

## The Schneider Corporation retires the ProMap name

—by Cheri Gustin

Effective June 22<sup>nd</sup>, two of the Midwest's leading providers of GIS services for land development became one. Schneider is officially retiring the ProMap name and is merging the two companies completely under one brand, The Schneider Corporation.

GIS is a computerized tool for mapping and analyzing events, predicting outcomes, and forming strategies. It takes data from databases and spreadsheets and puts them on a map as layers of information, allowing users to visualize information and highlighting data for better analysis. GIS is used worldwide in government, education, and industries, such as health care, agriculture, transportation, real estate, banking, marketing, and more.



Since May of last year, several changes have taken place at the two firms: An Iowa-based client services facility was created; GIS production was centralized to ensure efficiency and the monitoring of quality, research, and development was combined to improve desktop and web-based products; and staff experience and technology infrastructure was enhanced to meet the current and future needs of clients.

"This move enables us to leverage the strong Schneider brand and positions us to offer a broader range of services and products," said Ed Jolliffe, president of The Schneider Corporation. "It makes us better able to serve the long-term needs of our GIS clients throughout the Midwest and beyond."

Founded in 1962 and headquartered in Indianapolis, The Schneider Corporation has eight offices and 350 professionals serving a range of clients throughout the Midwest. Schneider applies professional expertise and sophisticated technology in the areas of Engineering, Land Surveying, and GIS services to collect, create, and manage the geospatial information that supports its clients' growth. ProMap was founded in 1991 to help local government in the Midwest utilize GIS. [www.schneidercorp.com]

THE SCHNEIDER CORPORATION



## EARTHDATA CONTRIBUTES TO WORLD TRADE CENTER movie

—by Louis Demargne

EarthData, a Maryland-based provider of mapping and GIS products, contributed critical spatial data to Oliver Stone's acclaimed docudrama about five Port Authority police officers who battle the devastation of the September 11 terrorist attacks. EarthData's contribution is in the form of three-dimensional renderings of the collapsing towers, which the film makers considered central to recreating the officers' perspectives and helping audiences comprehend the horror. The renderings were created by integrating architectural blueprints of the twin towers with aerial-based laser (lidar) terrain models and imagery acquired by EarthData in the days immediately following 9/11. Paramount Pictures also used EarthData's three-dimensional model of Manhattan for scene planning in advance of filming and to visualize the final effects shots for the film.

Paramount Pictures' visual effects personnel were especially impressed by "the level of detail and completeness of the laser, image, and 3D data," all of which made it possible to accurately portray the scene confronting the police and rescue workers.

Bryan Logan, EarthData's CEO, who led his company's response team at Ground Zero, credits the movie's realism with the origin of geographic data themselves—aerial-based mapping designed to precisely depict geographic locations on the Earth's surface. "Unlike most geographic data designed

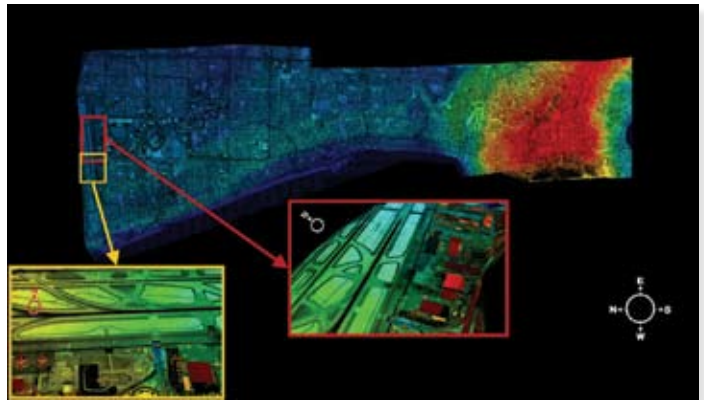


solely for animation and visual effect purposes, the data used in this movie were originally created for rescue and recovery operations (as well as engineering and design applications, in the case of the 3D city models), all of which required very precise and detailed information.”

Hours after the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center, EarthData was tasked with gathering mapping data over Ground Zero. For the next two months, the company conducted twice daily aerial over-flights to create maps that gave detailed information to the recovery workers on the ground. The laser (lidar) profiler provided highly accurate 3D maps of the site and allowed measurement of the rubble and shifts in the surrounding buildings. High-resolution digital imagery and thermal data complemented the laser data and enabled rescue and recovery workers to monitor the movement and temperature of the fires burning below the surface. Maps were produced and delivered in record time, less than eight hours after the over-flight occurred.

EarthData’s urban 3D models have also been used in other films, including Sony Picture Imageworks’ Spider-Man and Twentieth Century Fox’s The Day after Tomorrow. [www.earthdata.com]

EARTHDATA



## LIDAR XLR8R Upgrade

—Karl Engstrom

Airborne 1 launched LiDAR XLR8R 3.0, the eagerly awaited upgrade to LiDAR XLR8R’s beta version 2.0. This robust LiDAR data management, analysis, and visualization tool is the product of a key partnership with Canadian software developer, Ambercore Software Inc. The XLR8R 3.0 version offers users batch processing and feature merger capability, as well as enhanced pyramiding, 3D visualization, and geo-referencing functionality for raster data.

LiDAR XLR8R is the first of its kind to boast NO limits to the number of points that can be uploaded and processed on a standard PC. It can quickly generate digital elevation models (DEMs) from LiDAR input data, and enables users to build, view, analyze, and disseminate 3D surfaces based on LiDAR point data. The software includes innovative algorithms for data regularization and rapid processing, as well as user defined and optimized surface building parameters to control surface precision, gap filling method, and flat area reconstruction. The software’s stunning 2D and 3D capabilities include transparency, multi-layering, draping, and seamless 2D/3D switching. LiDAR XLR8R also imports and exports to a variety of familiar formats that include ESRI, USGS, and MI, among others. The software allows users to perform an array of analytical tasks simultaneously (utilizing dynamic hyper-threading technology) all while maintaining normal workflow. [www.LiDARXCHANGE.com]

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Learn the GIS Lexicon from A to Z: New ESRI Press book teaches the technology’s terminology

**A to Z GIS: An Illustrated Dictionary of Geographic Information Systems**, new from ESRI Press, serves as a handy guide to define the unique language of geographic information system technology.

GIS is now used widely around the world, whether it’s to map wildfires, monitor air pollution, explore oceans, or track wild elephants. That means more

people will want and need to understand the lexicon. Packed with 1,800 definitions, *A to Z GIS* helps users understand key GIS terms such as geocoding, polylines, and georeferencing. [A to Z GIS: An Illustrated Dictionary of Geographic Information Systems (ISBN: 1-58948-140-2, 288 pages, \$24.95) is available at online retailers and bookstores worldwide.]

