

# Create terrain and photo realistic scenery for Condor 2.

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A step-by-step tutorial on how to create both 3D terrain and photo-realistic scenery for use in Condor 2.

**CREDITS:** Many thanks to Mr. Luis Briones (a member of a Flying Club in Argentina), and special thanks to Mr. Nick Bonniere, a long-time Condor scenery pro who created a Condor 2 scenery for Lake Placid. Nick developed the Condor\_tiles program and a lot of notes/description used in the tutorial.

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## Goal: Create a scenery for Harris Hill Soaring Corporation.

This tutorial will take you thru all the steps that were used to create a scenery for Harris Hill Soaring in Elmira, NY. The home of Soaring in the United States and the location of Schweizer Aircraft. Large sceneries at high resolution take a lot of processing power and time. In this case we'll be creating a 57x57 mile landscape with the Harris Hill airfield (4NY8) at the center.

At the end of this tutorial we'll have flyable scenery with 3-D terrain which has been overlaid by photo scenery. For those of you who have used Condor, it will NOT have any actual 3-D objects like trees, hangars, runways. We will not do any special thermal modeling. Hopefully, those additions to this tutorial will come later (maybe from you!)

### Part One: Creation of 3-D terrain

This part will first get your computer setup for landscape creation with the needed landscape creation tools and documentation. We'll then go thru the steps necessary to create a flyable 3-D terrain of the correct size

#### Step Zero: Download the tools and guides needed

If you're a Mac/Apple person, sorry, most of these tools only run under Windows. Graphics processing is a difficult task for a PC. You should have a reasonably fast processor and at least 8 Gigabytes of RAM and room on your hard drive. A completed scenery can easily use several Gigabytes of disk space.

1) Download the tool set and documentation for landscapes from the [condorsoaring.com](http://condorsoaring.com) site, unpack in a different directory from where Condor2 is installed

1a) Download a Legacy [texture tool from Nvidia](#) that will be needed. Unpack the zip in the same directory where you installed the landscape editor above. When you are done the LandscapeEditor.exe and nvdxt.exe should be in the same folder.

2) Download and install the QGIS program version 2.18.28, x64 from → [https://www.soaringtools.org/downloads/QGIS-OSGeo4W-2.18.28-3-Setup-x86\\_64.exe](https://www.soaringtools.org/downloads/QGIS-OSGeo4W-2.18.28-3-Setup-x86_64.exe) . We won't use most of it, but one of the utilities it contains will be used by Condor\_tiles later. Although there are newer versions of this software, make sure you get version specified.

3) Download and install Google Earth Pro for the desktop → <https://www.google.com/earth/versions/> Scroll down on the versions page and choose the desktop download. This is a great tool for visualizing/measuring your landscape.

4) Download the Condor\_tiles program and unpack. It can be found in the downloads section on the SoaringTools web site → <http://www.SoaringTools.org/index.php/downloads/>

## Step One: Determine the coordinates for the scenery

Although we will be building the Harris Hill scenery, it's likely you're already thinking about making a small scenery for your local area. It's relatively simple to use this tutorial as a model and substitute your own area. The steps are the same, just the naming is different. If you're going to do this, it might be good to learn a bit more about the structure of Condor2 sceneries so that you understand what is happening at each step (see details in Appendix 1).

Briefly, the unit of Condor2 scenery is the *tile*. Each tile is 23 km x 23 km (14.29 mi x 14.29 mi), and a scenery is a rectangle of row x col tiles. This is important because as you choose the size of your initial scenery you want the sides of your rectangle to be multiples of the tile size. Also be aware that the outer edge of this rectangle is not usable (approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$  tile), so when you think about your coordinates, take into account this margin.

