



## Golden Eagle Nest Inventory

In 2011, a large scale inventory to locate Golden Eagles nests was conducted across southern Idaho. The project involved state and federal agencies, private consultants, and members of the public. Idaho Fish and Game, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Idaho Bird Observatory of Boise State University were the main coordinators.

### Importance: Increasing knowledge in Idaho

Although research on Golden Eagles has been conducted for 42 years in the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area (NCA), the rest of Idaho still lacks basic information on their distribution, population size, and nesting locations. In southern Idaho, renewable energy development (i.e., wind development) is on the increase, and this issue is particularly relevant to the conservation of Golden Eagles. There have been recorded incidents of Golden Eagles (and other raptors) colliding with wind turbines at various wind farms across the west. The exact short-term, long-term, and indirect impacts of wind power development on these birds in Idaho are currently unknown.

### Survey Objectives:

- consolidate historical Golden Eagle data throughout the state
- conduct an inventory of Golden Eagle nests and territories across southern Idaho

### Survey Results:

Approximately 2,706.2 square miles (7,009 km<sup>2</sup>) were surveyed using a mix of ground and aerial techniques. The survey took place during the breeding season, March–June 2011. Over 2,000 historical (pre-existing) Golden Eagle observations from state, federal, and private entities were compiled. A total of 168 Golden Eagle territories and 384 unique nests were documented in the survey area. Of these, 127 territories and 326 nests were newly discovered locations from the 2011 effort alone!

### Management Applications:

Information generated by this project will:

- help land managers identify areas of potential impact “hotspots,”
- inform mitigation efforts, and
- enable a more proactive approach to evaluate proposed wind energy development projects and their potential impacts on Golden Eagles

### For More Information On Raptors:

[www.blm.gov/id/st/en/prog/blm\\_special\\_areas/birds\\_of\\_preynca.html](http://www.blm.gov/id/st/en/prog/blm_special_areas/birds_of_preynca.html)



Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*)  
Photo courtesy of Yozora Tadehara

**Fact:** The tips of the wind turbine blades travel at **250 miles per hour**, making it difficult for birds and bats to avoid the turbine blades.



Golden Eagle nesting  
Photo courtesy of Yozora Tadehara



Golden Eagle's nest.  
Photo courtesy of Yozora Tadehara