

## Roy Hemmingway interview on Atiyeh

An interview of Roy Hemmingway regarding Oregon's Governor Victor Atiyeh, recorded on Jan. 20, 2016. Hemmingway represented Oregon on the Northwest Power Planning Council, now known as the Northwest Power and Conservation Council, from 1981-1986. The interviewer, James Moore, was as professor of political science at Pacific University and was Atiyeh's biographer.

The interview includes discussion of: the evolution of energy policy in Oregon, focusing on Atiyeh and his role in energy conservation; Atiyeh lobbying for the Domestic and Rural Power Authority (DRPA) and working on regional energy legislation; Atiyeh's influence in shifting energy policy towards conservation and regional cooperation, particularly through the Northwest Power Planning Council; the Council's integrated resource planning and conservation mandates; Atiyeh's leadership style; his focus on economic development and the challenges of balancing partisanship with capability in appointments.

Note on the text: This transcript was made through AI in 2025, with some manual corrections. It has been provided in order to facilitate research, but the text does contain errors and inaccuracies. Users should check the transcript against the recording before quoting the speakers.

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[Recording begins mid-conversation.]

James Moore 00:00

In this very room. So Vic asked me to write his biography, and I was able to do several times before he died, and then I had, a year ago, had a sabbatical, and so that's when I basically started getting a lot of data, and began writing towards the end of last summer. And, you know, we move along, but basically during school breaks. So I'm writing now about energy, which dominated his first year. And probably we can safely say two years there's a lot of because the interest rates just go through the roof at the end of 79. So I found some fun articles and editorials saying, but they're paying attention to energy and it's the economy, so there's that, that changing point. But you're involved in all of that, yeah. So tell me how you got into the energy game, you know, pre Straub. Where do you come from?

Roy Hemmingway 01:09

Well, I had practiced law here after law school for a couple of years downtown here, and I just felt it wasn't for me. And so it turned out the Oregon Environmental Council, which was the only environmental lobby at the time, needed a lobbyist. And I said, Oh, I'll do that. And so I did that for the '77 session. No, it was the '75 session, excuse me. And then that led to a couple of other projects, one of which was putting on an energy conservation conference, I think late 75 it was early 76 and after that, Charlie Davis, whom I knew socially because he was friends of the some of the people. Oh, did you know Jonathan Newman, the judge. Jonathan Newman practiced law in the same law firm I was in. We became friends and making buddies, and he introduced me to Charlie, and Charlie called me up one day and said, I've got a project I'm interested in seeing if there is a legal basis for suing the Bonneville Power Administration on an equal protection basis to get more Bonneville power into Oregon, because at that time, there was beginning to be a real diversion, or difference in rates between publicly owned and industrial utilities, and Washington was primarily publicly owned, and we were, of course, investor owned. So he said, This is all on the QT. I'll pay you, but you don't need to come to the office. And so I spent time in the law library and came with to the conclusion there was no basis to do this. And I said, but I got another idea, which is we could create our own publicly owned utility that would then own the Bonneville Power but lease the lines to deliver it, and that became the domestic and rural Power Authority. So I wrote the bill, and then got hired in the Strava administration to lobby that bill.

James Moore 03:36

So when you wrote the bill, were you still being a lobbyist, or was this just

Roy Hemmingway 03:40

I was being paid, I think, out of PUC discretionary funds. Then I became a staff person. Then after the bill and a version

passed in the 77 session, Charlie said, why don't you come over to the PUC. I need a new deputy. And I remember there was one commissioner at the time, so I became Deputy public utility Commissioner, all beginning about the summer of 77 and a lot of what was going on there was trying to figure out how Bonneville was going the Monaco Power Administration was going to deal with the future, right? And they had expiring contracts with the customers, and particularly the aluminum companies, and you know what was going to happen next. So they were proposing a major expansion of their authority. And there was a bill in the works in Congress that was kind of not going anywhere, but starting to get interest. So Charlie said, I'd like you to do that, lobby that, and see what you can do to. To move that along and protect the state's interest. So I spent a very little bit of my time in the beginning, and then more and more as time went on, and he said, I'd like to relieve you of administrative duties so you can do that full time. Then the 78 election occurred. Vic, told Charlie very early on that he was not going to be reappointed. And I figured, given that I was a person who worked in the Strava administration, I've been worked as an environmental lobbyist, that Vic would not want me around either. So I figured I was I should start packing my stuff up. And I got a call from, I think it was Lee Johnson already at that point, saying, Come on over. We want to talk to you. And Vic wanted a paper on what was going on this regional bill, because utilities had said, this is kind of important. And so I wrote Vic a one page paper. And he said, you know, which was kind of what, frankly, the previous governor, yeah. Wanted, yeah. And he said, No, I want, I want the full story. Yeah, so I went back and wrote a much longer paper, and it was well over 10 pages and they then they said, we'd like you to stick around. So I stayed in that office even after Charlie left. So I had the title of Deputy public utility Commissioner, but I wasn't doing that job. So I reported through Lee Johnson, and spent most of 1979 and 1980 working on that bill in Washington, right? So that's kind of how I That's the story. Yeah,

