

Natural Floodplain Functions

Santa Rosa Island, its beaches, and adjacent waters are not just a location for flood problems. They also perform some very valuable natural functions.

Learn more about these natural floodplain functions first hand by walking our [Eco-Trail](#). Sand dunes help break the action of waves that would otherwise slam into buildings farther inland.

- Sand dunes are our first line of flood defense- protect them by using the walkovers.
- Rules on walkovers can be found [in this PDF](#).
- See also, the state guidelines on [landscaping on beach front properties](#).

The beaches also provide nesting areas for birds, sea turtles, and other marine fauna. We do many things that affect where sea turtles nest.

- Night-time human activity can prevent sea turtles from emerging on the beach or even cause females to stop nesting and return to the ocean.
- Beach furniture and other recreational equipment (e.g., cabanas, umbrellas, hobie casts, canoes, small boats, and beach cycles) can reduce nesting success and increase false crawls on nesting beaches.
- Artificial lighting adversely affects their annual visits to our beaches to lay their eggs. You can get ideas for better lighting from the [The Navarre Beach Sea Turtle Conservation Center](#).

The open areas to the east of the developed area is a designated, and critical, wintering and nesting habitat for several endangered shore birds. Check Visit [Pensacola Beach Eco-Trail](#) site for more information on our feathered friends.