

## **Conservation Measures for Piping Plover in Mississippi**

1. Do not disturb foraging or roosting piping plovers to the maximum extent practicable. The project area (i.e., operational site, access points, travel corridors, staging areas, etc.) should be surveyed by a qualified biologist for the presence of piping plovers or optimal habitat features (i.e., inlets, bayside sand and mud flats, tidal pools, and wrack lines). Educate personnel on avoiding those areas being utilized by the birds.
2. When piping plovers are identified, vehicle and foot traffic should not occur within 150 feet from the birds or within 10 feet optimal habitat features (even when birds are not present). The recommended buffers should be maintained for the duration of the work activities even if the birds depart or relocate. Personnel and vehicles should follow existing/established travel and access corridors and maintain slow speeds to avoid disturbing birds.
3. Stay 500 feet or more away from high tide roosting areas, including large flocks of shorebirds when possible, as piping plovers may occur in mixed flocks. If birds in the area are repeatedly being flushed (i.e., flying away), then you are too close and need to back away.
4. Designate access points and travel corridors away from known foraging and roosting areas and keep all personnel, vehicles, and equipment within those designated corridors to minimize disturbance to birds and beach topographic alterations. Post and rope, as needed, shorebird foraging and concentrated roosting sites during construction.
5. Avoid driving up and down the shoreline to the maximum extent practicable to minimize disturbance to birds and beach topographic alterations. Keep all personnel, vehicles, and equipment within the designated work area/project footprint and access corridors.
6. Use low-pressure tire (10 psi) or tracked vehicles (e.g., ATVs, dozers, etc.) or consult with a qualified biologist to avoid and minimize beach topographic alterations.
7. Do not block major egress points in channels, rivers, passes, and bays to avoid disturbance to natural coastal processes.
8. Staging areas and waste collection areas should be located to avoid beaches, dunes, inlets, and ephemeral tidal pools.
9. Maintain a clean worksite and remove all trash and work-related debris on a daily basis.
10. Avoid disturbing the wrack line during project work or while traveling to and from the project site. If the wrack line must be crossed by equipment or vehicles, gently rake the wrack out of the way to establish a designated travel corridor for crossing the wrack line. Restore the wrack to its original configuration once access across it is no longer needed.
11. Avoid disturbing bay side sand and mud flats to the maximum extent practicable.
12. Avoid impacts to dune systems, both vegetated and non-vegetated, including trampling any dune vegetation. Use existing designated travel and access corridors at all times. If necessary, establish a buffer with flagging from the toe of the slope of the dune to a distance of 10 feet. Where vegetation extends off the dune onto the beach, the buffer should extend 10 from the vegetation.
13. Do not fly aircraft below 500 feet near bird concentration areas (i.e., foraging and roosting areas).
14. Avoid hovering or landing aircraft near dunes and bird concentration areas (i.e., foraging and roosting areas).
15. Restore beach topography and the wrack line to their natural pre-project conditions to the maximum extent practicable.
16. Poles/pier pilings within 300 feet of shorebird use areas shall be made avian predator free with pointed tops instead of flat tops.