James Moore 07:05

fascinating, yeah. But there's so many people that I'm running into who were trying to figure out what they would do and doing something else, and then said, you know, I like this, you know, yeah, project. And all sudden, they become experts. And, right, yeah, it's just, it's just, it's just great stuff. Yeah, tell all my students, not necessarily your majors, what gets you going,

Roy Hemmingway 07:25

that's right. And I taught at the law school and off and on for a while, and I told them, I said I taught energy law. And I said, this isn't it. This will be, this might be a good course for you, because half of you will not practice law, right? And they all looked at me like, What? No, that's really the truth. Yeah,

James Moore 07:50

absolutely, absolutely. So talk to me about DRPA as a negotiating tool. It becomes that, right? Was that the intention from the beginning, or was it really we're going to put together this public entity to resell the power

Roy Hemmingway 08:05

in the beginning? It was before there was any idea of regional legislation. It was intended to set something up that Oregon could use. And it was funny, because I'd been talking with the attorneys at BPA, and off and on, people I knew, and running various ideas by them. And when I came up, when came up with DRPA, I went to them and I said, Well, I've got this idea. Previously, they've been poo pooing everything I said, when I came up with that, they looked at one another, and there was no it didn't say anything. And finally, one of them said, you may have something there. So it became a real threat to publicly owned utilities, because this would be the largest customer of Bonneville by far. And already, Bonneville was saying, we do not have enough power to serve all our preference customers into the future. So it then gave impetus to regional legislation in Congress, because public power felt threatened, and if they could get something, if they could get regional legislation and solve this problem at the same time, then they would sign on to it. And previously, they've been kind of reluctant. They're a very conservative group

James Moore 09:35

of folks. Had certainly Monroe come over to BPA yet? Or was he? No,

Roy Hemmingway 09:40

he was still scoop. Jackson, yeah, aid, yeah, very much, yeah. There was, there was this story that, supposedly, the bill that was introduced, I think, in 79 was written at. Scoop Jackson's kitchen table, but actually it was written at the bottom of Power Administration,

James Moore 10:07

so, but Jackson is the main player,

Roy Hemmingway 10:10

yep, at this point, and Mark Hatfield turned out to be a pretty main player.

James Moore 10:13

Yeah, yeah, as we move along, yeah, absolutely. Do you remember Vic's feelings about DRPA as it was being debated. He was

Roy Hemmingway 10:26

not an active he wasn't on the committee. And at that what was happening was that Jason Bowe, who had, I think, publicly owned entities in his district, had appointed Ed fadley as head of the Energy and Environment Committee. I think that's what it was called. And Ed had public power, of course, in this district, and Ed kept playing games where he'd have hearing after hearing after hearing, and never moved the bill. And the utilities were Pacific Corp was kind of not very happy about the idea. They thought they could kind of stomach through this and and so only at the end of the session, something happened, and I'm not quite sure what that Ed had to move the bill, yeah. And so he moved the bill out. And it was, you know, one of those end of session things that happened. I don't even know how big voted on. I imagine he voted for it, yeah.

James Moore 11:29

I suppose I can tell he voted for it, yeah. Later on, after his first year in as governor, there's an energy report that's written, and it says, you know, Governor Tia, who was a supporter of DRPA. But then it has the wrong year, you know, 75 there until 76 and even inception, right? So, right. You know, all these kinds of things,

Roy Hemmingway 11:53

yeah, like, until about May of 76 Yeah, yeah. That's when we started talking about, yeah,

James Moore 12:01

and it's the Straub information actually has different months on when he announced it, so I've got to chase that down. But

Roy Hemmingway 12:10

there's an error. It was interesting because Bob had a big press conference, and I might have been like in April of 76 where he was going to announce this, and he was at the Hilton, and I was to show up at the Hilton and be part of the press conference, and I had stayed overnight at a girlfriend's place downtown here and came out in the morning, and we had kept this thing entirely quiet. We thought maybe five people knew about this and come out top headline in the Oregonians Straub to announce energy plan and, well, the reporter, Melinda later became my girlfriend, and she never told me how she found out. That's great. So you could go find that Oregonian Yeah, and that would tell you, yeah.

