

# INTERVIEW ABSTRACT

PROJECT TITLE: Minnesota Foundational Environmental Laws Oral History Project

NARRATOR NAME: Chuck Dayton

DATE OF INTERVIEW: 8/23/2016

INTERVIEWER NAME: Stephanie Hemphill

DATE and LOCATION OF INTERVIEW: Jasper Lake near Ely

LENGTH OF INTERVIEW (hrs): 1:21

Origins of the Minnesota Environmental Rights Act (MERA), inspired by Joseph Sax's book and Michigan model. People who worked on MERA, from the Hennepin County Bar Association and the Minnesota legislature. Importance of the substantive standard, which Dayton says does not appear in other states' environmental legislation. Concerns and objections to the bill. Important court cases based on MERA. Evaluation of success of MEPA: it has an "instructive" influence on corporations and government. Studies and reports between 1971 and 1973 sessions. Minnesota Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) also has a substantive standard. Influence of Environmental Quality Board, pattern of using Environmental Assessment Worksheets (EAW) instead of Environmental Impact Statements (EIS). EAW does not require studying alternatives. In spite of spotty record of court decisions, he feels the laws are "helpful."