

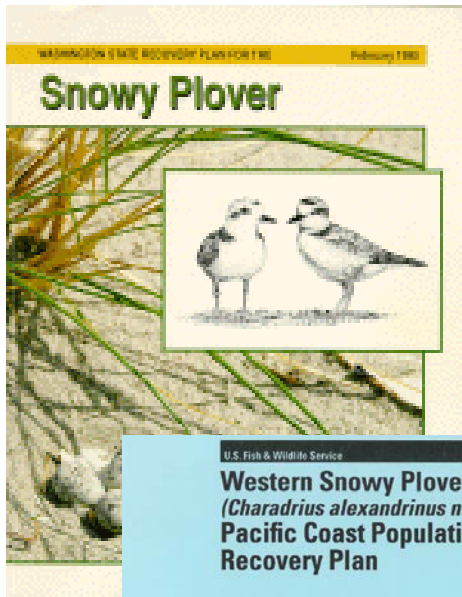
# Periodic Status Review of Snowy Plovers in Washington



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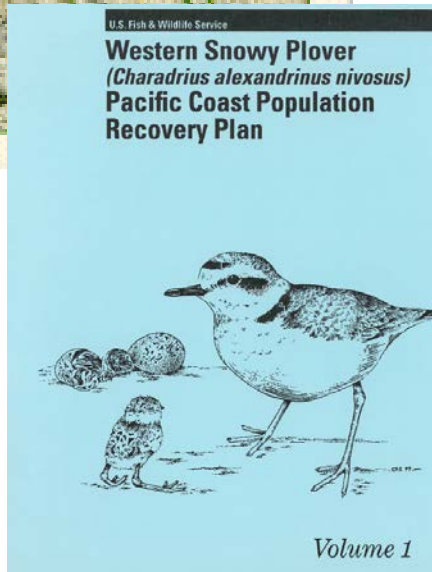


