

Nancy Holt Interview with Sid Feck and Unidentified Person conducted shortly after the construction of Robert Smithson's *Amarillo Ramp* (1973)

Duration: 37 minutes, 5 seconds

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TRANSCRIPTION

| TIME STAMPS | SPEAKER IDENTIFICATION | DIALOGUE |
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| 0:00:00.0 | | [BEGINNING OF Nancy Interview with Sid Feck at Amarillo Ramp] |
| | SID FECK | [COUGHS] |
| 0:00:01.7 | | [BRAKES SQUEAKING] |
| | SPEAKER 1 | I guess the 12-foot pole is down. |
| | SID FECK | Sure. |
| | NANCY HOLT | I guess so. |
| | SPEAKER 1 | There was a – The last pole was there. I hope he knows where the hell the last pole was. I think I'd better go take a look from the side and see if he does. |
| | NANCY HOLT | So what do you think, J.C. [SP]? |
| | SID FECK | Well, it's coming along, looks like. Yeah, coming along already. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. I hope that they're able to finish it by the end of the week. |
| | SID FECK | Yeah. They're going to try to get it finished this week. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. Well, yeah, we have -- |
| | SID FECK | Want to. |
| | NANCY HOLT | They took away a front loader, so I don't know. |
| | SID FECK | Yeah, yeah. |
| | NANCY HOLT | And the truck. So it's going more slowly than we expected, so I don't know. But maybe by Saturday it can be finished. |
| | SID FECK | Yeah. |
| 0:00:52.8 | | [ENGINE REVVING] |
| 0:00:57.0 | SID FECK | I wonder if Mike's come in yet. Somebody say he was coming in right away. Have you heard him say anything about him? |
| | NANCY HOLT | Mike? |
| | SID FECK | Marsh. |

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| | NANCY HOLT | Marsh. Oh, yeah. He's coming in. We're going to move out of the ranch today and back up to Toad Hole, and I think he's coming in on Thursday. |
| | SID FECK | Oh, y'all are going to move out over there -- |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. |
| | SID FECK | -- today, are you? |
| | NANCY HOLT | Uh-huh. So we're going to stay in the hideout house there. Well, you know, I was hoping--You know, the other day, you were telling about the levels of the water and everything. And I have my tape recorder on now, and I was wondering if--Would you mind if I asked you a few questions about the lake? And you could answer, and I could record. |
| | SID FECK | I'll do the best I can. |
| | NANCY HOLT | OK. |
| | SID FECK | Yeah. |
| | NANCY HOLT | I was wondering, like--You've seen the lake go through lots of changes, right? Sometimes the -- |
| | SID FECK | Oh, yeah. |
| 0:02:00.0 | NANCY HOLT | The water is very high, and sometimes it's not there at all. [CHUCKLES] |
| | SID FECK | Yeah. It's--The lake's been dry one time here since we built it. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. |
| | SID FECK | I guess about eight years ago, I guess, something like that, seven or eight years ago, maybe nine. I forget now. And it's come down real big. We had a five-inch rain up there one afternoon and washed all of this here away, this in here, these engines and all those tanks. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Oh, yeah? And it--How far did it go into the landscape? |
| | SID FECK | Well, it'll back water up and fill all that up, see? It'll back water up in there, and it'll fill all that up. And then it'll back water up yonder. Well, you see, it's about three quarters of a mile before--Then farther is [UNINTELLIGIBLE]. |
| 0:03:03.0 | NANCY HOLT | And where does the water--Is that, like, a river there? That -- |
| | SID FECK | Uh-huh. It--This creek hedge, this is the Coogas Creek, is what it is. And it--The head of it, it starts about 18 miles back up yonder, out close to El Dorado. Just, you know -- |
| | NANCY HOLT | Oh. |

