

Project Update: June 2015

June has been a busy month making beach profiles before the peak nesting season for Pacific Ridley sea turtle begins in July. We have been focusing on two main nesting areas with heavy ATV traffic. Migriño Beach and Todos Santos. Migriño beach has four - five active ATV tourism groups while Todos Santos beach has more ATV activity due to local residents, both Mexican and foreign, driving on the beach for fun or for coastal fishing access. We have support from local residents and government staff to conduct beach profiles and record nest coordinates. We will be comparing these areas to our control beach where there is no ATV driving except for biologist nesting patrols and a high density nesting habitat. On 16th June 2015, we successfully hosted a beach profile training workshop with six local foreign residents in Todos Santos, following our successful workshop in Migriño of 10 Mexican residents.

So far, we have trained the local community members of each beach area to continue to conduct beach profiles throughout the nesting season and then after to calculate erosion and accretion of the beach. With this data combined with the nesting coordinate data, we can begin to quantify threats from ATV use on nesting beaches and make recommendations for nesting habitat protection in these areas.

The community group in Migriño has offered to make a beach sign to alert tourists who choose to go on these ATV trips about the laws protecting sea turtles and also an endangered least tern. Since there is very limited government action, we anticipate these are the first steps to protecting these beaches and creating a more conscience best practices for beach tourism in the region. With this information, we can successfully create the first phase of the Model for Conservation Tourism focusing on beach protection for nesting female Pacific Ridley.



New group formed to help monitor beach profiles in Todos Santos



Beach profiles showing a 5 m sand escarpment created from storm surge from Hurricane Blanca that passed by early June 2015.



Final segment of profile training in the eroded area