

Category	Legislation	Explanation
<b>General</b>	National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA)	<p>The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is a United States environmental law that established a U.S. national policy promoting the enhancement of the environment and also established the President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). As one of the most emulated statutes in the world, NEPA has been called the modern-day equivalent of an "environmental Magna Carta"</p> <p>NEPA's most significant effect was to set up procedural requirements for all federal government agencies to prepare environmental assessments (EAs) and environmental impact statements (EISs). EAs and EISs contain statements of the environmental effects of proposed federal agency actions.<sup>[2]</sup> NEPA's procedural requirements apply to all federal agencies in the executive branch. NEPA does not apply to the President, to Congress, or to the federal courts.</p>
<b>Energy</b>	Energy Policy Act 2005	The Energy Policy Act of 2005 (Pub.L. 109-58) is a bill passed by the United States Congress on July 29, 2005, and signed into law by President George W. Bush on August 8, 2005, at Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The act, described by proponents as an attempt to combat growing energy problems, changed US energy policy by providing tax incentives and loan guarantees for energy production of various types.
<b>Water Quality</b>	Water Quality Act 1987	Established to control nonpoint sources of water pollution
	Federal Water Pollution Control Act (AKA The Clean Water Act)	The Clean Water Act (CWA) is the primary federal law in the United States governing water pollution. Passed in 1972, the objective of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, commonly referred to as the Clean Water Act (CWA), is to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters by preventing point and nonpoint pollution sources, providing assistance to publicly owned treatment works for the improvement of wastewater treatment, and maintaining the integrity of wetlands.
	Safe Drinking Water Act 1974	The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) is the principal federal law in the United States intended to ensure safe drinking water for the public. Pursuant to the act, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is required to set standards for drinking water quality and oversee all states, localities, and water suppliers who implement these standards.
	Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act of 1972 (MPRSA) or Ocean Dumping Act	one of several key environmental laws passed by the US Congress in 1972. The Act has two essential aims: to regulate intentional ocean disposal of materials, and to authorize any related research. While the MPRSA regulates the ocean dumping of waste and provides for a research program on ocean dumping, it also provides for the designation and regulation of marine sanctuaries. The act regulates the ocean dumping of all material beyond the territorial limit (3 miles (4.8 km) from shore) and prevents or strictly limits dumping material that "would adversely affect human health, welfare, or amenities, or the marine environment, ecological systems, or economic potentialities"
<b>Air Quality</b>	Clean Air Act	The Clean Air Act is a United States federal law designed to control air pollution on a national level. It requires the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop and enforce regulations to protect the public from airborne contaminants known to be hazardous to human health. The 1963 version of the legislation established a research program, expanded in 1967. Major amendments to the law, requiring regulatory controls for air pollution, passed in 1970, 1977 and 1990. The Clean Air Act is a United States federal law designed to control air pollution on a national level. It requires the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop and enforce regulations to protect the public from airborne contaminants known to be hazardous to human health. The 1963 version of the legislation established a research program, expanded in 1967. Major amendments to the law, requiring regulatory controls for air pollution, passed in 1970, 1977 and 1990.
	Kyoto Protocol	The Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is an international treaty that sets binding obligations on industrialized countries to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. The UNFCCC is an environmental treaty with the goal of preventing dangerous anthropogenic (i.e., human-induced) interference of the climate system
	Earth Summit of Rio De Janeiro 1992	<p>The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the Rio Summit, Rio Conference, and Earth Summit was a major United Nations conference held in Rio de Janeiro from 3 to 14 June 1992. The issues addressed included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• systematic scrutiny of patterns of production — particularly the production of toxic components, such as lead in gasoline, or poisonous waste including radioactive chemicals</li> <li>• alternative sources of energy to replace the use of fossil fuels which are linked to global climate change</li> <li>• new reliance on public transportation systems in order to reduce vehicle emissions, congestion in cities and the health problems caused by polluted air and smoke</li> <li>• the growing scarcity of water</li> </ul>
<b>Resources / Solid Waste/ Toxic Substances</b>	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act	<p>The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), enacted in 1976, is the principal federal law in the United States governing the disposal of solid waste and hazardous waste. It set national goals for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protecting human health and the natural environment from the potential hazards of waste disposal.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing the amount of waste generated, through source reduction and recycling</li> <li>• Ensuring the management of waste in an environmentally sound manner</li> </ul>
	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA) AKA Superfund Act	United States federal law designed to clean up sites contaminated with hazardous substances as well as broadly defined "pollutants or contaminants". Superfund also gives authority to federal natural resource agencies, states and Indian tribes to recover natural resource damages caused by releases of hazardous substances
	Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act 1977	the primary federal law that regulates the environmental effects of coal mining in the United States. SMCRA created two programs: one for regulating active coal mines and a second for reclaiming abandoned mine lands.
<b>Wildlife</b>	Marine Mammal Protection act 1972	The Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 (MMPA) was the first act of the United States Congress to call specifically for an ecosystem approach to natural resource management and conservation. MMPA prohibits the taking of marine mammals, and enacts a moratorium on the import, export, and sale of any marine mammal, along with any marine mammal part or product within the United States. The Act defines "take" as "the act of hunting, killing, capture, and/or harassment of any marine mammal; or, the attempt at such." The MMPA defines harassment as "any act of pursuit, torment or annoyance which has the potential to either: a. injure a marine mammal in the wild, or b. disturb a marine mammal by causing disruption of behavioral patterns, which includes, but is not limited to, migration, breathing, nursing, breeding, feeding, or sheltering." The MMPA provides for enforcement of its prohibitions, and for the issuance of regulations to implement its legislative goals.
	Endangered Species Act 1973	The Endangered Species Act of 1973 was designed to protect critically imperiled species from extinction as a "consequence of economic growth and development untempered by adequate concern and conservation." The U.S. Supreme Court found that "the plain intent of Congress in enacting" the ESA "was to halt and reverse the trend toward species extinction, whatever the cost." The Act is administered by two federal agencies, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).
	CITES	CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, also known as the Washington Convention) is a multilateral treaty to protect endangered plants and animals. It was drafted as a result of a resolution adopted in 1963 at a meeting of members of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The convention was opened for signature in 1973, and CITES entered into force on 1 July 1975. Its aim is to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten the survival of the species in the wild, and it accords varying degrees of protection to more than 35,000 species of animals and plants.
<b>Land Use / Conservation</b>	Wilderness Act 1964	<p>The Wilderness Act created the legal definition of wilderness in the United States, and protected 9.1 million acres (36,000 km<sup>2</sup>) of federal land. The result of a long effort to protect federal wilderness and to create a formal mechanism for designating wilderness. The Wilderness Act is well known for its succinct and poetic definition of wilderness:</p> <p><i>"A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain."</i></p> <p>The current amount of areas designated by the NWPS as wilderness totals 757 areas encompassing 109.5 million acres of federally owned land in 44 states and Puerto Rico (5% of the land in the United States).</p>