

How We Use Terrain Navigator Pro

We use Terrain Navigator Pro primarily as a research tool. My wife and I own a small survey business in an area of Northeast California where the terrain varies significantly. We have conducted surveys in 8 or 9 counties in this region. A lot of property is in the forest which makes surveying a little more difficult. Much of the land has not been surveyed of record since the original government surveyors were here. When a client wants to have their property surveyed, we do not always know what the property looks like, especially if it is some distance from our office.

We locate the property on the government quad map using the Terrain Navigator Pro program and have a ready idea of the topography. By going online and viewing the aerial pictures we can see what roads might provide access, whether the terrain is cultivated and even if there are fence lines along section lines etc. By using the profile part of the program we can determine if there is a line of site between two points. We can plan out where additional control points will have to be placed without ever being on the property.

If we are asked to conduct the survey, we determine geographic coordinates for points that need to be located and print a copy of the quad map as well as the aerial map to take in the field. Benefits to our Office

Terrain Navigator Pro helps us gain a better perspective of the job before we ever step into the field. When a potential client starts to mention the details of terrain and roads, we are familiar with what they are referring to.

The 3D ability of the program is extremely helpful. We can take a flight around the property in a 360 degree view and really get familiar with the lay of the land. As a private pilot I have flown over several projects before hand to see how things look. I can get the same perspective with the 3D aerial maps.

In submitting cost proposals to our potential clients we have been able to be very accurate in estimating the time needed to complete the survey. We believe our clients appreciate it when we charge what we estimated. We want them to look at us as professionals in all aspects of our work. Knowing ahead of time what to expect on a job also helps us to be competitive.

One of the biggest benefits to us is the ability to have geographic coordinates with us in the field for points that have no survey history since day one. Just yesterday we used the information that we had obtained with Terrain Navigator Pro to locate a scribed stone set around 1866 by the original government surveyor named Wilfred F. Ingalls. We found the stone in about 5 to 10 minutes without having to survey to the location first.

Having that information saved us a lot of time. (Enclosed are some pictures of the stone we found) How it has changed our work

I don't want to remember what it was like to go to research a possible survey and find I didn't have the right quad map. If I did it was difficult to scale geographic coordinates (of course they didn't do much good since hand held GPS didn't exist). Having the whole state at our fingertips allows us to venture farther into other areas. We do work for several utility companies. They often have need for our services in other counties that we are not familiar with. Seeing the quad map and aerial map helps us provide quality service to our good clients.

We have occasionally used a quad map as an overlay on our survey maps. This has been helpful to our clients. We will even send a copy of an aerial map to clients. One client we sent a picture to lived in Virginia and didn't even know what his property looked like.

—James Q. Eddy Jr., PLS California



Terrain Navigator Pro was instrumental in helping us find this original government corner. The scribed stone was set in the winter of 1866-67 by Wilfred Ingalls. With coordinates scaled from the topo map using Terrain Navigator Pro and a handheld GPS we ended up within 50 feet of the point. It took us 5 to 10 minutes to find it.

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