

Bald Eagle Nest Site Survey Form: Instructions

Purpose: This form is for recording information for surveys of bald eagle nest trees and may be used for general nest site tracking for active nests, or for documenting lack of use for the purposes of having a site declared an “abandoned” resource site under the Oregon Forest Practices Act (FPA). To change status of a site to “abandoned” under the FPA, surveys of at least two-hours are required twice per nesting season, for a five year period.

Requirements for surveys: Although it is preferable to have a qualified wildlife biologist conduct surveys, because bald eagles are conspicuous and relatively easy to observe, surveys can be conducted by the landowner, operator, or another individual. It is critical, however, that the observer:

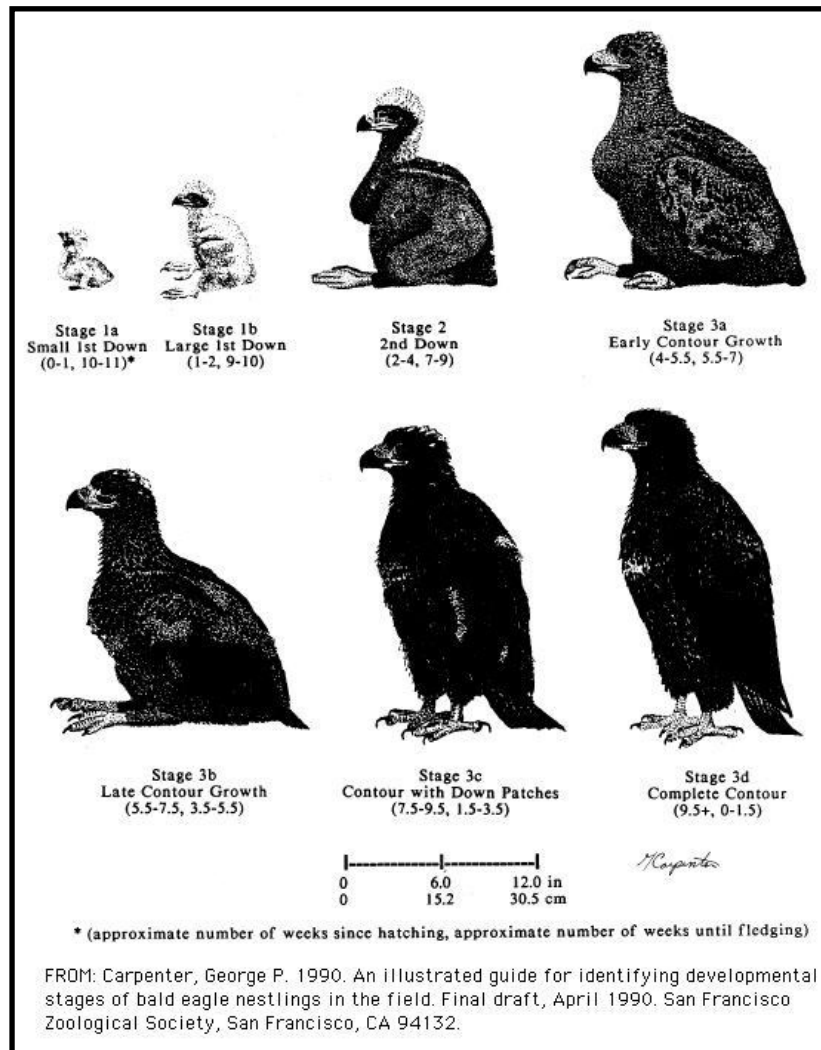
- Know where the nest tree is located and have a good vantage point where they can clearly observe eagles at the nest. In many cases, the best place to observe a nest is from a good vantage point away from the nest rather than close to the nest tree. The nest can be very difficult to see if too close to the nest tree.
- Must have a good quality, working pair of binoculars or a spotting scope. Be aware that older binoculars often become out of alignment, making it impossible to adequately focus them. ODF recommends using a spotting scope or 10 power binoculars, but 8 power are likely also adequate.
- If surveying for possible change in status (e.g., abandonment) under the FPA, the observer must have the local ODF stewardship forester visit the site at least once during the first year to confirm the location of the nest tree and to ensure that the observer has an adequate observation point from which to conduct surveys. Stewardship Foresters may also visit the site in other years to confirm status.
- Turn in survey forms annually to your local Stewardship Forester.

Survey Methods/ How to fill out form:

- In general, surveys should be conducted between March 15 and August 31. Two visits per year are recommended for all surveys, and required for FPA abandonment. The first visit should be conducted in March or April and the second visit must be conducted after mid-May. It is preferable to observe the site in the morning hours or around dusk when birds are most active. Avoid observing during inclement weather conditions (extremely hot or cold or in snow/rain conditions), as it is more challenging to see the nest and eagles will be less active.
- For FPA Abandonment, five consecutive years of observation with no evidence of nesting are required. Two visits per year are required. The Stewardship Forester should be consulted in the first year to confirm the location of the nest tree and to ensure that an adequate observation point is used.
- Box 1: Record names and affiliation of observers. Record start and end time of your survey observation. Record name and nest number of the site; ODF can provide this information.
- Box 2: Record information to describe your observation location and equipment. This is only required for first year of surveys unless your observation location changes

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- Box 3: Use this box to describe the condition of the nest tree.
 - If the nest tree is not standing AND there are no replacement trees nearby, additional survey work may not be needed. Contact ODF for a field review.
 - If the nest tree is not standing, but there are replacement trees nearby, scan those trees for possible nest structures and document what you see on the form.
 - If the nest tree is standing, fill out the remaining bullets to indicate if a nest is still present and to describe the condition of the tree and nest structure.
- Box 4: If bald eagles are present, fill out this box to describe your observations of the eagles. A 2-hour visit is not required if young are observed or adults seen in the nest as nesting has been confirmed for the year. Use the diagram below to record the age/size of any young eaglets observed.
- Box 5: If no eagles are observed, watch the nest for a full two hour period. Sometimes if eagles are incubating eggs, they can be hard to see. The two-hour time window ensures that if eagles are present, you are likely to see them.



Bald Eagle Nest Site Survey Form—DRAFT

Box 1: Header Information

Eagle Name/ Nest Number: _____	_____
Date of Survey: _____	Time of Survey _____ to _____
Name of Observer(s): _____	Consultant / Landowner/ Other (circle one)

Box 2: Observation Location/ SF Review

- Describe equipment used to conduct surveys? _____
- Do you have an adequate observation point where you can clearly see the nest structure and any activity happening in the nest? _____ Diagram or provide a map.
- Has the Stewardship Forester visited the site to confirm the nest tree location and review observation location? _____

Box 3: Presence and soundness of the nest tree and nest structure

- Is the nest tree still standing? _____
- If yes, does it have strong branches so that it can still support a nest structure? _____
- Is the nest structure still present? _____ Is there fresh nesting material? _____

Box 4: Observations of bald eagles

- Are there bald eagles present in the area? _____
- Were bald eagles observed in the nest? List the number of adults _____ and young _____ seen.
- If eagles observed, describe in your own words what kind of behaviors were seen (e.g., seeing eagles flying by, eagles perched near the nest tree, lying low in the nest, feeding young, etc.)

Box 5: If no bald eagle observed

- Did you observe the nest for the minimum 2 hour period? _____
- Describe weather conditions during the survey period? _____

Bald Eagle Nest Site Survey Form: Notes

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for handwritten notes during a survey.