



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Region 7

Timing Recommendations for Land Disturbance & Vegetation Clearing

Planning Ahead to Protect Nesting Birds

Destruction of active nests, eggs, or nestlings can result from spring and summer vegetation clearing, grubbing, brush hogging, burning, stockpiling fill, and other land disturbance and construction activities. An “active” nest is indicated by intact eggs, live chicks, or presence of at least one adult on the nest. Human disturbance and repeated loud noises near nest sites can cause nest failure. Avoiding nesting seasons during project implementation minimizes the risk of encountering an active nest or inadvertently causing a nest to fail.



Lucas DeCicco/USFWS

Rusty Blackbird

Some bird species and their nests have protections under other federal laws, including Bald and Golden eagles under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (Eagle Act), and those listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Please contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service if these species may be present in your project area to ensure Eagle Act and ESA compliance.

Implementing the following timing recommendations considerably minimizes impacts to migratory birds.

Recommendations:

1. Conduct land disturbance and vegetation clearing activities as described above outside of the nesting season (please see nesting season timing for your area on the next page).
2. If you encounter an active nest *at any time*, including before or after the local recommended avoidance times, leave it undisturbed until the eggs hatch and the young depart the nest.
3. If you have any questions regarding the timing recommendations, please contact your local U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Field Office for assistance:

Anchorage (includes Juneau and Kenai areas): ak_fisheries@fws.gov

Fairbanks (includes the North Slope, Interior, and Western Alaska): (907) 456-0203



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Nesting Seasons by Habitat Type and Region:

Recommended Times to Avoid Land Disturbance & Vegetation Clearing

HABITAT TYPE → REGION ↓	Forest or Woodland (i.e., trees present)	Shrub or Open (i.e., shrub cover or marsh, pond, tundra, gravel, or other treeless/shrubless ground habitat)	Seabird Colonies (including cliff and burrow colonies)	Eagles ^e
Southeast	April 15-July 15 ^a	May 1-July 15 ^{a, b}	May 1-September 15	March 1-August 31
Kodiak Archipelago			April 15-September 7	
Southcentral (<i>Lake Illiamna to Copper River Delta; north to Talkeetna</i>)	May 1-July 15 ^{a, b}			
Bristol Bay/AK Peninsula (<i>north to Lake Illiamna</i>)	May 1-July 15 ^{a, b, c}		May 10-September 15	
Interior (<i>north of Talkeetna to south slope Brooks Range; west to treeline</i>)	May 1-July 15 ^{a, b}		May 1-July 20 ^d	
Aleutian Islands		April 25-July 15 ^a	May 1-September 15	
Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta	May 1-July 15	May 5-July 25 ^{a, b, c}	May 20-September 15	
Seward Peninsula	May 1-July 15	May 10-July 20 ^{a, c}		
Northern (<i>includes northern foothills of Brooks Range</i>)		June 1-July 31 ^{a, c}		
Pribilof and Bering Sea Islands		May 15-July 15 ^a	May 15-September 15	

^a [Raptors](#) may nest two or more months earlier than other birds.

^b Canada geese and swans begin nesting April 20.

^c Black scoter are known to nest through August 10.

^d [Seabird](#) colonies in Interior refer to terns and gulls.

^e Eagles and their nests have protections under the Eagle Act, and a permit may be required to conduct activities near an eagle nest. Visit the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Alaska Region Bald Eagle Nesting and Sensitivity to Human Activity web page (<https://www.fws.gov/Alaska-eagle-nesting.htm>) or call your local Fish and Wildlife Field Office for guidance to determine if your activity is likely to take or disturb eagles and for conservation measures to avoid disturbance.