




Newsletter

PIT Tag Information Systems

Columbia Basin



**Replace Your Lithium Batteries
Now or Lose Data Later!**

See page 2 for details.

Adult PIT Tag Detectors to be Installed at Bonneville & McNary for 2002 Returns

Adult PIT tag data from all fish ladders at Bonneville and McNary dams will be available in the Spring of 2002. This marks the first year that significant numbers of fish, marked during the first year of the ISO PIT Tag systems, will return as adults.

The NMFS 2000 Biological Opinion requires that PIT tag detectors be installed at appropriate Federal Columbia River Power System projects prior to the expected return of any adult salmon from the 2001 juvenile out-migration (Section 10.5.1.6).

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PITTag3 Update

Development for P3 (PITTag3), the latest version of the tagging data entry and validation software, is almost complete. Portions of the new software were presented at the January PIT Tag Steering Committee meeting.

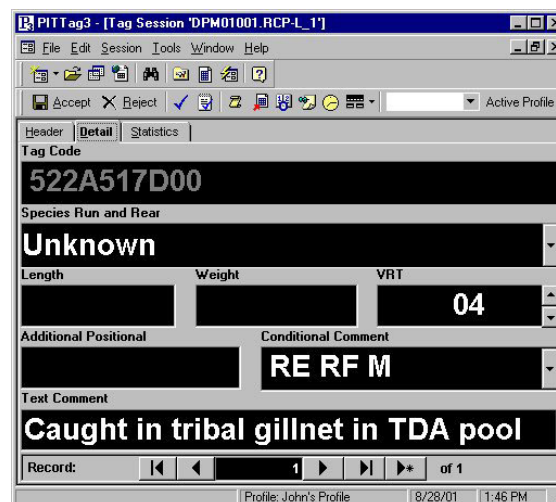
We listened carefully to the tagging community on ways to improve this application. We were able to incorporate many of the requested features and maintain our goal of keeping the software easy to use and learn. P3 has been developed

from the ground up and the scalability of the new architecture will allow us to grow with future needs. Speaking of scalability, most program screens, including the data entry windows, are now fully resizable, to best take advantage of your monitor’s size and resolution.

(“PITTag3” continued on page 5)

The PTAGIS Newsletter is published periodically by the PIT Tag Operations Center (PTOC). We welcome input from the PTAGIS community, so feel free to call (503.650.5400), fax (503.650.5426), e-mail, or write us with your story ideas. If you have any questions regarding the contents of this publication, or about the PTAGIS program, please contact Carter Stein, PTAGIS Program Manager. Editing and layout by Liza Bauman. Unless otherwise noted, contributors include Carter Stein (carters@psmfc.org), Dave Marvin (dave_marvin@psmfc.org), and John Tenney (john_tenney@psmfc.org). The PTAGIS program is administered by the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, 45 SE 82nd Drive, Suite 100, Gladstone, Oregon 97027.

Date of Issue: September 14, 2001



Replacing the Lithium Battery in DF-2001F Portable PIT Tag Transceivers

The lithium battery in the DF-2001F transceiver has an advertised shelf life of five years, but its operational life is much shorter, often only 2.5 years or less. The current from the lithium battery maintains the transceiver's menu settings, real-time clock, and any data stored to the unit's internal files. When the lithium battery fails, the menu settings revert to the default factory parameters, and any existing data files are erased. You may not receive any warning that the lithium battery is about to fail, or already has. The transceiver manufacturer, Destron-Fearing Corp., recommends that you follow these instructions to replace the lithium battery every two years in order to prevent the unexpected loss of data or function in your DF-2001F transceiver.

Tools:

- #1 Phillips screwdriver
- #2 Phillips screwdriver
- Credit card (or any plastic type card)
- 1 Lithium Battery (Panasonic CR2016 or similar)

Before You Begin:

Scroll through and jot down your menu settings, so you can restore them at the end of the battery replacement procedure. Charge the main battery prior to replacing the Lithium battery.

- 1) Remove the yellow boot by pushing upward with both thumbs at the top of the boot near the Destron-Fearing logo.