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| | SID FECK | Just groves and things. That's one reason it gets high, is it catches so much water from when they have a big rain. |
| | NANCY HOLT | I see. |
| | SID FECK | That distance, you know. |
| | NANCY HOLT | I see. I'm going to stop this for a minute to see how things are going. I forgot which one. |
| 0:03:39.3 | | [RECORDER CLICKS] |
| | SPEAKER 1 | Let's see. [INAUDIBLE] Maybe you're a -- |
| | RADIO HOST 1 | [CROSSTALK] KBJW, for the "Queen of the Silver Dollar" -- |
| 0:03:45.6 | | [RECORDER CLATTERING] |
| | NANCY HOLT | So you've seen it go over the dam. Has it ever gone over the dam? |
| | SID FECK | Yes, ma'am. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. |
| | SID FECK | It's washed it away twice since it's been there. |
| 0:03:58.5 | SID FECK | Washed it away twice. Just went over the top there when those big rains come down. You've got to have a pretty big rain. It's got to come quite a ways up there to catch all this old flow water [INAUDIBLE] Whenever it does, oh, that thing, it gets pretty high, so--Yeah. |
| | NANCY HOLT | And they use the water here that's caught in this lake? They use it for irrigation? |
| | SID FECK | We use some of it for irrigation. And see this ditch here, well, [INAUDIBLE] down yonder. We run it around there and run it into that tank and then use it for irrigation there. And then there's another big tank around here. [INAUDIBLE] fill it up. Then I fill that one up whenever it got the water down there at the house where you all are staying. In other words, that would fill up three tanks, and then we'd use it for irrigation too. |
| 0:05:00.5 | SID FECK | Which is real good, a year like this year. You see, we haven't had but one big washy rain that run water, and that's whenever it filled up there. That's the only time. And these tanks here, I had these two full. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Oh. |
| | SID FECK | You see? |
| | NANCY HOLT | I see. |

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| | SID FECK | I'd done filled them. I hadn't gotten them full before. Got to get rid of that water, that sure does help because, a lot of times in this country, you'll get plenty rain to grow grass, but you won't get tank filling. |
| | NANCY HOLT | I see. |
| | SID FECK | And this country, they depend on tanks a lot here, these here dirt tanks, for their water. Other words is, wells is kind of hard to get in this country. There's just not too much water here. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Now, is this land considered prairie land? |
| | SID FECK | Oh, yes, ma'am. It's just pasture land. That's all. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Pasture land? |
| | SID FECK | Uh-huh, it's pasture land. |
| | NANCY HOLT | And it's usually always this green? Or -- |
| 0:06:01.2 | SID FECK | No, ma'am. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Is this is a good year? [CHUCKLES] |
| | SID FECK | Yeah. This year is--It's not this green every year. It's--Some years, we have just a lot more rain than we do other years. |
| | NANCY HOLT | So -- |
| | SID FECK | We haven't had near as much rain this year as we did last year. It really rained a lot last year. Hell, this--It run over this thing here right around [INAUDIBLE] last time. Just about time it'd get run down, where it'd quit running around and spill away, we'd get another rain. Had lots of rain here last year. |
| | NANCY HOLT | I don't remember much rain though in the last couple weeks. It hasn't rained at all. |
| | SID FECK | No, I'm sure it hasn't. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Going to have -- |
| | SID FECK | We really need a rain now-- |
| | NANCY HOLT | Right. |
| | SID FECK | -- pretty bad because our growing seasons are getting pretty short now -- |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. |
| | SID FECK | -- this month. [INAUDIBLE] It gets colder. If it gets cool enough, we won't grow much. We do still grow a lot, quite a lot of grass through September, the first part of September anyway. |
| 0:07:02.6 | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. |

