

# Eagles soar above EBMUD reservoirs



**B**ald eagles, once dangerously close to extinction, have demonstrated remarkable resilience over the past several decades. EBMUD watersheds provide critical habitat for these majestic raptors, and we're happy to report growing numbers in the East Bay and the Sierra Nevada foothills.

Our lands and reservoirs offer bald eagles protected nesting sites and bountiful hunting grounds. And we take special steps to improve their odds of survival, such as suspending tree removal and other vegetation management during their nesting season. These efforts are contributing to the local revival of one of North America's largest birds.

Last winter, for the first time in nearly 40 years of annual surveys, our biologists and rangers observed bald eagles at all four of our monitored East Bay reservoirs – Briones, San Pablo, Lafayette, and Upper San Leandro – as well as at Pardee and Camanche reservoirs upcountry.

This comeback story has been neither fast nor easy. Bald eagles experienced a precipitous decline nationally in the 1960s due to the harmful effects of DDT, a now-banned pesticide that caused a thinning of their eggshells. But since the mid-1970s, the birds have made an inspiring rebound. They were removed from the federal endangered species list in 2007 and, though still classified

as endangered in California, their numbers are growing statewide.

Today, bald eagles nest annually at several known locations in the Bay Area. At San Pablo Reservoir, for example, EBMUD biologists have observed 34 fledged bald eagles over the past 17 years, contributing to the increase in nesting here and elsewhere in the region.

EBMUD's natural resources management ensures the highest-quality drinking water for our customers. We're proud it also supports healthy habitats where bald eagles and countless other species thrive.



*Above: Pardee Reservoir visitor Bob Marcy photographed this bald eagle in January.*

**We invite you to enjoy birdwatching, hiking & more on EBMUD watersheds.**

Scan this QR code to share feedback of your experience through our Recreation User Survey.

**Your input matters!**

# EBMUD ingenuity protects the bay and our ratepayers

Every day, waste from nearly 740,000 East Bay residents and businesses flows into EBMUD's Wastewater Treatment Plant where it is treated before it's discharged to the San Francisco Bay.

Our plant is great at removing solids, pathogens and pollutants from the water sent down your drains. Our processes protect public health and support a vibrant bay ecosystem.

But one challenge has remained: reducing discharges of nitrogen compounds that can contribute to harmful algal blooms.

Over the past five years, EBMUD has been experimenting to find a solution. Now, our staff have developed a first-of-its kind process to significantly cut nitrogen loads.

We've modified our operations and existing infrastructure to grow bacteria that break down inorganic nitrogen compounds such as ammonia, nitrite and nitrate that are common in wastewater. That's important because just as these compounds are used in fertilizers to feed plants, they can contribute to harmful algae growth in the bay.



Our wastewater treatment plant operates around the clock every day of the year.

The results of our biological nitrogen removal process have been extraordinary. By the end of next year we expect to reduce nitrogen levels in our wastewater discharge by up to 65 percent.

On top of delivering environmental benefits, this example of EBMUD ingenuity could save ratepayers \$2 billion in estimated costs we may have otherwise needed to spend to install a new mainstream treatment process for removing nitrogen.

There's more work to do, but we're driven to apply our scientific knowledge, engineering know-how, and culture of innovation to tackle challenges and protect the bay.



EBMUD's 2022-23 Biennial Report, **"Flowing into the Future: A Report to Our Community,"** is now available. We used the multimedia StoryMap platform to highlight the last two years. Find it at [ebmud.com/publications](https://ebmud.com/publications).



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#### EBMUD Mission Statement

To manage the natural resources with which the District is entrusted; to provide reliable, high-quality water and wastewater services at fair and reasonable rates for the people of the East Bay; and to preserve and protect the environment for future generations.

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