

[A Conservation 75th Anniversary](#)

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On July 1, 1945, as World War II was ending and State government could begin to look forward to the needs of the postwar years, the provisions of a new law went into effect that would reshape environmental protection in New Jersey. The legislature had enacted and the governor signed Chapter 22 of the 1945 laws of New Jersey, "An Act relating to conservation, providing for the establishment ... of a Department of Conservation," the first attempt to bring together into a departmental structure what had been various independent bureaus and commissions, operating more or less without coordination.

75 years ago, this 1945 law brought together what would later become informally known as the "Green Side" of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP):

- Parks
- Forestry
- Geological Survey
- Fish and Game
- Shell Fisheries
- Water Supply and Water Policy
- Navigation
- Historic Sites

It brought into existence a new entity called the New Jersey Department of Conservation. A few years later it became the Department of Conservation and Economic Development, which it remained until Earth Day 1970, when DEP was officially so-named.

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