# Listing of Snowy Plover



## State:

- **Endangered** since 1981
- Recovery plan 1995



## Federal:

- Pacific coast population **threatened** in 1993
- Recovery plan completed 2007



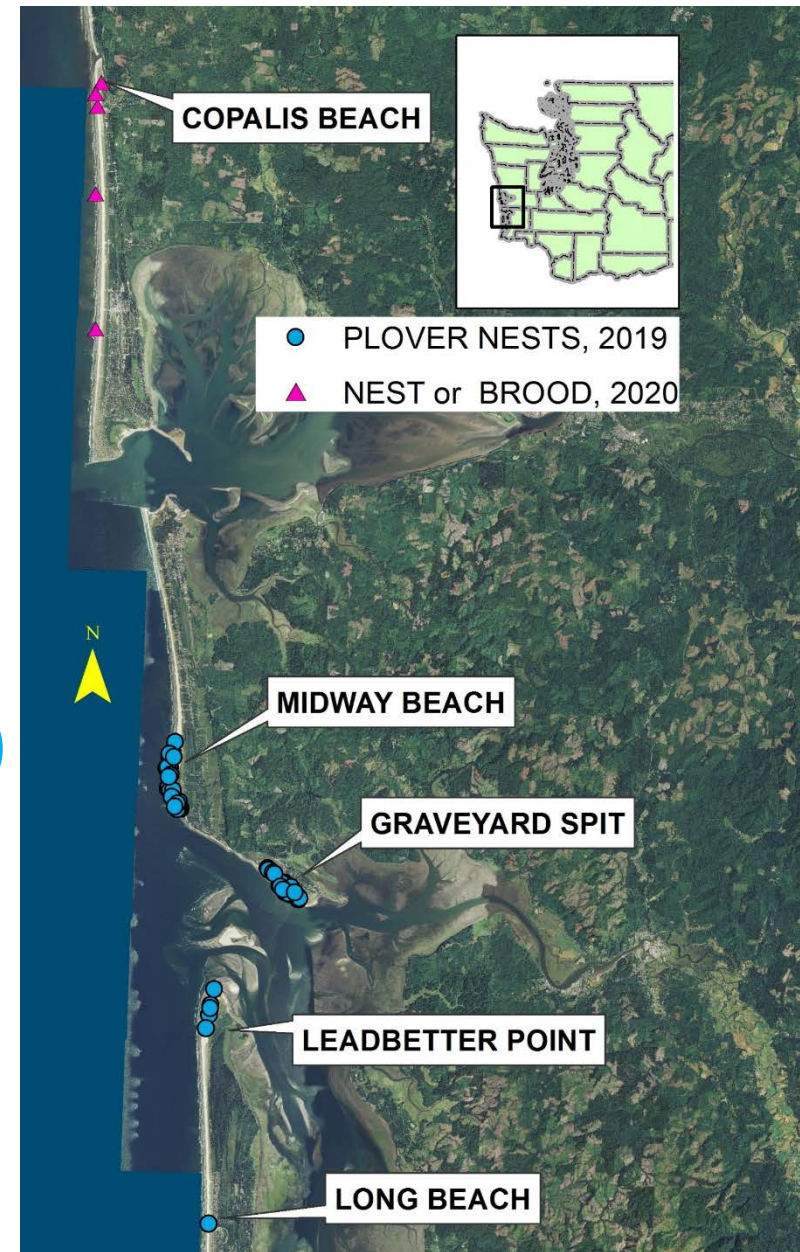


Pacific coast population nests on sandy and gravelly substrates along the coast from Baja, north to Grays Harbor County, WA



# Nesting areas

- Leadbetter Point
- Graveyard Spit
- Midway Beach
- **New/re-occupied 2020**
  - Copalis Beach
  - 'Connor Creek'



# Natural History

- Nest in dry sandy areas, Apr–July
- Often forage on wet sand
- Males rear the brood, females leave, mate again and produce 2<sup>nd</sup> clutch



# Factors affecting plovers:



- Beach stabilization/development of beaches eliminated nesting areas (reduced 68% range-wide)
- Introduced beachgrasses change dune geomorphology, eliminate nesting habitat
- Human disturbance
- Nest/chick predation by subsidized predators



