

FalconView Mapping Software Goes Open Source

The Georgia Tech Research Institute has released an open-source version of its popular FalconView software which the U.S. Department of Defense has used since the 1990s to analyze and display geographical and other data crucial to mission planners. The program displays topographical maps, aeronautical charts, satellite images and other maps, along with overlay tools. Now that it's open source, state, city, and town governments; police forces; architects, environmental researchers and utility companies can use the free software.

Police officers can plot information on burglaries, robberies, sex crimes, and other major incidents on maps in FalconView. School districts can reformat school zones easily, using a number of different data analyses and visualization techniques. FalconView can also be valuable for companies trying to determine the best location for their business to meet customer needs.

FalconView has several advantages over most free mapping software products, not least that it offers interesting mapping capabilities and that it can be used without an active Internet connection to get a top-down two-dimensional view that can be thoroughly analyzed even if the user is in a boat in the middle of the ocean without a satellite uplink and downlink. In addition, a GPS receiver and camera can be hooked up to the FalconView software to allow users to track their movements on a "moving" map and record the exact locations where they snapped photographs. Last but not the least, third parties can submit improvements or patches back to the main source code repository. With open source software, bugs are typically caught and repaired faster.

—by Abby Vogel
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Finding McDonald's in Europe

More than 5,500 of McDonald's restaurants in 16 European countries will soon be shown on the NAVTEQ® map and made available to customers on the move through NAVTEQ Direct Access. Over 80% of people using navigation systems want to see brand logos on the map as opposed to generic icons. Recent research also showed that 62% of those who look up, for example, shops and restaurants on their navigators, do follow through and drive to those businesses. Each entry on the NAVTEQ map indicates where drive-in facilities are available, and the program also collects and displays information on new and recently opened sites and merchants' brand icons. Updated maps are released every three months. NAVTEQ is a Chicago based provider of digital map, traffic, and location data that enables navigation and location-based platforms around the world.



<http://oregonstate.edu/media/sws-cn-hiq>

NOAA and Oregon State University map Oregon's sea floor

Surveyors and scientists from NOAA's Office of Coast Survey and Oregon State University will, over the next two years, create the most detailed maps ever generated of the sea floor along Oregon's coast. Using the latest technologies, they will measure water depth, search for navigational hazards, and record the natural features of coastal seabeds and fragile aquatic life. With the data collected from these surveys, Oregon scientists can model tsunamis, identify marine habitats, select alternative energy sites, identify geological hazards, and enhance safe and efficient marine transportation.

NOAA awarded \$5 million to private contractors to assist in the joint effort. The State of Oregon provided \$1.3 million in funding to Oregon State University. NOAA will use the data from the surveys to update nautical charts that currently contain depth information acquired before 1939.

The maps will cover about 34 percent of the state's waters and 75 percent of its rocky reefs, recording every bump, depression, reef and boulder on the sea floor from a depth of 10 meters out to three miles, the boundary of Oregon's territorial sea. They have a resolution of a half-meter.

The work at the Oregon State University will begin immediately and will focus initially on sites important for tsunami modeling, wave energy, and marine reserves. Some maps of Oregon's territorial sea and seabed habitats, showing water depths and topography, are already online.

Oregon state legislators from districts along the coast spearheaded the OSU project. The Oregon Department of State Lands and other state agencies supported the effort which also meets goals set in the West Coast Governors' Agreement on Ocean Health. The Oregon project will join those of California and Washington in an effort to map the three states' ocean areas by the year 2020.

For further information on the Oregon Seabed Mapping Project, visit <http://pacoos.coas.oregonstate.edu/MarineHabitatViewer/viewer.aspx>.