

The Peregrine Falcon: A Story of Recovery and Renewal

The peregrine falcon, native to California and present throughout the Bay Area, represents one of the most compelling wildlife recovery stories in modern history. In the mid-20th century, peregrine populations declined due to the widespread use of DDT, which caused eggshell thinning and nesting failure.¹ By the 1970s, peregrines had nearly disappeared from large parts of the United States.²

Recovery was driven by intentional, coordinated action, including the banning of DDT, captive breeding programs, habitat protection, and reintroduction efforts.³ By 1999, the species was removed from the federal endangered species list, and by 2009 from California's list.⁴ Today, peregrines thrive, including in urban environments.⁵

Alignment with District Transformation

The District's transformation mirrors this recovery:

- Removing systemic barriers
- Aligning structures and resources
- Acting with intention
- Accelerating student success

Like the peregrine, success requires deliberate intervention and sustained commitment.

Symbolism and Institutional Identity

Peregrine falcons are known for precision, speed, focus, and adaptability. These traits reflect an institution that moves with purpose, remains focused on outcomes, and adapts to community needs. Peregrines are also the fastest animals on earth, reaching speeds over 200 miles per hour.⁶

A Forward-Looking Identity

Adopting the name Peregrine Community College District represents an opportunity to align our institutional identity with our present-day values and future aspirations. While the District's current name reflects a historical legacy tied to California's colonial land grant era, Peregrine offers a forward-looking identity grounded in ingenuity, resilience, intentional transformation, and collective progress. Inspired by one of California's most remarkable recovery stories, the name change can symbolize our commitment to removing barriers, aligning systems in support of students, and creating the conditions for all students and communities to thrive.

References

1. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Peregrine Falcon Recovery Overview.
2. The Peregrine Fund. History of the Peregrine Falcon.
3. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. DDT Ban (1972).
4. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Delisting Records (1999; 2009).
5. University of California, Davis Health. Peregrine Falcon Overview.
6. National Audubon Society. Peregrine Falcon Species Profile.