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| | SID FECK | You notice the nights getting a little cooler -- |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. |
| | SID FECK | -- every night. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Right. |
| | SID FECK | You just notice the nights getting a little cooler now. |
| | NANCY HOLT | It's cool in the morning all the time. That's nice. |
| | SID FECK | Yeah. I tend to get out pretty early. |
| | NANCY HOLT | There's a big change in temperature here, like, between the night and the day. |
| | SID FECK | Yeah, there sure is a big change. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Now, in the wintertime, does the water freeze up here? |
| | SID FECK | Yes, it sure does. It gets pretty thick. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Now, what do you think will happen to Amarillo Ramp in the wintertime? |
| | SID FECK | Oh, I don't--If you put that rock on there, I think it'll stay all right. It'll take those rocks to hold it if it fills up, you know. What do we--What happens to the dam there, just like you'll see, where it's washed out the wind? |
| 0:07:58.0 | SID FECK | It just gets wa--throwing those waves up in it, and it just keeps coming and coming and coming. But it'd take so much rock to go across there, and they just never have done it, which--I think it'd--Oh, it'd probably really pay them to go ahead and do it because it just has to keep rebuilding -- |
| | NANCY HOLT | Right, right. |
| | SID FECK | [CROSSTALK] every so often. |
| | NANCY HOLT | So if they made it like the Amarillo Ramp, it would be better, because that riprap's the piece, and all those rocks. |
| | SID FECK | Yeah. Those rocks, they'll just--They'll keep it from cutting. |
| | NANCY HOLT | So what do you think of having something like this near you? |
| | SID FECK | Well, yeah, it's all right. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. |
| | SID FECK | Yeah, it's all right. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Do--What do you think about it then? |

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| | SID FECK | Well, I just—I've never seen nothing like that, put out like that, but—any place like this before. But it's all right, especially if they want it. [CHUCKLES] |
| | NANCY HOLT | Right. [CHUCKLES] Right. |
| | SID FECK | Especially if they want it. |
| | NANCY HOLT | I think the colors are very beautiful, don't you? |
| | SID FECK | Uh-huh. |
| 0:09:00.0 | NANCY HOLT | Like, that's part of what it's about, those red rocks. And I like the green and the red. And then, when the water comes in, it'll—That's sort of—The water's sort of a yellowish color. You know, it's muddy yellow. |
| | SID FECK | Yeah. |
| 0:09:14.1 | | [ENGINE REVVING] |
| | NANCY HOLT | So in the wintertime, you have snow here, don't you? |
| | SID FECK | Oh, yes. Yeah. |
| | NANCY HOLT | So that—This'll get covered with snow? |
| | SID FECK | A lot of times, yes, it'll get covered in snow. Yeah. Sometimes we have quite—We had lots of snow last winter. It snowed a whole lot. Some winters, we don't have much. We generally have one pretty good snowstorm here before the winter's over. Nearly every time. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. |
| | SID FECK | Along in January, it'll get pretty cold too. It'll get down around— |
| 0:09:57.7 | SID FECK | Generally, in January, we have some weather that's zero or close to it there for two or three weeks. Ice gets awful thick this time. Big job in wintertime, cutting that ice every morning so the cattle can drink, you know, or they can't drink. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Oh, you have to cut ice? |
| | SID FECK | Uh-huh, yeah. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Do you cut ice here in this -- |
| | SID FECK | Yes, ma'am. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Oh. And where do you do that? |
| | SID FECK | Well, I'll generally pick out a place that [INAUDIBLE] and cut it in the same place all the time. Let them find a big lake like this because, a little lake, it don't matter so much. They'll come to it and find a hole. But big lakes like this, a man has to kind of keep cutting one certain place, or they'll—They won't find it. And they walk out on that ice a lot of times |

