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## **With ID bands in place and names provided by schoolchildren, falcon chicks at Minnesota Power site get ready to fly**

Duluth, Minn. — Three peregrine falcon chicks hatched at Minnesota Power's Hibbard Renewable Energy Center in early May have been named, banded and are getting ready to fledge in the coming days.

A team from Minnesota Power and the [Raptor Resource Project](#) in Decorah, Iowa, climbed the Hibbard stack Wednesday, May 29, to check on the health of the three female nestlings and outfit them with leg bands. All three appear to be thriving.

And thanks to area schoolchildren who attended programs at STARBASE-Minnesota Duluth, the three chicks have names. Students from Cherry School and North Woods Elementary in Cook, Minnesota, named them Bridget (because they were born in view of the Bong Bridge), Minne (short for Minnesota) and Spark (a nod to the electric energy generated at the power plant).

Minnesota Power is a longtime partner with the RRP and specialists from the nonprofit organization visit Hibbard and MP's Boswell Energy Center in Cohasset, where there also is a nest box, almost every year. Banding at the Boswell site where four chicks hatched just before Memorial Day weekend is planned for June.

Chicks were banded most years since 1993 at Boswell and 2008 at Hibbard. More than 130 chicks have been fitted with leg bands at the two locations.

The RRP continues to work with Minnesota Power and other power companies across the Midwest to provide falcon nest boxes and do the leg banding. The leg bands allow researchers to track and study the falcons, including changes in range, population numbers and migratory behaviors. People often ask if the bands will constrict the falcons' legs as they grow. According to the RRP specialists, the birds' legs are nearly full grown at this point and the bands will not harm them.

At just over three weeks old, the nestlings will remain in the nest box until they're able to fly, sometime in mid-June. Bird enthusiasts can watch a livestream of the family at Minnesota Power's [Falcon Cam](#).

The peregrine falcon has made a remarkable comeback after use of the pesticide DDT nearly wiped out the population. The raptor was named an endangered species in the 1970s and power companies like Minnesota Power played a role in the peregrine's recovery by placing nest boxes on the stacks of their power plants.

Supporting a healthy peregrine falcon population is an example of Minnesota Power's commitment to build a cleaner, better world represented by the company's "Planet" value.

Minnesota Power provides electric service within a 26,000-square-mile area in northeastern Minnesota, supporting comfort, security and quality of life for 150,000 customers, 14 municipalities and some of the largest industrial customers in the United States. More information can be found at [www.mnpower.com](http://www.mnpower.com). ALE-CORP

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*Minnesota Power calculates and reports carbon emissions based on the GHG Protocol. Details in ALLETE's [Corporate Sustainability Report](#).*

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#### VIDEO LINK TO HIBBARD BANDING

<https://youtube.com/shorts/t75PcYmcPq8?si=YOeX4FcbXCwtC33c>

#### PHOTO CAPTIONS:

Dan Jesberg, an engineer at Minnesota Power, holds one of the falcon chicks as John Howe, director of the Raptor Resource Project, fits it with ID bands.

Kyrie Kephart, a service dispatcher at Minnesota Power, holds one of the peregrine falcon chicks at Hibbard during banding on Wednesday morning.

The adult peregrine falcons circle the Hibbard stack as the banding team makes its way to the catwalk where the nest box is located.

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