James Moore 13:20

Okay. That's great. That's great. Um, was Straub an energy guy did was this close to his heart? I mean, the, you know, I started doing this energy chapter thinking, Oh, it's about the Northwest Power Plant, yeah. And then there's going to be some stuff, because the context for people across the country is on oil crises, yeah, 7980 right? You know that kind of thing. But it's like, there's the Northwest Power planning stuff, there's the nuclear stuff, which kind of goes like this, but kind of doesn't, yeah. And then there's gas all at the exact same time, yep. And so, you mean gasoline, yeah, gasoline, yeah. Was Strava an energy guy, or did he kind of farm this out? No,

Roy Hemmingway 14:05

no, no. Bob was very concerned about this, because investor owned utility rates were going up at double digits every year because they were losing their access to Monaco power, and having to invest, at that time, in nuclear. And so they the this became a big political issue, and Bob was very happy to try to do something about it. And and DRPA became, I think he said his top legislative priorities, 77 session, yeah, and when he lost, he did say that he thought that you took

that electricity rates were the reason he lost. So, you know, I he became very. Very, very interested. And I don't, I don't mean to put down Bob by saying Vic was went more into depth and things, I liked Bob a lot. They're all different. And Bob, Bob was, he had a very good heart, and then he presented an issue to him. Here was the political path, and here was the right path. But I've always chose the right path. Yeah,

James Moore 15:26

it's not really any be in my book, but Straub, business acumen from years of that, is something that people, even in his biography, they just don't really focus on this. And the

Roy Hemmingway 15:40

state treasurer, he very much informed the office. Yeah, what we know of the office today is large, but he did.

James Moore 15:46

I was just talking with Gerry Thompson yesterday, yeah, and who came in after you did all this stuff, right? But we were talking about how some of the offices and become so much more politicized since big stay. But the one exception is Bob Straub made a treasurer's office that is is close to a nonpartisan, partisan office as whoever's in there's investments, you know, all that investment

Roy Hemmingway 16:15

Council makes the decisions the state treasurer doesn't get to. Yeah, get political fingers on it. Yeah,

James Moore 16:23

it's just amazing legacy, yeah,

Roy Hemmingway 16:25

and little known. And it was interesting when Lee Johnson died, I was very sad. The Oregonian obit was just six inches or something, and it never said anything about how he reformed the Attorney General's Office, yeah, and made it what it is today. Bringing in all the lawyers to the office, rather than having them out in the agencies and making it a big law firm, it would improve the quality of legal representation immensely.

James Moore 16:53

Yeah. It's interesting, because there are a number of people who talk about Vic and say he had the smallest gubernatorial staff, which he kind of did, not by much. But one of the things that Vic did in his fights in that first year, he wanted to do exactly what Lee Johnson had done. Maybe because of Lee, he wanted to bring in all those appointments that go into the Department of Energy and stuff and say, great. They serve at my will. They should be here. Yeah, and the legislature,

Roy Hemmingway 17:26

absolutely. They love this mess. We have Astoria state government with these boards and commissions that hire directors and yeah, I can tell you stories about that, and the kids over here.

James Moore 17:39

It's crazy. So you are basically the lobbyist on this federal bill. Yeah, what was your sense about how Vic wanted that bill to come out? And the key thing is, he claims that he's the one who came up with the idea for the Northwest Power Planning Council and brought in the governors. And He also claims the genesis of the importance of fish in the Yeah,

Roy Hemmingway 18:15

about that big so, yes, yeah. Well, early on, I went to Vic and said, you know, this bill's been introduced. It doesn't have any role for the states, and it increases vonabells role in the region quite a bit. But there's no role for the states, and he wanted to get a role for the states. So there had been talk about getting a council, and they very much liked that idea. So he said, Well, let's get the states together. So I called some people in the and the other states whom I knew, and I think he called each of the governors and asked them to appoint a person to meet and we would draw up amendments. So I think it was in April of 79 we got together, and we were in Vancouver, I think it was, and we sat down and worked out a set of conceptual amendments to the bill that included, as I recall, a council but also included a stronger conservation

mandate, and what were called model conservation standards, which became The basis of the current building code which improved energy efficiency by

James Moore 19:43  
probably double, yeah, and,

Roy Hemmingway 19:48  
and I so when I had these amendments that everyone had agreed to, I took them a VIC, thinking he's never been a conservation vote. You know, not quite sure where. He was absolutely fine. He said, I like this. At that time, my worry was that, though each of the people who had been appointed by the other governors was close to their governor, if not in their governor's office, Governor Ray had appointed a former state senator. Had asked a former state senator with whom she didn't have a real relationship, and he didn't know anything much about energy, as I recall, and he was a very pleasant and positive person in the in these discussions. I don't even remember his name, I'm sorry and he but I felt, given the strong conservation bent of all of this, that Governor Ray might not be very enthusiastic about it. So he said, So I mentioned this to Vic, and he said, Well, let's go see

