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## Officials confirm eagles incubating at Barr Lake

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BRIGHTON – Officials at Barr Lake State Park have confirmed that a pair of nesting bald eagles is incubating a baby eaglet.

The pair began incubating the egg around Feb. 23, according to **Nelda Gamble**, the bald eagle watch coordinator for the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory.

If the eagle is successfully hatched, it will become the 33rd bald eagle to be hatched at the park. Barr Lake State Park, which is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, has become one of the most successful bald eagle breeding habitats in the entire state.

Bald eagles have used the park as a breeding habitat for nearly every year since 1988.

“This is great news,” Gamble said. “We’ve been very successful to the point where it’s unusual not to have young every year.”

Park officials say it’s the perfect time to view bald eagles because the adult eagles rarely leave the nest during the incubation period. The park has a viewing gazebo where the eagle nest can be seen with binoculars.

The eaglet or eaglets (eagles typically lay one to three eggs) should hatch in about a month and be ready to fly about two months after they’ve hatched, according to Gamble.

The eaglet will be banded and tagged by the Colorado Division of Wildlife (DOW) so it can be tracked. The DOW has located eagles born at Barr Lake in a nest in Windsor and a nesting pair at Milton Reservoir near Keenesburg.

Special efforts have been made by state officials and developers alike to preserve the bald eagle habitat. DOW built an artificial nest for the a pair of eagles after their nest blew down in 1988.

THF Realty, the developer in charge of building the Prairie Center, is also moving forward with plans to purchase more land to help preserve eagles.

The company will purchase several more acres of land containing prairie dog colonies around its 1,760-acre Prairie Center mixed-use development that will help serve as a primary food source for the eagles.

Gamble said the extra efforts have produced great results for eagles at the park.