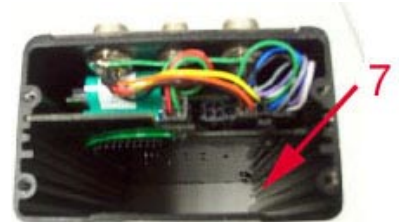
- 5) Place the reader on a flat surface with the bottom facing up. Disconnect the battery connector (red, black, and white wires) by pushing on the bottom release button and pulling outward.



- 2) Remove the connector covers.
- 3) Remove the 4 Phillips screws securing the top end cap to the unit.
- 4) Remove the 4 Phillips screws securing the bottom end cap to the unit.

- 6) Remove the main battery by grasping the aluminum plate and pulling it out. DO NOT PULL ON THE WIRES.

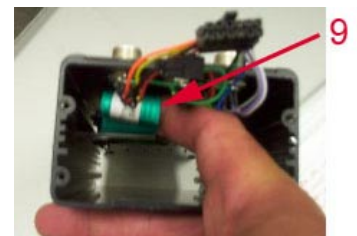
- 7) Pick up the unit and slide the circuit boards inward slightly and disconnect the larger 12-pin connector in the same manner as the battery connector.



- 8) Pull the circuit boards outward and remove the 4-pin connector. You may need to move the other wires slightly to gain access to the connector.



- 9) Push the circuit boards inward while pulling gently on the ribbon cable with your index finger. As you continue to slide the board inward, the connector should disengage and the boards should slide out freely.

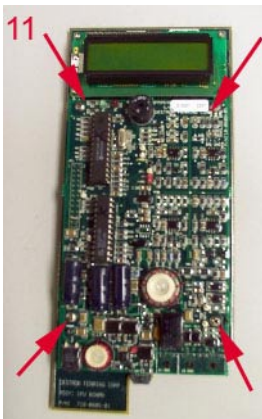


- 10) YOUR UNIT SHOULD NOW APPEAR AS SHOWN BELOW:
("Battery" continued on page 3)

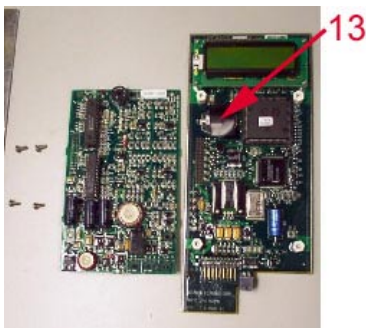
("Battery" continued from page 2)



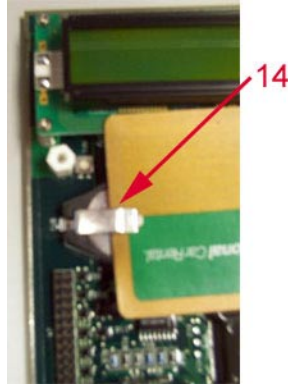
- 11) Remove the four Phillips screws in each corner of the large circuit card.



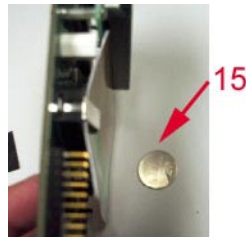
- 12) Gently pull the two circuit boards apart.
- 13) Remove the protective tape over the lithium battery.



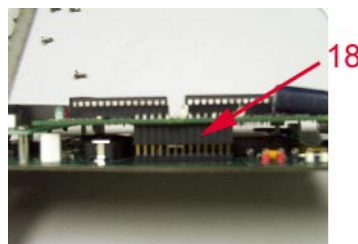
- 14) Using a rigid card (similar to a credit card), bend the sides of the card up and slide it under the battery retaining clip until the battery is not visible. BE CAREFUL NOTTO DAMAGE OTHER AREA COMPONENTS.



- 15) Turn the board on edge slightly past vertical and the battery should fall out. You may need to pull out slightly on the card to release the battery.



- 16) Remove the credit card and install the new Lithium battery (Panasonic CR2016 or similar). The printing on the battery should be face up and visible.
- 17) Replace the protective tape that was removed in step 13.
- 18) Put the two circuit boards together by aligning the connectors located on left edge of each card.

