



United States Environmental Policy

Nixon through Obama

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Overview

- What is Environmental Policy?
- Birth of Environmental Movement
- Policy through the Presidents
 - Nixon
 - Carter
 - Reagan
 - Bush
 - Clinton
 - G.W. Bush
 - Obama
- Democratic vs. Republican view

Environmental Policy

Aims:

- Protect the environment for future generations
- Regulate activities that have environmental impacts
 - Prevent, reduce, mitigate harmful environmental effects
- While limiting interference with economic efficiency
- Limiting interference with the liberty of the people
- Limiting the unequal distribution of environmental costs

U.S. Environmental Policy is action through the Federal Government

Federal Agency	Environmental Responsibilities
White House Office	Overall policy, Agency coordination
Office of Management and Budget	Budget, Agency coordination and management
Council on Environmental Quality	Environmental policy/impact statements, Agency coordination
Department of Health and Human Services	Health
Environmental Protection Agency	Air / water pollution, Solid waste, Radiation, Pesticides, Noise, Toxic substances
Department of Justice	Environmental litigation
Department of the Interior	Public lands, Energy, Minerals, National parks
Department of Agriculture	Forestry, Soil, Conservation
Department of Defense	Civil works construction, Dredge / fill permits, Pollution control from defense facilities
Nuclear Regulatory Commission	License and regulate nuclear power
Department of State	International environment
Department of Commerce	Oceanic and atmospheric monitoring and research
Department of Labor	Occupational health
Department of Housing /Urban Development	Housing, Urban parks, Urban planning
Department of Transportation	Mass transit, Roads, Aircraft noise, Oil pollution
Department of Energy	Energy policy coordination, Petroleum allocation research and development

Modern Environmental Movement

Public awareness and growing concern of the environmental harm caused by man was spearheaded in the United States by several defining events during the 1950s, 60s, and 70s.

- 1954; fishing crew exposed to radioactive fallout from hydrogen bomb
- 1969; catastrophic oil spill from offshore well near California
- Barry Commoner's protest against nuclear testing
- Rachel Carson's book, *Silent Spring*

Environmental Issues such as air and water pollution, solid waste disposal, depleting energy resources, radiation, pesticide poisoning, noise pollution, etc, began receiving increased public attention nationwide.

This widespread public support for environmental concerns / protection became clear through the Earth Day demonstrations of 1970.

1970 - 1980 became known as “Environmental Decade”

Richard Nixon

- 1969 - 1974
- 37th President of United States
- Member of Republican Party

Nixon initiated Environmental Decade by signing major environmental legislation;

- National Environmental Policy Act (1969)
- Clean Air Act amendments of 1970
- Federal Water Pollution Control Act amendments of 1972

As well as establishing many government agencies:

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
 - Created in 1970, most comprehensive environmental agency
 - Protects human health / environment, by setting and enforcing national standards under a variety of environmental laws
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
- Council on Environmental Quality
 - Created by National Environmental Policy Act
 - Oversaw the environmental impact of federal actions



Nixon Continued

Legislation during the Nixon administration concerned itself with first-generation pollutants in the air, surface water, ground water, and the disposal of solid waste

The regulation of pollutants such as particulates, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, etc, was enforced through environmental policy and legislation.

Issues such as acid rain, visibility, and global warming came to the forefront of the political agenda for the first time.

The environmental policies passed during the Nixon administration led to technological innovation - many of the standards put into place were unattainable with the existing technology at the time

Other important legislation passed by Nixon:

- Coastal Zone Management Act
- Ocean Dumping Act
- Marine Mammal Protection Act
- Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, Rodenticide Act
- Toxic Substances Control Act
- Endangered Species Act (1973)
- Safe Drinking Water Act (1974)

