predominantly in the Hāli'imaile area. But one of the big changes they decided in their production was it would be fresh fruit and there wouldn't be a canned pineapple enterprise. And it was a canned fruit enterprise that produced all of that by-product. So that by-product stopped and we transitioned to grass finishing and we had to start to cut cow numbers because when you go to grass finishing, all of a sudden now, you're keeping a calf where prior to that we might get them up to 700 pounds or 800 pounds and then we'd put them in a feedlot... or heavier. But now all of a sudden they were staying till they were 24 to 28 months of age. So you're ending up with a cow and two of her offspring on the ranch and so the cow numbers had to come down. And so that along with the droughts that came along, the cow numbers were taken down even further. And at one point we had to ship a bunch of the stockers out because we needed to protect that cow herd and those cows had to go up into that country where the stockers were running and although we were in a drought there was at least some moisture up in that area where the stockers ran 'cause historically it was a higher rainfall area anyway. The cows would

come up out of Kīhei, Kama‘ole, which is 8 inches annually on a good year, and in those years we weren’t getting anything. So the cows went up into the stocker country, the stockers had to be shipped off to the mainland to market and our production numbers for Maui Cattle Company dropped drastically. We got down as low as twelve animals a week being marketed. And so now that things have been better everybody’s... the partners are all trying to rebuild our cow numbers. Get back up. Optimistically, I’d say we could get back up to 2,200 cows. Because one of the differences now is HC & S has just closed up... the sugar plantation. And they’re working with us to pasture and finish animals for us so right now they have a couple of trials on a few hundred acres that they put in and so right now they got 40 head in one trial and I think... I’m not sure how many... there’s about 60 or 70 head on another trial lot. But as we speak they have two fencing contractor crews that are fencing... I think it’s about 3,500 acres for this year. And when those pastures are done they hope to get 900 stockers in there by the end of 2017 if the schedule... you know... if everything goes well. And if that’s the case, what they’re planning on doing is over the next 3, 4 years, they’re thinking of getting in 10,000 total acres of pasture which handle everyone’s stockers. So what that would do for the partner ranches from Maui Cattle Company is instead of finishing our animals on the ranch, I’ll wean these calves... like say those calves we weaned last week, we’d wean them, process them, and then we’d hold them on the ranch for about 45 to 60 days, we’d booster them with another set of shots, and then during that 45 to 60-day period we’d make sure that they’re broke to the electric fence. Trained to the electric fence, get them quieted down to where they’d be used to man on foot. We don’t handle cattle on foot much, so it is something that you have to do. You can work off of horseback and they’ll be fine; they’ll be quiet; they’ll be settled. But you get off your horse and it’s something that’s novel. It’s different to them and they’ll be a little more flighty. And so before we’ll take them down... those animals we took down to the trial we spent a couple of days just kind of walking around them in the corrals and getting them to that... getting their flight zone shrunk down so that we could walk in and amongst them so that when they get transitioned down there it won’t be a problem for them mentally... mental stress on them.

LW: So then do you keep ownership or...?

GF: What we’re probably going to be doing and we’re still going through the pasture agreements and everything. But what the plan will be is the ranchers will be selling them to Maui Cattle Company at that time. And then Maui Cattle Company will own them already and so it’s guaranteed animals for their market. And then the HC & S will be paid for pounds of gain that they put on these animals.

LW: Where will they be processed?

GF: The harvest will be at DeCoites Packing House in Makawao. And the processing...

LW: Is it big enough to handle all that?

GF: Yes, it is. The harvest will be at DeCoites but the actual processing is done at Maui Cattle Company's facility. Which is presently down in the old pineapple cannery. There's a facility that was built there. What they'll do there is they'll take those carcass halves and depending on what the market is, if it's going into the supermarket, it will leave there packaged, labeled, priced... everything... shelf ready. It's delivered right there to the shelf. If it's going into a restaurant... then some of the restaurants prefer primal cuts, so they might take them in primal cuts. And then the restaurant might cut it to what they want. But some of the restaurants will take the ground beef or different products in other manners.

LW: It seems to me like you need kind of a big harvesting and processing operations to manage... what is it? Five ranches?

GF: Four... ranches.

LW: I guess it's got that capacity...

GF: It does, because historically DeCoites facility handled that in the past. So the thing that they have to work on now is being able to increase their labor staff.

LW: That might be good for local labor. Is there a place big enough on the Big Island to do that? I'm always under the impression that the harvesting and processing... well they don't do much processing but the harvesting here is all small operations.

