



# *Nest Prep Orientation*

*Last updated 2024*

# Prep for Day 50 (sometimes still referred to as “trenching”)

- Nests are typically prepped on day 50 at 7:00 pm. (7pm is to allow the summer heat from the day to ease off and minimize public disruption.) The last few years we have prepped nests a day or 2 before day 50 due to high temperature incubation and early hatches.
  - In 2024 we began prepping CB nests at 7 in the morning. Parking is free until 9am, so this allows teams to bring folks along that want to lend a hand with prep. (It is often much cooler in the morning too.)
  - Your prep date will be scheduled with your team ahead of time, and you will have on-site instruction/assistance for proper nest prep.
- Many nest leaders make ID tags for their team that shows nest number and volunteer name. Bringing these to your prep is a great tool to help you all get to know each other.
- Material/Equipment – Runway material will be provided for the appropriate length of beach in front of your nest. There will also be additional stakes/poles and flagging tape for the perimeter around the nest to be marked off. One rubber mallet and spreader will be provided to keep at the nest for maintenance.



# Digging Trenches for Silt Fencing



- You and your team will work together to dig a narrow trench (8-10 inches deep) around the back of the nest, and down both sides towards the tideline.
- These trenches must be deep enough to secure the fencing. This helps the fencing withstand weather (and tourists leaning on it), potentially pulling up portions of it.
- After the trenches have been completed, the whole team will work together to drop each roll of fencing in place one roll at a time.
- Prepping a nest typically takes about an hour. Secure fencing means hatchlings will be safe in the runway, unable to escape from underneath.

# Installing Silt Fencing

- Unroll the silt fencing to find the mid point of the longest roll, placing it directly behind the middle of the back of the nest.
- Using a rubber mallet, pulling the material tight, hammer the stakes in to keep them in place.
  - Tip: Angle the **bottom** of the stake **out** prior to pounding it in... this pulls the fencing material tight and helps avoid loose flapping.
- Once the fencing is in place you will need team members on both inside and outside filling sand back into the trenches to secure the fencing.
- Do not poke holes in the fencing for any reason. The fabric is woven, and this will cause it to fray and wear, making it unusable.



# Runway



- Keeping the runway the same width as the nest area will ensure hatchlings have a somewhat natural journey to the ocean (as they tend to fan out naturally). This is also a guideline from the NCWRC.
- There is no need for shovels here. It is too easy for hatchlings to climb over slanted runway berms, so the best way to keep them inside the runway is to keep it nice & flat (with the proper runway equipment set up).
- Making a small straight 90° angle barrier/berm (with damp sand) at the end of your runway is a simple/effective way to keep hatchlings on a straight path to the ocean; and is much less work than shoveling giant berms.
  - Deep shoveled runways are a safety hazard to PD/Fire/Rescue or anyone else who must patrol the beach.

# Emergency Access



- Emergency vehicle lanes are at the top of the beach. If your nest is in/near the dunes, and your runway crosses this lane, the silt fencing must have a 15-foot break in the runway to allow emergency vehicles to pass through on the beach. Your runway can resume after the break, given there is enough beach before the tideline. Landscape edging will be used in the emergency access... it keeps hatchlings safely in the runway but can be driven over by emergency vehicles.
- If your nest has 15 feet of access behind it to the dunes, you will not need a break in your runway.

# Nest Perimeter

- Once the silt fencing is complete, using pvc poles and flagging tape, we will mark off a perimeter around the nest, closing off entry points to this area and the runway.
- The size of the perimeter should be 50 feet on all sides per the state, but will be determined at your nest prep based on the landscape and public accesses near your nest.
- Only the team for this nest is allowed inside this area, giving you space to work when hatch time comes.



- Prep sometimes coincides with rain... but the nest must be prepped so the hatchlings have the protection they need to make it to the ocean safely.



- Now that your nest is prepped and ready... the fun begins!



- Enjoy the next week or 2 of bonding with your team, interacting with curious beachgoers, and anticipating the arrival of your precious hatchlings!

