McGill Library Bibliothèque
Information ♦ Innovation ♦ Service

Centre de recherche géographique
Walter Hitschfeld
Geographic Information Centre

Tutorial: Importing tabular data with x,y coordinate values in ArcGIS 8.x and 9.x

For the equivalent guide in ArcView 3.x see:
Importing tabular data with x,y coordinate values in ArcView 3.x

Overview:

Data collected in the field using a Global Position System or tabular data with x,y coordinates are usually best represented in a mapped form. This tutorial will help you convert tabular data with x,y coordinates into a shapefile (ArcGIS file format for maps).

The first part of the procedure explains how to clean up your data in a spreadsheet program such as Microsoft Excel. The second part explains how to import, display, and save your data in ArcGIS.

The example in this tutorial is groundwater data from Howick, a municipality in southern Quebec. The coordinate system used in the example is latitude/longitude with the North American Datum 1983 (NAD83).

Part 1: Cleaning your data in Excel (or an equivalent software)

The x,y coordinate information that you would like to import will most likely be found in text or spreadsheet format. Because of this, a few minor changes are necessary in order for ArcMap to recognize your data correctly.

1. First, open your data in a spreadsheet application such as Excel.

- Adjust the width of each column to an 87oNCopc -0.00011 Tw 12 0 0 12 330Ŧj/T06 Tm(87oNCo

6. In the drop-down menus next to “X Field:” select the field labeled X, and in the “Y Field:” select Y. k1dGr

10.