

**Minimum Qualifications for Obtaining a Section 10(a)(1)(A) Recovery Permit for Western
snowy plover (*Charadrius nivosus nivosus*)
(Version Date: April 10, 2024)**

*Note: The document may be revised at any time at the discretion of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife
Service*

Experience as described below may be acquired either under the direct on-site supervision of an authorized individual on a snowy plover permit or by performing the activities on a non-listed congener (*i.e.*, any plover [*Charadrius*] species). Experience monitoring and conducting authorized activities on other birds (not plover species) to the extent which demonstrates high proficiency in avian field work may be substituted in certain limited circumstances, where minimum qualifications have not been explicitly met.

I. For winter surveys, or surveys outside known nesting areas:

- a. No section 10(a)(1)(A) permit is required for this activity, but training (II.e.) is strongly encouraged.

II. For breeding season surveys and censuses all following criteria are required:

- a. Have familiarity with suitable plover habitat within the geographic range of the species
- b. Have familiarity with avian species which exhibit similar life history and physical characteristics
- c. Have familiarity with potential plover predators and how to avoid impacts to plovers
- d. Have familiarity with gauging suitable survey conditions
- e. A minimum of 4 hours of classroom or virtual training are required (Service 2007) on plover topics including:
 - Biology, ecology, and behavior of plovers;
 - Identification of adult plovers, their young, and their eggs;
 - Threats to plovers and their habitats;
 - Survey objectives, protocols, and techniques;
 - Regulations governing the salvage of carcasses or eggs;
 - Special conditions of the existing Recovery Permit;
 - Other activities (e.g., banding, determining incubation stage, erecting exclosures)
- f. Have 20 hours documented and verifiable experience conducting breeding season surveys at location(s) with breeding activity with a permitted individual *or* possess equivalent documented and verifiable fieldwork experience (see section VI below). Breeding season is typically March 1 through September 30, but in southern parts of the range could start as early as February 1.

III. For erecting exclosures around nests:

- a. All requirements for breeding season surveys.
- b. Observed a permitted individual erecting 3 exclosures.
- c. Hands on training by permitted individual on how to erect 3 exclosures.

- d. Have documented and verifiable experience demonstrating the ability to erect 3 enclosures under supervision of a permitted individual (see section VI below).

IV. For handling eggs:

- a. All requirements for breeding season surveys.
- b. Observed a permitted individual handling eggs from 2 nests.
- c. Hands on training by permitted individual on how to handle and float eggs from 3 nests.
- d. Have documented and verifiable experience demonstrating the ability to handle eggs from 3 nests under supervision of a permitted individual (see section VI below).

V. For banding and color marking adults or chicks (including capture methods):

- a. All requirements for breeding season surveys (Section II.). For captive banding programs, only requirements a. through e. must be met.
- b. Meet qualifications for, or already be on a USGS Master Bander’s or Master Station permit to band snowy plover¹.
- c. Observed a permitted individual banding and color marking 3 adults or 5 chicks².
- d. Hands on training by permitted individual on how to band and color mark 3 adults or 5 chicks².
- e. Have documented and verifiable experience demonstrating the ability to band and color mark 3 adults or 9 chicks while under supervision of a permitted individual².

VI. Verifiable Documentation:

The applicant must document their field experience acquired under supervising permitted individual(s) and submit the following information with their recovery permit application:

- a. The name(s) of the supervising permitted individual(s) and their associated permit number(s).
- b. Dates and hours of field experience (protocol surveys) and the type of activity conducted (enclosures, egg handlings, banding, *etc.*).
- c. The number and age class of all plovers detected, observed, and handled in the wild.
- d. The specific locations of the observations (including the County).
- e. Letters of recommendation from supervising permitted individuals verifying the applicant’s ability for all requested activities, *i.e.*, breeding season surveys, erecting enclosures, handling eggs, banding and color marking, and/or specialized activities. At least one letter is required.

EXAMPLE: Survey Experience with western snowy plover. (Your name here)

Date	Location (include county)	Permitted Individual (supervising) and permit #	Hours of Survey	Type of Survey or activity	Species name, life stage, and # handled or observed	Other Notes

March 22, 2021	Big Lagoon State Park, Humboldt County	John Smith (TE-00000) (PER-0000)	8	Breeding survey	Observed 2 WSP adults; observed 2 nests	Collected band combinations on 2 WSP adults
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VII. Specialized Permit Activities:

Specialized permit activities will not be authorized without demonstrated proficiency in conducting the requested activities under the supervision of a permitted biologist.

Specialized activities for plover may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Collect feather and blood samples
- b. Using GPS loggers and transmitters or similar tracking devices
- c. Captive breed and/or captive rear
- d. Administer veterinary care, and/or euthanasia
- e. Use of nest cameras³

¹ In order to band snowy plovers, banders must receive a USGS Master Bander or Master Station Permit upon issuance of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service permit.

² Observation of banding will be based on the goals of the banding project. If the observer is planning to band adults, then only the adult requirements shall be met. If the observer is planning on banding chicks, then only the chick requirements shall be met. If both adults and chicks are to be banded, then both requirements must be met to meet minimum qualifications.

³ Use of ground cameras for monitoring plover nests will be considered on a case-by-case basis depending on research or management needs. Minimum qualifications for this activity are like those listed for conducting surveys *and* erecting nest enclosures (*i.e.*, see section II and III, combined, above).

Literature Cited

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2007. Recovery Plan for the Pacific Coast Population of the Western Snowy Plover (*Charadrius nivosus nivosus*). In 2 volumes. Sacramento, California. xiv + 751 pages.