



City of Highland Weekly Report

December 20, 2012

Bald Eagles Spotted in the Inland Empire Volunteers Needed to help Count

Administration

Bald Eagles Spotted in the Inland Empire - On Saturday December 15, 2012, the first bald eagle count of the winter was conducted by local Federal and State biologists and volunteers around lakes in the southern California.



A grand total of 4 eagles (3adults and 1 juvenile) were observed at the lake areas during the 1- hour count.

There were 2 adults at Lake Hemet and 1 adult and 1 juvenile at Lake Perris. No eagles were observed at Silverwood Lake. The counts at Big Bear and Lake Arrowhead were cancelled due to road conditions. The roads had not been plowed yet, making it difficult for volunteers to safely and legally park.

Juvenile eagles are distinguished by a brown head and tail; adults are recognized by the famous white head and tail - it takes 4-5 years to acquire full adult coloration. Juvenile eagles are the same size as the adults.

The count coordinators from the Forest Service and State Recreation Areas would like to thank those volunteers for their dedication in getting

up early and participating in the eagle census. The success of the eagle counts is entirely dependent on the volunteers!

The remaining bald eagle counts for this winter are scheduled for the following Saturday mornings: January 12, February 9, and March 9. No experience needed. Signing up ahead of time is unnecessary - just show up at the designated time and location, dress warmly, bring binoculars and a watch.

- **Big Bear Lake** area volunteers will meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Forest Service's Big Bear Discovery Center on North Shore Drive for orientation. Contact Robin Eliason (reliason@fs.fed.us or 909-382-2832) for more information. Contact the Discovery Center (909-866-2789) for information about Eagle Celebrations.
- **Lake Arrowhead/Lake Gregory** volunteers will meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Skyforest Ranger Station for orientation. Contact Robin Eliason (reliason@fs.fed.us or 909-382-2832) for more information.
- **Silverwood Lake State Recreation Area** volunteers should plan to meet at the Visitor Center at 8:00 a.m. for orientation. Contact Kathy Williams or Mark Wright for more

information about volunteering or taking an eagle tour (760-389-2303 between 8:00 and 4:00; or email: kwilliams@parks.ca.gov).

- **Lake Hemet** volunteers should plan on meeting at the Lake Hemet Grocery Store at 8:30 a.m. for orientation. Contact Anne Poopatanapong (apoopatanapong@fs.fed.us or 909-382-2935) for more information.
- **Lake Perris State Recreation Area** volunteers should plan to meet at the Lake Perris Regional Indian Museum at 8:00 for orientation. Contact the office for more information at 951-940-5600.

See websites for additional information about the San Bernardino National Forest (<http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/sanbernardino/>) and the California State Recreation Areas (www.parks.ca.gov).

Background - The best time of year to see bald eagles in Southern California is during winter months when there is an influx of eagles. Migrating eagles typically begin arriving in the area in late November and leave in late March or early April.

Bald eagles are usually found close to water because their diet is primarily made up of fish and ducks. As winter approaches in those northern regions, lakes freeze over and waterfowl fly south. For bald eagles, that means that the food they eat has become scarce. So, they head south looking for areas with abundant food supplies and end up wintering in sunny southern California!

During the winter, southern California bald eagles are typically found at many of the lakes, including Big Bear Lake, Baldwin Lake, Silverwood Lake, Lake Arrowhead, Green Valley Lake, Grass Valley Lake in the San Bernardino Mountains and Prado Dam, Lake Perris, Lake Hemet, Lake Skinner, Diamond Valley Lake, Lake Matthews, and the Salton Sea to the south.

Through radio-tracking bald eagles, biologists learned that some of the same individual eagles return to the San Bernardino Mountains year after year. We also determined that there is a lot of movement of eagles between the different mountain lakes and that the lakes do not have distinctive separate populations—the eagles regularly move between the mountain lakes.



Radio-tracking and/or banding also revealed that the eagles that winter in the San Bernardino Mountains migrate to Southern California from Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, and Canada. Those regions are likely where most of our migratory bald eagles nest in spring and summer. Some of our San Bernardino Mountains' eagles were tracked all the way to Alberta and the Northwest Territories in Canada - that is over 2,000 miles one-way!

For more information regarding bald eagle migratory routes for these and other California eagles go to the University of Santa Cruz Predatory Bird Research Group's web site at (<http://www2.ucsc.edu/scpbrg/baeamigration.htm>). While the evidence suggests a northern interior migration for most of the bald eagles, some of our southern California eagles have traveled fewer miles, moving over from the Channel Islands.

Breeding populations of bald eagles in Southern California were extirpated by the late 1950s. Until reintroduction efforts began in the 1980s on Catalina Island, the southern-most nest site known in California was in Lake County. Since 2003, several pairs of bald eagles have decided that our southern California neighborhoods were too nice to leave - they built nests and have successfully raised families. Nesting bald eagles can now be found at Lake Hemet, Lake Skinner, Lake Matthews, and Big Bear Lake. As the populations continue to grow, more bald eagles are in our future.