# Factors affecting Plovers in Washington

## Disturbance during nesting season:

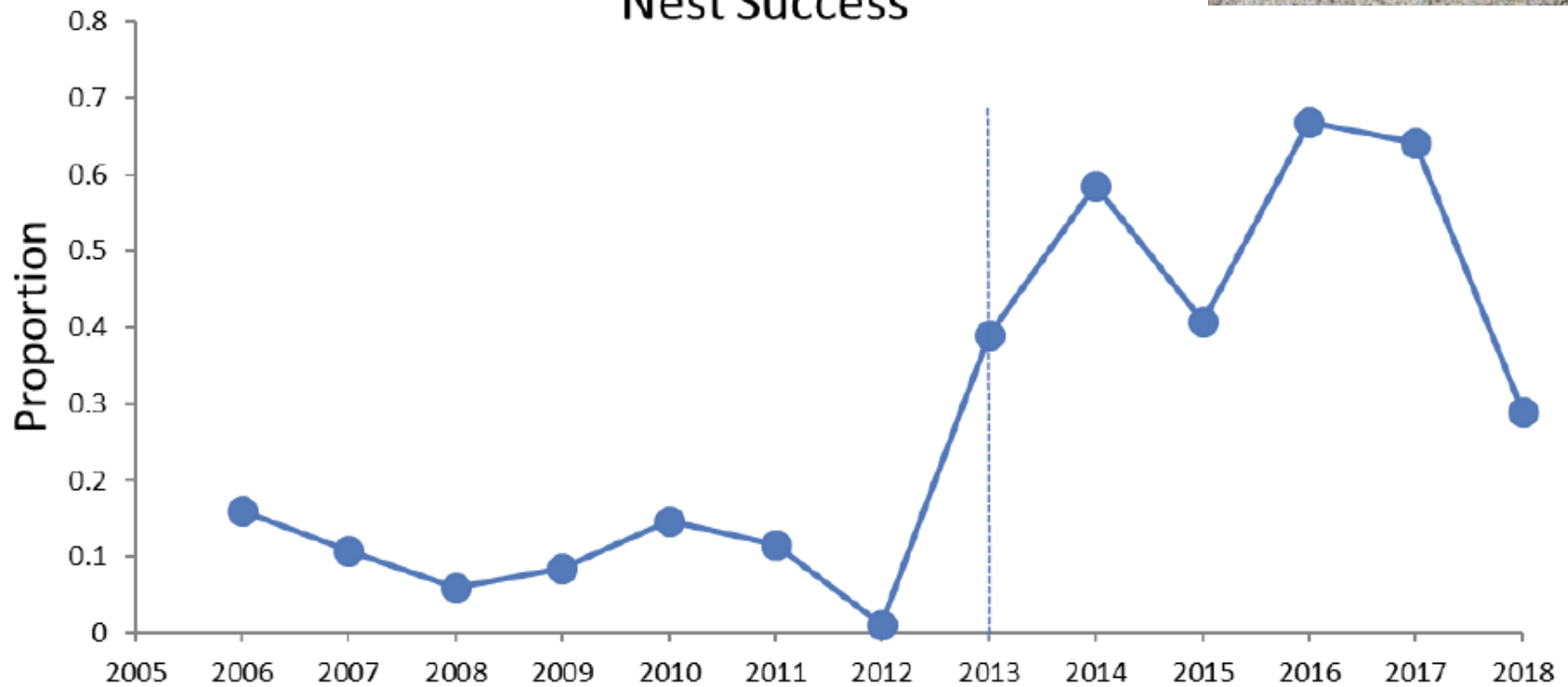
- **Vehicles** straying off the wet sand
- **Dogs** off leash
- **Kites, WPVs,...**
- **People:** razor clam days; 4<sup>th</sup> of July