Jimmy Carter

- 1977 – 1981
- 39th President of United States
- Member of Democratic Party

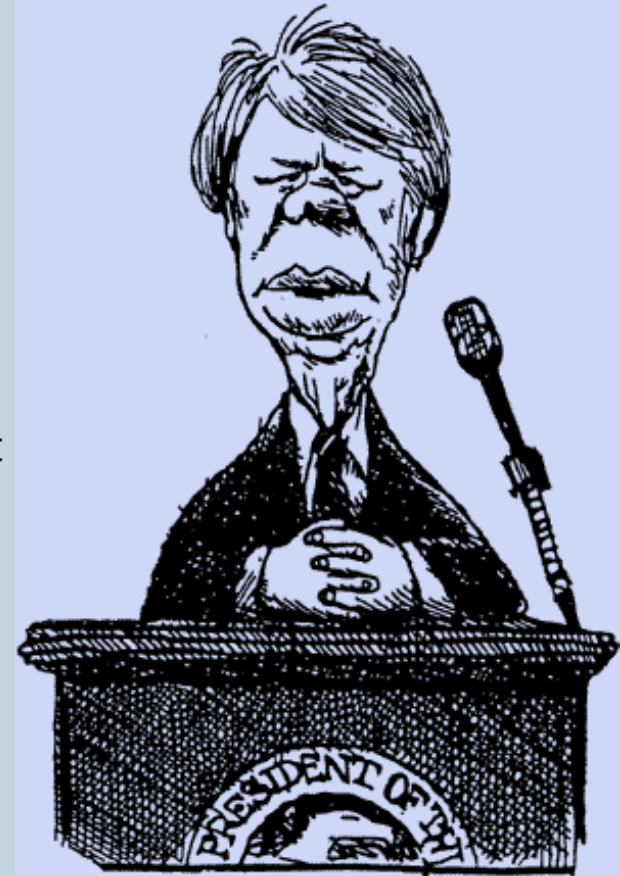
Strong advocate of environmental protection and passed important environmental legislation during his Presidency.

- Inspiring 1977 speech calling on the country to “drastically ramp up energy efficiency and conservation”
- Created Department of Energy – goal was the establishment of a national energy policy that promoted clean and alternative fuels
- “Corporate average fuel economy” (CAFE) standards
- that mandated fuel-efficient cars

Oversaw passage of important laws:

- Soil and Water Conservation Act
- Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act
- Antarctic Conservation Act
- Endangered American Wilderness Act
- Also passed tighter amendments on Clean Air Act

Famously installed solar panels on the White House roof



Ronald Reagan

- 1981 - 1989
- 40th President of United States
- Member of Republican Party

Believed in the value of conservation - signed 38 bills that added more than 10.6 million acres to the National Wilderness System.

However, in more ways Reagan was a “model of the New Republican: environmental foe”.

- Adopted an extremely aggressive policy of issuing leases for oil, gas and coal development on tens of millions of acres of national lands
- Skeptical of environmental protection laws
- Campaigned against harsh government regulation (with environmental arena in mind)
- Rolled back Carter’s CAFÉ standards for car gas mileage
- Cut funding for renewable energy



Regan Continued

“Trees cause more pollution than automobiles do.”

“If you’ve seen one tree you’ve seen them all.”

- Ronald Reagan

- Elected anti-environment leaders to heads of Department of Interior and Environmental Protection Agency
 - Officials tried to roll back environmental regulations - Clean Air and Clean Water Act
 - 79% decline in number of enforcement cases filed from regional offices to EPA headquarters
 - 69% decline in number of cases filed from the EPA to the Department of Justice
 - Gradually reduced EPA’s budget by 30% and cut number of employees

Changed operations of environmental protection from stiff regulation to “cooperative regulation”

Environmental laws and policies were written and interpreted more favorably for industry interests

