

The Power of One Dataset: Custom Data Applications Used to Integrate PIT Tag Information with Study-Specific Data

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The Columbia River Basin PIT Tag Information System (PTAGIS) was developed to provide “a centralized source for real-time PIT tag data accrual, storage, and exchange”. The power and ease of use of PIT tag information can be enhanced using custom data applications to (1) simplify the exchange of datasets between PTAGIS and study-specific databases and (2) automatically enter PIT tag codes into electronic data entry forms via a serial port connection between a PIT tag reader and a desktop, laptop, or handheld (PDA) computer. Incorporating PTAGIS compatible features into a custom MS Access database can allow users to store both study-specific data and PIT tag related data in one dataset. PIT-tag related information can then be extracted from the dataset into PTAGIS-ready files, thus greatly simplifying the PTAGIS data submission process. Similarly, data from PTAGIS can be downloaded and imported into a custom data application where the user can easily conduct automated data analysis, summarization and reporting. Finally, by creating electronic data collection forms that incorporate (1) automatic entry of PIT tag codes; (2) data validation and error checking capabilities; (3) pull down lists of specified data variables or codes; and (4) auto entries the efficiency, accuracy, and flexibility of PIT tag data handling can be increased.