

# INTERVIEW ABSTRACT

PROJECT TITLE: Minnesota Foundational Environmental Laws Oral History Project

NARRATOR NAME: Byron Starns

DATE OF INTERVIEW: 2/8/2017

INTERVIEWER NAME: Stephanie Hemphill

DATE and LOCATION OF INTERVIEW: Mr. Starns' office, 150 S. 5<sup>th</sup> St., Suite 2300, Mpls, MN 55402

LENGTH OF INTERVIEW (hrs): 1:40

Environmental attorney representing various types of clients. Reserve Mining (established basis for precautionary principle – to regulate an activity, it's not necessary to prove it directly causes harm); Bryson (government should be held to a higher standard); Powderly (set precedent that man-made structures are a protectable resource under MEPA); mineral lease case (environmental review not needed until there is a plan for physical action). Differing strategies for plaintiff & defendant in MEPA cases. Rules could be more flexible (timelines are never met because agencies don't have enough resources). Analysis of alternatives is the most fundamental part of environmental review. We should use existing knowledge to speed environmental review. People now don't trust government as they did in the 1970s.