

INTERVIEW ABSTRACT

PROJECT TITLE: Minnesota Foundational Environmental Laws Oral History Project

NARRATOR NAME: Ron Way

DATE OF INTERVIEW: 11/2/2016

INTERVIEWER NAME: Stephanie Hemphill

DATE and LOCATION OF INTERVIEW: Mr. Way's home office in Minneapolis

LENGTH OF INTERVIEW (hrs): 1 hour

Grant Merritt recruited him to help set up EQC and lobby for MEPA. Tension between ag and environmental interests. MN Assn. of Commerce & Industry (MACI) wanted EQC board made up of agency heads; citizen groups wanted citizen involvement. MN Environmental Control Citizens Assn (MECCA) was ineffective at lobbying but testified strongly. Dayton and Herman were good at lobbying. In House, power centered in committee heads, including Willard Munger. In Senate, go-to person was Bob Dunn. Dunn and Rosenmeier, both Republicans, committed to conservation. Republicans were concerned about too many regulations, but they wanted an effective process to protect the environment. MEPA flew under the radar in part because it was so esoteric. Ideological differences make new legislation harder to pass; environmental groups resort to lawsuits.