G. H. Bush

- 1989 - 1993
- 41st President of United States
- Member of Republican Party

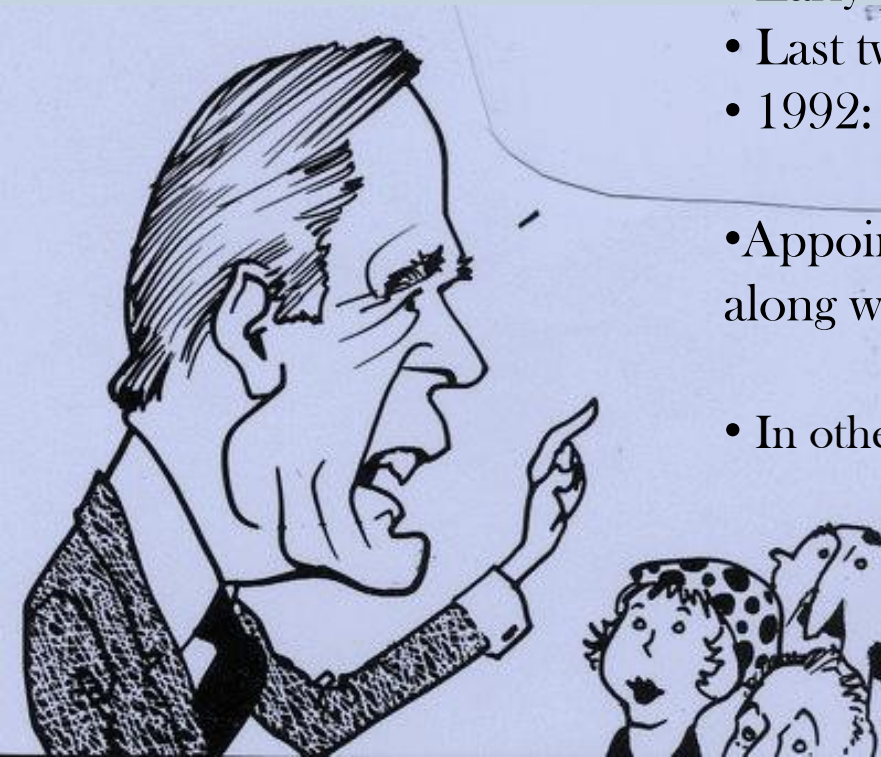
-Ideological ties between Bush and Reagan administrations

- Believed environmental policy was combination of environmental / economic concerns

- Early presidency: considerable regulation passed
- Last two years: severely restricted regulation
- 1992: put total freeze on new regulations

• Appointed first environmentalist as head of EPA, along with others strong environmental inclinations

- In other departments with environmental responsibilities / White House offices he appointed people who were more developmentally oriented



Bush Continued

- 1990 Renewal of Clean Air Act and amendments - viewed as single-most distinguished policy achievement of Bush Administration
 - Re-formulated Clean Air Act to include limits on urban air pollution, toxic air emissions, and acid rain as well as gasoline requirements and emission trading → all of which are still used today
- Confronted with Exxon Valdez Oil Spill during first year of Presidency (1989)
“I’m not going to suggest that because of this [Exxon Valdez Oil Spill], we should re-think a policy of trying to get this country less dependent on foreign oil.”
- G.H. Bush

- In 1992, Bush opposed international efforts at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil by refusing to sign the biodiversity treaty and lobbying to remove all binding targets from the proposal on limiting global carbon dioxide emissions



William Clinton

- 1993 - 2001
- 42nd President of United States
- Member of Democratic Party

The Clinton Administration focused more on resource preservation and environmental quality than on the economic analysis of these issues, as compared to the previous Bush Administration.

The Clinton administration is likely to be remembered as one of the “greenest” administrations in US history.



Clinton Continued

Policy:

- Strengthened the Safe Drinking Water Act, required America's 55,000 water utilities to provide annual reports to their customers
- Adopted the toughest standards yet on smog and soot emissions
- Expanded American's right to know about environmental hazards in their community by doubling the number of chemicals that companies must report
- President Clinton strongly opposed efforts to drill for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge
- Launched the Climate Change Technology Initiative to increase the development of clean energy technologies to reduce greenhouse gases while at the same time creating jobs
- National Environmental Technology Strategy was created to strengthen partnerships with the environmental business community
- Secured over \$13 billion over the past 8 years for scientific research for climate change
- Clinton Administration made thousands of partnerships with major industries to work towards and promote voluntary, cost-effective efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as the Partnership for a New Generation of Vehicles, the Partnership for Advancing Technology in Housing, Energy Star, Climate Wise, and Industries of the Future

Clinton Continued

Policy:

- More than doubled exports based on environmental technology
- Clinton established the President's Council on Sustainable Development in 1993, administered as a federal advisory committee to advise the President on sustainable development and new approaches to achieve economic and environmental goals.



