

#### IA410.22 Bald Eagle Nest Sites

This is to inform field offices of the location of a map and data layer showing all known Bald Eagle nest sites in Iowa. Each field office will receive a map showing the location of known Bald Eagle nest sites and the GIS layer showing the point locations of the sites. **The GIS layer called "bald\_eagle\_nests\_2007.shp", and an Acrobat PDF map called "2007\_eagle\_nest\_sites\_<county>.pdf" is available in your f:\geodata\wildlife directory.** The GIS layer can be added to ArcMap GIS projects as needed. Please contact the GIS section in the NRCS State Office if you have questions concerning the data or map. These maps will be updated annually as Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) obtains new information on nest site locations.

While the Bald Eagle is no longer protected under the Federal Endangered Species list, it is still protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act of 1940. This Act protects all Bald Eagle nests from destruction or any disturbance that may cause the eagles to abandon their nest. If activities by an individual cause a Bald Eagle's nest to be destroyed or abandoned, this is considered a "taking" under the Act. Penalty for a first offense for such a "taking" is a \$100,000 fine and one year in jail.

**The following guidance to field offices is to be implemented for conservation planning and practice application to conform to the Eagle Protection Act:**

**1. For any identified nest sites:** The Bald Eagle is very site-specific and will often come back to the same nest site year after year. Protection of a nesting site involves more than the nest tree itself. All large trees (12 inch DBH or larger) within 600 feet of a known nest site location will be left standing. Since disturbance may cause nest abandonment, limit any construction disturbance outside of the woodland within ¼-mile radius around known nesting sites during spring and summer months (February 1 to September 30).

If a proposed NRCS funded or technically assisted project activity cannot be modified to meet the above requirements, then no action will be undertaken until after a review of the project activity by a biologist from the NRCS State Office or IDNR Private Lands Biologist in the area office. NRCS State Office concurrence will be required for any activity that would potentially affect a nest site. If a landowner chooses to proceed without NRCS concurrence, NRCS will cease all involvement with the project and inform him that he may be subject to penalties specified under the Act. This course of action will be documented in the customer's case file.

**2. For sites where a potential nest may exist:** For any activity where NRCS is providing technical or financial assistance, there will be no clearing of any trees in the vicinity of a suspected nest until an NRCS, IDNR, or other professional biologist has been contacted and evaluated the nest to determine if it is an eagle nest. If clearing has begun and a suspected nest is found within or adjacent to the project site, all clearing will cease until the nest has been evaluated to determine if it is an eagle nest.