

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## The Maryland Port Administration **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **BALD EAGLES MAKE A HOME AT MASONVILLE COVE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER**

*Public access to campus limited during nesting period to minimize disturbance to eagles*

(BALTIMORE, MD) – Eagles have landed at Masonville Cove Environmental Education Center in Baltimore.

Officials with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Maryland Environmental Service (MES) today announced a pair of adult bald eagles have been discovered nesting on the 52-acre cove property. It's the first time eagles have nested on the campus since environmental restoration efforts there began in 2007.

Partners at Masonville Cove, which include U.S. Fish and Wildlife, MES, the Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Port Administration (MDOT MPA), the Living Classrooms Foundation and The National Aquarium, are collaborating to minimize disturbance to the eagles and establish a protected area in compliance with National Bald Eagle Nest Protection Guidelines.

This means access to the property will be limited during breeding season to a small area east of the education center. (See map below). Events scheduled inside the education center will not be impacted, but some other onsite activities will be limited or suspended.

Staff will monitor the birds' behavior to assess the need for additional restrictions. Access will gradually be increased toward the end of breeding season, around mid-May, and will be fully reinstated after the young eagles fledge, approximately in late May.

Much of Masonville Cove, including many waterfowl, can still be observed from limited areas of access. The public is invited to view the eagles' nest from the balcony of the education center. Visitors are encouraged to bring binoculars.

Masonville Cove, 1000 Frankfurst Ave., is open to the public from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mondays through Fridays and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturdays. Extended hours are being offered this year on the first Thursday of the month until 8 p.m. For up-to-date information about Masonville Cove, call the Education Center at 410-246-0669.

Since 2007, some 230 bird species have been recorded at Masonville Cove, making it No. 3 on the Baltimore eBird list of hot spots. During the June 2018 BioBlitz, 222 plant and animal species were identified at the cove, the highest in the five years of recorded observations. Since August, birders have recorded 10 species previously unseen at Masonville Cove, according to MES Senior Environmental Specialist Tim Carney.

Located along the banks of the Middle Branch of the Patapsco River, Masonville Cove is an urban wildlife area that was transformed from the former home of Kurt Iron and Metal and the Maryland Shipbuilding and Drydock Company. More than 61,000 tons of trash and debris dating back to the Great Baltimore Fire of 1904 have been cleared from the site. In 2013, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service designated Masonville Cove as the nation's first Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership.

Today, the nationally-recognized refuge includes walking trails, a fishing pier and the Masonville Cove Environmental Education Center, which is marking its 10th anniversary in 2019. The Living Classrooms Foundation and The National Aquarium provide educational and environmental programs at the center that are attended by about 2,000 students annually.

In 2018, Masonville Cove welcomed Captain Trash Wheel, which operates on solar power and collects litter, preventing it from entering the Middle Branch of the Patapsco River. The trash wheel has gathered nearly 9 tons of refuse since June. Its operation is part of mitigation efforts associated with the neighboring Masonville Dredged Material Containment Facility, which receives dredged sediment from Baltimore shipping channels to clear the way for maritime travel.

Among the nation's ports, the Port of Baltimore ranks first for autos and light trucks, roll on/roll off heavy farm and construction machinery, and imported sugar. The Port ranks second in exported coal. Overall, the Port ranks ninth among all ports for total dollar value of cargo, and 12th in foreign cargo tonnage. Business at the Port of Baltimore generates more than 15,300 direct jobs, with more than 139,000 jobs in Maryland linked to Port activities. The Port is responsible for \$3.3 billion in personal income and nearly \$400 million in state and local tax revenues.



**Attention Editors: Please credit attached photo of eagle in nest at Masonville Cove to Tim Carney/Maryland Environmental Service**

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