GF: The one in Hamakua... Hawai'i Beef... they're big. But I think... I'm not sure... I'm not really familiar with them. When that was built and I was still on the island, it was a different marketing set-up. The animals were chilled a short time and then the product was shipped out. Where now there's more processing being done there. I'm not sure exactly what their needs are but I know it would be increased chill room capacity is one thing to be able to handle the load.

LW: Yeah... it takes a lot of energy to go in there. What do you think is your legacy at Haleakala?

GF: We'll see how that goes. We try to stress grazing management, animal handling... just stockmanship. Just management to improve conditions for the stock and the men.

LW: What are you most proud of in there?

GF: I think the transition of the herd of cattle. Making this transition to grass, back to a grass market. Because you know historically it was there. And as the economics of the industry change it went away to a feedlot type of situation. And you know when I first got to Haleakalā Ranch, that's what it was. We'd wean these calves and within 45 to 60 days, they were shipped to the mainland, whether it be Texas, California or Washington. And it was what fit the market at the time. But for us we felt that... between Alex Franco, Lindy Sutherland, myself, Sumner Erdman... we felt that the consumer was

looking for that local product and then later on we realized that local product they wanted was grass. Grass finished and so transitioning this herd it's taking time, the drought put a delay on it, but now we're making headway. We're looking at the heifer; we're looking at the bulls we're retaining. We artificially inseminate all the replacement heifers to the type of genetics we'd like to see it move to. So for the near future... the next twenty or thirty years it's where the consumers want us to be. I'm not sure what's going to happen after that, but for now that's the direction we're moving in and I'm seeing that change in those animals... the heifers that are... that type of animal that it takes to be productive on a 100% forage diet is...

LW: What kind of animal is that?

GF: They're predominantly Red and Black Angus. We've fooled with a few other things. We tried some Red Devon. Animals were the right type, body condition and what not, but we had problems with them... the hair not slicking off in the summer. And so it impacted their production. They weren't comfortable because their hair was still long and it was June and July. And so you could see that the comfort level wasn't like those animals that had already slicked off and so we got out of breeding for that. We've investigated where we'll breed about thirty heifers to these Mashona and Tuli. They're Bos Taurus breeds out of Africa. And they were... they're very slick hided. Parasite resistant, disease resistant... coming out of Africa. And they had... it was survival of the fittest, you know. There weren't a lot of inputs into them. So if they couldn't handle the diseases, they would have died off. And one of the things that you got to do, though, is Americans... tend to want to "improve" everything, you know. American producers... whether it's... you know there's Boer goats, Kiko goats, sheep... Dorper sheep or now it's these breeds of cattle that are coming in from Africa and all of a sudden it's like everything, you know. Here's these animals that evolved under harsh conditions, and they start to put props up under them. And so the trick to get into these genetics before they try to improve them, while they're still kind of a naive animal. But what I find on those... the Mashona and the Tuli, is that there's an outfit, a meat and animal research center in Nebraska... Clay Center (U. S. Animal Research Center), Nebraska, I think it is. And they do a lot of meat research. And so the Tuli and the Mashona... the research which I've seen on them at that research center say that it shows that they're comparable to Angus quality meat. They're typically in the top four in their ratings and it would be Angus, Tuli, Mashona, and Herefords are usually the top four. And they'll switch off... which one will be first, which one will be second, but they're always in those top categories. So these animals besides being hardy, they do have meat quality so... like every breeding season I'll add about thirty heifers or so, to... to those bulls and we'll follow them up and see how they perform production wise as heifers and cows and then... again, there's what the steers do when they get on the rail.

LW: So does each cow have a tag? Do you know which cows are which?

GF: The cows are identified for some purposes, but we don't tag the calves back to them. But when you look at them, they have their own characteristic. You can see what those Mashona are...

LW: They have their own characteristics? You can trace that breeding through what they look like?

GF: Yeah. And as we get further along in this partnership with HC & S, we'll be starting to utilize electronic ear tags to track the stockers anyway. They'll leave the ranch with their basic information of... these animals were born within this sixty-day period this year. At branding they received this. At another date they received this. At weaning... and then 45 to 60 days after weaning, they received this. Then they were this weight when they left the ranch to go to... they'll have that information.

LW: For each one... individual.

GF: Yes... yes.

LW: Because this sounds like the system where it's going to be based on how much they gain.

GF: Yes.

LW: So then each cow needs to be identified.

GF: Not necessarily.

LW: I mean each animal. They're not necessarily cows are they?

GF: Yes. Those animals that are going down there to go into that stocker finishing program will each be identified electronically.

LW: Will that be a new technology for Haleakalā?

