



This Wednesday, April 22, marks the 50th time we have celebrated Earth Day. This year's celebrations will, of course, look nothing like the [first](#) Earth Day in 1970, when 20 million people took to American streets to raise public awareness about environmental issues. Given the global lockdown because of the covid-19 pandemic, large public gatherings are banned in virtually every country. The U.S. is no exception. The 50th Earth Day celebration — and Earth Week — will move to the digital realm.

The Emmett Institute is joining the digital celebration with a timely, week-long series of posts on Legal Planet that address environmental issues in the time of the covid-19 pandemic. Jonathan Zasloff [started us off](#) on Monday with a provocative and important post about federalism in the time of the pandemic, arguing that Donald Trump's assertion that he has absolute authority to order states to reopen is a question not of federalism but of separation of powers. Posts from other faculty and fellows will address Los Angeles air pollution under the shut down, the Chinese response to the pandemic, the effect of the pandemic on clean energy, animals in urban spaces, more on the divide between federal, state and local authority to address the pandemic, and even more. Dan Farber has, of course, already addressed a number of important topics since the pandemic began and we join him in highlighting the unique ways in which the unprecedented global shutdown has affected environmental issues. We hope you are healthy and safe during these extremely challenging times.