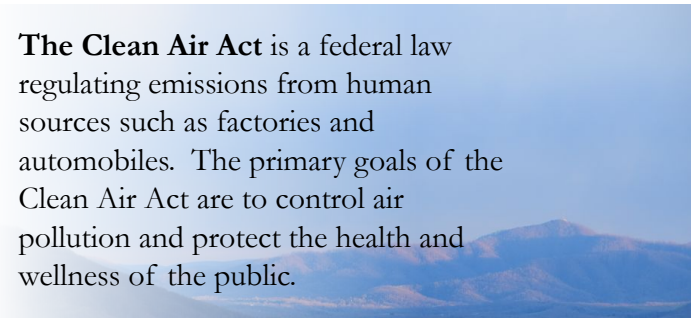
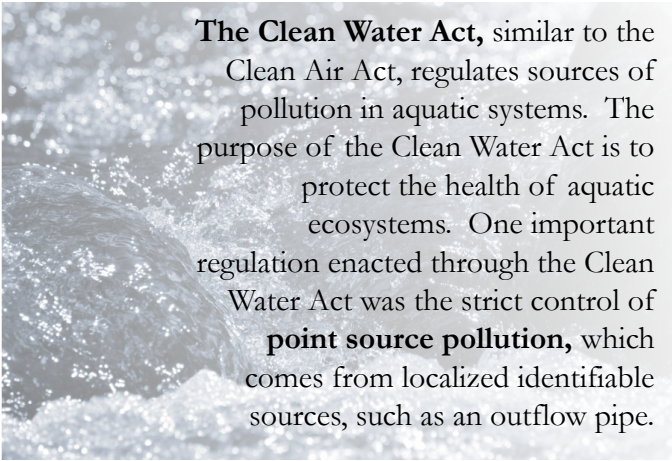


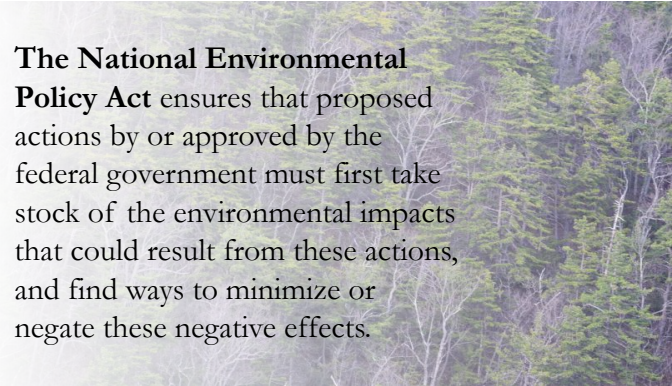
The American system of land and wildlife management is one built on, and for, public involvement. Through legislation and regulation, important habitats and species are protected. Learn about how these decisions are made and, most importantly, how to get involved.



The Clean Air Act is a federal law regulating emissions from human sources such as factories and automobiles. The primary goals of the Clean Air Act are to control air pollution and protect the health and wellness of the public.



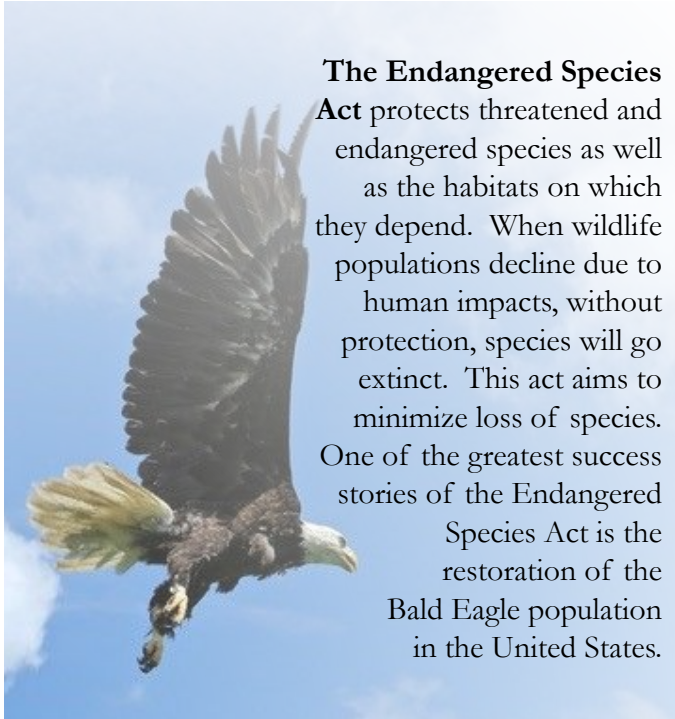
The Clean Water Act, similar to the Clean Air Act, regulates sources of pollution in aquatic systems. The purpose of the Clean Water Act is to protect the health of aquatic ecosystems. One important regulation enacted through the Clean Water Act was the strict control of **point source pollution**, which comes from localized identifiable sources, such as an outflow pipe.



