



Bald Eagle Regulations, Permitting, and Contact Information for Florida



For projects or activities within 660 feet of a bald eagle's nest, a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service eagle take permit may be necessary to avoid a potential violation. The following resources provide information about the protections and permitting process for bald eagles in Florida.

Regulations	State of Florida Eagle Rule, 68A-16.002, F.A.C.	Prohibits take, including disturbance, of bald eagles in Florida.
	Federal Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act	Includes 50 CFR 22.23 Depredation, 22.26 Eagle Incidental Take (Disturbance), & 22.27 Eagle Nest Take.
Websites	(State) FWC Bald Eagle Information	Species Action Plan, monitoring reports, general information.
	(Federal) USFWS Bald and Golden Eagle Information	Eagle biology, fact sheet, federal regulations, permitting links.
Nest Locations	(State) FWC Bald Eagle Nest Locator	Searchable database of historically known nest territories. Undocumented eagle nests can be reported to BaldEagle@MyFWC.com .
Technical Assistance	(Federal) USFWS Southeast Region's Eagle Technical Assistance Webpage	Step-by-step guidance to determine if new or intermittent activity near an eagle nest is likely to take or disturb eagles.
Guidelines	National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines	Guidelines to avoid disturbance to nesting bald eagles, nest buffer distances, activity-specific guidance, etc.
Eagle Take Permits	Incidental Take (Disturbance) Permit Application	Federal permit application for activities where there is a potential to disturb or otherwise take eagles (Rule 50 CFR 22.26).
	Nest Take Permit Application	Federal permit application for eagle nest removal (Rule 50 CFR 22.27). See information about the conditions under which nest take permits are issued.
	Scientific Collecting Permit Application	Federal permit application to collect, transport or possess bald eagles, their parts, nests, or eggs for scientific research or educational purposes. Only zoological parks, scientific societies and museums that are open to the public and are established, maintained, and operated as a governmental service, or are privately endowed but non-profit, are eligible for a permit.
Contact Information	For technical assistance:	Ulgonda_Kirkpatrick@fws.gov
	Ulgonda Kirkpatrick, USFWS Bald Eagle Biologist	(352)-406-6780
	For permitting questions:	Resee_Collins@fws.gov
	Resee Collins, USFWS Eagle Permit Coordinator	(404) 679-4163
	For biology, nest database, or research questions:	BaldEagle@MyFWC.com
	Jared Zimmerman, FWC Eagle Biologist	(352)-262-2661
To report a violation or contact law enforcement:	Tip@MyFWC.com (text or email)	
FWC Wildlife Alert Hotline	(888) 404-3922	



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Frequently Asked Questions

Since the bald eagle is no longer a listed species, is it still being protected by state and federal laws?

Yes, the bald eagle is still protected by both state and federal eagle laws. The Florida eagle rule, [68A-16.002, F.A.C.](#), outlines that it is illegal to disturb or take an eagle in Florida. There are two federal eagle laws, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA). For more information about the federal eagle laws please visit the [USFWS bald eagle website](#).

Does FWC still issue eagle permits?

On April 20th, 2017, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission approved revisions to the state's bald eagle rule (68A-16.002, F.A.C.). The approved rule revisions eliminate the need for applicants to obtain both a state and federal permit for activities with the potential to take or disturb bald eagles or their nests. Under the approved revisions, only a federal (USFWS) permit is required.

What are the federal permitting regulations?

The original federal eagle regulations were published in 2009 and revised effective January 17, 2017. Refer to the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) about the revised federal eagle regulations.

There are two federal permitting regulations under the [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#). The regulation set forth in 50 CFR § 22.26 provides for issuance of permits [to take or disturb bald eagles when associated with but not the purpose of the activity and cannot practicably be avoided](#). Avoidance and minimization measures, along with monitoring, are generally required. The regulation in 50 CFR § 22.27 establishes permits for removing eagle nests. Refer to the [conditions under which these permits are issued](#) along with a list of [permitting terms and definitions](#) under 50 CFR 22.3 as provided in the federal regulations.

How can I make sure that a bald eagle's nest will not be impacted by a new project, event, or activity?

The FWC and USFWS encourage landowners and regulatory officials to refer to the [FWC eagle nest locator](#) before starting any project or planning activities that have the potential to impact a bald eagle's nest, i.e. land clearing, exterior construction, timber harvest, etc. The database is not comprehensive, and does not take the place of an on-the-ground survey, but it is an excellent place to start. New or undocumented eagle nests should be [reported to the database administrator](#).



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Frequently Asked Questions (*continued*)

What do I do if a project may need an eagle permit?

If an eagle or eagle nest may be affected by the proposed project it may be necessary to obtain a federal (USFWS) eagle permit. More information on federal eagle permitting in Florida can be found on the [USFWS Southeast Region eagle website](#). If you need additional technical assistance, please contact the [USFWS Bald Eagle Biologist](#). For questions about the federal eagle permit application process, contact The [USFWS Eagle Permit Coordinator](#).

The [USFWS Southeast Region eagle website](#) features a [technical assistance page](#) and information about [federal eagle permits](#). The USFWS has also developed [National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines](#). Note that for most activities, the recommended buffer distance from a bald eagle nest is 660 feet. Activities occurring at a distance greater than 660 feet from an eagle nest are not likely to cause disturbance.

When was the bald eagle removed from the state and federal endangered species list?

The FWC removed the bald eagle from the state list of threatened species in May 2008. The bald eagle was removed from the federal list of endangered species in August 2007. Delisting by state and federal wildlife agencies was based on the substantial recovery of bald eagle breeding populations, both in Florida and throughout the lower 48 states.

What is the current population status (both nationally and in Florida) of the bald eagle?

The population of bald eagles in the lower 48 states is estimated to be 15,500 nesting pairs. FWC estimates the population of breeding bald eagles in Florida is approximately 1,500 pairs. Florida is home to more nesting bald eagles than any state other than Alaska and Minnesota.

What has contributed to the recovery of the Florida eagle population?

The Florida bald eagle population and their nests have been protected through science-based land management, regulation, public education and law enforcement. Florida's eagle population began to increase substantially following the ban of the pesticide Dichloro-Diphenyl-Trichloroethane (DDT) in 1972 and passage of the U.S. Endangered Species Act of 1973. In addition, the rehabilitation and release of injured and orphaned bald eagles back to the wild have also contributed to their recovery in Florida.

Bald eagles have taken over a nest built by ospreys, or great-horned owls have taken over an eagle nest. Do the bald eagle regulations still apply to these nests?

Yes, any nest built or used by bald eagles for breeding is protected by state rule and federal law. Bald eagles may sometimes take a nest over from osprey and use the nest to raise young. Similarly, great-horned owls may take over the nests of bald eagles. In either situation, eagles may return to use the nest again once the other species has completed its own nesting season. An eagle nest removal permit is needed to remove or destroy the nest, and the [USFWS Eagle Technical Assistance](#) information should be consulted for guidance on proposed projects within 660 feet of the nest.