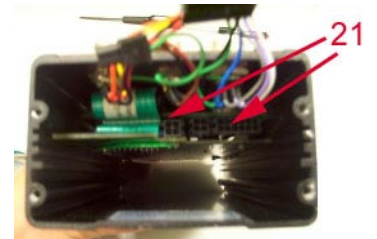


- 19) Install the 4 Phillips screws that were removed in step 11. Tighten until snug. DO NOT OVERTIGHTEN.

- 20) Slide the circuit card assembly in from the top. While sliding in the assembly, be sure to align the pins of the keypad ribbon cable and engage it as you fully insert the cards.



- 21) Place on a flat surface and reconnect the 4- and 12-pin connectors that were removed in steps 7 and 8. You may need to slide the boards back to get the clearance necessary to fully engage the connectors.



- 22) Install the battery as shown and reconnect. Wires from the other connectors may need to be moved. When finished with this step, ensure that all wires are secure inside the housing. Also verify that the grommet on the battery plate is seated properly.



("Battery" continued on page 4)

("Battery" continued from page 3)

- 23) At this point set the unit face on the table and turn on the power. Verify the keypad operations. If they do not work properly, check the **ribbon cable connector**. Next hook up the antenna, the RS-232 cable, and the power supply. Verify proper functionality by reading tags, and seeing them on the computer. Attempt to issue a command to the 2001F and see that the unit is charging or indicates external power with the "plug" character in the upper left corner of the unit display. If any items do not function, check the connections on the three black connectors and that no wires were broken in the process. When completed, remove all external cables.
- 24) Replace both end caps by applying equal pressure on each of the 4 Phillips screws, alternating between the farthest screw that was not tightened previously. **DO NOT OVERTIGHTEN.**
- 25) Put the connector covers on and place in the protective boot.
- 26) Verify the reader by retesting the keypad, the RS-232 port, the antenna, and the battery charger/power supply.
- 27) **IMPORTANT!** Swapping out the lithium battery will reset the transceiver's settings to the default factory options. You must set the menu options to match your previous configuration, from the values you recorded at the beginning of this procedure. Be sure to set the 'Send to CommPort' option to ON.

("Adult" continued from page 1)

In January and February 2001, PIT tag orifice detectors were installed into 12 weirs in the Washington Shore Fish Ladder at Bonneville Dam. Based on the positive results from fish tests conducted this past spring and the low number of maintenance issues that have arisen, the Action Agencies (BPA and COE) are moving forward with plans to install orifice detectors into the other three ladders at Bonneville Dam (Bradford A & B Branches and Cascades Island) and the two ladders at McNary Dam. The in-ladder installation work will start in December, for both dam locations, and finish by the end of February. NMFS and PSMFC are assisting BPA and the COE in these efforts.

ISO refers to the International Standards Organization. The PITTag System used in the Columbia River Basin utilizes the 134.2 kHz 11784 and 11785 FDX-B (full-duplex "B") standards. It does not implement half-duplex (HDX) technology, and is not backward compatible with the old 400 kHz PIT Tag System that was in exclusive use in the Columbia River Basin through 1999.

Installing adult detectors in the Washington shore ladder at Bonneville Dam



Installation of ISO interrogation systems at additional dams will be considered at various regional forums during 2001 to produce an acceptable future installation schedule. These forums include the:

1. Fish Facility Design Review Work Group
2. System Configuration Team
3. Fish Passage Operations and Maintenance
4. Scientific Review Work Group
5. Fish Passage Advisory Committee

For further information on adult PIT tag interrogation capabilities and program development, please go to <http://www.pittag.org/web/AdultPit> on the PTAGIS website.

("PITTag3" continued from page 1)

Some of the new features in P3 include:

- Device configuration is not limited to a single serial port as in PITTag2. P3 supports multiple devices connected to multiple serial ports (see Figure 1 at right).
- Support for WinTab digitizer boards.
- Profiles will allow you to maintain multiple configuration settings.
- Header templates have been expanded to allow greater customization of the tag header. Field labels can be modified and fields that are not required can be hidden.
- The clip file verification feature has been replaced by 'Actions', which can be configured to notify the user if the tag code is inclusive or exclusive of a set of tags (see Figure 2 at right).
- Select one or more tag sessions, press a button and automatically submit your data into PTAGIS.
- Additional sound alerts, a resizable tag session window, customizable statistics, a global search and replace feature, robust import/export capabilities, merge tag sessions with a click of a button, and more.