- Clean Air Act requires EPA to set National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for pollutants considered harmful to public health and the environment
- Three times as many toxic waste sites cleaned up as in previous 12 years
- Clinton used executive orders to create 17 new national monuments, and expand four more without congressional approval. These monuments preserve more than 4.6 million acres

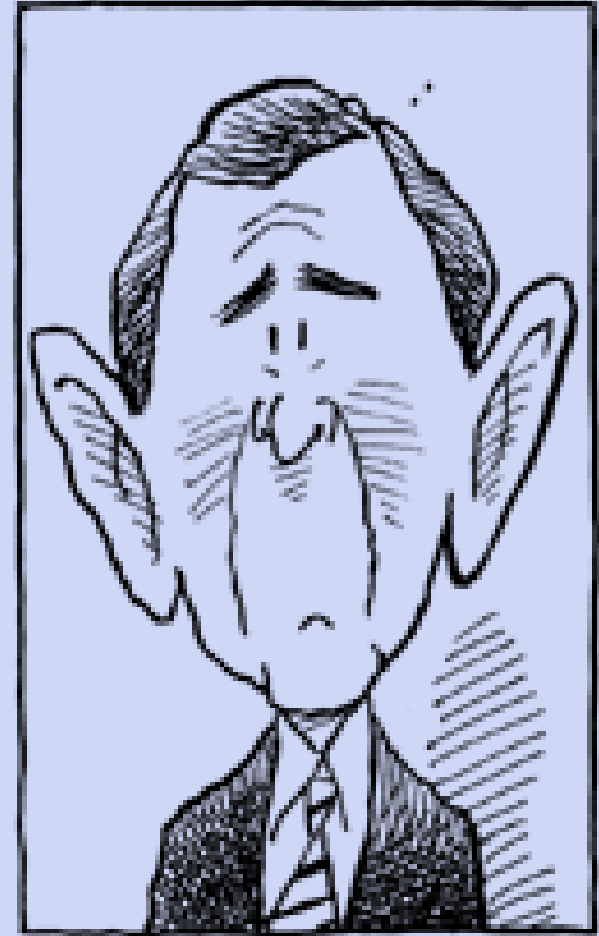
George W. Bush

- 2001 - 2009
- 43rd President of United States
- Member of Republican Party

Re-established Republican leadership - cutbacks in many environmental policy programs that Clinton established. President Bush, coined by Robert F. Kennedy Jr. as “the worst environmental president in our nation’s history” rewrote and dismissed many progressive environmental laws during his time in office

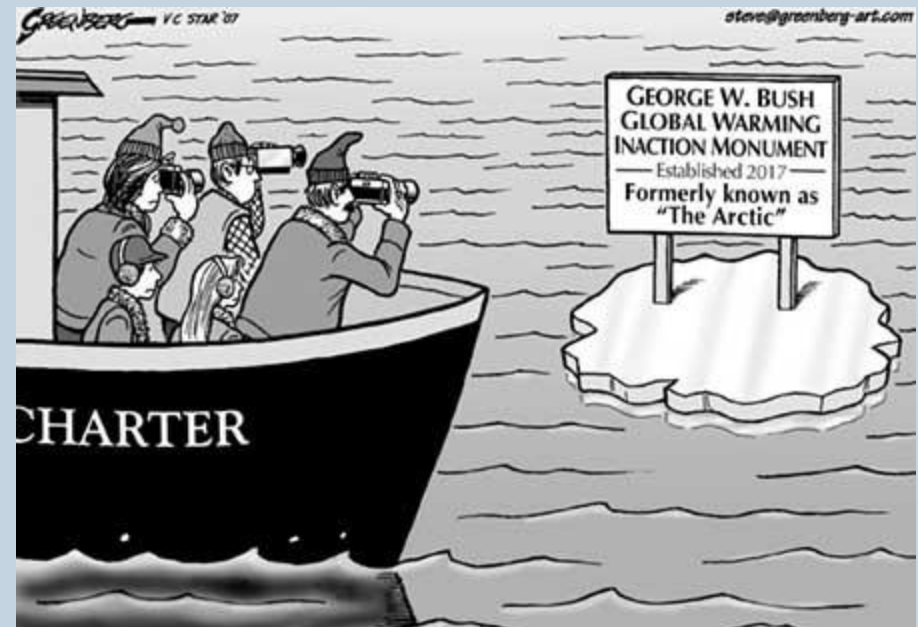
March 2001 Condoleezza Rice announced to European Ambassadors that Kyoto Protocol is “dead,” Bush does NOT support Kyoto Protocol because he believed it would be harmful to US economy and unfairly targets the US and is deliberately lenient with certain developing countries such as China and India

