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NEWS

'Egg Watch 2020' streaming live at Minnesota Power's FalconCam

DULUTH, Minn. – A new season of “Egg Watch” has premiered at Minnesota Power’s Hibbard Renewable Energy Center in Duluth and Boswell Energy Center in Cohasset.

Fans of the long-running reality show tune in to the company’s [FalconCam](#) each year to watch as adult peregrine falcons return to nest boxes at the two power plants, lay their eggs and raise their young. This season peregrine parents are caring for four eggs at each site. According to the [Cornell Lab of Ornithology](#), the incubation period is 29 to 32 days, which places hatching at Hibbard in early May with Boswell about a week or so later.

As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of Earth Day today, Minnesota Power encourages students, teachers, parents and others to check in on the two peregrine families and learn more about peregrine falcons. Each year, thousands of visitors from around the world visit the two nest sites via FalconCam.

The peregrine falcon has made a remarkable comeback after use of the pesticide DDT nearly wiped out the population in the middle 20th century. The raptor was named an endangered species in the 1970s and power companies like Minnesota Power played an important role in the peregrine’s recovery by placing nest boxes on the stacks of their power plants. The peregrine was removed from the Endangered Species List in 1999.

In addition to FalconCam, bird enthusiasts can watch live episodes of “Egg Watch 2020” on [“Nestflix.”](#) a network of links to peregrine falcon, eagle and kestrel cameras across the Midwest. The birdcam network is managed by the [Raptor Resource Project](#) in Decorah, Iowa, a nonprofit that develops and maintains nest sites and provides training in nest site creation and management to preserve and strengthen raptor populations.

Minnesota Power is a longtime partner with the RRP, and specialists from the nonprofit organization visit Hibbard and Boswell almost every year to place leg bands on any chicks that hatched in the nest boxes attached to stacks at the two power plants. Over the years more than 100 falcons have hatched at nest boxes at Boswell and Hibbard. Chicks were banded most years, but not every year, since 1993 at Boswell and 2008 at Hibbard.

RPP also offers a free online classroom and lesson plans, valuable resources for teachers and parents as schools have closed and learning has moved to the home. The free lesson plans, developed by four teachers who serve on the nonprofit’s education committee, are centered on RRP’s bald eagle and peregrine falcon web cams and can be used as is or tailored to fit a variety of ages.

The RPP continues to work with Minnesota Power and other power companies across the Midwest to provide falcon nest boxes and do the leg banding that helps to maintain a healthy peregrine

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population. The leg bands allow researchers to track the falcons and their behavior, and do not harm the birds. Falcons raised in Minnesota Power nest boxes have been reported in Florida, Central America and on oil rigs in the Gulf of Mexico.

The commitment to peregrine falcons is one example of Minnesota Power's longstanding value of environmental stewardship. Under the company's EnergyForward strategy, Minnesota Power is on track to deliver 50 percent renewable energy by 2021. The company also is on track to reduce carbon emissions by 50 percent by 2021 compared with 2005 levels.

PHOTO CAPTIONS

Minnesota Power employee Lindsey Buran holds a very vocal and active peregrine chick during the banding in 2019 at Boswell Energy Center in Cohasset.

Minnesota Power employee Diem Carson holds one of the chicks during banding in 2019 at Hibbard Renewable Energy Center in Duluth.

Feisty, Henry and Brunhilde display their new leg bands after specialists from the Raptor Resource Project in Decorah, Iowa, and Minnesota Power employees banded the three chicks in 2018 at Hibbard Renewable Energy Center in Duluth.

Minnesota Power provides electric service within a 26,000-square-mile area in northeastern Minnesota, supporting comfort, security and quality of life for 145,000 customers, 15 municipalities and some of the largest industrial customers in the United States. More information can be found at www.mnpower.com.

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