This is exactly what happened at Lake Hemet in Riverside County. The female eagle with orange wing tags "02" hatched at San Francisco Zoo in 2000, and was released on Catalina Island as part of the reintroduction efforts. In 2004, she arrived at Lake Hemet and decided to take up year-round residence with the male bald eagle that was already there. Together, the pair has raised successful nests ever since then. In 2012, the first successful bald eagle nesting ever recorded in the San Bernardino Mountains happened in Big Bear Lake!

As more bald eagles raise families in southern California, they become year-round residents and it is now possible to see bald eagles any time of year (not just during winter migrations). Because of the influx of migrating bald eagles during the winter, the easiest time to see eagles is still between December and March.

The bald eagle is a success story of the federal Endangered Species Act. Through protection under that law, its populations have recovered dramatically. Captive breeding programs, reintroduction efforts, the banning of DDT and public education have all helped in the recovery of this species. There are over 10,000 breeding pairs in the United States and they now breed again in all 49 of the continental United States (they have never bred in Hawaii).

Because of the population rebound, bald eagles are no longer in jeopardy of going extinct. While bald eagles are no longer protected under federal Endangered Species Act, they still have full protection under the Bald Eagle Protection Act and under the State of California's Endangered Species Act. These laws make it illegal to harm or harass bald eagles. It is also illegal to possess bald eagle parts, even a feather.

Catching a glimpse of our breath-taking national symbol is relatively easy during winter months. There are some fantastic opportunities for excellent photographs too. Just look in the

tallest trees around the lake near open water for perching eagles. Or, if the lake is partly frozen, look for eagles perched on the ice near small groups of ducks using the open water.

If you want to look for eagles in the Big Bear area, stop by the Forest Service's Big Bear Discovery Center (on North Shore Drive, 1-1/2 miles west of Stanfield Cutoff) and pick up a handout on eagles. Also, join us for one of our free public talks and other Eagle Celebration events. Call the Discovery Center (909-382-2789) for more information.

If you are in Garner Valley and want to see the resident pair, stop by the Forest Service's Lake Hemet Day Use Area and just look across the lake. The birds are often flying overhead and or sitting in trees above the picnic area.

Remember that human presence may distract or disturb the eagles - so, try to limit your movements and don't make loud noises when they're nearby. If possible, remain in your car while looking at eagles - the car acts as a blind. Stay a respectful distance of at least 200-300' away from perched bald eagles. Do not get closer than $\frac{1}{4}$ mile away nesting bald eagles - trying to get a closer look may result in eagles becoming agitated and knocking eggs or chicks out to the nest. It is illegal to harm or harass bald eagles. Please do your part to help protect our national bird!

San Bernardino National Forest to start Winter Prescribed Fire Program. The Forest Service will begin its winter prescribed burn program in the San Bernardino National Forest with the recent shift in the weather.



Winter burning projects are part of a continuing effort to reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfire and improve forest health. The prescribed fire program will continue through the winter months as weather and conditions permit. "Prescribed fires are ignited only when both weather and fuel conditions exist that will ensure low to moderate burning rates and firefighting resources are available to keep fires within fire lines," said Forest Service Fire Chief Shawna Legarza.

Prescribed fires and pile burning are intended to reduce the amount of vegetation, such as needles, small plants, brush, and small trees, which can carry fire from the forest floor into the treetops. Studies and experience have shown that prescribed fires will stimulate the growth of grasses, forbs and shrubs that provide food for deer, mountain quail and other wildlife. "We are sensitive to the fact that smoke has an impact on people, particularly those with respiratory conditions and allergies," said Legarza. "Every effort is made to ignite prescribed fires when weather patterns will carry smoke away from populated areas."

The ignition of all prescribed burns is dependent on the availability of personnel and equipment, appropriate conditions, and in coordination with the National Weather Service and South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) before and during prescribed burns in order to manage smoke production and minimize impacts as much as possible.

Fire managers follow a burn plan that outlines the "prescription" or environmental conditions such as temperature, wind, fuel moisture, ventilation, and relative humidity that need to be present before the project begins. When the criteria are met, crews implement, monitor, and patrol each burn to ensure it meets the goals and objectives outlined by managers.

Firefighters will be burning slash and debris piles adjacent to Forest Service Fire Stations. Signs will be posted along the roadways to alert passerby's to the burning activity. The Forest Service will send out occasional reminders to the public, alerting to potential smoke in the air. In addition to the station pile burning, the public may also see smoke from pile burning activities in the following forest locations over the winter months:

San Bernardino Mountains:

- Prescribed fire State Highway 38 as part of the Angelus Oaks Community Defense Project.
- Slash and debris piles near Pisgah Peak, south of Oak Glen.
- Slash and debris piles near the Oak Glen California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Conservation Camp.
- Slash and debris piles along Forest Road 2N10, south of Big Bear Lake.
- Slash and debris piles along Forest Road 2N19, south of Green Valley Lake.
- Slash and debris piles along Highway 173 near Grass Valley Rd, north of Lake Arrowhead.
- Slash and pile burning near various fire stations.