James Moore 21:10  
you what the heck yeah, he does that in the past. There. Do you know judge Bob Jones,

Roy Hemmingway 21:16  
I am happy. Okay, sir, but,

James Moore 21:19  
but he's he and Vic were on a slate together in 1962 but his federal appointment was jammed up. This is after Vic left office. He's doing consulting. And Vic came back from one of his trips and went in to see his friend Bobby Jones, and said, I think your nomination is gonna move forward. I just dropped in to see President Bush, George the father, yeah. And he said, Oh yeah, we'll move that forward. Just fucking so. So

Roy Hemmingway 21:48  
he orders up state play, which was easier to do then, I think, and we flew up to Olympia, terrible, foggy, awful day. I thought, We're gonna die and we go to the Capitol, and standing outside the governor's office, Vic and I, and Dixie comes out, greets us, and Vic then turns to me and says, what every staff member's worst nightmare is you stay out here, you know, because you never know what the principal is going to give away and you know. And I didn't know Vic that well, and I didn't know how well briefed he was, and energy had not been his focus in the legislature. So I sit out there going, Oh God, six months of work down the drain. And so time goes by and 20 minutes go by, and he says, I'll call you if we need you. And so I'm sitting out there expecting a call. Door opens, outcome big and Dixie, and they are all smiles. And, you know, Dixie had a reputation for being this fierce person, and Dixie was like a pussycat. I mean, she was just absolutely delighted. And she, I mean, she was just practically bouncing up and down with how happy she was. And Vic and she were exchanging these pleasantries. And I remember she said, You and Gloria must come up for the weekend for me. And she, Dixie lived with her sister, I think, in Gig Harbor then and and, and I thought, Oh, God, if Dixie is this happy, something has happened.

And so we leave, and we're walking down the hall or got in the car, I can't remember which. And finally I turned it back and go, what happened? He says, she's fine with it. And I said, she's fine. Don't worry. It'll go, it'll be fine. And if there's any trouble, let me know. And I was just sort of shocked that it turned out to be absolutely true. And that's when I really got my first appreciation of Vic. You know, I've been a staff member of his political opponent lobbied in the legislature against interests that he didn't predict for interest he didn't particularly share. And that's when I really felt this is a guy who, one is a lot more moderate than I think people ever gave him credit for, up till Yeah, and two, was a guy who ought to sell something, yeah and then I realized the guy had sold rugs for 30 years, expensive for real rugs. Probably knew how to make a sale, yeah and, yeah, and he'd gone in there. I never knew what they said, Yeah, but he'd gone in there and. Made the sale, yeah? Which just because, because, I mean, after all, when the regional Act was passed and the power council got going, it killed future nuclear, yeah, absolutely. Which was Dixie, yeah, yeah. Yeah. And I, and a few of us who, I mean, I've written part of it, knew that was what was going to happen. And if you had been around energy, you probably were kind of savvy. You could have read that said, Oh yeah, I don't think this is good for nuclear

at all. There's going to be a major investment in energy conservation and a hard look at the numbers, which nobody wanted to do, yeah,

James Moore 25:52

as this was going through Congress, what was their emphasis? You've got, you've got the different parts, yeah, so you got an energy part, conservation part, got the fish part, yeah, what was, what was the thing that really sold it there? Were they all equal? Or was it well, or get those northwesterners out of our hair? Or, well,

Roy Hemmingway 26:12

it was a coalition of people all who wanted something. Okay, so public power wanted to continue preference and continue to get power from Bonneville right? The aluminum companies wanted new contracts. The states wanted a hand in planning and wanted greater conservation. And this, this about this kind of coalition kept falling apart, largely due to public powers getting nervous, right? And they'd have to go back and write new amendments to satisfy public power. We probably went through this three or four different times during the lobbying on the legislation, but eventually we got there and legislation passed. First past the Senate. There wasn't a lot about there wasn't any real opposition in the Senate. And Mark Hatfield had been very strongly working for more conservation, and he was the one who put in a 10% advantage for conservation in the bill, his people did. And so went to then went to the house, and it got a dual referral in the house, which is a normally a killer, yeah.