# How are they doing?



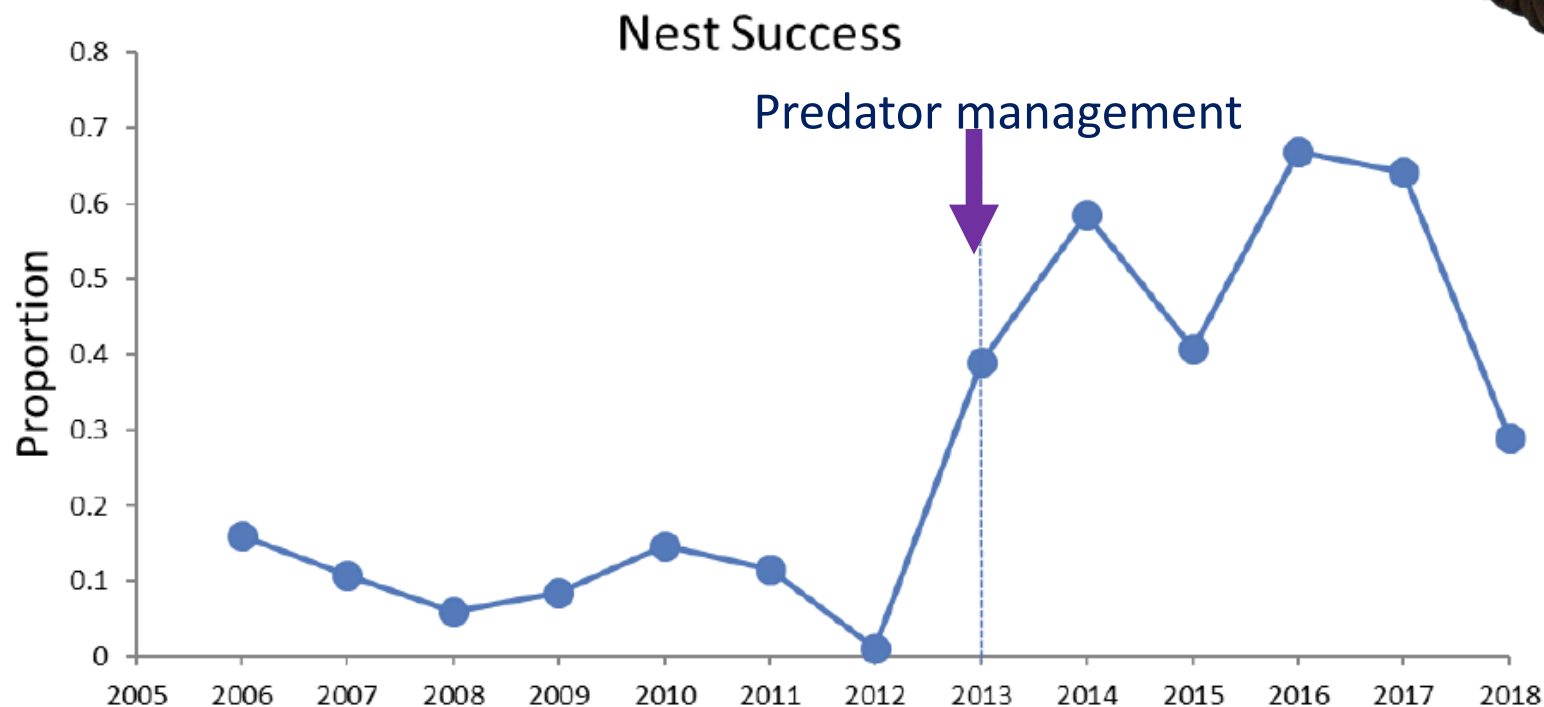
## Nest Success





# Management actions

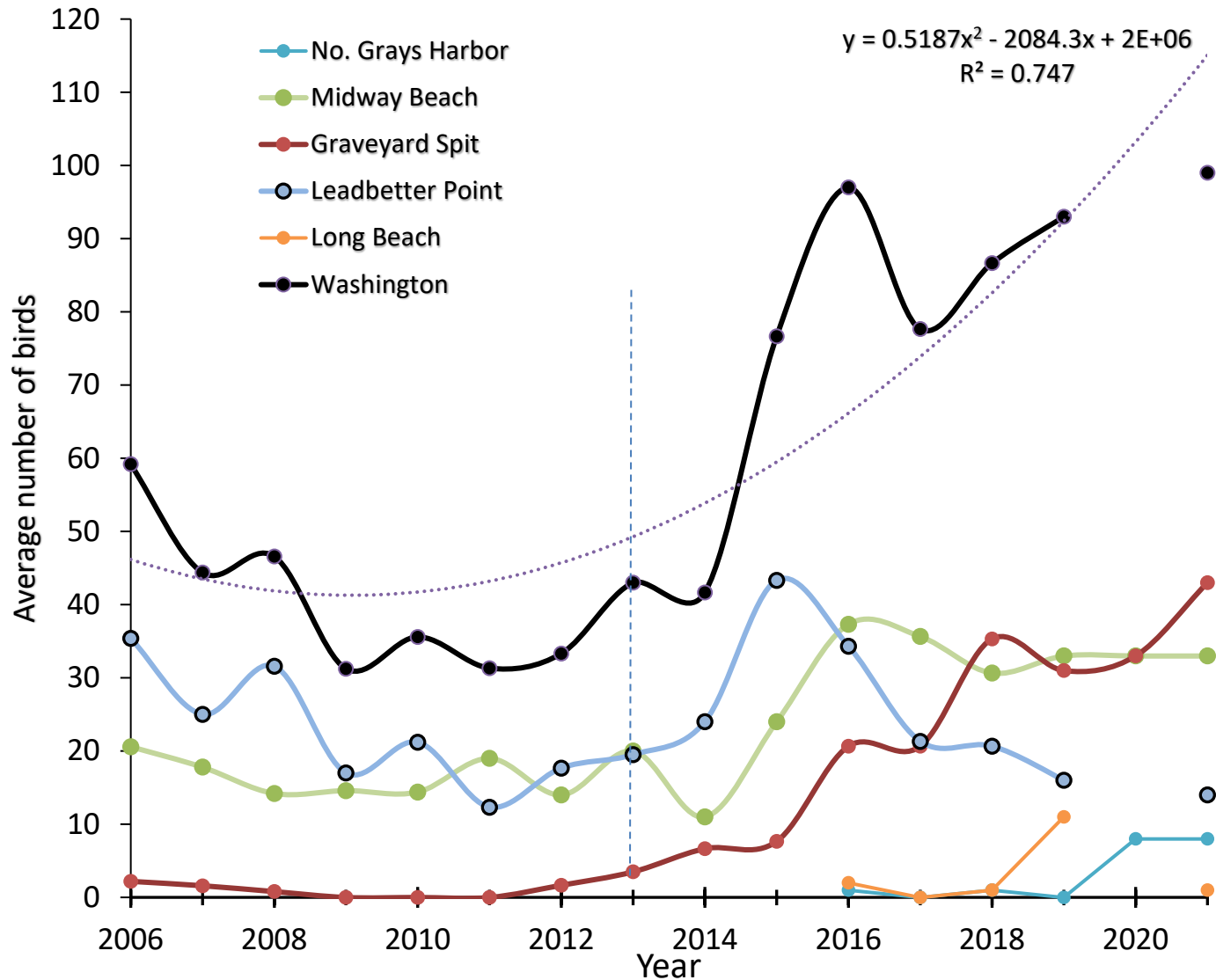
- Active predator management began 2013



- Effectiveness of predator management in WA being analyzed