Development and testing of P3 will continue through the summer. Once the beta testing is completed, John and Dave will conduct a series of their famous bi-directional training seminars to introduce the tagging community to P3.

Figure 1: Serial port configuration

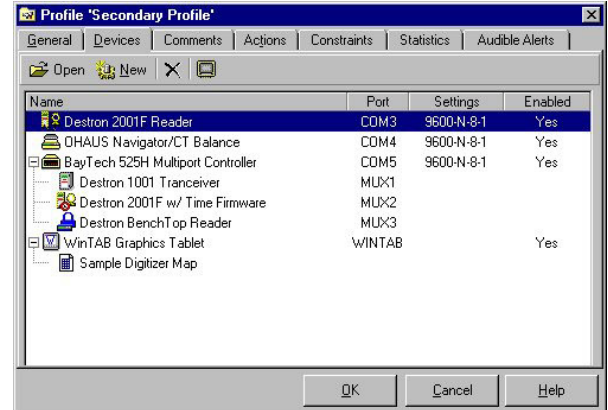
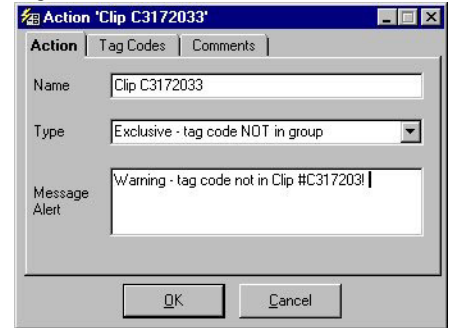


Figure 2: Actions



PTAGIS Software Compatibility with Windows ME and Windows XP

Microsoft Windows ME—short for Millennium Edition—is designed for individual home users, not for business. It's an upgrade from Windows 98 SE that features advanced multi-media and home networking support. In addition, it contains system file protection, system restoration capability, and integrated help; some reports say these functions considerably decrease the overall performance of the PC.

We don't currently run Windows ME on any of the PTAGIS lab computers. However, Microsoft asserts that Windows ME is 100% compatible with all software designed for a Win32 platform, and we're not currently aware of any issues with this operating system. If you experience any problems with a PTAGIS application related to Windows ME, please let us know ASAP.

We have tested all of the PTAGIS software applications (PITTag2, P3, and PTTTP) with Windows 2000 professional and did not encounter any problems.

Microsoft just released Windows XP to computer manufacturers, and will release it to the general public later this year. At that time we will test all of the PTAGIS software applications on the XP platform, and report any problems we might discover.

Are Serial Ports Going Out of Style?

If you're purchasing a new laptop and you're expecting to use it for marking or interrogation, make sure it ships with a standard serial port. Some of the lower end laptops from Gateway and Dell are not shipping with a standard 9-pin serial port.

If you purchased a laptop without a serial port, you may still be in luck. If your operating system supports USB (Win95 B,

Win98, Win2000, Win ME), you can purchase a USB to Serial adapter/hub to extend the number of serial ports. These devices can also be used to replace the Baytech Multiport for the new PITTag3 software.

Below are known products for USB to Serial conversion. Products range from multi-function hubs to single serial port adapters.

Product	Company	Description	Price	Contact
RocketPort USB Serial Hub	Comtrol	4 serial port hub	\$209.00 - \$395.00	www.comtrol.com (800) 926-6876
AccelePort USB	Digi	4-8 serial port hub	N/A	www.digi.com (800) 551-4797
WhiteHeat	Connect Tech	4 serial port hub	\$349.00	www.connecttech.com (800) 426-8979
6 Port Multi-Function USB Hub	Entrega Tech./ Xircom/Intel	4 serial port/2 USB port hub	\$179.00	www.xircom.com (805) 376-9300
USB Gear DB-9 Serial PDA Adapter Cable (Win 98 Only)	USB Max	Single serial port adapter	\$32.95	www.usbmax.com (888) 850-9543
USBG-S25s and USBG-232s	USB Gear	Single serial port adapter	\$29.50 - 32.95	www.usbgear.com
Ruggedized Dual Serial I/O PC Card # SL0723-116	Provantage	Two serial ports from a PCMCIA (PC) card	\$168 - \$178	www.provantage.com

Mr. Know-it-All Ponders Your Pervasive and Pernicious PIT Tag Problems

Dear Mr. Know-it-All:

All of my old data have disappeared from the PTAGIS database! I can find all my data files since 1991 on the PTAGIS server, but when I query the database for tagging or interrogation data, I can't find anything before January 1, 2000. Where'd all my data go?