In May 2001, Vice President Cheney issues national energy plan, calling for expediting of drilling on public lands, including Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and western arctic



Bush Continued

- Bush Administration proposes Clear Skies plan for power plants, which would increase coal use by 79 million tons by 2020
- In 2002, for the first time in six years the EPA omits global warming from its annual air pollution report
- Bush Administration proposes the Healthy Forest Initiative which allows for logging to be exempt from federal review- this is later incorporated into the Healthy Forest Act by Congress
- In August of 2005, the Bureau of Land Management formalized policy that makes it voluntary for corporations to clean up oil and gas drilling sites on public lands
- EPA weakens reporting requirements for chemical releases from industrial facilities, exempting more than 3,500 facilities from detailed public reporting
- Bush lifted a 27-year-old ban on offshore drilling
- The Bush Administration has been said to have distorted government science in terms of global warming



Barack Obama



- 2008 - Present
- 44th President of United States
- Member of Democratic Party

"Each of us has a part to play in a new future that will benefit all of us. As we recover from this recession, the transition to clean energy has the potential to grow our economy and create millions of jobs"

- Barack Obama

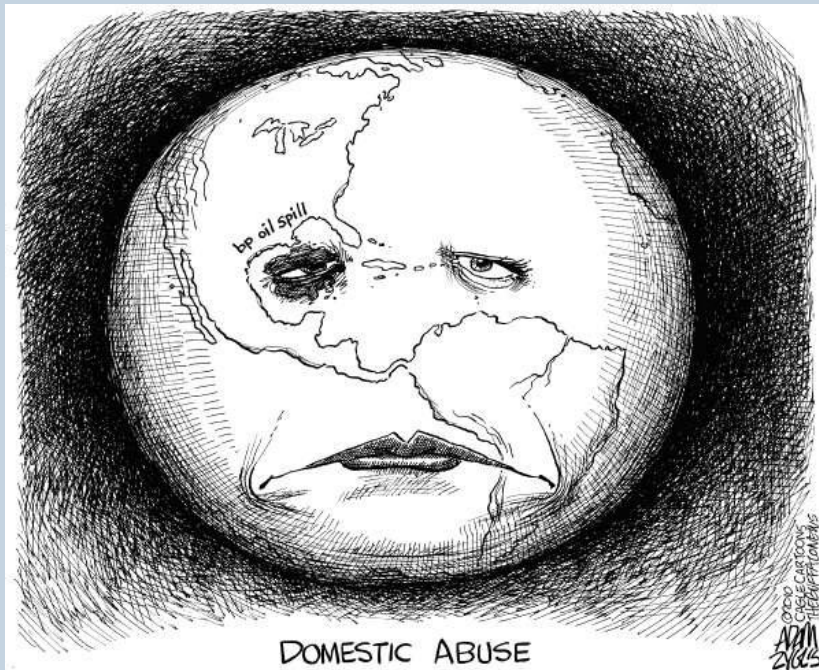
- Focus on linking economic growth and sustainability with environmental policy

