

The U.S. Shorebird Conservation Partnership

Building Collaborative Action for Shorebird Conservation

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Dr. Rob Clay
Director, WHSRN Executive Office
rclay@manomet.org

Dear Dr. Clay,

The WHSRN-USA Committee of the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Partnership Council has reviewed the site modification request for Salt Plains National Wildlife Refuge for elevation to a WHSRN site of International importance and a slight increase in size of the designated area. We support the upgrading of the site to one of International importance and the inclusion of additional mitigation acres.

Starting with the range-wide survey of Snowy Plovers in 2007 and repeated breeding surveys from 2013 to 2017, an average of 4,672 SNPLs were present on the Salt Plains NWR during the breeding season. This breeding abundance represents 20.4% of the Interior/Gulf Coast population and 18.1% of North American Snowy plovers (*Charadrius nivosus nivosus*). The counts were remarkably consistent, with a coefficient of variation (SE/mean) of only 7.2%. Although the count type is indicated as an "extrapolation", the provided estimates were generated from a statistically rigorous survey.

Therefore, we recommend that the WHSRN Executive Office accept the modification request from Salt Plains NWR.

Sincerely,



Robert L. Penner II
Chair, WHSRN-USA Committee
The Nature Conservancy

cc: Suzanne Fellows
Darrin Welchert
Brian Smith
Brad Andres
Laura Chamberlin