You now have a potential area selected. Because the earth is round and our maps are flat, we need a way to project that curved surface onto a flat area. The first goal is to determine your UTM zone and then the latitude/longitude of the north west corner and south east corner of your landscape (also know as top left and bottom right). **NOTE:** *It can be OK if your scenery crosses into another UTM zone by a small amount. Just be sure to use the UTM zone # where the majority of the scenery is located in the steps below. There may be some minor distortion.*

Use this to find your Universal Transverse Mercator Zone (UTM) and measure distances → <https://mangomap.com/robertyoung/maps/69585/what-utm-zone-am-i-in->

For Harris Hill we want at least a 9 tile landscape (3 x 3). Each Condor landscape tile is 14.2915 miles/23 km square, so we want to have a square app. 42 miles on each side. Now remember, the Earth is not FLAT, so our square is approximate and the tools will compensate for that. Make sure you have a little extra. Start from you center point and measure out 23 miles N,S,E,W (46 miles/side)

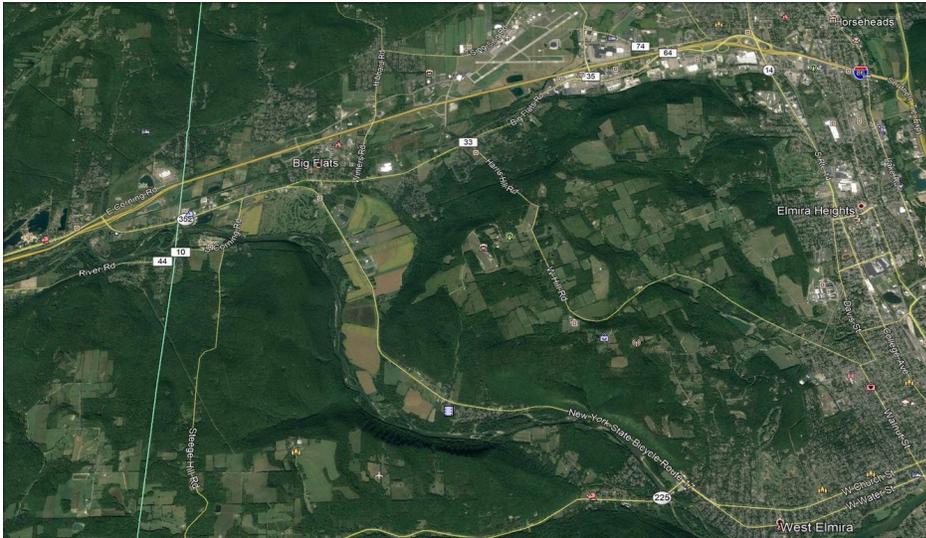
You can use the UTM lookup site above for that, also Google Earth is very handy. Here is what we have for Harris Hill and the yellow pins define the two corners. Take the time to make SURE you get the coordinates right. In this case we have the below. BE CAREFUL not to confused Degrees/Decimal minutes/seconds below with other format which give individual degrees, minutes, seconds. Some tools like a certain format – many are happy to take the wrong format and convert to a bad location..... beware!

This web site is your FRIEND in conversions → <https://www.pgc.umn.edu/apps/convert/>

**NW Pt:** 42°25'26"N / 77°24'26"W or 42°25.438'N / 77°24.434'W or 42.423968 / -77.407247

**SE Pt:** 41°48'41"N / 76°25'32"W or 41°48.699'N / 76°25.545'W or 41.811661 / -76.425757

WARNING: Don't skimp on this step, some bad numbers here will cost you late



## Step Two: Convert to UTM coordinates, confirm proper size

With those corners defined, we now start to build the landscape. The Lat/Lon we have are approximate. We do not need to get exact numbers by converting to UTM and making sure we are on a boundary.

Create a folder in the Condor2\Landscapes directory to hold your scenery. In this case we call it hhsc1 (you can substitute your own scenery name in the examples).

### 1) Start Condor\_Tiles.

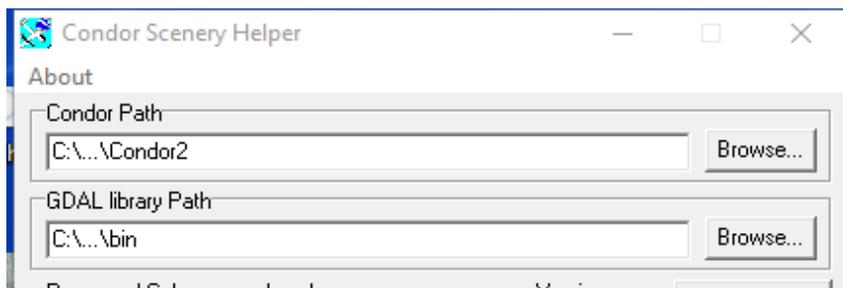
- In the “Landscape” box, choose the folder you just created above.
- Some settings: Imagery/Tiles, Tile Zoom/16, Tile size/8192, GeoData/OSM.
- On just the first run you need to define two paths. Using the ‘Browse’ buttons set:

