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Patuxent Wildlife Research Center

RE-ENGINEERING OF THE NORTH AMERICAN BIRD BANDING PROGRAM

The Bird Banding Laboratory (BBL) of the U.S. Geological Survey and the Canadian Bird Banding Office (BBO) of the Canadian Wildlife Service jointly administer the North American Bird Banding Program. A panel of experts has reviewed the policies and operations of the BBL. The Panel's report made numerous recommendations regarding procedures, policies, and electronic data management. As a result, operations of the BBL and the BBO are being redesigned to increase efficiency and effectiveness, especially by taking advantage of the widespread availability of personal computers, the Internet, client-server technology and user-friendly software.

IMPROVEMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTED:

- A toll-free telephone number (1-800-327-BAND) has been established and advertised to increase band reporting rates. Public response has been good, and the number of bird bands reported has increased substantially.
- New software and hardware have been acquired to support converting BBL's computer system to the client-server model including an on-line relational database.
- Home Pages have been developed by BBL (www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbl) and BBO (www.cws-scf.ec.gc.ca/nwrc/bbo)
- New software, called BAND MANAGER, has been developed to enable banders to manage their banding data and submit them electronically to the banding offices.
- A bander training and certification program has been developed by the North American Banding Council. The first training and certification sessions will be held in September 1999.

IMPROVEMENTS UNDER DEVELOPMENT:

- Electronic submission of recovery data
- Redesign of the banding and encounter record format
- Electronic notification to banders of band encounters
- Electronic quarterly encounter report to State and Federal agencies
- Data access via the web
- Revised permit policies
- A recapture/resighting database
- Electronic processing of auxiliary marker sightings
- Continued work on web sites

Department of the Interior
U.S. Geological Survey
Biological Resources Division

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