



GIS BEST PRACTICES

ArcGIS FILES:

ArcGIS map documents (mxd) should be saved with **relative paths** (this is the default).

Output files should always be saved to locations associated with the map document currently in use and not saved in a default or temporary location. (It is suggested that map documents and data be saved within one directory or subdirectories therein to help preserve the relative paths.)

Folders, Filenames and fieldnames should never begin with a number and should only contain letters, numbers, and underscores. If these guidelines are not followed it can produce errors in analyses and files and fields have to be renamed. **Spaces** should **never** be used in filenames or directory names, as this causes problems with some programs.

ANALYSIS AND EDITING:

All **work** that involves editing or geoprocessing should be conducted **locally** on a computer's local hard drive to minimize network delays and outage problems. (This means if the data/project is not already local – retrieve the files from the server or personal media where they are being backed up when work is started each day) Errors can be introduced into analyses when any files are on the network instead of located locally – these errors may not be as obvious as a pop up message, but rather may just alter calculations or drop some of the data.

SAVING DATA:

Work should be **saved regularly** to save progress in case of a hardware or software crash.

All work should be saved to the “geogdata” server (V: or X: drive) or other personal media as **backup** before logging out **each day**. Remember, when backing up a project the data must be backed up in addition to the mxd file – the mxd file contains no data.

The “geogdata” server (V: and X: drive) may be only used for GISL projects, GIS related coursework, and approved student projects. Your files and storage area may be monitored.

PROBLEMS? / QUESTIONS? please contact

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