GF: It'll be something that we presently don't use. Because I don't see a monetary value in it for us to do it under the conditions we're working on now, because everything's kept on the ranch. But we'll see. Like I tell the sales guys every time I see them at the cattlemen's conventions. I say you show me how we're going to make money off of that then I'll do it, but until then it's just an expense.

LW: So what do you think about ranching and the future of ranching in Hawai'i on Maui?

GF: The family... the Haleakalā Ranch family... the shareholders, they celebrated their 125th anniversary... I think it was 2013. And they'd like to be able to see the ranch continue on. Like they said, they won't be there but they want to hear that the ranch celebrates its 200th anniversary when the time comes. They're committed to the land... the stewardship of the land. And they're committed to the livestock that are there. And so... some of the other things happening around the ranch that don't come directly under me... there's some *koa* plantings that will be commercial planting. And we're looking at ten to fifteen acres planted annually until 35 years down the road they're starting to harvest it.

In that period of time you'll be looking at 4,000 acres of forest. There's one area we call the Pu'u Pahu Reserve, which has been taken out of grazing. It's high up on the crater road. It runs from around the 6,000-foot elevation up to the park boundary. And it parallels the crater road on the last switchback, and that's been fenced in. Deer proof fence and we've been eradicating the last of the feral goats in there. And that's to just protect that forest that's up in there. And so we got a lot of *mamane* trees up there. And... when I first got here there were quite a few goats up in that area. And so you didn't see young *mamane* trees up there. And then part of it might have been the grazing operation in those days; they stayed longer in each pasture. So when we consolidated those three cow herds up on the mountain into one, like I said... you had a longer recovery period before you came back. And then when they were in there, they weren't there as long. So after a few years we started to see a lot young *mamane* trees coming up. After a while they decided that the grazing up there is very range like. There's a lot of *a'ali'i pua keawe*. A lot of lava. So we decided to put that into a preserve... try and enhance it so that that *mamane* would come back and we could cut it into areas where we could start to get rid of some of the invasives whether it be plants or animals. And so Jordan works with East Maui Watershed Nature Conservancy, Leeward Haleakalā Watershed. And they'll get in there and partner up and do re-control sweeps and he utilizes a lot of those like GPS and that type of technology to help them mark where they've been and what plants they've been doing. And the ranch is committed to a lot of conservation and stewardship programs. Another project we're coming up with will be about a hundred acres in an area called 'Ukulele, which is right on the edge of the watershed and the ranch... it's called Waikamoi Preserve... and the ranch put that into a conservation easement with Nature Conservancy having those management duties. I'm not sure but it had been in place a while before I got to the ranch in 1994. I'm not sure exactly. I'd have to look up when that conservation easement was put in. So that's about 5,000 acres that had never been grazed in the ranch's history. It's being managed by Nature Conservancy in partnership with the ranch and East Maui Watershed and those conservation groups tend to get together and work together to help each other out. But in that 'Ukulele area, part of the deal is to try to keep it not for commercial use but just for reforestation... is working on a project to try and enhance that area to go back to more native forests and we'll probably utilize livestock in the beginning to kind of take down some of the cover, and then be able to come in and do some pest control and then see what comes up and try and plant some of those natives that need to make those different canopies for that rain shed to come to fruition.

LW: Well what about the cattle industry? What do you think is in the future for the cattle industry?

GF: It's hard to say. I'm not that smart. I'd like to think that if we continue along the way that we're going... animal welfare is going to be a big thing so we got to make sure that we're on top of that game. Grazing management... brush weed control. Trying to keep stuff from getting established in the first place is a big problem. From that we need the partnerships of the State, Department of Ag, Department of Transportation, the conservation partners that we presently work with to be able to keep these introductions of pests to a minimal impact because they come in and they have no natural enemy, no

predator to work on them and they just get going great guns and they take off and they start to impact pasture quality immediately. I've got a friend who's an entomologist with the Department of Agriculture with the State. He told me that there's something like two to four that get established every year. And things happened where Department of Agriculture lost a lot of inspectors in some cutbacks during Lingle's time. And they've never been able to refill those positions as of today. I think that what people don't realize that not only are they impacting the ranches but they're going to impact the watersheds. And then where's the water going to come from when that's impacted? People are short sighted. It's like somebody becomes a governor, or a councilman or a senator and they look to the next election. Planning for this kind of stuff you got to be... you better be looking a hundred years down the road. But people don't think that way, you know. So you plan. You plan for a hundred years... and conditions, environment, business economics. Things change, well then you re-plan but at least for now you've got this direction, this goal, these plans.

INTERVIEW 2 ENDS