Condor\_Path → Set it to the location of your Condor2 install, usually C:\Condor2

GDAL library Path → This is a geodata processing package that was installed as part of QGIS. If you’ve installed QGIS 2.18 you should find this path: C:\Program Files\QGIS 2.18\bin

If you’re having a hard time finding it, do a Windows search for gdalwarp.exe

Mine looks like this when done. The displayed paths look incomplete, but it’s all there.



2) In Condor\_tiles click on the “DEM Helper” button in the lower right. This will bring up a new screen. Make the following entries:

a) In the bottom left “Range Margin” choose “None” (we should have already compensated that the last 5.76Km or 3.6 miles will be unflyable around the border of your landscape).

b) In the upper left “Desired Area Selection” choose “By Coordinates” and enter the values just as we recorded earlier. Use the degree/decimal values, latitude for North/South, longitude for West/East.

c) Then click the box ‘To UTM’, do not check the box “TL BR” – you will then see values fill in the upper right side in the box “Condor UTM Range”. (TL – Top Left, BR – Bottom Right coordinates are used for extents instead of the overall largest extents)

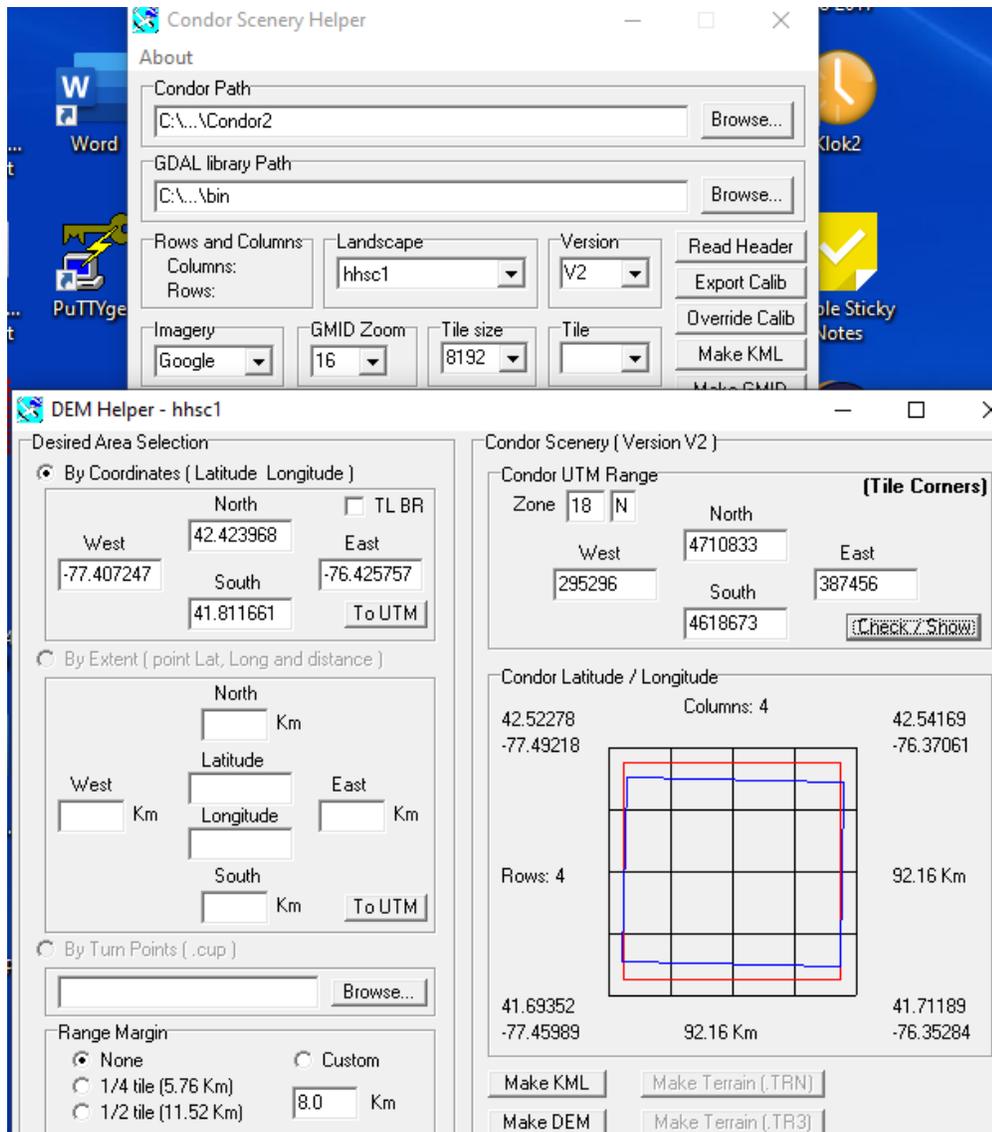
d) Then click “Check/Show” and you will see a grid pattern in the box labeled “Condor Latitude/Longitude”. Explanation follows.

