

# **Dead Bald Eagle found on shoreline at New Hogan Lake**

**By Nick Baptista/ The Valley Springs News/ 10-26-12**

A Bald Eagle was found dead Tuesday afternoon along the shoreline at Wrinkle Cove.

Bill Heger of Valley Springs was fishing New Hogan Lake when he noticed the bird carcass.

Heger said he called the Department of Fish and Game to report the incident and he was told to contact the U.S. Corps of Engineers at New Hogan since the bird died within their jurisdiction.

Heger said he made the call, but by Wednesday afternoon the bird had not been picked up.

“This is our national bird,” Heger said Wednesday afternoon, about 24 hours after he first spotted the carcass. “I’d like to know why nothing has happened and it has not been properly taken care of.”

New Hogan Park Ranger Adam Durando was contacted Thursday morning by The Valley Springs News and he said it was the first time he had heard about the dead bird.

“We’ll get out there and check it out,” Durando said.

The Army Corps of Engineers is responsible for operation and maintenance of the dam and recreation area, Durando said, while wildlife falls under the jurisdiction of state Fish and Game or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Durando said it would be speculation to say whether the death of the bird was connected to an earlier report about suspected poachers at the lake.

An Oct. 14 sheriff’s log entry said someone was seen poaching waterfowl out of a ski boat at Hogan and “shooting anything that is alive.”

Durando said two people were arrested two weekends ago for allegedly poaching coots, but there were no reports of a Bald Eagle being shot.

Kyle Orr, public information officer of state Fish and Game, said Heger took the responsible action by contacting state and federal authorities.

Orr, who is the primary media contact for the region including Calaveras County, said he would check with people within his department to see what should be done with the bird.

The Bald Eagle is no longer listed as an endangered or threatened species in the lower 48 states.

It has been on the brink of extinction, but was removed from the federal government's endangered species list in 1995 and the threatened species list in 2007.

The U.S. Bald Eagle population is now believed to be well over 100,000.

Back in 2009, a pair of fledgling Bald Eagles died near Pardee Reservoir.

A state Department of Fish and Game study at the time confirmed at least one of the eagles likely died from the West Nile virus.

Tests determined one of the eagles contracted the virus and was assumed the second eagle also died from the virus, but the carcass was too far along in the decomposition process to accurately determine cause of death.

"There's got to be a better way to dispose of this eagle," Heger said. "I don't want it to sit here and get torn up by buzzards or end up in the hands of people who will take its feathers."