The National Environmental Policy Act ensures that proposed actions by or approved by the federal government must first take stock of the environmental impacts that could result from these actions, and find ways to minimize or negate these negative effects.



The Migratory Bird Treaty Act is an agreement between the United States and several other countries, which bans the capture, killing, sale, or transport of most species of wild birds. This act also regulates the possession and use of products and parts taken from birds, such as feathers, nests, and eggs.



The Endangered Species Act protects threatened and endangered species as well as the habitats on which they depend. When wildlife populations decline due to human impacts, without protection, species will go extinct. This act aims to minimize loss of species. One of the greatest success stories of the Endangered Species Act is the restoration of the Bald Eagle population in the United States.

This vocabulary may be useful in the discussion questions provided, as well as in additional classroom application of the concepts covered in this episode.

Legislation is a general term for bills and laws. These laws are considered and determined by a legislature or other governing group.

Regulations are those specific rules and details contained within legislation that define how the laws will be carried out and enforced.

Pollution is the human-related introduction of substances or disturbances into the environment that cause harm. Pollution can include chemical substances that contribute to air and water contamination, as well as less obvious sources like light and noise pollution.

Point Source Pollution is defined in the Environmental Protection Act as “any single identifiable source of pollution from which pollutants are discharged, such as a pipe, ditch, ship or factory smokestack.” In many cases, point-source pollution can be more easily identified and controlled than other types of sources.

Run-off, and other types of nonpoint source pollution, can include fertilizers and pesticides from agricultural areas, as well as grease, oil, and other contaminants from urban areas and roadways. Water flowing across landscapes washes these substances into creeks, rivers, lakes, and oceans, where they harm the habitat and the wildlife that lives there.

Emissions is a term used to describe air pollutants that are harmful to the environment, such as carbon dioxide and methane, produced and released into the air from various sources such as vehicles, factories, and farms. These substances are often referred to as **greenhouse gasses** because they contribute to the greenhouse effect, which results in climate change. Though many of these substances occur naturally in the atmosphere, human emissions and other activities have caused their concentrations to increase dramatically since the start of the industrial revolution.



These writing prompts are designed to inspire critical thinking and promote a “big picture” understanding of topics covered in this episode. Questions may be answered individually in writing, or discussed out loud in a group setting.

Laws that specifically protect the environment have only been in place for a fraction of the time that human governments have existed. Why do you think that broad conservation regulations have become so important in recent history?

Some environmental protection acts function on a national level and others are international, but of course, wild animals do not recognize imaginary boundaries between states and countries. What challenges may be present when regulatory agencies attempt to protect wildlife that move across borders? What suggestions would you have for neighboring governments wanting to cooperatively protect wildlife?

Choose an animal from the endangered species list. What habitat(s) does this species depend on and what is the current status of those habitats? What are the biggest negative impacts on the survival of this species? What is being done to help conserve the species and what more do you think should be done?

Imagine you are a legislator proposing new laws to protect wildlife and natural habitats. What is a problem you have seen where you live that you think could be improved by enacting new legislation? Write a proposal for how these new laws would be carried out and regulated.