The numbers in the upper right box are called Easting/Northing values. The earth is divided into 60 UTM zones, HHSC is in 18N, and your exact location in the zone is defined by the Easting(X Coord) and Northing(Y Coord). So the values above express the exact coordinates of the corners and for our Condor landscape they need to be on whole numbers.

The bottom right box shows the rounding that occurred. Our original values (the Blue Box) put us closer to a 4x4 terrain. The outer black grid shows the landscape has been expanded to 4x4. The red box shows the actual flyable area (remember, you can’t reach the edge of a landscape). We could try to shrink it in Latitude and Longitude for a 3x3, but we’ll accept the 4x4.

We need to store the Easting/Northing values. GOOD IDEA to take a screen snapshot to you have all the values, including lat/lon of the corners.

NW Corner: 295296 (Easting) <the West value>, 4710833(Northing) < the North value>  
SW Corner: 387456 (Easting) <the East value>, 4618673 (Northing) <the South value>

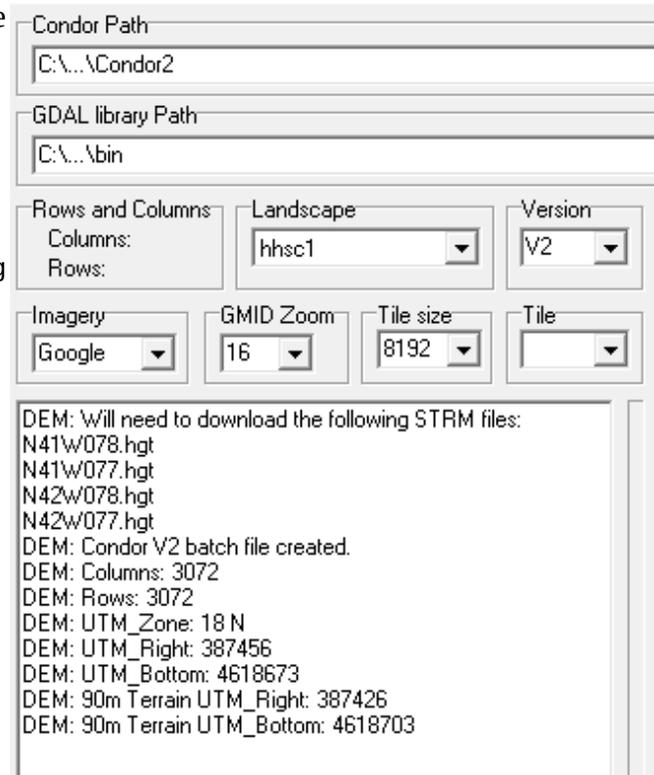


3) In the lower right click on “Make KML” to make a Google-earth map file. It will be stored in Landscapes/hhsc1/working/DEM/OverAllMap/OverAll.kml  
 You’ll need Google Earth to open and see the file. It should agree with what you expect.

