

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Pacific Southwest Region

Migratory Birds Program

Recommended Buffer Zones for Human Activities around Nesting Sites of Bald Eagles in California and Nevada

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The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has national guidelines for management of bald eagles including recommended no-disturbance buffers around bald eagle nests (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines 2007). **Bald eagle nesting sites in California and Nevada may require larger no-disturbance buffer zones than recommended in the national guidelines when local jurisdictions recommend larger buffers, when nests are located in remote or arid areas, or when intensity or duration of human activities are above normal conditions; e.g. when a nest draws high levels of public interest a larger buffer may be appropriate.**

Summary of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines (2007) recommendations for no-disturbance buffer zones around bald eagle nesting sites*

*Please refer to the *National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines* for specifics, further information, and potential conditions under which the maximum buffer may be reduced.

Activity	Maximum Recommended No-Disturbance Buffer
Category A Building construction, 1 or 2 story, with project footprint of ½ acre or less. Construction of roads, trails, canals, power lines, and other linear utilities. Agriculture and aquaculture – new or expanded operations. Alteration of shorelines or wetlands. Installation of docks or moorings. Water impoundment.	660 feet
Category B Building construction, 3 or more stories. Building construction, 1 or 2 story, with project footprint of more than ½ acre. Installation or expansion of marinas with a capacity of 6 or more boats. Mining and associated activities. Oil and natural gas drilling and refining and associated activities.	660 feet
Category C Timber Operations and Forestry Practices	660 feet
Category D Off-road vehicle use (including snowmobiles)	660 feet
Category E Motorized Watercraft use (including jet skis/personal watercraft, but exclusive of airboats)	330 feet
Category F Non-motorized recreation and human entry (e.g., hiking, camping, fishing, hunting, birdwatching, kayaking, canoeing)	330 feet
Category G Helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft	1,000 feet
Category H Blasting and other loud, intermittent noises (including fireworks)	½ mile