# Bald Eagles

Data Literacy Project

# Background: In 1978 the Bald Eagle was placed under the protection of the U.S. Endangered Species Act. To keep track of the eagle population, states began monitoring the numbers of nesting Bald Eagle pairs each year. In 2007 the Bald Eagle was removed from the list of Endangered Species. Below is a graph showing the number of nesting pairs of Eagles in Maine from 1990 to 2007.

# Evidence:

***Data Source:*** *http://www.fws.gov/midwest/eagle/population/nos\_state\_tbl.html*

1. What claim can you make about the eagle population in Maine between 1990 and 2007?

# 2. How well does the evidence from Maine support the decision to remove the bald eagle from the Endangered Species list in 2007?

3. What kind of graph is this?

**Teaching notes:**

**More background**: According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bald Eagle population recovered for a number of reasons, including: the banning of DDT; new laws to prevent the killing of eagles; improved water quality in lakes and rivers; acts to protect eagle nesting sites, and habitat restoration projects. Much of the data that the states collected in the past several decades provides evidence for this recovery. Most states stopped monitoring in 2000, but Maine continued to monitor for several years after that, and the Maine record was important in the Federal decision to de-list eagles.

**Pedagogy notes**: Students might be uncomfortable with the 2006 data point that is not part of the line. It’s not connected because the eagles weren’t monitored in 2004 and 2005, so the data are not continuous. But the point does suggest that the eagle population in Maine continued to recover. (Don’t let them throw the point out just because it stands apart!)