



The National Environmental Policy Act: Judicial Misconstruction, Legislative Indifference, and Executive Neglect (Environmental History Series)

Matthew J. Lindstrom, Zachary A. Smith

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Environmental degradation and the compromised integrity of the earth's ecological system were growing public concerns in the mid to late 1960s. These issues spurred Congress to pass the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), the first law to focus such environmental concerns into a comprehensive national policy. The new legislation encompassed an array of environmental values and ethics, as well as administrative tools to achieve the ecological goals of the nation while taking into account other important societal needs. Though NEPA has had a positive effect on U.S. environmental policy and the national quality of life, this challenging new book shows how federal courts and agencies have failed to implement many of the values and goals fundamental to the success of NEPA. To explain this divergence, authors Matthew J. Lindstrom and Zachary A. Smith examine NEPA's origins, address how NEPA has been implemented and enforced, and highlight the shortcomings of its practice. Lindstrom and Smith strongly argue that if NEPA were fully and properly implemented, it would prove to be a valuable and realistic tool for balancing the needs of the world population and the protection of the earth's environment. They offer a new, hopeful look at how the law's structure can be properly utilized in order to give future generations hope of living on a sustainable planet. This book is well suited for audiences interested in public policy formation and implementation, especially environmental policy administrators, environmental historians, and those involved in environmental law, its policy, and its politics.

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