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Eagle Statue Recreated and Installed on the Historic Hurlbut Memorial Gate at Water Works Park

- *Eagle and parts of monument completely recreated after being destroyed by lightning in 2019*
- *Teams cleaned and repaired monument using preservation standards to return to original conditions from 1894*

DETROIT – As part of its continued commitment to the community and to commemorate those who started Detroit’s first municipal water system, the Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA) has restored the iconic stone Beaux-Arts eagle statue on the Hurlbut Memorial Gate located at GLWA’s Water Works Park facility.

The statue and monument suffered extensive damage after being struck by lightning in 2019. The eagle has since been completely recreated and was recently reinstalled on the memorial gate. GLWA and its contractors will continue rebuilding other parts of the monument, installing new light fixtures and setting new cement and landscaping. The Authority expects that the project will be finished within the next month, weather permitting. Discussions have also begun to determine how to best recreate the bust of Chauncey Hurlbut, another focal point of the gate, which went missing shortly after the monument was constructed.

“In addition to Great Lakes Water Authority’s role providing water and wastewater service to southeast Michigan, we are committed being good stewards of the communities we serve and this project was one of the ways we can aid in helping preserve Detroit’s iconic history,” said Suzanne Coffey, Chief Executive Officer, GLWA.

Over the last four years, GLWA has worked with Quinn Evans Architects, Ram Construction Services and Metropolitan Stone to repair or replace portions of and clean the entire monument, using the U.S. National Parks preservation standards. The eagle was recreated by stone masons who carved a new statue out of limestone. Fun Fact: the block of limestone used to carve the new eagle came from the same quarry and the same lot that was used to build the Detroit Train Station more than 100 years ago.

Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the monument, which was originally built in 1894, is named after Chauncey Hurlbut, a 19th Century president of Detroit’s Board of Water Commissioners. In 2007, when it was owned by the City of Detroit, Preservation Detroit and local artists helped to partially rebuild it.

“We appreciate everyone who helped with the previous restoration and rebuilding of the Hurlbut Memorial Gate, including Preservation Detroit and local artists,” said Doug Atkinson, Management Professional, GLWA Facilities. “Thanks to our team and contractors, we have been able to build on that previous work to restore this important monument which symbolizes a celebration of water. We are excited that it will now be preserved for generations to come.”

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About the Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA)

The Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA) is the provider-of-choice for drinking water services to nearly 40 percent and efficient and effective wastewater services to nearly 30 percent of Michigan’s population. With the Great Lakes as source water, GLWA is uniquely positioned to provide those it serves with water of unquestionable quality. GLWA also has the capacity to extend its service beyond its 88 member partner communities. As part of its commitment to water affordability, the Authority offers a Water Residential Assistance Program to assist low-income households in participating member communities throughout the system. GLWA’s board includes one representative each from Oakland, Macomb and Wayne counties, two representatives from the city of Detroit and one appointed by the Michigan governor to represent customer communities outside of the tri-county area.