



## OCRF Plover Patrol Final Report 2025

We are deeply grateful to OCRF for your partnership in advancing the mission of the Bird Alliance of Oregon: to inspire all people to love and protect birds, wildlife, and the natural environment upon which life depends. Our grassroots supporter base of over 12,000 members, hundreds of active volunteers, and a specialized staff uphold this mission. We envision a region where birds, other wildlife, and people flourish together, and we work year-round throughout Oregon to advance that vision through several programs:

1. Statewide Conservation: Advocating for critical wildlife habitat throughout Oregon.
2. Urban Conservation: Maintaining the Portland-Vancouver region as one of the greenest metropolitan areas in North America.
3. Education: Engaging 3,500+ children and 4,000+ adults annually to foster a stronger connection to nature.
4. Wildlife Rehabilitation: Promoting coexistence with urban wildlife and giving orphaned and injured native species a second chance at life in the wild.
5. Wildlife Sanctuaries: Protecting and stewarding 599 acres of habitat for Oregon's native species.

Beyond serving the general population in Oregon, Bird Alliance of Oregon seeks to build connectivity, common purpose, and collective impact with communities of color, low-income earners, and people with disabilities in the context of conservation.

### Metrics as Outlined in Our Proposal

Thanks to support from OCRF, Tillamook County middle school students were able to engage in Snowy Plover conservation through a program blending art and science offered by Bird Alliance of Oregon, Friends of Netarts Bay WEBS, Seven Capes Bird Alliance, Sitka Center for Art and Ecology, and Oregon State Parks. Students first learned about Snowy Plover life history, the threats they face, and best practices on the beach while in Snowy Plover habitat. The students then created realistic Snowy Plover art, showcasing “good” behaviors by beachgoers near nesting birds. Each student’s art was printed onto reusable yard signs to be placed on the beach to educate the public about nesting Snowy Plovers. The young scientific artists then took a bus to Cape Lookout State Park to put their signage into action at the start of the 2025 breeding season.

We also involved the community in habitat restoration. We enhanced Snowy Plover habitat on the north coast prior to the 2025 breeding season by 1) conducting beach clean-ups in partnership with SOLVE to remove entanglement hazards and waste that could attract nest predators and 2) scattering oyster shells in existing Habitat Restoration Areas at Sitka Sedge State Natural Area and Nehalem Bay State Park to introduce detritus that Snowy Plovers nest near to camouflage their nests.

#### 1. Beach Clean Ups (5 Events)

The goals of our beach cleanups were to engage our community and to enhance snowy plover nesting habitat prior to the breeding season by removing entanglement hazards and predator-attracting waste. These events took place in five locations: Clatsop Spit (Snowy Plover Management Area), Necanicum Inlet in Seaside, Nehalem Spit (Snowy Plover Management Area), Bayocean Spit (Recreation Management Area), and Sitka Sedge/South Sand Lake Spit (Snowy Plover Management Area). A total of 55 volunteers participated in these events, offering



259 hours of volunteer service. We covered 11 miles of beach and carried out about 525 pounds of marine debris. Another 2,100-2,700 pounds of debris were removed with ATVs and trucks by OPRDs. Partners who contributed to these activities included SOLVE, OPRD, Oregon Shores Conservation Coalition, Heart of CARTM, and Lower Nehalem Community Trust.

## **2. Oyster Shell Scattering (2 Events)**

Our second goal was to engage the community in oyster shell scattering, enhancing snowy plover nesting habitat by adding shell detritus in existing Habitat Restoration Areas (HRAs) to provide nest camouflage. At South Sand Lake Spit Snowy Plover Management Area (SPMA) and Nehalem Spit SPMA, we scattered shell throughout the HRAs, focusing on the central area between the vegetation edge to the east and the top of the foredune to the west. This was an area prioritized based on previous nest locations since the creation of each HRA. When tracking nesting activities post scattering at South Sand Lake Spit SPMA (as of 6/2/25), we found 0 nests but did see 44 scrapes prepared for eggs in the oyster shell area. At Nehalem Spit SPMA (as of 6/2/25), we found 3 nests and 21 scrapes prepared for eggs in the oyster shell area. Seven volunteers participated, offering 21 total hours of volunteer service. We also had 6 OPRD staff participating, and distributed 200 bags of oyster shell (about 6,000 pounds) across the 2 HRAs (100 bags each). Oregon Oyster Farm donated the shell fragments for both sites.

## **3. Snowy Plover Education Program with Tillamook County Students**

A third goal of our coast events supported by this grant was to engage Tillamook County 6th grade students in snowy plover conservation and outreach. We educated students about snowy plover life history, breeding biology, ongoing threats, and best practices on the beach. Students each created a unique interpretive sign to be used to educate the public about nesting snowy plovers at sites throughout the north coast. We engaged three 6th grade classes at Neah-Kah-Nie Middle School (39 total students) with four classroom visits, and two 6th grade classes at Nestucca K-8 (44 total students) with three classroom visits. Together, these classes created 74 unique 12"x18" double-sided interpretive signs in English and Spanish. These signs are currently set up at Sitka Sedge State Natural Area, Nehalem Bay State Park, Bayocean Spit, and Necanicum Inlet in Seaside. We hosted a field trip for students on April 11, 2025 at Cape Lookout State Park that included six activity stations: a birding walk, creating mock snowy plover nests, a marine debris game, a shorebird migration game, exploring and journaling bird specimens using microscopes, and putting interpretive signs in the park. The field trip was a great success and included our partners from OPRD, Friends of Netarts Bay - WEBS, Seven Capes Bird Alliance, and the Sitka Center for Art and Ecology.



Students from Neah-Kah-Nie Middle School with their plover signs at the April 11, 2025 event.



Beach clean up at Bayocean Spit, February, 2025.