And it went to the Commerce Committee as well as the water and power committee and Water and Power subcommittee of the whatever committee that is interior, it's interior, yeah, and But we persevered. I mean, I spent six months of that, two years in Washington, and at one point didn't go home for a couple of months because I didn't have what the lobbyists had, which was a free ticket home every weekend. The state wouldn't put up with that. So what we were, what this, what we were most interested in was the residential Exchange, which got written in number one. Number two was the council. Number three was probably conservation mandate, and four was the fish and Vic was very interested in the fish thing and but he didn't have, we didn't really have a lot to add to what was going on there. It came out of the Senate with kind of weak fish language. But John Dingell, who was chairman of the subcommittee in the Commerce Committee at the time, it's a big outdoorsman, and he insisted on stronger fish language. And I remember one meeting with him on a Friday afternoon, and he was in his hunting camouflage gear, boots were up on the desk, and we're trying to talk to him, and he's saying, I got on a trip to get to but he was a very strong supporter, and wouldn't put up the utilities were trying to get very weak language in, and he would buy

James Moore 29:36

it. I just learned that one of his aides at the time was at Eva. She It's a woman. I wrote it down when I got it. But he's this because his name is, you're the second person to really say that he played this role, so I need to track her down. Yeah, yeah, and get that. That's great. The role of Jim Weaver. Oh, right.

Roy Hemmingway 29:58

Well. So Jim Weaver decided that this not to protect his publicly owned utilities, but he had decided this is a pro nuclear bill, okay? And no matter what we told him, and there were environmental lobbyists out there lobbying against this. And I don't know if you know Ralph Cavanagh, he's worked for the Natural Resources Defense Council in San Francisco since then, and he probably knows more about energy in the west than any other human being. But Ralph started out lobbying against the bill right out of law school, and I tried to talk to him then and said, I got this wrong. This is going to kill nuclear. And when the power planning council got going, at one point, he came before the council and he said, I am here to officially eat my hand. He said got a great sense of humor, because he said I was dead wrong, but he thought it was very pro nuclear. And so he basically tried to filibuster the bill in the House, which isn't permissible. And he introduced, I think, 100 different amendments, and was going to have each one dealt with on the floor. He didn't. He had very little support. I think he had Ed Markey with him, who I think is an idiot, who's now a senator, but he, he just was trying to delay things till the session expired in 1980 and Tip O'Neill and John Dingell. And of course, Tom Foley was not. He was, I think, chair of the Democratic Study Committee, which is kind of three or four months down in the House leadership. And he was working with the speaker and with Representative Dingle to maneuver this through the floor, and Weaver kept finding every delaying tactic in the book, and he made himself persona non grata. And one of the reasons, I think, in a session or two that he didn't run for re election was that not only did he squander his campaign funds, but he really had no influence whatsoever after that. And Tip O'Neill kept saying,

Don't worry. We're going to get this through. Don't worry. And it took until the lame duck after the election, yeah, but he said, we'll get it through. Don't worry about it. And eventually shut down Weaver. And it happened,

James Moore 33:09

there's a quote from you in the BPA 75th anniversary that's got you coming back from when everything is finished. And Dick says, So how did we do? He said we would do great, but so did everybody else.

Roy Hemmingway 33:23

I said we got everything we wanted, but so did everybody else, yeah, yeah. And that's, that's true, and it was this grand compromise where they were basically giving out four thirds of the Bonneville pie, right? You know, and eventually it would fall apart, which I think we all knew, but we all wanted to get something out of it for now. Yeah, yeah.

James Moore 33:53

One of the people I interviewed long ago just died, Wayne Thompson, yeah. I just heard this week that he died, yeah, and I haven't seen anything there was to set the service will be announced. I haven't seen it. Yeah, no, I haven't seen it either. But one of his first recording assignments when he came out here in the early 60s was to go to allocate the river meeting, yeah, and the head of the committee was the Oregonians editorial, right? And so he's sitting there, zero reporter, and he starts adding things up. And after, like, the second allegation, after allocation, they're out of Colombia, right? So once you go look at the guy and says, you know, we're out of water, it happens at every meeting, you just let him go. And then we figure that was kind of that way. Yeah, yeah. In the midst of all this, you talk about that there's this is this is basically going to be the end of nuclear, just because of the way that the bills put together. And, yeah,

Roy Hemmingway 34:52

I don't think, I don't think the nuclear

James Moore 34:54

advocates understood that, right. But what I want to ask is, Three Mile Island has happened in. March, end of March of 79 and so there's a, you know, here. The big thing is pebble springs. And then, oh my gosh, the pebble springs eventually dies a monetary death, right, in 1982 but did you get a sense that there wouldn't that nuclear had changed radically because of three mile an hour? Yes,

Roy Hemmingway 35:21

the cost of nuclear went up dramatically, okay, because of new NRC regulation. I think it was NRC at the time, if not AEC and and it just, I mean, whoops, was pouring concrete one day to meet regulations. They would change, and then the next week, they would be jackhammering it up. And that, you know, not only was whoops mismanaged, but they were in the middle of that period when regulation was changing all the time, and they, they and PGE really had designs which weren't compatible with regulations, so they kept having to change them