*Furiously,
Liven N. dePast*

Welcome to the modern world. When querying the PTAGIS database for your 1987-99 data, be sure to use a four-digit year in any dates in the query form. Two-digit years default to the 21st century (e.g., entering "1/1/99" is resolved as "1/1/2099"). You'll see the full date on the input form, so there shouldn't be any confusion.

Dear Mr. Know-it-All:

I've created a number of Registered Tag ID lists for multiple sites and years. I use these lists to update my reports every few months. I'd like to leave these lists in the "out" directory in my personal account space on the PTAGIS file server, but the lists keep disappearing, and I have to reload and re-register them. Is there a way to keep these files on the PTAGIS server indefinitely?

*Sincerely,
Mr. Sett N. Maiwheyze*

In order to ensure that we provide enough disk space for all of the nearly 300 accounts registered to PTAGIS users, we regularly delete most user files or reports more than 30 days old. We make an exception for files with a ".sav" extension,

("Mr. KiA" continued on page 7)

("Mr. KiA" continued from page 6)

such as "MyTagList.sav". If you plan to use a registered tag list repeatedly, such as to check for interrogations or recaptures over the course of the migration season, name that list with a ".sav" extension before uploading and registering it with PTAGIS. Please be considerate of the disk needs of other PTAGIS account holders; do NOT name your PTAGIS reports with ".sav" extensions. Regardless of the file names and extensions you use, please delete all input and output files from your account directories when they are no longer needed.

Dear Mr. Know-it-All:

I have been querying PTAGIS data to construct a survival analysis using the SURPH program, and I'm getting blank columns of data in the CSV output files. Using the observation data format that SURPH requires, my queries are producing blank columns for information regarding second coil readings. Similarly, my queries in the tagging file format are producing blank columns for Species and Rearing-Type. Why?

*Sincerely,
A Survivalist*

In the PTAGIS database, there are NO data in the "coil2" field for any interrogation data records created using either the MultiMon.exe or MiniMon.exe software; this essentially covers all interrogation data collected since 1997. Many interrogation records from 1987-1996 DO contain values in the coil2 (and even coil3 and coil4) fields; this occurs ONLY when the same tag was read on multiple coils during the same second, AND the event was recorded using the (now obsolete) Monitor.exe software. Since 1997, those simultaneous events are reported in separate interrogation detail records, with one record per unique tagcode/coil/time-stamp combination. Each interrogation record in the PTAGIS database includes an "nreads" field; this field contains the number of coil detections identified within the record. If you are utilizing data from 1987-1996 concurrent with more recent interrogations, and you want to standardize on the current format, then you'll probably need to manually transform any records with an "nreads" value > 1 into separate data records. If you're working strictly with recent (>1996) data, then all of your records will have one and only one coil identifier, always in the "coil1" field.

When you define a "Tagging Details" query, the "S", "R", and "T" columns in the input form refer to the "Species", "Run", and "Rear_Type" codes associated with each tag record in the PTAGIS database. However, when you define your report's CSV output, it's extremely important that you specify the "t_species", "t_run", and "t_rear_type" fields, and