## Step Three: Download terrain data and create terrain files

1) Click on “Make DEM” (lower right part of the window) while in the “DEM Helper” window to create a batch file to run the GDAL library routines. Check the message box in the main Condor\_tiles window for files you need to download.

```
DEM: Will need to download the following STRM files:  
N41W078.hgt  
N41W077.hgt  
N42W078.hgt  
N42W077.hgt  
DEM: Condor V2 batch file created.  
DEM: Columns: 3072  
DEM: Rows: 3072  
DEM: UTM_Zone: 18 N  
DEM: UTM_Right: 387456  
DEM: UTM_Bottom: 4618673  
DEM: 90m Terrain UTM_Right: 387426  
DEM: 90m Terrain UTM_Bottom: 4618703
```



### DEM → Digital Elevation Model

At this point some files have been created for your new scenery. Check the ../Working/DEM folders and you see the batch file (DEM.bat). It contains the commands necessary to create the actual 3-D terrain for the area you specified.

2) You next need to download this data from a NASA website. We'll be use Space Shuttle Radar Topography Mission data (SRTM).

a) First go to → <https://dwtkns.com/srtm30m/>

You can zoom in to your location and then click to see the tile name, we need four tiles as shown in the message above:

N41W078.hgt, N41W077.hgt, N42W078.hgt, N42W077.hgt

b) When you click to download, you'll first need to create a login account with NASA. Save the files (.zip) in the DEM directory where the .bat file is located.

*NOTE: At times downloads from the USGS servers may fail. They do offer pretty responsive tech support. If you have a problem, let them know here → <https://ers.cr.usgs.gov/feedback/>*

Start a “Command Prompt” window. After download you should now have this directory contents:

```
C:\Users\jm>cd c:\Condor2\Landscapes\hhsc1\working\DEM
```

```
c:\Condor2\Landscapes\hhsc1\working\DEM>dir (your dir display may have different columns)
```

```
-rwxrwxr-x+ 1 jmurtari None      2188 May 11 10:58 DEM.bat
drwxrwxr-x+ 1 jmurtari None         0 May 11 10:52 KML
-rwxrwxr-x+ 1 jmurtari None         87 May 11 10:50 LatLong.txt
-rwxrwxr-x+ 1 jmurtari None 10602217 May 11 11:03 N41w077.SRTMGL1.hgt.zip
-rwxrwxr-x+ 1 jmurtari None 11545464 May 11 11:03 N41w078.SRTMGL1.hgt.zip
-rwxrwxr-x+ 1 jmurtari None  9441928 May 11 11:03 N42w077.SRTMGL1.hgt.zip
-rwxrwxr-x+ 1 jmurtari None  9575162 May 11 11:02 N42w078.SRTMGL1.hgt.zip
-rwxrwxr-x+ 1 jmurtari None     264 May 11 10:58 scenery.hdr
```

c) Next unzip the files and you should have four .hgt files. You may need to rename these files to match what is expected, e.g. N41w078.SRTMGL1.hgt → N41w078.hgt When done you should have 4 new files in the same directory as above:

```
-rw-r--r--+ 1 jmurtari None 25934402 Oct  8 2012 N41w077.hgt
-rw-r--r--+ 1 jmurtari None 25934402 Oct  8 2012 N41w078.hgt
-rw-r--r--+ 1 jmurtari None 25934402 Oct  8 2012 N42w078.hgt
-rw-r--r--+ 1 jmurtari None 25934402 Oct  8 2012 N42w077.hgt
```

d) Then run the DEM.bat file in a command prompt window – you should see quite a bit of output . Just showing sample output from the start of execution:

```
c: \Condor2\Landscapes\hhsc1\working\DEM>DEM
```

```
C:\Condor2\Landscapes\hhsc1\working\DEM>set local
```

```
C:\Condor2\Landscapes\hhsc1\working\DEM>set PATH=C:\Program Files (x86)\Common Files\Oracle\Java\javapath;C:\ProgramData\Oracle\Java\javapath;C:\WINDOWS\system32;C:\WINDOWS;C:\WINDOWS\System32\wbem;C:\WINDOWS\System32\WindowsPowerShell\v1.0;C:\Program Files (x86)\Common Files\Intuit\QBPOSSDKRuntime;C:\WINDOWS\System32\OpenSSH;C:\Program Files\Git\cmd;C:\John\emacs\emacs\bin;C:\Program Files (x86)\Intel\Intel(R) Management Engine Components\DAL;C:\Program Files\Intel\Intel(R) Management Engine Components\DAL;C:\Program Files\PutTY;C:\Users\jmurtari\AppData\Local\Microsoft\WindowsApps;";C:\Program Files\QGIS 2.18\bin"
```

```
C:\Condor2\Landscapes\hhsc1\working\DEM>set GDAL_DATA=C:\Program Files\QGIS 2.18\bin\..\share\epsg_csv
```

```
C:\Condor2\Landscapes\hhsc1\working\DEM>rem convert HGT file to GeoTiff
```

```
C:\Condor2\Landscapes\hhsc1\working\DEM>set sourceHGT=N41w078.hgt
```

```
C:\Condor2\Landscapes\hhsc1\working\DEM>set destinationTIFF=T0.tif
```

```
C:\Condor2\Landscapes\hhsc1\working\DEM>gdal_translate -of GTiff N41w078.hgt T0.tif
Input file size is 3601, 3601
0...10...20...30...40...50...60...70...80...90...100 - done.
```