# Snowy Plover Population Trends



**RU1 (OR, WA):** Oregon—more beach, more plovers;  
source for many Washington plovers

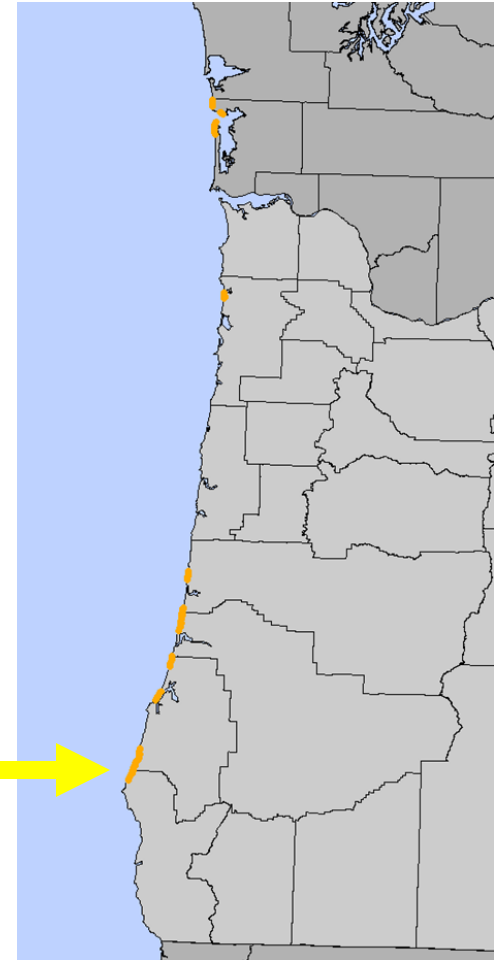
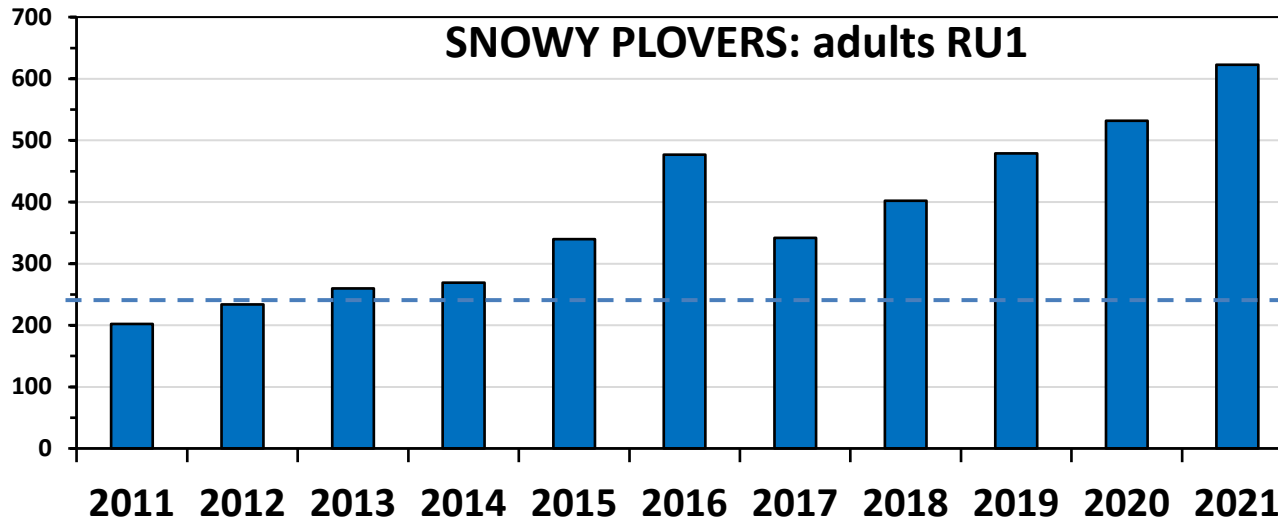


