

# News Release

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## **Snowy Plover Nesting Season Begins March 15**

**Southern Oregon Coast** – The nesting season for the western snowy plover begins on area beaches March 15 and runs through September 15. Some area beaches have access restrictions in place during this time to help protect plover nests, eggs and chicks.

After March 15, signs and ropes will mark snowy plover nesting. In the nesting areas, beachgoers will only have access to the wet sand portion of the beach – dry sand access will be closed. Beachgoers can also help the plovers by keeping their dogs on leash when near a nesting area.

The dry sand closures will be in effect for habitat sites at Sutton Beach, Siltcoos Estuary, Oregon Dunes Day Use, Tahkenitch Estuary, Tenmile Estuary (northern Coos County), the North Spit of Coos Bay, Bandon Beach State Natural Area, and New River area beaches. The access restrictions affect approximately 18 miles of beach in Oregon.

“The plovers had a tough time during the nesting season last year due to a variety of factors, and the birds produced the fewest number of young since 2003. This nesting season, more than ever, we need to help the plovers by staying clear of their nesting areas. Hopefully they’ll have better nesting success this year, in part because of the public’s continued cooperation,” said Kerrie Palermo, Wildlife Biologist with the Bureau of Land Management.

The western snowy plover is a small shorebird that lays its eggs and raises its young in the open dry sand. The Pacific coast population of the western snowy plover was listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as threatened in 1993. The primary threats to snowy plover survival are habitat degradation, urban development, introduced European beachgrass, and predators such as crows, ravens, foxes and skunks.

More information on plover habitat and beach restrictions can be obtained from the Forest Service 541-902-8526, or the BLM, 541-756-0100.

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