



Smithsonian Institution Archives

Pablo Rodriguez-Martinez
Oral History Interview, 1990

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Smithsonian Institution Archives
Washington, D.C.
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Collection Overview

Repository:	Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., osiaref@si.edu
Title:	Pablo Rodriguez-Martinez Oral History Interview
Identifier:	Record Unit 9581
Date:	1990
Extent:	1 audiotape (Reference copy).
Creator::	Rodriguez-Martinez, Pablo, interviewee
Language:	English

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 9581, Pablo Rodriguez-Martinez Oral History Interview

Use Restriction

Restricted. Contact SIHistory@si.edu to request permission.

Historical Note

Pablo Rodriguez-Martinez (1936-) was a Game Warden at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI), from 1962 to the early 1990s. He was born on March 2, 1936, in Penonome, Montegrande, in the Pajona'l corregimiento of Panama. In 1950, he moved to La Chorrera and in 1961 began working part-time as a General Helper at the Canal Zone Biological Area, which was renamed the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in 1966. In 1962 he was hired full-time with the primary task of guarding Barro Colorado Island (BCI) and other STRI facilities against poachers.

Introduction

The Smithsonian Institution Archives began its Oral History Program in 1973. The purpose of the program is to supplement the written documentation of the Archives' record and manuscript collections with an Oral History Collection, focusing on the history of the Institution, research by its scholars, and contributions of its staff. Program staff conduct interviews with current and retired Smithsonian staff and others who have made significant contributions to the Institution. There are also interviews conducted by researchers or students on topics related to the history of the Smithsonian or the holdings of the Smithsonian Institution Archives.

Rodriguez-Martinez was interviewed for the Oral History Collection because of his long tenure at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute as a Panamanian employee. Additional information about Panamanian staff can be found in the Records of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute which are also housed in the Smithsonian Archives and Record Unit 9624 History of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute Oral History Interviews.

Descriptive Entry

The Pablo Rodriguez-Martinez interview discusses his background and career at STRI; recollections of colleagues and life on Barro Colorado Island; and changes at STRI over the years. Box 1 contains transcripts of the interviews and cassette copies of the original reel-to-reel recordings, which are in security storage.

The Pablo Rodriguez-Martinez Interview was conducted in June 1990 by Pamela M. Henson, historian at the Smithsonian Institution Archives . It consists of 0.5 hour of tape and 16 pages of transcript in Spanish and 13 pages in English.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Conservation of natural resources
- Guards -- Panama
- Interviews
- Oral history
- Security guards
- Tropical biology

Types of Materials:

- Audiotapes
- Transcripts

Names:

- Bocanegra, Fausto, 1926-
- Henson, Pamela M., interviewer
- Rodriguez-Martinez, Pablo
- Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute
- Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute. Barro Colorado Island
- Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute. Canal Zone Biological Area
- United States. Canal Zone Biological Area, Barro Colorado Island
- Vitola, Francisco

Geographic Names:

- Barro Colorado Island (Panama)
- Latin America -- History
- Panama
- Panama -- Description and travel

Panama -- Social life and customs

Container Listing

Interviews

Interview 1: June 17, 1990

Interviews

Covers Rodriguez-Martinez's background and work at STRI, c. 1950-1990, including: Changes in management of guards and game wardens; character of Francisco "Chi Chi" Vitola as supervisor; changes in poachers' operations; changes in work schedules; his childhood; description of patrol routine; changes in reporting and arresting poachers; lack of firearms; reasons for working a dangerous job; changes in communications and boat transportation; ease of job for current wardens; and reminiscences of colleagues including Pedro Acosta, Calixto Aguillar, Abel Gomez, Egbert G. Leigh; Martin H. Moynihan, and Moises Troya.

Interviews

Transcript, pp. 1-16 in Spanish and pp. 1-13 in English, of audiotape recording, 0.5 hour.

Interviews

Audio Recordings of Interview: Total Recording Time: 0.5 hour

- Note:
- Original Master: 1 7" reel-to-reel analog audiotape
 - Reference Copy: 1 cassette audiotape