Figure 13. Snowy Plover nests at Bandon SPMA, south of the mouth of New River, Oregon, 2021.



# Management actions

Predator management began in Oregon in 2004



- Recovery Unit 1 (Washington and Oregon) increased from 137 in 2005, to 623 in 2021
- Federal Rec obj---250 breeding adults exceeded for 9 years
- All RUs that implemented predator management have met population objectives



# Management actions



## Management of disturbance

- Symbolic rope fencing along foot trail
- Signage: restrict access on upper beach
- Careful scheduling of clam days, and Enforcement presence
- Portable toilets to reduce intrusions into nesting habitat
- Outreach: radio spot, brochures

## Razor Clamming and Nesting Birds

How you can help protect Snowy Plovers and Streaked Horned Larks



# Management Actions (cont'd)

- Habitat Restoration Area on Leadbetter ~460 acres of refuge and state park lands

## Needs:

- Continued predator management
- Continued cooperation/improvement of disturbance
- Management agreements to increase “secure” nesting areas



# Summary

- Snowy Plovers have increased with management in Washington and Oregon
- Management of disturbance & predators still needed
- Management agreements needed to ensure habitat remains secure
- Snowy Plover numbers remain small
- Climate change?



## Recommendation:

It is recommended that the species remain state-listed as endangered



# Public comments

## 27 public comments

- 5 clearly supported maintaining Endangered status
- 21 form letters expressed alarm at disturbance of birds on Klipsan (Long Beach)
- 1 alarmed at vehicles on beaches
- 0 opposed maintaining status





# State Recovery Objectives: draft revision

- Number of fledged young/male requires ~full time staff for 4-5 months, so nest monitoring suspended after 2018
- However, given WDAC concerns, the revision of recovery plan tabled, pending further analyses



## Related analyses underway:

- Effectiveness of predator management
- Goal is  $\lambda > 1$ ; best metric may not be chicks/male
- Local reproduction; chick and adult survival
- Integrated population model?





# Questions?

## Acknowledgements

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Rod Gilbert

Greg Thompson

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