

Release Notes for Pisces version 2.4

Release Date: **September 20, 2007**

We are pleased to announce the latest release of Pisces, version 2.4. In this release, we have built upon and enhanced functionality introduced in the last release, adding many new features and enhancements in the areas of attachments, wildlife crediting, publications searching, and data layers for location and focal species. We have also created a new tab for tracking cost share data. Maintaining and reporting cost share data enables us to demonstrate the diverse participation in Fish and Wildlife Program implementation, and facilitates improved continuity, cohesiveness, and effectiveness of the actions implemented by many entities.

You will be prompted to upgrade to the new version when you log in. The log in dialog now includes a text field called “Go Direct”, where users can enter a contract, project, or contract request (CR) you’d like Pisces to open. You can also access the Go Direct feature from within Pisces from the menu File → Open, or by pressing CTRL+O.

Look for the new “Most Recently Used” feature in Pisces’ File menu, which displays “Recent Contracts” and “Recent Projects”. You can choose the number of contracts and projects Pisces displays in this list through the Preferences tab on the Tools→Options menu.

Pisces is a web-enabled software application aimed at helping BPA and its Fish & Wildlife program participants track and manage projects throughout the Columbia River Basin. Pisces allows contractors and BPA project managers to collaborate on project definition and ongoing project management over the internet.

New features in Pisces version 2.4 include:

1. Cost Share Tab

The Fish and Wildlife Program must be able to identify and confirm the amounts and sources of cost share funding for each of its projects, and the new cost share data entry will enable our project sponsors to provide us with the most up-to-date information. This is especially important for project work in areas of shared responsibility, where cost sharing can demonstrate that BPA’s funding is not supplanting (or “in lieu” of) that of another entity already authorized or required to undertake the activity.

- a. The new Cost Share tab displays the amount and source of cost share funding (if any) that a sponsor identified during the project proposal process. BPA asks that sponsors update this information once per year, by October 31.
- b. After the close of each fiscal year, individuals identified as Project Leads in each Project Contact List will receive email notifications inviting them to confirm and/or update their cost share information in Pisces. Notifications will only be sent for those projects that had a BPA approved budget for the previous fiscal year.
- c. The Pisces team will proactively grant write permission at the project level to all Project Leads so they can enter data on the Cost Share tab.
- d. Pisces will send a notification to the BPA Project Manager when cost share “actuals” have been submitted by the Project Lead. The Project Lead will receive a notification from Pisces when the BPA Project Manager has confirmed receipt of their updated cost share data.
- e. Pisces will send reminder emails to Project Leads who have not entered updated cost share information. These reminders will go out Nov 1, Dec 1, and Jan 1. If updated cost share information is still missing after Jan 1, “reminders” will take a different form.
- f. Guidance for entering cost share data, including a glossary of terms, will be posted at <http://www.efw.bpa.gov/contractors/costshare.aspx>. BPA Project Managers will be available to advise sponsors about how to complete this activity.

2. Attachments

- a. Pisces now supports the uploading of attachments at the project level.
- b. Users can quickly move an attachment from a contract to project level via right-clicking on the attachment and selecting “Move Attachment to Project”.
- c. To ensure duplicate attachments aren't uploaded, Pisces will warn a user when they attempt to upload a document that it has already been uploaded under the same project. Pisces will not allow duplicate documents to be uploaded if they already exist for that project or one of its contracts.
- d. If the primary author of a project-level attachment is not already on the Project Contact list, Pisces automatically copies the contact from the contract to the project when a user moves an attachment. After the move, Pisces notifies the user that the contact was copied to the project contact list. However, a contact's write permissions do not automatically transfer from the contract level to the project level. Write permissions at the project level must be granted separately.
- e. Users can now attach documents and photos at the work element level during status reporting. COTRs (Contracting Officers' Technical Representatives) and other users will be able to view attachments associated with each WE when reviewing a status report.
- f. The Add/Edit Attachment dialog and the Attachment grid have been enhanced as follows:
 - The WE selector in the Add/Edit Attachment dialog, when called from the Project Details Attachment tab, will prepend the contract number to the work element using following format: [ContractNum] - [WE_Letter]: [WE_ID]. [WE_Title].
 - A "View" button has been added to the bottom left corner of the Edit Attachment dialog to allow access to and management of the attachment.
 - A new "WE Ref" column displays the WE letter and ID associated with the attachment.
- g. The Attachments tab will now include a "Report Covers" label for Progress Reports, displaying the performance period dates covered by the report.
- h. The Attachments tab will also include an "Attached To" label, which will display CR/Contract or CCR/Amendment numbers for contract package attachments (e.g. Line Item Budgets and Property Inventories).

3. Enhanced Publications Search Capabilities

The [“Search Publications”](#) web interface, which provides online access to Pisces attachments deemed “Web Public” (e.g. Final Progress Reports), now supports Google-powered full text searching, and searching by authors using a free-form text field.

4. Wildlife Crediting

BPA is responsible for mitigating the impacts to wildlife caused by the development and operation of the dams of the Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS). Through the use of the Habitat Evaluation Procedure (HEP), loss assessments identify "Habitat Units" (HU) lost due to construction and inundation behind the dams. The HUs are measured or estimated and then credited against the loss assessment for the dam being mitigated.