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| | | if they get dry, you know, and want water. Too many of them break through. And -- |
| | NANCY HOLT | Oh. |
| | SID FECK | -- you've lost some cattle. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Right. |
| | SID FECK | Yeah. |
| 0:10:58.7 | NANCY HOLT | I see. Yeah, that must be a way of losing quite a lot of cattle. |
| | SID FECK | Yeah. There's lots of cattle lost last winter in places around here. I heard them talk about just--People neglect cutting that ice, you know - - |
| | NANCY HOLT | Right. |
| | SID FECK | -- and let a bunch of cattle walk out on it. And it just breaks through. We had--I got over here one morning, back over yonder, a little lake. And they were out on it. It hadn't broke through. They'd done pushed this many cattle on it; the ice was pushing down. But it was about that thick, you know. It could hold up a lot of weight. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Wow. |
| | SID FECK | About--Oh, I imagine it's eight inches thick, something like that. It just keeps getting a little thicker and building up during cold weather. You know. |
| | NANCY HOLT | What other changes does the lake go through, like, besides it freezing over? Does it ever, like change color? Or -- |
| 0:11:57.8 | SID FECK | Oh, yeah. Whenever it first comes down, it'll be a yellowish, muddy color. And it'll sit around enough; it'll clear just on--Well, whenever you all first come, you know, it's pretty near clear. They hadn't had no water running. But after it runs down and fills that mud, it'll be, oh, several months before it'll clear up. Now, this clears up a lot better than that there over yonder, that big lake over yonder. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Oh. |
| | SID FECK | That is red, so much of this red dirt there, and that water will be red. Well, it never has cleared up completely over there. |
| | NANCY HOLT | The Whale Pond, you mean? |
| | SID FECK | Mm-hmm. They just don't. It's always -- |
| | NANCY HOLT | It's always -- |
| | SID FECK | -- cloudy. |

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| | NANCY HOLT | -- cloudy. But this actually does get clear from time to time? |
| | SID FECK | Yes, yeah. This will clear up. This water clears up if it sits long enough without anything running into it. |
| | NANCY HOLT | And how deep does the lake get normally, when it's not too full? When it just--The normal level of the lake is -- |
| 0:12:57.8 | SID FECK | Oh, what was it? Back--It's the deepest place right back here. I imagine 10, about 12 feet. Don't you? |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. |
| | SID FECK | Something maybe about 10, 12 feet deep back there. |
| | NANCY HOLT | It was eight feet over here when we first arrived. |
| | SID FECK | Was it? |
| | NANCY HOLT | It was over our heads. |
| | SID FECK | Yeah. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Not on, you know, the far point. |
| | SID FECK | Well, it popped. It might get a little leak in that down there. I don't know that that [INAUDIBLE]. |
| 0:13:30.0 | | [ENGINE REVVING] |
| | SID FECK | Of course, that backup this way was real shocking. |
| | NANCY HOLT | So you're going to walk out on that ramp when it's finished? |
| | SID FECK | Oh, I'm [INAUDIBLE] Yeah. |
| 0:13:57.9 | SID FECK | Oh, tell me this. Is it just--the purpose of it. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Well, it's a sculpture. |
| | SID FECK | Just a -- |
| | NANCY HOLT | It's an earth sculpture. |
| | SID FECK | Earth sculpture. |
| | NANCY HOLT | And it's about calling attention to the things that already are here, you know. Like, those rocks are very beautiful, you know. And it's also about certain sculptural, like, mass, massiveness. It's about being able to walk out on it and having the landscape come around in a full panorama. Also, when you walk up to the top of it, you'll be able to look over into the valley here. And it's a new way of working, you know. It's doing a sculpture right in a particular place where you consider all the aspects of the place. |
| | SID FECK | Yeah. |
| 0:14:59.0 | NANCY HOLT | And it's a new way. |

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| 0:15:10.8 | | [BRAKES SQUEAKING] |
| | NANCY HOLT | He's doing a good job, Sid. |
| | SID FECK | Yeah, he sure is. Good work. |
| | NANCY HOLT | But he still has a lot more to do. |
| | SID FECK | Oh, yeah. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Those poles are at the height that the piece should be. And -- |
| | SID FECK | Oh, yeah. |
| | NANCY HOLT | But now they've taken away a truck and front loader, so -- |
| | SID FECK | Yeah. |
| | NANCY HOLT | -- things are slower. |
| | SID FECK | Yeah. Well, I guess I'd better get around. I've got to -- |
| | NANCY HOLT | OK. |
| | SID FECK | -- get busy. [CROSSTALK] |
| | NANCY HOLT | Well, thanks a lot for the interview. And -- |
| 0:15:56.0 | | [RECORDER CLICKS] |
| 0:15:57.0 | | [MUSIC PLAYING ON RADIO] |
| | NANCY HOLT | Testing, testing. One, two, one, two. Testing, testing, testing. Testing, testing. One, two, one, two. Testing, testing. One, two, one, two. Testing, testing. One, two. |
| 0:16:20.2 | | [MUSIC PLAYING ON RADIO] |
| | NANCY HOLT | Testing, testing. One, two, one, two. Testing, testing. |
| 0:16:42.9 | | [MUSIC PLAYING ON RADIO] |
| 0:17:00.0 | | [MUSIC PLAYING ON RADIO] |
| 0:17:06.0 | | [RECORDER CLATTERING] |
| | NANCY HOLT | OK. You've been doing this kind of work for a long time, haven't you? |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Yes, I have, Nancy. I've been doing it for 38 years now on construction. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Wow, that's a long time. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Yes, it is. It sure is. Of course, now, when I was a kid, I started out on other things, you know, mowing grass and stuff, when I was big enough to push the mower. |
| | NANCY HOLT | [CHUCKLES] |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | And my daddy had done this kind of work, you know, all his life until he passed away. See, my daddy had, and I followed it, and I learned a lot from him. |