James Moore 36:04

all the time. Yeah, did you know Kelly Woods run into him little bit? Yeah, I'm just writing. He's gonna He's on me much. It's more important because this is when Lee Johnson shows that he plays hardball, and Vic doesn't like it. Vic is just starting his governor, Lee Johnson is pretty the screws on the Senate, yeah, and they're screaming. It's like the personalities apart. Let's see. Well, you know,

Roy Hemmingway 36:32

a lot of people referred to lead as the, what was it the iron fist in the velvet glove, or, yeah, but yeah. I mean, that's what, that's what Vic needed, because governors have trouble saying no, yeah, absolutely. I mean, I worked for John Kitzhaber, and I remember another staff person I heard, overheard him on the phone saying to he was Ginny Burdick, the time senator. I know you heard the governor say yes, but what he really meant was No, exactly, exactly,

James Moore 37:03

but I'm just figuring out who Kelly Woods is. I had no idea he's a Manhattan Project guy. I didn't know he goes back that far. Vic was a huge Boy Scout. Yeah, I know that. So here's what I found with Kelly woods, 1950 boys life. There's a full page ad for General Electric featured. Dr W Kelly Woods really tell you how safe nuclear energy. So I'm sure Vic,

who is running a scout troop, yeah, you know, serendipitously, he would have seen that ad. Just amazing. Just amazing. So all this comes together. It passes. The state is fully into the first recession at that point, right? So at what point did you kind of sense that Vic's energy was moving more?

Unknown Speaker 37:59  
Excuse me, at

James Moore 38:14  
what point did you sense that his focus and energy was really shifting from energy to the economy.

Roy Hemmingway 38:22  
Well, once we got the regional bill up and going, I mean, once, once it passed, I think, and once he appointed members of the power Planning Council in April of 81 then, yeah, I think his focus largely was elsewhere. Yeah, as it needed to be. Yeah, because he had the machinery. He had the machinery in place, right, right?

James Moore 38:51  
Your one of his first appointments, yep. So what was that process like? Was it just, you know, you've been doing this, come on in or, yeah,

Roy Hemmingway 39:01  
I didn't, and I think I made it known to him that I was interested in it, but I didn't do any lobbying. I don't know that anybody did any lobbying on my behalf. He and I had gotten along fine, and seemed to be he was very happy with what I was doing. I kind of expected the appointment. There was a funny story around that, in that the way the council is set up legally is that it is an interstate compact body, and that means that the four states have compatible legislation enacting it, and the Congress agrees. And in this case, the Congress agreed in advance, and then the states enacted compatible legislation. And the legislation was in Ted Halleck's committee, and Ted went into Vic in his usual way, and he said, Vic, you. So I'm not going to let you appoint two Republicans to this council. Have you heard this story? Just keep going, yeah. And Vic told me this story, so I think it's fairly accurate. He said, I'm going to put amendment in the legislation that says you have to appoint at least one person from one party. And Beck very patiently listens to this, and he says, Well, Ted, I wouldn't do that. And Ted goes, goes on, and he says, Because, actually, I'm going to appoint two Democrats, Ted, did you know another? Never mind,

James Moore 40:39  
exactly, yeah, yeah, it's, it's amazing how Vic was looking for capability and partisanship. Yeah, unless partisanship got away your capability, you didn't care, right? Yeah.

Unknown Speaker 40:52  
And,

Roy Hemmingway 40:55  
you know, at that time, the parties weren't, yeah, the way they are now. I mean, there were conservative Democrats who hated what I was doing, and there were liberal Republicans who were just happy. So, yeah, yeah.

James Moore 41:12  
Very different, very different from now. So talk to me about basically putting this thing, implementing it. You're there on the power Planning Council. So how'd it go? I mean, it's kind of an all star group, yeah, the governors took this seriously. Appointed strong people, yep.

Roy Hemmingway 41:29  
And it was very good that Washington had appointed the people they did. I mean, you know, the moment that Dan Evans was appointed. We knew he had to be chair, yeah, so yeah, and that gave us a certain profile and gravitas that we wouldn't have otherwise had. And I mean, the legislation set out a very ambitious agenda, which was we were supposed to have a fish program, I think, within a year, in a Power Pro Plan, within two years, and we were eight guys around a desk, around a table. We didn't have any staff, so we went about hiring, and we were very lucky and getting terrific

