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DETAILS OF 2011 EAGLE NEST REVEALED AFTER STATE VISIT

HOWELL — It's a boy and a girl! This is just one of the things the Monmouth County Park System learned when staff and volunteers from New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife visited and banded the eaglets hatched in February at the Manasquan Reservoir, Windeler Road, Howell. Through careful examination, staff believe there is a male and a female a week apart in age. To explain this larger than usual age difference, staff think another egg may have been laid in between them that failed to hatch. The age difference is also apparent with the beginnings of flight feathers on the male and mostly down feathers on the female.

The chicks each received two bands – a green one so scientists know that they were born in New Jersey and a second silver one from the federal government. Bald eagles are on the endangered species list in New Jersey. While there are more nests throughout state, the one at Manasquan Reservoir has been closely monitored due to recurring nesting patterns. Scientists have been banding the chicks born there since 2007. This year marks the site's first female chick.

While visitors to the Manasquan Reservoir aren't allowed to approach the nest, they may approach naturalists at the Manasquan Reservoir Environmental Center, Georgia Tavern Road, Howell, and ask questions about this remarkable pair of chicks. Visitors can also view nest activity live on a television. The Environmental Center hours are 10am to 4:30pm daily. The park is currently open daily from 7am to 7:30pm.

To learn more about the Park System, visit www.monmouthcountyparks.com or call (732) 842-4000. The TTY/TDD number for persons with hearing impairment is 711. The Monmouth County Park System, created in 1960 by the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders, is Monmouth County's Open Space, Parks, and Recreation agency.

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PICTURED – New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife believe this eaglet, hatched in a nest at the Manasquan Reservoir in Howell, is female and younger than the male. Note her down feathers which will change over to flight feathers in a week or so.