

County: San Diego**ACP Division/Segment:****NOAA Chart:****Map Book:****Decimal Degrees:****Site Description:**

Western snowy plover and California least tern nesting sites are seasonally occupied at various coastal beach sites. Western snowy plovers also maintain a year round presence with nesting from April to August. Beach nesting birds may have active nests, or chicks may be actively moving about the described area. All responders should be careful to minimize disturbance and to avoid causing injury to nests and chicks. Response activities must be planned and monitored to prevent injury to both birds and habitat.

Resources at Risk:

ESI and Habitat: 3A Fine- to medium-grained sand beaches

List of Resources at Risk:

	Resource Name	Status	Presence	Sensitivity
Birds	California least tern	FE, SE	Feb - Sep	
Birds	Western snowy plover	FT, SSC	Year-round	

FT-Federally Threatened, FE-Federally Endangered, FP-Federally Protected, SE-State Endangered, ST-State Threatened, SP -State Protected, SR-State Rare, SSC-Species of Special Concern, BGEPA-Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, SSSP-State Special Status Species

List of Key Contacts:

Type	Name/Title	Organization	Phone
C	/Coordinator	Native American Heritage Commission	(916) 373-3710
C	/Coordinator	South Coastal Information Center	(619) 594-5682
O	/Agency Representative (24hr)	California Coastal Commission	(415) 693-8375
T	Nancy Frost/California Least Tern Survey	California Department of Fish and Wildlife	(858) 467-4208
T	/Southern Communications Center SURCOM	California State Parks	(951) 443-2969
T	/Oil Spill Point of Contact	NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service	(707) 480-3496
T	/Spill Coordinator (24hr)	US Fish and Wildlife Service, Carlsbad Office	(760) 607-9768

C – Cultural, Historic, Archaeological; E – Entry/Owner/Access; O – Other; S – Safety; T – Trustee; X – Exclusion or Security

Additional Site Summary Comments:

Western snowy plovers are small, sparrow-sized white and tan colored shorebirds. California least terns are small, gull-like, gray, white, and black colored diving birds. Western snowy plovers conceal their nests in the upper rack line above the high tide line while California least terns generally nest on open beaches and/or along estuary shorelines. Nests are usually constructed on loose sand, and are easily stepped on due to their very cryptic nature. Chicks are known to run between nests and the waterline. Western snowy plover adults forage while wading along the shoreline. California least tern adults dive into the water to forage in shallow, nearshore areas of the open coast, embayments, estuaries, and dune lakes.

Concerns and Advice to Responders:

Western snowy plover and California least tern bird-nesting sites are typically shallow depressions scratched out from the sand surface on sandy beaches above the highest tide line. The nest sites are typically very well disguised and difficult to see. Nest sites may contain either eggs, or chicks which are potentially vulnerable to trampling by vehicles or foot traffic. Western snowy plover adults and chicks, and California least tern chicks are known to move between the nest sites and the active water line. Over-wintering Western snowy plover adults may be foraging throughout the response area. To aid in avoiding damage to nests, consider delineation of nesting areas and designating responder "pathways" in discussion with Trustee Agencies and/or the local land manager and their biological monitors. Monitors should be present to observe and prevent any disturbance to birds/nests caused by operations. Vehicle travel on beach should be restricted to wet sand if possible; and should be slow enough to avoid and minimize impacts to wildlife (not to exceed 15 MPH).

Hazard and Restrictions:

Watch weather and sea conditions. Strong surf.

Site Strategies:**Site Validation Level: II****Strategy: 6-000.1 Objective:**

Strategy: After approval only, pre-clean beach with hand crews to move and store kelp, driftwood, and vegetative debris above high-tide line. Collect and properly dispose of trash. Redistribute wrack after response efforts are completed. The areas to be protected should be monitored by an assigned biological monitor. Heavy equipment and 4WD vehicles may be used pending approval.

Table of Response Resources

Table of Response Resources

Equipment	Sub-Type	Size	Unit	QTY	Unit	Last Page Update
Staff	Natural Resource Specialist					

Strategy: 6-000.2 Objective:

Strategy: In consultation with USFWS and CDFW, Western snowy plover or California least tern eggs may be removed from nests by authorized and qualified personnel and taken to an approved facility to reduce injury.

Table of Response Resources

Equipment	Sub-Type	Size	Unit	QTY	Unit	Last Page Update
Staff	Natural Resource Specialist					

Logistics:

Directions: Refer to the beach nesting bird maps to identify known habitat in San Diego County. Incident specific information should be developed for known breeding sites, especially during the active breeding season.

Land Access: Refer to coastal access mapping information to describe the best access point for response and natural resource protection. Access by crews and equipment should occur only through areas specifically designated by authorized monitoring personnel. Access points shall be minimized by size and number to reduce impacts. Site specific information will be developed during a response effort.

On-Water Limitations:

Facilities, Staging Areas, Command Posts, Available Equipment: All facilities should be selected to minimize disturbances and impacts to wildlife. All responders will be briefed on procedures for avoiding birds and nest sites.

Communications Problems: None.

Additional Operational Comments: Beaches may be pre-cleaned if given prior authorization. Some beaches have designated fenced areas for nesting. Individual environmentally sensitive sites may have additional Western snowy plover and California least tern information.