

How to Handle a Crowd

- Crowd control during a hatch is easy if you and your team are prepared beforehand.
- Employ your team to educate bystanders on what is happening and where they can be during the hatch. Keeping visitors in the loop works wonders, as they will feel like part of the process, and become great sea turtle protectors!
- It is our job to get turtles to the water safely, while ensuring a great experience for visitors. Make sure they are aware of perimeters, how they can help (by kneeling not standing), and what to expect.
- Take a deep breath, and remember this is a very rare and special event to see. Don't panic and lose the magic of what's happening. Yelling at someone is a failure to communicate on your part, and makes the entire project look bad.



Excavation Procedures

- Three days after emergence, the nest cavity must be inventoried for data to provide to the state. Excavations are a major event on our beaches, and our chance to shine as a project.
- To prepare for inventory, make sure your team members are clear about their duties ahead of time. You will need 2 to dig, 2 to count, and 1-2 to help pull sand out of the way as the nest is being emptied.
- The rest of the team will interact with the crowd and answer questions. They can also go around showing a hatched eggshell, allowing people to see it up close... a very exciting alternative when there are no hatchlings left in the nest to release.
- Categories counted are: Hatched, Unhatched, Piped Live, Piped Dead, Live Hatchling, Dead Hatchling
- To begin, gently scoop sand out of the nest, following the soft sand to guide you into the nest cavity. Use your fingers to loosen the sand to carefully free any live hatchlings. Live turtles will begin to make their way to the ocean immediately.
- Once the inventory is completed all items are placed back in the nest cavity and sand is packed back over it. Decomposition of these items provide nutrients to the sand for the health of future nests.

These little hatchlings are sometimes weaker than those from the hatch and deserve to be treated with care. They are not to be passed around or posed with. This does not represent the protection we are there to provide. We only handle hatchlings when absolutely necessary.



Hatchling Release



- As the nest inventory is being conducted, any live hatchlings still in the nest are released, to crawl down the same runway path their siblings used on their way to the ocean.
- Sometimes these hatchlings need to crawl a little to wake up, get their lungs functioning, flippers moving, and of course to set their compass (imprinting). They should be allowed to make their way to the water on their own, even if it takes a little while. Remember they have been stuck in that nest for 3 days.
 - Some of our hatchlings won't make it, but it is our responsibility to give them their best chance... and their best chance is in the water.
- There will need to be plenty of room along the shore for this event. Crowds can close in fast when there are hatchlings to see. In order make this event safe for hatchlings and enjoyable for humans your team must be in control. You will need to set up a perimeter at the tideline (with team members on either end) for crowd control.

Return Of Nest Materials

- After your nest is done, it's time to get the equipment cleaned up and ready for the next nest. All materials must be returned in good condition, clean and bundled the way it was prior to use.
- Silt Fence: Carefully loosen the sand around each stake of the silt fencing, taking caution not to yank it and break the stake (this makes the entire roll unusable). Once the fencing has been pulled up, sweep off sand from both sides and roll up in one direction only. Tie leftover pieces of flagging tape around it to keep it rolled up for the next team.
 - For those who have a nest with a long runway, this task can seem daunting due to the amount of material needed... however, when the whole team works together, this process can be completed easily in just a few minutes.
 - You may even find excited bystanders jumping in to sweep sand & roll up material with you just to be a part of the process! (Don't let the work make you forget how lucky we are to be a part of such amazing events!)
- Stakes/PVC Poles: Sand needs to be knocked out of the pvc poles, and all orange tape removed from poles and stakes.
- Tools: Rinse out your bucket, and place mallet, orange tape, gloves, and any other PISTP tools, in it.