Obama Continued

- The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act included more than \$80 billion in the generation of renewable energy sources, expanding manufacturing capacity for clean energy technology, and advancing vehicle and fuel technologies
- Obama signed an Executive Order on Federal Sustainability that commits the government to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 28% by 2020, increase energy efficiency, and reduce fleet petroleum consumption
- Obama created bilateral energy and climate partnerships with China, India, Mexico, and Canada
- Copenhagen Climate Summit
- The U.S. Global change Research Program involves 13 federal agencies, works to respond to climate change and reduce US greenhouse gas emissions
- Obama signed the Executive Order on Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy, and Economic Performance in 2009 that called on the Interagency Climate Change Adaptation task force to develop, within a year, recommendations for adapting to climate change impacts domestically and internationally

Obama Continued

- Obama signed a Presidential Memorandum establishing the America's Great Outdoors Initiative to promote and support innovative community efforts to conserve outdoor space
- Louisiana-Mississippi Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Working Group established in 2009 to improve federal coordination with restoration of the coastal regions
- In response to the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, The Obama administration is developing a plan to restore the Gulf ecosystem- with aid from local residents, elected officials and leading scientists and conservationists



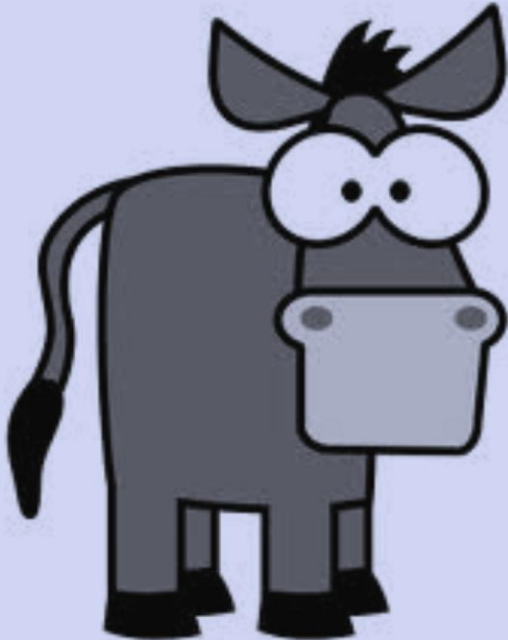
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)- February 2010 the White House Council on Environmental Quality proposed four steps to modernize the NEPA
- Obama's response to the BP Oil Spill echoed President George H. Bush's response to the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill, Obama states, "Domestic oil drilling continues to be one part of an overall energy strategy that now includes more clean, renewable energy and energy efficiency than at any other time in our history."

Major Environmental Legislation

Year	Law	Year	Law
1899	Refuse Act	1974	Safe Drinking Water Act
1918	Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918	1975	Hazardous Materials Transportation Act
1948	Federal Water Pollution Control Act	1976	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
1955	Air Pollution Control Act	1976	Solid Waste Disposal Act
1963	Clean Air Act (1963)	1976	Toxic Substances Control Act
1965	Solid Waste Disposal Act	1977	Clean Air Act Amendments
1965	Water Quality Act	1977	Clean Water Act Amendments
1967	Air Quality Act	1980	CERCLA (Superfund)
1969	National Environmental Policy Act	1984	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act Amendments
1970	Clean Air Act (1970)	1986	Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments
1970	Occupational Safety and Health Act	1986	Superfund Reauthorization
1972	Consumer Product Safety Act	1987	Clean Water Act Reauthorization
1972	Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act	1990	Oil Pollution Act
1972	Clean Water Act	1990	Clean Air Act (1990)
1972	Noise Control Act	1993	North American Free Trade Agreement
1973	Endangered Species Act	2003	Healthy Forests Initiative

Democratic vs. Republican Attitudes on Environmental Policy

- From the early 1970s until the mid-1990s, support for increased spending on environmental protection by self-identified Democrats was typically only around 10 percent higher than for self-identified Republicans.
- Democrats vs. republicans- democratic administrations are more inclined towards more active environmental regulation and less inclined toward economic analysis of environmental policy than their republican counterparts



Future of US Environmental Policy?