In the last release of Pisces, wildlife crediting information was migrated from an older database, and is now entered and tracked in Pisces. In the current release, we've made several improvements to this functionality.

- a. The Wildlife Crediting user interface has been enhanced to allow editing of Parcel information, and HEP

reports are associated with the selected Area/Parcel.

- b. Pisces will now generate reminders for follow-up HEP surveys on wildlife areas.
- c. Wildlife crediting reports have made a great leap forward in this release: users can now access dynamic, real-time wildlife crediting reports, based on the latest information from Pisces, from the application and on the web through the [Fish and Wildlife Program Report Center](#). (Previously, wildlife crediting information was posted on BPA's wildlife crediting web pages in static reports updated semi-annually.)
- d. Impact Assessment reports and HEP reports are now available on our Search Publications page. NOTE: Impact Assessments are no longer allowed as an attachment type in Pisces. The Pisces team will migrate all existing HEP Reports from their existing contract-level locations to the project level.
- e. A [glossary of wildlife mitigation terms](#) has been published as a companion to these reports to help viewers understand how the data were generated and compiled.

5. Work Location and Focal Species Data

- a. For focal species, updated ESU (Evolutionarily Significant Unit), MPG (Major Population Group), and other population data is now available for Program reporting.
- b. For location data, Pisces will now dynamically retrieve the appropriate "geo-attributes" whenever a location is created or updated, and will store those in the Location Property table. These location properties will also display in the "identify" popup window on the Project and Contract Map.

6. "No Deliverable" Option for WE# 132, Produce (Annual) Progress Report

In the past, BPA has required an annual progress report for every Fish and Wildlife Program contract. For many years, these reports were the Program's only means for demonstrating that contract deliverables were being received and project-level objectives were being met. With the advent of Pisces status reporting, the Program is now able to report the progress and accomplishments of Fish and Wildlife Program contracts and projects with greater frequency, confidence, and transparency than ever before. In some cases, separate annual reports have become redundant and unnecessary.

We are thus modifying our reporting policies, and adapting Pisces, to allow a "no deliverable" option under WE# 132 for those contracts in which Pisces status reporting and/or other contract deliverables (e.g. report-like products such as manuscripts, plans, etc) are sufficient to document contract results, and for contracts whose results will be incorporated into a project-level report produced by another contract. Please see "[Guidelines for Joint Reports](#)" for additional guidance about multiple-contract reports.

NOTE: As a general rule, the results of data collection, analysis/interpretation, develop/design and other , monitoring and evaluation work elements will almost always require progress reporting beyond Pisces status reports.

- a. In order to document that reporting requirements have been met, we will continue to require that [WE# 132, Produce \(Annual\) Progress Report](#), be included in every Fish and Wildlife Program contract. In cases where no annual progress report is required, COTRs will indicate that "No Deliverable" is required under this work element.
- b. In such cases, the COTR and contractor *must* use the WE Description field to document the reason(s) why no report is required. This field should also include links to reports of other contracts or documents in which the results of this contract might be found.
- c. When a report *is* required under WE# 132, Pisces will now verify that the report has been uploaded when the contractor marks this deliverable complete.
- d. Since some contracts have multiple WE# 132, users will be asked to select the instance of WE# 132 – via a new field/dropdown list in the Attachment tab -- that corresponds with the report they are uploading.

For more information about Fish and Wildlife Program reporting policies, please see:

- [Reporting Requirements web page](#)
- [Progress Reports and Technical Publications](#)
- [Content and Formatting Guidelines for Publications and Reports](#)
- [Reporting RM&E Results](#)
- [Guidelines for Joint Reports](#)

Fixed Bugs and Enhancements

While most bugs are encountered by only a handful of users, it can be frustrating if you happen to be the one using the application when it does something it shouldn't, or doesn't do something it should. Although it is customary to describe the bugs themselves in a list such as this, we prefer to describe the fixes, i.e., what works correctly now that the bugs have been "exterminated".

- The Work Element Description field now includes a tooltip reminding Pisces users to describe their methods. Including methods is especially important for work elements that involve potentially ground disturbance, so that our staff can assess impacts and ensure environmental regulations are met.
- In the Attachments tab, the Title field character limit has been increased from 100 to 200, per request from users.
- Also in the Attachments tab, a "Report Covers" column has been added to display the performance period for project-level reports.
- Milestone changes are now tracked on the SOW tab.
- In the Contract SOW tab, the "Inits" and "Modified" columns will be updated upon a save or refresh.
- When using the Explorer Contracts grid, clearing the date in the filter row will no longer clear all other filters.
- In the Project Map tab, users can now change the map extent without losing focus in the project/contract list.
- The Project Details > Summary > Contracts tab's right-click menu options are now consistent with those in Explorer > Contracts.
- Primary Author is now displayed in Edit Attachment dialog when reviewing a project attachment.
- The Role Definition for "Supervisor" has been updated to include BPA supervisors.
- While setting up notifications/reminders, the email subject and body will now be displayed.

Training materials to help you understand and use the new features will be posted on our website at <http://www.efw.bpa.gov/contractors/usingpisces.aspx> under "Pisces Help".

If you have any questions about the new or existing Pisces features, or for technical assistance, please contact fishsupport@bpa.gov. For inquiries about cost share data or (annual) progress reporting requirements for your contract(s), please contact your COTR.

End of Pisces v.2.4 Release Notes