Conservation seems like a straight-forward goal. Preserved land is beautiful and serves humans and wildlife in many ways. However, there are groups and agencies who oppose legislation designed to protect the environment. What reasons do you think these groups have for their opposition and what would you tell them to try to change their minds?



For this activity, each student will role play as a member of the community. They will hold a mock town hall meeting to discuss a proposed project.

Scenario: Dominion Energy is planning to expand their new array of solar panels into Augusta County. One of the proposed sites is Bear Oak Natural Area, a space directly abutting the Wildlife Center of Virginia, and owned by WCV itself. Dominion plans to purchase the land from WCV for 1.75x its expected market value, a large sum of money, and will additionally donate a certain amount of acreage to the Wildlife Center, to allow them to expand their operation and double their outdoor holding capacity, as well as donating 50% of the Center's yearly energy costs from the panels themselves. In response to this potential land sale, the Virginia Dept. of Wildlife Resources has done an Environmental Impact Assessment on the land, and discovered that it holds immense ecological value, and is a frequent breeding site for migratory songbirds, as well as holding many protected habitats for native reptiles and amphibians. A large-scale development of this size would irreparably damage the site, and force the evacuation of thousands of wild animals. The proposed project would bring much needed economic growth to Waynesboro, and create thousands of new jobs. However, construction would require destruction of woodland habitats and potential development related pollution could run-off into Waynesboro's South River, harming the delicate ecology of the waterway and damaging a popular tourist destination for anglers and water-sports enthusiasts alike. In late spring of 2021, the town of Waynesboro holds a town-hall meeting and invites all stakeholders to come and attempt to solve this problem, and find a solution that works for all.

The Goal: Natural resource issues are never cut and dry, and are never just about the animals. Finding ways to compromise, and creative and innovative solutions to the little problems that arise behind every new proposed plan or law is incredibly important. Your mission is to try and find a way to help everyone feel at least satisfied with the outcome of this meeting.

At the conclusion of your meeting, you should put your final proposal to a secret ballot vote. Cast your vote as you think the community member you are representing would. After submitting these votes, vote again as yourselves. Tally the votes separately and compare them. What were the results? How were they different or similar? Is this what you expected?



For this activity, each student will role play as a member of the community. Below are some examples, but students may also choose other community members to represent.

Jacob Sheffer, Dominion Energy: President Biden's New Green Deal proposals highlight the importance and profitability of green energy expansion. Bear Oak receives 289 days of direct sunlight a year, and could create massive amounts of solar energy. Expanding our solar array into Augusta County will put us at the forefront of green energy development into the future, and net a large profit for the company.

Roger Beasley, Department of Wildlife Resources: Bear Oak is a very important site for biodiversity, as well as hunting. The habitats here are extremely important for our year-round residents and migratory visitors, and losing this land would be a major loss for the area's wildlife populations. Additionally, Bear Oak is a very popular hunting and recreation area, and a major source of license revenue for the county.

Trevor Lightly, Trout Unlimited: The potential run-off from construction into the South River would damage the habitat for fish and other aquatic species. The Chesapeake Bay watershed is already under so much pressure in this highly populated part of the country, it would be a bad idea to add anymore. Additionally, trout angling is a very popular tourist draw for Waynesboro, and this would threaten that tradition and the influx of visitors and tourist revenue.

Caroline Russell, Citizen of Waynesboro: After the recent pandemic-led recession, many people in Augusta County are out of work. A new large-scale development and energy production facility would put a lot of citizens like Caroline back to employment, leading to a healthier economy in Waynesboro and the surrounding towns. This could lead to better schools, public services, infrastructure, etc. and a better life for Caroline, her family, and many other families like hers.

Jonathan Matherly, Waynesboro Downtown Business Association: For years Waynesboro businesses have been hurting. Our downtown is full of empty shop windows and dilapidated store fronts. A large development near the community would bring an influx of new citizens and business to the town, helping to revive this historic downtown.

