

BALD EAGLE BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES



Are you planning any development? If your property is near an eagle nest, this fact sheet will provide you with important information about protecting eagles and enhancing enjoyment of your property.

Bald eagles are protected under the federal Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Human actions that cause loss of eagles, their nests, or eggs are prohibited by federal law, unless allowed by permit.

Due to these existing protections and the challenge of identifying eagle nests, the City and Borough of Juneau recently repealed regulations that prohibited development within 50 feet of an eagle nest and within 330 feet during the March 1 to August 31 nesting season.

Eagles are not endangered or threatened in Alaska but are an important, legally protected symbol and valuable member of the ecosystem. With some thoughtful consideration, bald eagles will continue to nest in Juneau neighborhoods.

In Southeast Alaska, the active nesting season is March 1 through August 31. Eaglets typically hatch from mid-May through early June, and fledge (leave the nest) in August. Both periods are sensitive for young eagles.

Newly hatched chicks can't maintain their body temperature without the warming shelter provided by their brooding mother, who may be flushed from the nest by loud, obtrusive activity. As nestlings approach the time to fledge, they become more active, stretching their developing wings and hopping among the branches of their nest tree. If frightened by tree clearing, construction, or other highly visible or noisy activity, they may jump or fall from the tree before they are able to fly, exposing them to injury or death.

The guidelines on the back of this handout are intended to provide developers and landowners with tools to minimize impacts to bald eagles.

DID YOU KNOW?

Alaska and Canada have the largest populations of breeding bald eagles in North America who occupy "territories," and defend these areas against intrusion by other eagles. Territories include both active and alternate nests (nests maintained but not currently in use). Bald eagle nests are found near coastlines, rivers, or lakes that provide a food supply and are often situated in mature trees, snags (dead trees), cliffs, rock promontories, and sometimes on structures such as power poles and towers. Bald eagles prefer the tallest trees with limbs strong enough to support a nest weighing more than 1,000 lbs. Eagle nests measure about 4-6 ft. in diameter and 3 ft. deep.

✓ **Maintain a 330-foot buffer from eagle nests for all vegetation removal and construction activity. If you are unable to do so, follow these additional guidelines:**

✓ Retain as many trees as possible; removing only what is necessary when eagles are not nesting (September 1 through February 28).

✓ Avoid noisy, obtrusive construction, blasting, clearing and similar activities during the March 1 to August 31 nesting season, especially within the critical hatching and fledging periods from May 15 to June 15 and from August 1 to 31.

✓ Eagles vary in their tolerance of human activity near their nests. Most eagles nesting near people will not be disturbed by less-obtrusive projects like interior construction, or building fences, sheds, or other small structures. Eagle pairs that nest near long-established, ongoing human activity often tolerate greater disturbance. Eagles nesting far from humans are typically more sensitive, so extra effort to avoid seasonal disturbance may be necessary when developing a remote property.

✓ If you can avoid loud, visible disturbances within 330 feet of an active nest during the nesting season, eagles will likely continue to nest successfully.

If you cannot follow these guidelines and are concerned that your activities could disturb eagles, you may qualify for a permit from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, which would allow disturbance of an eagle nest.



RESOURCES & CONTACT INFORMATION



CITY & BOROUGH OF JUNEAU, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

(907) 586-0715 or email CDD_Admin@juneau.org



U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE, JUNEAU OFFICE

(907)780-1160 or visit

www.fws.gov/alaska/fisheries/fieldoffice/juneau/directory.htm

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE 2007 FEDERAL BALD EAGLE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

https://www.fws.gov/alaska/eaglepermit/pdf/national_guidelines.pdf