NOT the more obvious "Species", "Run", and "Rear_Type" fields. The "t_species", "t_run", and "t_rear_type" fields refer to the corresponding TAG DETAIL values, while the "Species", "Run", and "Rear_Type" fields reference the (archaic) TAG HEADER values. Populating the header with the predominate SRR values was the common convention for data entry prior to 1996; that methodology became obsolete in 1996, when SRR values became mandatory for each tag detail record. Every tag detail record in the PTAGIS3 database contains values in the "t_species", "t_run", and "t_rear_type" fields; some records (most prior to 1996) also contain "Species", "Run", and "Rear_Type" fields from their respective data file's header. When those files were loaded into the PTAGIS database, any null "t_species", "t_run", or "t_rear_type" values were assigned the defaults from the corresponding "Species", "Run", or "Rear_Type" header fields. In the case where the data file contains information collected from mixed stocks, you'll often see disparate values for the header and detail versions of the three fields. For example, a data file generated back in 1994 from a screw trap on the Grande Ronde might list the predominate SRR combo as "15U" in the file header, and this value would be applied by default to all records in the file. If a chinook was identified as originating from Lookingglass hatchery, the the SRR codes in the detail record might have been changed to "11H"; similarly a wild steelhead might have been identified in the detail record with an SRR code of "32W". When that file was processed by PTAGIS, the tag detail values present in that file took precedence over the header values. If you were to look at the records from that file, as instantiated in the PTAGIS database, you'd see "Species", "Run", and "Rear_Type" field values of "1", "5", and "U", respectively for ALL records from that file, but there'd be different values in the "t_species", "t_run", and "t_rear_type" fields where the tagging personnel entered "11H" or "32W" in the detail records. In summary, when selecting "Tagging Detail" fields for CSV output, ALWAYS use the "t_species", "t_run", and "t_rear_type" values.

Dear Mr. Know-it-All:

How can I get all my 2001 tag files from PTAGIS so I can compare them with my original versions?

*Sincerely,
Xavier Y. Zanadu*

If by "get" you mean "view the status" of your tag data files, you can view this information directly on the web by browsing to our PTAGIS "Data and Reports" page at "http://www.pittag.org/Data_and_Reports/index.html" and then clicking on the "Tag File Contents Summary" link in the Web

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("Mr. KiA" continued from page 7)

Queries section. Type "XYZ01%" in the "Files like:" section on the left side of the form, click on the "Year" radio button in the center section, and press the "Submit Request" button. The returned list contains the most recently processed versions of all "XYZ01" files received by the PTAGIS database this year, with the number of different record types processed per file, as well as a cumulative record summary. You can also view the contents of individual data files. If, before you run the query, you select the "File" option under the "Output" section of the form (and if you are using Netscape Navigator or Internet Explorer version 4.0-5.0x, but NOT IE 5.5), the list of tag files will be delivered in a comma-separated value (CSV) file, which you can load directly into your Excel or Quattro for further analysis.

If by "get" you mean "retrieve" your data files from our file server, there are two ways to do this. If you want to retrieve just one or two files, use your web browser and navigate to "http://www.pittag.org/Data_and_Reports" and then click on the "Raw Tagging Files" link in the Data section. Then follow the links to the XYZ files for 2001. You'll see a directory listing of all versions of XYZ01 files loaded to the PTAGIS database. Note that the filenames have an extra "-L_x" suffix tacked on to the file extension. This indicates the "load sequence" for each file, where the "x" is an integer value, starting with "1". Where there are multiple file versions, the file with the largest load sequence value is the version that was most recently loaded to the database (and replaced any previous version). Make sure you retrieve the most recent version of any data file. To download a file, RIGHT-click on the filename link (this brings up a menu window) and then click on the "Save Link/Target As..." option.

If you want to download more than a couple of data files, you can speed things up by using an FTP client, such as WS-FTP. Log into "<ftp://ftp.psmfc.org>" as an anonymous user, navigate to the "/pub/pittag/data_loaded/tagging" directory, and then drill down to the XYZ/2001 directory. You can select multiple files for download; make sure you ignore all but the most current version of each unique filename.

2002 PIT Tag Forecasts

The 2002 PIT Tag Forecast Letter will be distributed to Fish and Wildlife Program project sponsors by September 1, 2001.

To ensure that your PIT tags are available for your project in time for marking, please return the completed form to Renee Barrett (renee_barrett@psmfc.org) by Oct. 1, 2001.

