

Home

Customer Services

- › [Ways to Pay Your Bill](#)
- › [Account Information](#)
- › [Customer Assistance](#)
- › [Service Line Protection Program](#)
- › [Water Rates](#)
- › [Property Managers & Trade Professionals](#)

Water Utilities

- › [Drinking Water](#)
- › [Wastewater](#)
- › [Stormwater](#)
- › [Harbor Water](#)
- › [Long Term Control Plan](#)

The Watershed

- › [Watershed Protection](#)
- › [Watershed Recreation](#)

Citywide Initiatives

- › [Regulatory Reform](#)
- › [Environmental Education](#)
- › [Conservation Programs](#)
- › [Air Pollution Control](#)
- › [Noise Codes & Complaints](#)

Business and Professionals

- › [Forms & Permits](#)
- › [Economic Development Unit](#)
- › [Doing Business with DEP](#)
- › [Asbestos Abatement](#)
- › [Construction, Demolition & Abatement](#)

About DEP

- › [Inside DEP](#)
- › [News](#)
- DEP Featured In...
- Stories from DEP
- Press Releases
- Public Notices
- Testimony & Public Comments



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## Department of Environmental Protection Announces That Bald Eagle Nest Alongside Gilboa Dam Construction Site has Yielded Eaglets for Second Year

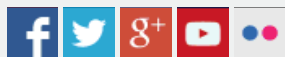
**Monitoring and work restrictions have protected unique nest at \$400 million construction site**

**Photos of the eagles and the Gilboa Dam reconstruction can be viewed on [DEP's Flickr page](#)**

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) today announced that a bald eagle nest alongside the Gilboa Dam construction site has yielded eaglets for the second consecutive year. Two eaglets hatched inside the nest, located only a few hundred feet from the dam's west support wall, in early April. Because bald eagles are a federally protected species, DEP is monitoring the nest for several hours each week to ensure that construction activity at the dam does not disturb the eaglets or the adult eagles. Careful monitoring and limitations on construction activity near the nest during the eagles' breeding season helped two eaglets hatch from the same nest and successfully fledge in 2013. Those eagles, now a year old, have recently been seen fishing nearby in Schoharie Creek.

"The bald eagle nest at Gilboa Dam is unique because it shows that construction and conservation can take place side-by-side if the right precautions are taken," **DEP Commissioner Emily Lloyd** said. "I want to thank DEP's construction workers and biologists for their extraordinary collaboration that has enabled us to keep the work on Gilboa Dam moving forward while protecting this nest. Everyone at the site has also taken an interest in the well-being of these

- › [Capital Projects](#)
- › [Careers at DEP](#)
- › [Environmental Reviews](#)
- › [Interagency MOUs](#)
- › [A to Z Index](#)
- › [Contact Us](#)



beautiful eagles.”

The newest eaglets at Gilboa Dam hatched about the first week of April. Bald eagles grow quickly during the eight weeks they spend in the nest before fledging. They are slightly larger than a baseball when they hatch, but the eagles will be roughly 2.5 to 3.5 feet tall, with a wing span of 6 to 7 feet, by the time they first take flight in June. In the meantime, the adult eagles continue to bring fish back to the nest from Schoharie Reservoir and Schoharie Creek.

Bald eagles built the nest alongside Gilboa Dam in 2011. The nest was close enough to the dam construction project that DEP was required to get permits from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to allow construction to continue. The permits restricted some activities within a 330-foot and 660-foot radius of the nest from Jan. 1 to July 31, to coincide with the bald eagle breeding season. For instance, construction equipment was permitted to drive, but not beep horns or idle, within the 330-foot buffer. The permits also required DEP to monitor the nest to ensure the adult and baby eagles were not disturbed by construction activity. DEP biologists stationed at Gilboa monitor the nest for several hours each week. In addition, DEP and DEC installed aluminum flashing at the bottom of the tree where the nest is located to prevent predators such as bears and raccoons from climbing it and harming the eaglets.

The bald eagles did not produce eaglets in 2011. They built a second nest in a different tree in 2012—which required an amendment to the federal and state permits—but later abandoned that nest for the original one. 2013 marked the first year that either nest yielded eaglets; two successfully fledged from the nest last year.

City-owned land and reservoirs in the watersheds boast some of the highest bald eagle nesting densities in all of New York. In fact, DEP has identified 30 bald eagle nests throughout the watersheds, including 19 that have been active in 2014. These areas have been key to the resurgence of bald eagles, which were on the brink of extinction in New York in the late 1960s. The natural habitat around the reservoirs—including nearby rivers and creeks—provides nearly ideal conditions for bald eagles to nest and hunt.

That includes the area around Gilboa Dam, which is currently undergoing a \$400 million full-scale rehabilitation, including the addition of 234 million pounds of concrete, to improve its structural integrity. Dam construction is currently two years ahead of schedule and is expected to be substantially complete by late this year. Reconstruction of the dam is the largest construction project in Schoharie County, and one of the largest in the entire Catskills. More information about the project can be found by clicking [here](#).

DEP manages New York City's water supply, providing more than one billion gallons of high quality water each day to more than 9 million New Yorkers. This includes more than 70 upstate communities and institutions in Ulster, Orange, Putnam and Westchester counties who consume an average of 110 million total gallons of drinking water daily from New York City's water supply system. This water comes from the Catskill, Delaware, and Croton watersheds that extend more than 125 miles from the City, and the system comprises 19 reservoirs, three controlled lakes, and numerous tunnels and aqueducts. DEP has nearly 6,000 employees, including almost 1,000 scientists, engineers, surveyors, watershed maintainers and others professionals in the upstate watershed. In addition to its \$68 million payroll and \$157 million in annual taxes paid in upstate counties, DEP has invested more than \$1.5 billion in watershed protection programs—including partnership organizations such as the Catskill Watershed Corporation and the Watershed Agricultural Council—that support sustainable farming practices, environmentally sensitive economic development, and local economic opportunity. In addition, DEP has a robust capital program with over \$14 billion in investments planned over the next 10 years that will create up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. For more information, visit [nyc.gov/dep](http://nyc.gov/dep), like us on Facebook at [facebook.com/nycwater](https://facebook.com/nycwater), or follow us on Twitter at

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 [All Press Releases](#)



13