

# News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **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 areas and direct the public away from nesting areas. In these areas, beachgoers will only have access to the wet sand portion of the beach – dry sand access will be closed. The access restrictions affect approximately 18 miles of beach in Oregon.

The dry sand protection efforts 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.

“During the 2007 season, plover monitors observed the highest number of adult plovers since monitoring began in 1990,” said Steve Langenstein, Wildlife Biologist with the Bureau of Land Management. “The public’s cooperation, along with habitat work and predator management, is getting us closer each year to recovery.”

The number of plover young that hatch and survive continues to improve each year, thanks in part to the public’s willingness to comply with the access restrictions. The public can continue to help by staying back from roped areas and leashing dogs during this nesting season.

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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