San Jacinto Mountains:

- Prescribed fire near Lake Hemet, north of Highway 74 as part of the on-going Bonita Vista fuels reduction project.
- Slash and pile burning near Saunders Meadow Road and 243, Lawler Lodge and 243, and near the community of Bonita Vista.
- Slash and pile burning near various fire stations.

We appreciate the public's tolerance of some smoke impacts in order to achieve the San Bernardino National Forest's fire prevention and resource management goals, and the public can call our local offices to find out where we are burning at the following numbers:

- Big Bear Ranger Station & Discovery Center 909-382-2790
- Lytle Creek Ranger Station 909-382-2851
- Idyllwild Ranger Station 909-382-2922
- Mill Creek Work Center 909-382-2882
- Santa Rosa & San Jacinto Mountains National Monument 760-862-9984

BUILD A KIT - Having a well-stocked disaster supply kit on hand before a disaster strikes will make anyone's life easier. A disaster may cause everyday necessities like food and clean water to become scarce and hard to come by. You may need to survive on your own after an emergency. This means having your own food, water and other supplies in sufficient quantity to last for **at least** three days. A week is preferable. Local officials and relief workers will be on the scene after a disaster but they cannot reach everyone immediately. You could get help in hours or it might take days. A well-stocked disaster supply kit should have the following items:

Water - one gallon of water per person, per day.

Food - Canned goods, MRE's, freeze dried. Also include at least one manual can opener.

Battery-powered or hand crank radio and NOAA Weather

Flashlights and extra batteries

First aid kit

Sanitation Items - Moist towelettes, toilet paper, feminine hygiene products, garbage bags and plastic ties, soap/detergent and bleach.

Basic tools - wrench, pliers, screw drivers, shovel, and duct tape, etc.

Cash and change

A change of clothes, sturdy shoes, and rain protection for each person

A sleeping bag and/or extra blankets

Other supplies

Cups, plates, bowls, utensils, foil

Extra batteries

Plastic sheeting

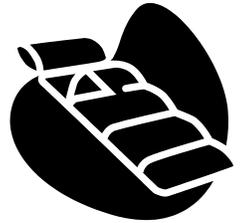
Copies of important documents (Driver's license, Passport, birth certificate, etc)

Fire extinguisher

Lighters and/or matches

Extra medication

These are just the basics. Everyone's kit will be different because everyone has different needs. If you have an infant, then extra bottles, formula, and diapers would be necessary. Don't forget about your pets. They'll need food and water as well. Remember that a disaster can strike at any time, but the time to get prepared is now. For more information on assembling your disaster supply kit, please visit www.ready.gov.



Finance

Commercial Business License Applications - There were no new commercial business licenses for the week of 12/17/12 to 12/21/12.

Public Works

Graffiti Report: During the period of 12/3/12 - 12/12/12, graffiti made known to Public Works staff, by the following means, was removed: **Reported to Hotline:** 26667 Highland,

27166 9th; Byron/Buchanan; **Routine Observation by Public Works:** Orange/Pacific; Vine/Base Line, 26584 Base Line; Sterling n/o Byron; Pacific e/of Sterling; Sterling s/o Fisher, Sterling @ Flood Control n/o Base Line; 7th/Del Rosa Ave.; Del Rosa Ave./9th; 9th/Del Rosa Dr.; 7429 Palm; Base Line w/o Webster; Boulder n/o Base Line; 25496 Base Line; misc. locations on Victoria Ave.; north side of Base Line from Central to Cunningham; Bruce/Cunningham; Base Line from Church Ave. to Palm; Seeley/Base Line, Sterling n/o Base Line; 26789 Ward; 25979 Base Line; 14th/Central; s/side of Pacific to Osburn; Elmwood/Base Line; Central s/o Base Line, Newcomb/9th; Orange/Millar; 25510 9th; s/side of 9th to Golondrina; Elmwood/Pacific.

Mark Your Calendar

Tuesday, December 25, 2012

Christmas Holiday - City Offices are closed

Wednesday, December 26, 2012

2pm - City Council Special Meeting, Donahue Council Chambers

Tuesday, January 1, 2013

New Year's Day Holiday - City Offices are closed

Thursday, January 3, 2013

5:30pm - Historic and Cultural Preservation Board Study Session, Upright Conference Room

Monday, January 7, 2013

4pm to 5pm - Blood Drive Committee Meeting
New members always welcome Highland City Hall - 27215 Baseline, Highland

Tuesday, January 08, 2013

6pm - City Council Regular Meeting, Donahue Council Chambers

Thursday, January 10, 2013

5pm - Community Trails Committee Regular Meeting, Donahue Council Chambers

Tuesday, January 15, 2013

6pm - Planning Commission Regular Meeting, Donahue Council Chambers

Tuesday, January 22, 2013

6pm - City Council Regular Meeting, Donahue Council Chambers

Assembled by: Elena Rodrigues



HAPPY HOLIDAYS

City of Highland

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