



# Alaska's Bald Eagle

## Eagles and the Law

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service is the federal agency responsible for bald eagle management. Alaska's bald eagle populations are healthy at between 50-70,000 birds. These birds are protected by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (Eagle Act) and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Both laws prohibit "taking;" which includes disturbing or killing eagles as well as selling or otherwise harming eagles, their nests or eggs. The definition of "disturb" is "to agitate or bother a bald or golden eagle to a degree that causes, or is likely to cause, based on the best scientific information available, 1) injury to an eagle, 2) a decrease in its productivity, by substantially interfering with normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering behavior; or 3) nest abandonment, by substantially interfering with normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering behavior."

## National Guidelines

The *National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines* are designed to give landowners, developers, contractors, and others clear guidance on how to ensure that actions they take will not harm eagles and are consistent with the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. For example, the *Guidelines* recommend buffers around nests to screen nesting eagles from noise and visual distractions caused by human activities. The *Guidelines* themselves are not legally binding. Rather, they are recommendations based on several decades of behavioral observations, science, and the development and refinement of conservation measures to avoid or minimize adverse impacts to bald eagles. The Service intends to update these *Guidelines* as more information becomes available through adaptive management.

## Planning a project or activity?

If you are planning a project or activity on property that you think may have eagle activity or nests, visit [alaska.fws.gov/birds/eagle](http://alaska.fws.gov/birds/eagle) as part of your early project planning. On this site you may download both laws and the *National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines*. If additional assistance is needed, call the Fish and Wildlife Field Office responsible for the area where your project is located. Refer to the map below to identify the appropriate office and phone number.

### U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service

**Anchorage** (907) 271-2888

**Kenai** (907) 262-9863

**Fairbanks** (907) 456-0203

**Juneau** (907) 780-1160

<http://alaska.fws.gov/birds/eagle>  
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Laura Whitehouse/USFWS