<<< much more follows, should be no errors >>>

The following new files should be created:

```
-rwxrwxr-x+ 1 jmortari None 2099695 May 11 11:10 UTM_cropped_90m.tif
-rwxrwxr-x+ 1 jmortari None 604 May 11 11:10 UTM_cropped.raw.aux.xml
-rwxrwxr-x+ 1 jmortari None 18874368 May 11 11:10 UTM_cropped.raw
-rwxrwxr-x+ 1 jmortari None 679 May 11 11:10 UTM_cropped.hdr
-rwxrwxr-x+ 1 jmortari None 2097152 May 11 11:10 UTM_cropped_90m.raw
-rwxrwxr-x+ 1 jmortari None 604 May 11 11:10 UTM_cropped_90m.raw.aux.xml
-rwxrwxr-x+ 1 jmortari None 683 May 11 11:10 UTM_cropped_90m.hdr
```

3)

Now you can use the two other buttons at the bottom of the DEM helper page. Click on Make Terrain (.TRN) to generate a Terrain file. *You will see a blue progress bar in the main Condor\_tiles window.*

When that is complete click on Make Terrain (.TR3) to generate the heightmaps files that Condor2 uses for elevation. Depending on the size of the terrain, this may take a few minutes. *Again, the progress bar will appear in the main Condor\_tiles window.* The following files and folders were created within c:/Condor2/Landscape/hhsc1

hhsc1.trn

HeightMaps/ – a folder containing series of files starting with h0000.tr3 – h1515.tr3

These contain the terrain data for each tile. You should be asking if our terrain is 4x4, that should only be 16 files, why are there 256!!!? Because.... Condor2 subdivides each of the larger tiles into 4x4 subtiles. So  $16 * 16 = 256$ .