staff. I just can't say enough about it. And some of them are still there. One guy is still there who's the head of the power Planning Division, and the people, I mean, particularly Dan and Chuck Collins were really bright and great contributors. So and at that time, Idaho and Montana had Democratic governors, and so they their participation was all positive. They weren't trying to get something for their states, they were very regionally focused, and it, it was a and so we really buckled down. I think we as a council, met once a week for at least a year, and it was a very hard going. Yeah, I think the staff worked on Thanksgiving Day and but we put out a power plan in the that was the first, if I can toot our own horn a bit, that was the first instance of integrated resource planning in the world now, which is kind of the basis Of all utility planning, where you run various resource portfolio ideas against multiple futures, yeah. And in the northwest, that also means running it against the various water years in the Columbia River, so which required very sophisticated computer modeling, yeah. So I'm still proud of what we did there. Yeah, and there's and the seventh power plan is in draft form right now. I think they're voting on it very soon, and it is, if you read the first one and you read the Seventh one, it's almost the same format, same an analytical framework, yeah, so we beavered away at this, and I reported to Vic, and he was happy with it all. The big issue in the power plan was, what do you do with whoops, four and five, yeah, and which were not acquired by Bonneville, if you recall, yeah, described by the individual publicly owned utilities and a lot of money. Yeah, and they and we said they don't make it by quite a bit. Yeah.

James Moore 44:59

Oh. Was working with Bonneville. Is this an easy relationship? Uneasy? I know there's court cases, very,

Roy Hemmingway 45:05

very, very uneasy, because we were usurping a role that Bonneville felt they had. Bonneville had a whole planning department at the time. They had a whole they had their own forecast, which was very different from the forecast we came up with of power needs, and ours was much more sophisticated and turned out to be right, but it was a very difficult adjustment for Bonneville, and when we were sued, Bonneville got the federal government to join the suit, which soured relationships quite a bit, as you can imagine, because it was an existential issue, they were basically claiming we were unconstitutional, despite the fact that they had signed on to this legislation two years earlier. Yeah. So, yeah, it was a difficult time, but the Ninth Circuit's straightened it out. Very, very emphatically, yeah, that's

James Moore 46:13

what Congress gets to do things, yeah? Just

Roy Hemmingway 46:15

saying, yeah. Well, I mean, in the idea, the idea put forward was that you couldn't form an interstate compact body in the way that we did, because all other interstate compacts had previously been formed by the states getting together first and proposing something to Congress. And there was nothing in the Constitution in that clause that said you had to do it that way. That's

James Moore 46:42

great. Yeah, it's not going to be in my book, but just the federalism side of this is just fascinating, yeah, just fascinating. Well, and, and BPA. I mean, then 37 that's, it's a fascinating federalism. Oh, absolutely. And international. They throw in Canada in there rivers go. Where rivers go? You political things? I got to figure it out. Well,

Roy Hemmingway 47:09

one of my worries is that Oregon is not paying attention to the RE negotiation of the Columbia River Treaty. Kitzhaber's office told me three, four years ago, they wanted me to work on it, and they get back to me, and they never put the money together, and they never, it never was a priority. But I'm a little afraid that, as a result, 20 years from now, we may find out we should have done something. Yeah,

James Moore 47:43

I know BPA has stopped over it. Yeah, absolutely. I get to talk to their top managers in November, and they were just all ears, yeah, but between now and when that has to be renegotiated, once again, all their contracts are up, so they got all sorts of fun things there, yeah, yeah. In terms of conservation, of power, conservation, BPA makes a big deal because they bought into conservation. Whole Hog, yep. Did your stuff pushed them there? Or did you have a sense they were going that way anyway? Because there's a, there's a period, it's like the early 60s until around 80 ish, when we're going

to build more power, yeah? And then, well, that

Roy Hemmingway 48:35

was down. That was down hotel, yeah. You know, we've got to keep building plants, and the load is going to keep going up and up and up. And Stirling Monroe had been part of pushing the regional bill, and with all its conservation mandate, he bought into the analysis that that conservation was the cheapest resource. Yeah. I mean, if you, you know, if you look at the analysis, it's particularly then it was a no brainer. Oh yeah,

James Moore 49:10

yeah. And then as Vic is coming in, he's pushing. There was some with scrub, but Vic really pushes a lot of, you know, we're paying consumers to change, right? You know, working, the utilities are beginning to pay people, yeah, tax stuff. There's a lot of movement there saying, Oh, this is all much less expensive. Yeah,

Roy Hemmingway 49:32

yeah. I wrote a couple of energy conservation bills for Bob Straub in 77 that passed requiring veterans home loans to have an energy inspection and fund energy improvements. The first utility energy conservation program was in that. So, yeah, I mean, Bob was part of that, but it was kind of it wasn't as big as the whole region. Whole focus? Yeah, absolutely.

