



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terrence Murphy

Eaglefest lands at Croton Point Park on Feb 10th with Dar Williams

TERRENCE MURPHY January 2, 2018

| ISSUE: **BALD EAGLE, CROTON POINT PARK, EAGLEFEST**



Croton-on-Hudson - The bald eagle is among the most revered species in the United States. The majestic birds represent our country's liberty, tenacity, and strength. To celebrate the return of the bald eagle to its winter home, Senator Terrence Murphy has partnered with Teatown to sponsor the 14th Annual EagleFest festival. The festival will be held at Croton Point Park, 1 Croton Point Avenue in Croton-on-Hudson on Saturday, February 10, 2018, from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm.

EagleFest will feature live programs highlighting birds of prey, bird walks, bus tours, live music, children's activities and food trucks filled with mouth-watering meals. Sites offering close up views of the eagles will be staffed by birding experts stationed along the Hudson.

Local singer/songwriter Dar Williams is this year's special musical guest. Born in Mount Kisco and raised in Chappaqua, Williams has released ten critically acclaimed albums. Her striking soprano voice and knack for composing insightful songs have led her to be favorably compared to Joan Baez and Joni Mitchell - with an added touch of acerbic wit.

"The EagleFest festival is a great way for families to spend an afternoon learning about the magnificent birds that were chosen as our national symbol," said Senator Murphy. "This is an opportunity to see bald eagles and other wildlife in their natural surroundings, to learn from experts, enjoy gourmet food, and listen to first class entertainment. It is an unforgettable experience."

Kevin Carter, Executive Director for Teatown stated, "Teatown was so pleased to learn that Senator Murphy was a big fan of EagleFest. We are also grateful to the Senator for bringing attention and funding to the Croton Point Park landfill and meadows project, which will restore habitat for many bird species."

Among the largest birds of prey in North America, bald eagles were once plentiful in New York. According to the State Department of Environmental Conservation, prior to the 1900s, there were as many as 80 nesting sites, primarily in northern and western New York. As a result of indiscriminate hunting, loss of habitat and pesticides, by 1976 only one pair of nesting eagles remained. Now, thanks to a breeding program and measures designed to protect them, more than 100 bald eagles spend the winter in the Hudson Valley.

The bald eagles have to have a place to call home, and Senator Murphy has been in the

forefront of efforts to refurbish the bird's natural habitat. To help maintain their home, Senator Murphy secured a \$500,000 appropriation for a critical meadow restoration project at Croton Point Park.

The funds will be used for grassland design and management specifications to restore the 100-acre constructed on the capped Croton landfill. In addition to enhancing the overall aesthetics of the park, the project will eradicate invasive species and improve the ecological health of the park and the Hudson River Estuary bald eagle habitat, the largest in the lower Hudson flyway.

"The restoration of the grasslands will improve the ecological health of the Croton Park and enhance its role as a natural habitat for our bald eagles and other indigenous wildlife," said Senator Murphy. "We want Croton Point Park to be an attraction for future generations, expand recreation opportunities, and support the continued growth of EagleFest."

To address the infestation of Hydrilla in the Croton River, New York State created the Croton-Hydrilla Control Project. The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets and the Westchester County Soil & Water Conservation District have entered into an agreement to provide a \$267,375 grant for a Coordinator for the Project.

Hydrilla or "water thyme" is one of the most difficult aquatic invasive species to control and eradicate. Infestations can affect waterfowl feeding areas and fish spawning sites, disrupt water flow in reservoirs, hamper drainage in irrigation canals, and decrease oxygen in the water, which can result in fish kills. Municipalities that rely on tourist dollars from recreational use of lakes and ponds can suffer serious losses in income due to a Hydrilla infestation.

Senator Murphy and Teatown will offer FREE admission to EagleFest for veterans. In addition, each veteran is allowed to bring one guest free of charge. Pre-registration is required. Veterans can call Senator Murphy's District Office at 914-962-2624 to reserve a spot.

With EagleFest being a predominantly outdoor event, Guests are encouraged to dress warmly. The EagleFest Headquarters and the Theatre will be open and heated. In the event of snow, EagleFest will be rescheduled for the following day, Sunday, February 11, 2018.

For more information about EagleFest, including directions, parking, ticket prices and a schedule of events, visit the Teatown website at www.teatown.org or contact them at 914-762-2912, ext. 110.