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| | NANCY HOLT | So do you enjoy getting—doing this kind of moving of the earth? And -- |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Yes, I really like it. I've made a living at it, you know, for a long time. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Right, right. |
| 0:17:57.0 | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | And so, you know—And I really enjoy it and people I work with, you know. And they take an interest in it, and I do too. You know. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Right. What are some of the things that you've built? |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Well, I worked 18 years, Nancy, for one contractor. And during the 18 years, I learned a lot about dirt and equipment, you know. And I have run jobs for him and also run every piece of equipment that he had. I learned; I had to. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Right. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | And then, when he went out of business, then I went to work for Brown Brothers out of Manhattan. And I built some disposal plants for them and a road job or two. You know. |
| | NANCY HOLT | So -- |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | And also dam work. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | You know, we built a lot of dams for them, Brown Brothers, and they're still in the business. |
| | NANCY HOLT | So you've been working here in Texas for how long? |
| 0:18:57.0 | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Nancy, I come in here in 1938. |
| | NANCY HOLT | To Amarillo? |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | To Amarillo. My folks moved in here. And I've been in and out since then. |
| | NANCY HOLT | And you've moved a lot of earth in these regions, huh? |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Yes, I have, really. Yeah, we have worked in this Northern Panhandle for a period of nine years, you know, on dams and highway work and for all these ranchers around here. You know. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Have you ever worked on anything like the Amarillo Ramp before? Like, this work that we've just done here? |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | No, Nancy, this is something new to me, you know. But I appreciate doing what I did for you. And I tried to do you as nice a job as I could, |

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| | | you know. But it's something new to me. Of course, you know, I had built a lot of dikes and things like that. But just come to a dead-end point like we did on this, and it was something new to me. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | It was something you had to finish going backwards, you know. |
| 0:20:00.0 | NANCY HOLT | Yeah, right. What were some of the sensations you had when you were going out on the ramp and bringing the rocks out? |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Well, it's an experience that I never did have, you know, Nancy, really. But I really do like it, and I enjoyed it. And it turned out nice. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Right, right. What were some of the things that you thought about, like, when you were trying to get it leveled off? Like, what were some of your feelings about it? Was it difficult? |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Well, it wasn't too difficult, Nancy, really. But I'll tell you, what I was building, I didn't know until after it was completed. You know? |
| | NANCY HOLT | What was that? |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | After I had worked on it, I didn't know, really, what we was really building. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Right. [CHUCKLES] |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | You know. |
| | NANCY HOLT | And so it slowly became something in your mind? |
| 0:21:03.0 | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Yeah. It was just something that I have never experienced before. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Right. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | It turned out beautiful. It sure did. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | And I enjoyed every bit of it. Really, I did. |
| | NANCY HOLT | And what do you think of this kind of rock? Do you have any feelings about working with this kind of rock over—versus other kinds? |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Well, Nancy, I have worked in all different types of rock, you know, riprapping dams, you know, and spillways. And it's amazing how this turned out with the narrow arrow—area that I had to work in. You know, |

