Interview 6

Theme 1. Family fishing

* Grandparents on both sides taught to fish
	+ Subsistence
	+ Going up river as a family 14:10 “Our grandparents would be camping up there the whole summer.”
	+ Taught when to go out and paying attention to wind (don’t go out if blowing more than 15 knots out of north)
	+ 15:00 “Pretty much everything I learned about safety, about going out, was from them and my dad.”
* Started commercial around 14 for summer money
* Deckhands for father mostly
* Occasionally goes out with cousins or other permit holders who need temp. help
* Difficult fishing with dad—high expectations
* Cousins and friends chill
* Is planning on teaching son, now 11
	+ Compares his son to himself as a child—he didn’t have a choice but to go out when it was rough
	+ Wants to teach son work ethic

Theme 2. Prep

* No safety training offered
* Would need to order any safety equipment beyond PFD. Can get EPIRB from fish plant
* Asks around where to fish
	+ Strategize with dad’s family—make a plan together
* Don’t wear PFDs because too hot and uncomfortable, but would wear inflatable if had one
* May wear Stormline bibs in colder season
* Mom makes sandwiches and preps food in case they get stuck
	+ 99% of time, don’t need extra food, water, snacks
* Tries to get knowledge from experienced fishermen
	+ Having coffee, chat on streets or fish plant

Theme 3. Health challenges

* Longest trip was 18 hours
	+ Had to wait for tide to come into river mouth and deliver fish
	+ Stayed with boat and watched others’ boats overnight
	+ Had to go back out next day without sleep
* Looks back on missing fishing periods after partying night before—dad threatened to replace him
* Getting back to land is a relief
* Eat and relax, no energy to play out, go on rides
* Mostly 2, 48-hour openers/week—sometimes three or only 1.
* 1 opener is hard financially
	+ When not enough fish, keep believing that next period will be better
	+ Emotional long-term stress
	+ Financial stress—going to make enough money next year?
	+ Loan causes stress
* Doesn’t get enough sleep during season—3am-7am typical
	+ Going out the night before sometimes
	+ Too bright during summer
	+ Doesn’t feel rested
	+ Splashes water on face, drinks energy drinks, and stretches
	+ Catches up on sleep in winter
* Long-term effect physically
	+ Arthritis in hands
	+ Wear and tear in arms and hands
	+ Get strong if doing it right—good physical shape
* Strategies to be healthy—eat breakfast, lunch, dinner, don’t party too much

Theme 4. Dangers

* Was pulling net in by hand when large wave hits, almost pulling him out of boat with it
	+ Weather was bad and only a couple boats out—they still forgot PFDs
		- Should have had them on
	+ Started pulling net and boat turns broadside to waves 26:36 “My dad’s like, ‘Well if anything happens, it’s too late now.”
	+ Hand caught in net and only a couple feet before he would have been out of the boat.
	+ 5-7’ swells, so if he went over, most likely wouldn’t have been recovered
	+ 24:43 “Those kind of things like make you ‘all right, you know, maybe I do have to suffer in a lifejacket. [laughs] But yeah, once I’m getting to a point where my dad’s age, that’s when I’ll have a life jacket on every day, but now it’s just like too hot, don’t need it.”
	+ Looks back in how much danger he was in
		- 24:16 “I didn’t really think like, I almost died, I could’ve almost died. Holy cow, I almost fell in. In my head I was thinking I would have been able to get myself out, but come to think of it, that was a whole lot more dangerous than I thought about it at the time.”
	+ If needed help, would call 911 or VHF if out of cell signal—word of mouth or social media would get help as fast as possible safely
* Greatest dangers
	+ Checking net in rough weather
	+ Falling overboard
	+ Lack of awareness
* Compares dangers in Bristol Bay versus Unalakleet—Bay boats better in bigger weather, but small Unalakleet boats can get in and out of river mouth in different tides
* Increased awareness needed and extra hands when it’s rough

Other:

* Went to get wood with dad when anchor gets caught on bottom and boat swamps, then capsizes
	+ Calls cousin with water logged cell phone before it dies
	+ 30’ swim to land, then 50-60’ swim back to get jacket with cell phone
	+ Bears and no gun (only planning on being out 1 hour)
	+ 30 miles from town due to mudslide, but SAR meets them after 15-20 miles of walking
* Set nets for pinks, coho, reds, and dogs
* Try to fish away from town for more space from boats
* Enjoys fishing in fleet—competitiveness, but also helping each other find fish
* More fish in the past