Flagging Adult Recaptures

Did you know there are special data codes to identify "adult returns" of PIT-tagged fish? This includes newly-tagged or recaptured PIT-tagged adult salmon and steelhead recovered at hatchery weirs and racks, or intercepted as they are swimming upstream. There has been a standard convention since 1998 to denote the marking or recapture of adult PIT-tagged fish, but this was not specifically documented until 2001 (see "Adult Returns" in section III.A.3.e.2 of the 2001 PIT Tag Specification Document). Here are the requirements and some of the conventions for recording the tagging or recapture of "Returning Fish" in a standard Tag File for submittal to the PTAGIS database.

- 1) Flag the record to denote a Returning Fish (by inserting the "RF" code in the Conditional Comments field).
- 2) If the fish was tagged previously, then add the recapture (RE) flag.
- 3) If this is a terminal capture event then add the mortality (M) flag.
- 4) Depending on circumstances, you might also flag certain fish as Immature (IM), Jack (JA), Kelt (KL), or Mature (MT).
- 5) If you can sex the fish, then add the Male (MA) or Female (FE) flag.

As always, provide only as much data as you have confidence in. For example, if you're handling a fish, you should be able to determine, and provide, the species information. You may not be able to determine what run your adult chinook recaptures are from. In that case, leave the definition at "unknown." If the fish is ad-clipped, and unless you know differently, it's a safe bet to classify the fish as "of hatchery origin." Conversely, a fish with its adipose intact may yet be of hatchery origin, so you probably won't be able to positively identify it as a "wild" fish.

If you are recording hatchery returns at the rack and again at spawning, consider consolidating this information into a single data record. The initial observation may only provide the date of return, but that can subsequently be appended with size and sex data from the later (and likely more detailed) examination. If you're recapturing these fish at a given site over an extended period of time, you can assign a release time variable to each group of fish (generally each day's recaptures), and report all of the adult recaps for that site in a single PITTag2 Tag Session. Maintaining all of your adult recapture/mortality data for the year in a common Tag Session also makes it easier to identify and modify records of previously-detected fish. If you choose to consolidate recoveries from multiple days in a single Tag Session, you

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("Flagging" continued from page 8)

can accumulate your adult tag/recapture/mortality records over the course of the field season, and export and submit the data file to the PTAGIS database at the end of the season. Alternately, you can revise the data file periodically, appending and/or modifying data records as necessary, and submit the updated data file using the "TAGGING CORRECTIONS" upload protocol.

Filtering PTAGIS E-Mail Messages

It's been almost two years since the PIT Tag Operations Center implemented an automated process for receiving, validating and loading Tag Data files to the PTAGIS database. This has been an almost unqualified success as we switched from batch processing to "near real time" incorporation of your tagging, recapture, and mortality data records. The new process includes enhanced messaging capabilities, and direct routing of those messages to the data contributor's local e-mail address.

While most responses to the new data acquisition process have been positive, the only complaint we've heard (over and over and over again, thank you) is that we're sending too many messages back in response to your data submissions. Some of you are so frustrated with the volume of messages generated that you've disabled your automated e-mail forwarding from within the PTAGIS database application. This is unfortunate, as using this method to "block" the confirmation messages for uploaded data files also prevents your ability to receive your (compressed) PTAGIS database reports via your local e-mail address.

There's a much more efficient way to filter unwanted confirmation messages generated by our data-acquisition process, while still allowing the receipt of important PTAGIS "exception" notifications AND your compressed query output files. Before we discuss how to do this, let's first look at the types of messages generated during your data file upload activities.

For each Tag File you upload to PTAGIS, we normally respond with an e-mail receipt message from "pittag@sockeye.psmfc.org". The Subject line of this message contains "Received [yourfile]"; where [yourfile] is the name of the data file.

Note that we generate one message for each data file received, NOT each e-mail received. So, if you attach six data files to a single e-mail, we cheerfully generate six receipt messages, one for each data file attached. If you zip 50 data files together and send the zip file as a single attachment, we'll dutifully send back 50 receipt messages. Only in the case where we successfully receive and

recognize your Tag File do we generate an e-mail message as "pittag@sockeye.psmfc.org" with the word "Received" in the subject.

After sending the successful receipt notification, we scan your data files and verify that each record meets the format and content requirements specified in the current PIT Tag Specification Document. If so, we generate an e-mail response (again, for each validated data file) as "pitdata@psmfc.org" with a subject of "Validated [yourfile]".