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| | | it's amazing how I had to do it, you know, to get it placed on there like you wanted. You know. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Right, right. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Because I didn't have much room. As high as it is, and as narrow, it was treacherous, you know, really. |
| 0:22:02.7 | NANCY HOLT | But you managed to do it. And you -- |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Yes, I did. And I took my time, you know, so that nothing would happen in the meantime, you know, and still do you a nice job on it. |
| | NANCY HOLT | I remember you were going backwards pretty fast though. I've -- |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Yes. |
| | NANCY HOLT | That's really im- -- |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | I got where—I got used to it, like a race track. You know. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Right. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | The more you do it, the more you get used to it. And it worked out nice, you know. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Have you been watching the light, how it changes on it? |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Yes, and it changes colors all of the time, every day. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Now, you know, them rocks were all dusty till we had those little sprinkles. And I noticed yesterday, after we had dinner, how they were clearing up, and they're a lot brighter yet—this morning— |
| | NANCY HOLT | Right. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | -- than what they were yesterday evening. |
| 0:22:57.8 | NANCY HOLT | Right, yeah. I see that they are, a little. And sometimes the rocks are— They go through different color changes. Like, they look red and pink and orange. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Well, yes. And, Nancy, I went up here. And when I ripped this rock, I noticed there were different veins of it that was different color. And I tried to mix them as I put it on there. Even when I got them out of my stockpile to put on there, I kind of mixed them up there for you just a little -- |

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| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | -- to kind of change the color on it, not make one solid color -- |
| | NANCY HOLT | Right. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | -- on either side. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Oh. See, well, that's something I didn't realize you were doing. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | You can see them on the end of it there, Nancy -- |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | -- how they change the color from the top to the bottom and even on the side. |
| | NANCY HOLT | I'm going to stop this a minute because I think I might be coming to the end of the-- |
| 0:23:53.5 | | [RECORDER CLATTERING] |
| | NANCY HOLT | [INAUDIBLE] because I was just worried that there wasn't enough tape. |
| 0:24:00.0 | NANCY HOLT | Anyway, we were talking about--Well, look at--Even now, since we've been sitting here, I think the light just changed. It got--The sun came out more bright, and the shadows are more pronounced on both the outside and the inside. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | It's a little cloud move that we have going over, Nancy, that's changing the color of it as they go by. And we had a beautiful rainbow this morning. If you'd been out here real early, you could have saw -- |
| | NANCY HOLT | Oh. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | So before, it was showering real light, you know. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | And it put a beautiful color on the whole area here. That was this morning early, if you had been here this morning. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Well, I wish I had seen that. That would be nice. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | We had a complete rainbow, you know, here early this morning. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. So that-- |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | The sun -- |

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| | NANCY HOLT | And that sort of takes the kind of same shape as the work here, circular. It's half a circle in the sky. |
| 0:25:01.1 | NANCY HOLT | What do you think's going to happen when the water comes in here? |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Well, Nancy, I believe it's going to stay because we've got good compaction on it. You know. And there's not going to be any water sloshing on it which will damage it, I don't believe, because we have a good base on it, really. |
| | NANCY HOLT | And -- |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | It's marvelous, Nancy, the compaction that we have on it by just running it on the edges of it as we built it. You know. |
| | NANCY HOLT | So the front loader itself helped press down the mass. And -- |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Yes, it did, Nancy, and we got a good base under it. I mean, it's really going to stay. I believe it'll stay right there. |
| | NANCY HOLT | That's called riprap, isn't it? When they -- |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | On the sides, yes, Nancy, it's riprapped all the way around. |
| | NANCY HOLT | And there were rocks right through it too. |
| 0:25:58.8 | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Yes. They were mixed in with it as we built it, Nancy. You know. They're just falling, just fell right in place as we went up with it, you know. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Did you have trouble getting the level so that it was like the stakes were, you know, the height of the stakes? |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | No, Nancy. I just more or less got the idea, when Richard set the grades out there, what he was planning on doing. And, you know, I built half of it and then just kept going on out, which is before I really got to the top, so it'd be a little wider for me to run on. You know? Then, when we started finishing it off, I had to go backwards on it because it was so narrow that I couldn't run on it. You know. |
| | NANCY HOLT | I see. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Yeah. This is my first job to finish, Nancy, where I had to do it going backwards. |
| | NANCY HOLT | [CHUCKLES] Well, you got really good at it. I saw you -- |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Well -- |
| | NANCY HOLT | -- whipping around here. |


