



## News Release

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

**Southern Oregon Coast** – The nesting season for the western snowy plover, a small shorebird that lays its eggs and raises its young in the open dry sand, begins on area beaches March 15 and runs through September 15. Some area beaches have access and recreational restrictions in place during this time to help protect the nests, eggs and chicks of these threatened birds.

After March 15, signs and ropes will mark snowy plover nesting areas. In the nesting areas, beachgoers will only have access to the wet sand portion of the beach – dry sand access will be closed. ATV use, dog walking and kite flying is also restricted on some beaches.

The dry sand closures will be in effect 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 number of fledgling plover chicks doubled from 2010 to 2011, going from 84 to 168 birds,” said Kerrie Palermo, Wildlife Biologist with the Bureau of Land Management. “People honoring the closures, along with the habitat improvement and predator control projects the agencies are implementing, are getting us closer to recovering the snowy plover population.”

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, European beachgrass introduction, and predators such as crows, ravens, foxes and skunks.

More information on plover habitat and beach restrictions can be obtained from the Forest Service at 541-750-7000, or the BLM at 541-756-0100. Visit <http://www.fws.gov/oregonfwo/Species/Data/WesternSnowyPlover/default.asp> to learn more about the western snowy plover.

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