If we detect any errors in file format or content, we move the file to our data "errors" directory and generate a message as "pitdata@psmfc.org" with a subject of "Validation Failure [yourfile]". The body of the message details each of the errors detected in the file.

If you upload a file to PTAGIS using the Tag File process, but don't include a valid Tag File, you'll receive a message from "pittag@sockeye.psmfc.org" with a subject of "Unable to process your pittag data".

If you attach a new tagging file to PTAGIS but refer to a subject of "TAGGING CORRECTIONS"; you'll get a message back from "pitdata@psmfc.org" with a subject of "Refused [yourfile]" and a detailed description of the problem in the message body; this also occurs when previously-processed files are resubmitted in an e-mail with a subject of "TAGGING". For each of your data files, you will normally receive an e-mail message from "pitdata@psmfc.org" with the word "Validated" in the subject.

After each of your uploaded files are successfully validated they are moved to our loading queue, where they are processed in a matter of seconds. Once the Tag File is loaded to the database, we generate yet another e-mail message, again as "pitdata@psmfc.org"; and normally with a subject of "Loaded [yourfile] SubmitSeq [x]"; where [x] is an integer indicating the number of times the contents of the file have been loaded to the database. If, during the load process, we detect duplicate tag codes in the file, then we load those codes to our PTAGIS tag_dup_data table, and change the subject of the e-mail message to "Dups Rejected [yourfile] SubmitSeq [x]". We will confirm the loading of a "clean" file with an e-mail containing the word "Loaded" in the subject.

Using this information, you can easily filter and delete any "normal" confirmation messages from PTAGIS, but still receive any "exception" and "error" messages. Current e-mail clients, such as Netscape Messenger or Microsoft Outlook (and Outlook Express) contain tools to automatically filter (and delete) certain messages, using criteria that match a given sender and/or key words in a subject. To create a filter in Microsoft Outlook, point to "Message

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("Filtering" continued from page 9)

Rules" on the Tools or Message menu, specify that it's a "Mail" rule, check the boxes under "Conditions" to filter on the "From" and "Subject" fields, check the box under "Actions" to delete messages matching the criteria, and then click on the hyperlinks in the "Description" area to specify the sender and subject strings to filter. If you use Netscape Messenger, point to "Message Filters" on the "Edit" menu, and simply fill out the incredibly intuitive filter-creation form for a new filter.

Data contributors who currently receive three confirmation messages for each data file submitted can eliminate two of these messages by filtering the "normal" response from our "Received" and "Validated" processes, keying on both the values of the "sender" and "subject" fields.

Do NOT filter the confirming "Loaded" message, as the body contents of that message provides an audit of the disposition of records loaded to the various PTAGIS database tables, such as new tags, recaptures, duplicates, etc. You should NOT filter the "exception" messages (including the "Dups Rejected..." message) generated for files you have personally uploaded, as these provide a direct alert and description of problems in your data files.

Many Tag Coordinators have registered their program's tagging crews' addresses with the PTAGIS server, so the

crews can submit their data files directly to PTAGIS. In addition, the Coordinator registers his or her own e-mail address in order to directly receive their compressed output from PTAGIS data queries. In this situation, the Coordinator may be inundated with PTAGIS e-mail messages resulting from data files submitted by his or her field crews. This is because we provide the Coordinator with a copy of each file-processing message that we send to the data file's originating address. Under these circumstances, Tag Coordinators can filter out the normal "Received" and "Validated" messages, as described above. They may feel comfortable blocking the normal "Loaded" messages, as well. In this specific case, where the Tag Coordinator is not directly uploading data files and is simply receiving copies of messages, it's their decision whether or not to block the various "exception" messages generated during the file transfer and processing steps.

In summary, many people don't configure their PTAGIS account to forward their database output to their local e-mail address, because they don't want to also receive a bunch of auto-generated PTAGIS file processing messages. By filtering out the unwanted messages, you can reap all the benefits of direct e-mail communication from PTAGIS at little, or no, cost. Filtering out those unwanted messages now will also prepare you for the inevitable day (and it's coming soon, folks!) when your PTAGIS account requires a forwarding e-mail address.

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