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| 0:27:00.6 | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | I tried to do the best I could for you, Nancy. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | That's what I tried to do. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Right. Now you also ripped out some of the rocks here from the quarry place up there in the hill. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Yes. I done that with a dozer, Nancy. And what I was trying to do is just find what rock that was suitable, you know, to make it look like something. You was telling me that you wanted a rock change on it, and that's the reason why I went up there with a dozer and ripped three or four different places, made three or four different stockpiles for you. And then, as we brought it down here and stockpiled it—And then I switched to a little of this and a little of that to change the color for you as I placed them on there for you. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Now, when you took the rock out of the earth, weren't they in certain, like, stratas or levels in the hill? |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Yes, there was layers of them, Nancy. And the farther down we went, the thicker they were. |
| 0:28:00.5 | NANCY HOLT | Oh. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | They started out little layers at the top that were a little different color. And then you go down two or three feet, and you get a different color. And as I ripped them, they just mixed up, you know. And then when we loaded them, well, we mixed them again. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | That's the reason why we have a change of color, you know. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Tony told me that, when you ride out on that, you felt you were going to nowhere. Is that right? |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Yeah. It seems like that, you know, really. |
| | NANCY HOLT | How else could you describe that? |

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| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Well, it's just like you're going to outer space. You're going up all the time and just come to one end there where you're—You know, you don't know where you go from there. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Right, yeah. Well, that's a good way of saying that. I like that. Yeah. Now, when you were driving up there in the front loader, did you ever look out and look at the landscape, the panorama of the landscape? |
| 0:29:02.0 | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Yes, I did, Nancy, but I still had to keep my eye on what I was doing. |
| | NANCY HOLT | [CHUCKLES] Right. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | It was pretty narrow, you know. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Right, yes. I guess you had to keep your eye on where you were going. You couldn't look up. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Yes, because I didn't have much room to run on there. But I did, several times, glance off and see different sights as I was building it. You know. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. And what was it like watching the rocks falling down into the mud? |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Well, it's a feeling, Nancy, that you have to watch them for a simple reason. You try to get them as uniform as you can as you place them out there, you know, and you naturally watch your grade as you build it. |
| | NANCY HOLT | I see. But when the rocks fell into the mud, sometimes they would disperse the mud. You know, like, see how the mud is there, like, all pushed away? |
| 0:30:00.9 | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Yes. It would fall in there and also just squash out a little, you know, at the bottom. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Right. Did you watch them squash the mud? |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Yes, you do that. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. [CHUCKLES] |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | You do that. You know, when you was a kid, how you'd throw a rock in the mud and watch it go under? Well, I watched this too. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | I sure did. |

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| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. I enjoy watching the rocks in the mud too. And the mud—As you were building the piece, the mud got harder and harder every day, right? |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Yes, it did. And it caked and opened up, you know, as it dried. And it's amazing how it does that, you know. The weather, you know, like, it has been dry, you know, and it started cracking as we was building it. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. I find those crevices between the mud very interesting to look at. It seems to make patterns and get larger, as you said. So -- |
| 0:31:03.0 | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Yeah, yeah. They get larger. You know, it starts drying out a little at a time, you know, and they get larger. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Do you know why that happens? |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Well, no, not really. |
| | NANCY HOLT | I think it's fascinating that—I don't know why either. [CHUCKLES] You know. And another interesting thing, I think, is the way there's a color change in the center of the ramp. The mud there is a darker color than the mud on the far side that we can see here. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Yes. Yes, it is. It's a lot darker. And there's three or four different shades of this whole area right now than what it is in the center, Nancy, and it's a lot darker, really. And I think it sets it off beautiful. Don't you? |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. Right. Well, what do you think caused the mud in the center to be darker? |
| 0:31:57.2 | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Well, I believe, Nancy, after we built this, I think it stopped that wind from coming in there and drying it out too fast. I really do. It looks wetter there than it does elsewhere, see? |
| | NANCY HOLT | Do you think, too, that some of the dust from the rocks might have— The darker dust might have -- |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Well, yes, because this rock has a lot of red tint to it. And it also blew over on this and made it a lot darker. And that also changed the color of it. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. So there are quite a few colors here when you stop and look. There are those color of the rocks, and then the yellowness of the mud beyond, and then the green grass, the blue sky. You have a lot of colors coming together. |