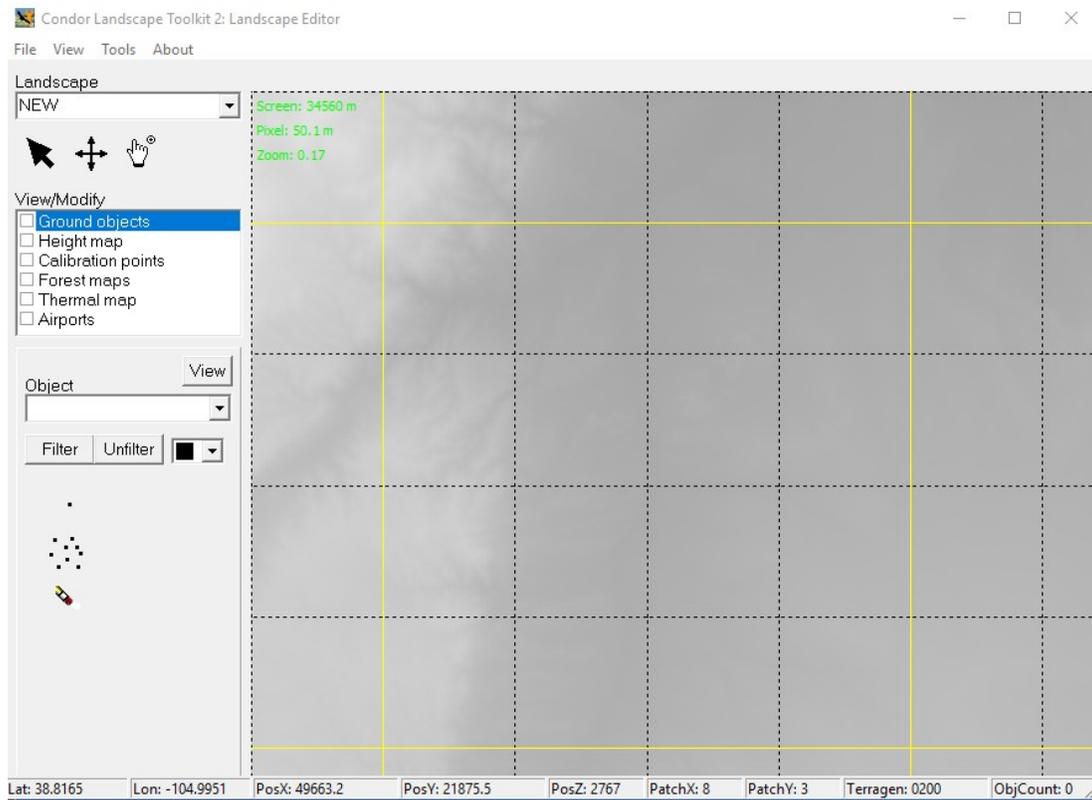
How do you relate the numbers to the actual terrain location, check Appendix ONE for a complete explanation. Real quick → The bottom right tile is “0000”, the first two digits are the row, the second two are the column. The tile to the left of the bottom right tile is “0001” and the tile above the bottom right is “0100”. The tile in the upper right corner is “1515” (remember, total of 16 subtiles numbered 0-15).

**NICE JOB!** – you can close Condor\_tiles for now.

## Step Four: Use the Condor Landscape Scenery Editor

In our last step we'll actually finish creating a flyable terrain. It won't have any real scenery, but you'll be able to see 3-D terrain and fly it in Condor2.

1) Start the Landscape Editor, and from the Landscape popdown in the upper right, you should see your new Landscape, hhsc1, as an option. You should see something like below. *It doesn't look like much, but it's actually showing elevation features in the terrain.*



How to maneuver. As you move the mouse around, you are presented with a lot of useful location information in the bottom bar. The latitude and longitude values should agree with what you're expecting. By default, the editor puts you near the middle of the terrain. To move around select the "FINGER" and you can drag the terrain. Notice the yellow lines delimit the larger 4x4 tiles, and the dashed lines show the 4x4 subtiles.

Click the left mouse button to zoom in, middle/right to zoom out.

3) A landscape must have at least one Airport defined to be flyable in Condor 2. Using another tool like Google Earth you need to find the exact LAT/LON in decimal degrees for the middle of your runway, also the elevation (in meters). Google Earth does give you the option of seeing decimal degrees and meters.

For hhsc1 I used the name 4NY8: 42.119522 / -76.900490 (THIS SHOULD BE THE MIDDLE/CENTER of the runway), elevation: 523 meters(1715'), length: 500 meters (1640'), direction: 331 True (340-9W variation), width: 36 m.

4) In the Landscape Editor, in the "View/Modify" box, check "Airports". Then put your mouse in the blank area beneath and click right. A menu should appear, select 'Add'. Then fill in the values and select OK. It should appear on the map.

4a) OPTIONAL – you may want to flatten the runway terrain. Choose "Height Map" and the map will show you elevation, zoom into the runway, it should be outlined. Then click on the "FLATTEN" icon and set the radius no wider than the runway, and set the altitude to elevation (in meters) and a slope ratio (1:4 is good). As you sweep your mouse you'll see two concentric circles: the inner one is the flattening area and the ring between the inner and outer one is the graduated slope. It's helpful to get the immediate runway area flat for placement of objects and ease of towing.

