Nova Scotia

Preserved eagle given to wildlife association to teach dangers of lead

Eagle was blessed at Membertou First Nation before it was given to the Port Morien Wildlife Association

Brent Kelloway · CBC News · Posted: Oct 26, 2019 5:00 AM EDT | Last Updated: October 26, 2019

Listen to this article
Estimated 2 minutes



This eagle was given to the Port Morien Wildlife Association to use to inform people of the dangers of using lead ammunition and tackle. (Brent Kelloway/CBC)

A preserved eagle was blessed at Membertou First Nation Friday afternoon and given to the Port Morien Wildlife Association.

The wildlife association intends to use the eagle, which has undergone taxidermy, to inform people of the dangers of lead ammunition and tackle.

The association is continuing the efforts of Dr. Helene Van Doninck of the Cobequid Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre, says association president Jeff McNeil.

Van Doninck was a leader in the rehabilitation of eagles and other birds of prey that were poisoned by lead. She died in 2018.

McNeil says the wildlife association plans to lobby the provincial government to add labels to ammunition and tackle to indicate if they contain lead.

He said the warnings could be like those on cigarette packages, but not as graphic.

"But we want people to know," said McNeil. "People don't realize that some of the bullets that they buy, or ammunition or tackle, is lead."



Jeff Ward is the general manager of Membertou Heritage Park. (Brent Kelloway/CBC)

McNeil said the association will take the eagle to school presentations both in Indigenous and non-Indigenous schools, as well as their information sessions for hunters and fishers.

It is believed this is the first time in Atlantic Canada that an eagle was bestowed upon a non-Indigenous organization.

Jeff Ward, general manager of Membertou Heritage Park, said the eagle is significant to the Mi'kmaq and the feathers alone are given only to people who have earned them.

"The eagle flies the highest, it takes your prayers to the creator," said Ward. "It flies so high they say it sits on the lap of the creator."

He said the blessing of the eagle was to signify the union between multiple groups working toward a common goal.

"It's like a marriage," said Ward. "Whenever you get married you have a blessing in all ceremonies in all cultures. We want to keep it sacred and help out everyone in a good way."

The eagle was collected from Howie Centre.

MORE TOP STORIES

What you need to know about gold mining in Nova Scotia

IWK program aims to boost children's care at hospitals across the Maritimes

Yarmouth using free housing to help with doctor recruitment

'Hike, eat, repeat': Food truck rally debuts this weekend in Cape Breton

N.S. government passes bill to end Crown attorneys' strike, but will not