James Moore 50:03

So how would you assess the Northwest Power planning Council's effectiveness, since you were there at the beginning, before the beginning

Roy Hemmingway 50:11

to now? Well, it's the only analytical game in town, okay? And I mean in the region, yeah, and as a result, and it's and its analysis is unchallenged, and I think, unchallengeable. And so it becomes what everyone has to look at when they start making decisions. And this whole flat now over this renewables bill, I don't you probably saw the article in the paper about the PUC being told by the governor not to say anything because she was kind of leaning in the direction of being for it. Well, they are quoting analysis from the power Planning Council today. So which did a did a analysis of a 35% renewables portfolio, and it came out being as, I think, the most expensive way of meeting power needs into the next 20 years, and not a particularly good way of reducing carbon

James Moore 51:19

to that partly because kids are muzzling somebody, PC person, like a year ago, two years ago, there was some, there was somebody who was in that general, and he ordered her not to talk. And it's like, this

Roy Hemmingway 51:39

is weird. Anytime you do that, you know you're exactly gonna get screwed.

James Moore 51:44

But also, there's the Montana COVID stuff, yeah, you know, they're all this, the Federal coal stuff, the state coal stuff, and the private utilities, the utilities are just saying, you know, we're going to be shutting down some of these lands, if not all of them, yeah, and Montana has no say whatsoever. And so it's just, once again, a fascinating cross line. It's a Montana political issue, but not for anybody who uses the power story or anything like that. This is kind of a golden time for energy stuff. In your mind, in looking at the Pacific Northwest at the time, do you think that's driven by the crisis over hydropower and then the hydrothermal or does it become a broader political thing because of the oil crises? The rest of the world is oil crises? Yeah,

Roy Hemmingway 52:50

I think the fact that people were had been waiting in line at gas stations, and the price of gasoline was going up, everybody in the public's mind, they all became kind of One Piece energy in all forms, is going up, though they were completely unrelated in the northwest, the but the driver in the Northwest was the fact that the hydro system couldn't serve anybody, everybody anymore, and there had to be other things to be done, and they were going to be very expensive. Yeah. I mean, PGS power rates now are right about the national average. Yeah, we do not have any

advantage Pacific Corp, because they still have so much coal, they're below the national average. You know, if you see these surveys, the cheapest utility in United States is still Idaho Power, Snake River dams.

James Moore 53:56

Fascinating stuff. Yeah, it's just amazing how you know you know, the systems put in place then are still, yeah, very much, yeah.

Roy Hemmingway 54:06

I think the and I served as chair of the Public Utility Commission the early 2000s and their mandate is, is kind of antiquated, and it's still what's the cheapest thing for ratepayers, right? And they don't have much of a larger mandate to look at other issues. They have put in integrated resource planning for the utilities, which does require them to look, you know, more at conservation, I think we are. We're doing a pretty good job funneling money from ratepayers into conservation.

James Moore 54:50

That's great. So anything else you'd like to add? I

Roy Hemmingway 54:52

think so. I mean, I was one of those people that started out as a real skeptic of an Atea. Administration and became a believer. Yeah, you know, I, and I worked for John kits and many years later, and they're very different approaches, and there were very different times. Yeah, John wasn't dealing with a severe recession, right? And Vic, Vic, and his latter part of his administration spent a lot of effort trying to chase down industries to locate in Oregon, a lot of which was not successful, and I thought some of that was misplaced emphasis, rather than focusing on the things that are normally attractive to industry like education and land use planning and things, but that became kind of an obsession, and I would sit in cabinet meetings, and that's all that would be talked about was, you know, this latest code name for an industry they were chasing. There was and Vic, Vic made one mistake as a governor that I that John Kitzhaber didn't do, and I think every other Governor before since has done, and that is that he had kind of an in group in the office, and there were tensions, because people felt they were on the outside of this inner circle. John Kitzhaber, I think, because he was an emergency room physician, could make decisions very quickly, and though he had a very large staff, everyone had access and he could see everyone. Anybody who needed to see him could see him, whereas people in Vic's office didn't feel that way, which led to tension in his office. It was the worst I ever saw was in Bob Straub pushed people away.

James Moore 56:57

Well, in fact, it's the appointment of Straub's Chief of Staff, right? When he's elected, that they call themselves as well. That's mistake number one, yeah, he's beginning to think about, right, yeah,

Roy Hemmingway 57:09

well, and Lee Johnson was, that was, I thought it was a great combination, yeah, a lot of people didn't, but I thought it was, yeah, it was a great idea. And Gerry was tough too. Oh, yeah, and Vic. Vic could be a bit of a softy, and you'd come out of his office thinking you were just fine and find out you really got more than you should have gotten.

James Moore 57:38

Great well, thank you very much. Yeah, happy to do it. This is wonderful. Have you talked to Pat Amedeo?

[Recording ends.]