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| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Yes. Well, they all blend in nice, you know, Nancy. They sure do. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. |
| 0:32:57.2 | NANCY HOLT | Well, this work is a way of calling attention to all of the things that are here to begin with, you know. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | That's right. |
| | NANCY HOLT | The rocks are here. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | That's right. |
| | NANCY HOLT | The mud was here. The grass was here. But, see, this is a way of just calling attention to that fact. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Well, what I like about it, Nancy, is that it's something that you're building for old Mother Earth, and you ain't tearing it down. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yes, that's right. Yeah. [CHUCKLES] Right. I think it's—it looks, now that it's made, that it's been there a long time, and it'll be there a long time. Don't you think? |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | It sure will. Yes. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. So that's an interesting statement, that it's been built for Mother Earth. I like that. Yeah. Do you feel, since you've been working with earth for so long, that there is kind of, like, a mother -- |
| 0:34:00.5 | NANCY HOLT | -- or some kind of special feeling about it? Like, you said Mother Earth. I mean, do you have that feeling about the earth? |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Nancy, we've been working all over these ranches and everything, and let's put it this way, I think the old Lord put us on here to keep the old Earth in shape. Some of us, and I'm one of them. |
| | NANCY HOLT | That's very interesting, yeah, because you've certainly done a lot with it and reshaped the earth. Right? |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | That's right. That's right. We have really changed it, you know, on these dams where the earth is washing away. We rebuilt them, re-terraced them, and all this to save it, you know, because it's eventually washing away, and we're trying to save it. You know. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Right. Well, so -- |

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| 0:35:01.5 | NANCY HOLT | Yes, I'm sure that a lot of the dams you've built and everything have given—helped store water that have plants grow and cattle eat and everything. So that—You are—You know, you're keeping alive a lot of things that wouldn't be alive. Right? |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Well, yes, that's right, Nancy. And another thing too—Since we have been building these dams all over this Panhandle, it's a dry area here, you know. And we have had more moisture, and our grass is getting greener, and these ranches are putting on more cattle for that simple reason—is that they're having more grass -- |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. Right. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | -- than what they used to have. Right? |
| | NANCY HOLT | Right. So now, today, you're sort of bringing the land back to where it was. We had to disrupt it a bit to make this work, and now you're bringing it back. |
| 0:36:01.3 | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Well, we always do that on every job, Nancy. You know, got to smooth up what we had really tore up, you know, because it has to be done that way. You can't leave anything tore up. |
| | NANCY HOLT | That's right. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | We try to satisfy the ranchers and the ones we do our work for. |
| | NANCY HOLT | I see. So, well, I guess that's—Can you think of anything else you'd like to say? |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | No, Nancy, only I'm just proud that I've done you a nice job, and I tried to do the best I could. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Well, you did a beautiful job. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | And I like you, Richard, and all them that worked with me. |
| | NANCY HOLT | Yeah. Well, I'm glad that we all got along and that you did such a good job. And we couldn't have done it by ourselves. You're a really important part. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Thank you, Nancy. Now, I want to tell you this. I'm proud of you— |
| | NANCY HOLT | Oh. |



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| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | -- for doing something like this. I really am. It gave us an opportunity to help you and gave us a job to do. |
| 0:37:00.4 | NANCY HOLT | Oh. Well, thanks a lot. |
| | UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER | Thank you, Nancy. |
| | NANCY HOLT | OK. Well -- |
| 0:37:05.0 | | [RECORDER CLICKS] |

