

2000-78-62

William H. Schlesinger on the Permafrost Conference

Steven Lay, interviewer

1980

Series: University focus

University of Alaska campus in Fairbanks, Alaska

Steven Lay said next week there will be more than 800 scientists, engineers and researchers attending the fourth international permafrost conference. They are coming to Fairbanks from approximately twenty different nations to share research and information. He said permafrost is a topic that covers a broad spectrum of science according to William H. Schlesinger who is one of the local organizers of the conference. Schlesinger said the categories range all the way from meteorology to engineering. Lay said conferences like this one are invaluable in advancing scientific studies. Schlesinger said these types of conferences offer a good opportunity for permafrost information exchange for all the scientists across the world working on the subject. This is one category that is a relatively cross disciplinary one. There are people from many disciplines. He said there isn't any other conference that can combine together all those people and let them talk about permafrost. There isn't a technical journal that deals with permafrost in a wide comprehensive sense. The proceedings of the conference which constitute about three volumes will become a regular Bible for permafrost researchers. Lay said this is a truly international conference. Major delegations are coming from Canada, Europe, the Soviet Union, Scandinavia, and for the first time the People's Republic of China. Topics will cover a diversity of experiences and studies. Information will be exchanged informally during field trips, receptions, and conversations. The formal program will consist of papers and panels. Schlesinger said panels will cover pipelines in northern regions, environmental protection of permafrost terrain such as problems in hydrology, erosion, and vegetation, deep foundations and embankments, frost heaves and ice segregation, and subsea permafrost. Lay said the panels will have some of the most knowledgeable people in the world. Schlesinger said panel discussions are going to involve a handful of experts from around the world. He talked about the panel on frost heaves. He said several of the panels have up to the minute description about what is being done now. Lay said the conference will be held July 18th-23rd on the University of Alaska campus.