

# 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 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. ATVs are also restricted on some beaches and dogs must be on a leash while on beaches where plovers nest.

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.

“Last year, monitors found 261 plover nests on the Oregon Coast – a very promising number,” said Kerrie Palermo, Wildlife Biologist with the Bureau of Land Management. “People staying out of the closed areas, along with our habitat improvement and predator control projects, 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, 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 at 541-902-8526, or the BLM at 541-756-0100.

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