5) Now just complete the steps in the "Condor Landscape Guide". Make sure to follow the order below:

- a) File → Export flightplanner map
- b) File → Export forest map.
- c) File → Export thermal map.
- d) File → Export textures to DDS (As the guide says, you'll need the Nvidia legacy texture tools placed in the same directory with the LandscapeEditor.exe for this to work. Say 'No' to export only nonexisting, we want everything recreated.
- e) File → Export terrain hash
- f) File → Export forest hash (NOTE: These steps are important as an anti-cheat mechanism. ALSO, if you ever try to fly Condor2 and your elevator doesn't work, make sure you have exported these recently).
- g) File → Save Landscape

## Step Five: Take a test flight in Condor 2

Just a little more to do.

1) You still need two more files in the main landscape directory. Condor\_Tiles will automatically create two dummy files you can edit as needed. You just need to start Condor\_Tiles and then choose the 'Read Header' button on the upper right side. You should then see some messages and the files will be created if they are absent.

```
Reading Terrain header...
```

```
UTM Zone: 18 N
UTM Bottom: 4618673
UTM Right: 387456
Height: 1024
width: 1024
Resolution: 90
Delta X: -90
Delta Y: 90
```

```
42 dummy centre tile airports \dhpsc1.apr created
```

- hhpsc1.ini – Edit the text file and change Version to be something meaningful, e.g. version=1.0
- hhpsc1.cup – This is another text file, which contains waypoint/turnpoint definitions. By default, a dummy waypoint is placed in the center of the scenery. See the appendix for the format of this file.

2) Start Condor2 and select "FREE FLIGHT". In the upper right "Landscape" box you should now be able to select your scenery.

3) TASK tab: You must define a simple task. Click on "New" and then Click on your airport, move the mouse and it will create a line, Click again to create a turnpoint. Just make a box, but end it by going to your airport and clicking again – you should get "Finish"

4) NOTAM tab: You can try an "Aerotow", recommend change rope length to 200'. We have not yet created a real airport, so the terrain and tow planes may not line up. If it doesn't work, choose Airborne.

5) "SAVE" the flightplan and then click "Start flight"

**NOTE:** *When the flight starts, check your flight controls. If you cannot move the stick forward/aft please re-export all the items shown earlier in the landscape editor. The lack of stick control is a security feature against 'tampered' sceneries...*

## Part Two: Photo Scenery creation

### Step Zero: Download extra needed tool.

There is probably a way to do this for FREE and I'm happy to update the tutorial. For now you'll need to spend a little money for a tools that makes downloading satellite imagery easier.

Go to <http://AllMapSoft.com/> and download the "Google Satellite Maps Downloader." To create HI-RES scenery as we will in this case, you'll need the paid version. Your version should be at least 8.346

Let it install to the default location, usually: C:\allmapsoft\gsmd

After it installs you'll need to create a symbolic link to make it usable by other tools. To do that you need to run a Command Prompt window as the Administrator.

*NOTE: Use "Command Prompt" and not "Power Shell".* Then give these commands:

```
C:\WINDOWS\system32>cd \allmapsoft
```

```
C:\allmapsoft> dir
```

```
Directory of C:\allmapsoft
05/11/2020  01:31 PM    <DIR>          .
05/11/2020  01:31 PM    <DIR>          ..
05/11/2020  01:22 PM    <DIR>          gsmd
```

```
C:\allmapsoft> mklink /D gmid gsmd
symbolic link created for gmid <<====>> gsmd
```

```
C:\allmapsoft> dir
```

```
05/11/2020  01:32 PM    <DIR>          .
05/11/2020  01:32 PM    <DIR>          ..
05/11/2020  01:32 PM    <SYMLINKD>     gmid [gsmd]
05/11/2020  01:22 PM    <DIR>          gsmd
```

For Condor scenery generation, the concept is to get a set of these imagery tiles at a desired resolution for a given area to fit into Condor tiles of a desired resolution. Review Appendix ONE for more info and a table of zoom/resolution in meters.

### Step One: Create the commands necessary to download images

1) Start Condor\_Tiles (**IMPORTANT: click right and choose "Run as Administrator"**) To minimize the download data size, Condor\_Tiles creates 'symbolic-links' for the imagery folders and needs administrator level for this step.

Pick the landscape name and Version should stay at V2 (this is for Condor2, not version 2 of your scenery).

Pick the type of data imagery (we'll be using Tiles).

Pick the desired Tile zoom level (we'll use 16 for high resolution)

Pick the desired tile size for Condor, which should match closely to the zoom level (8192)

NOTE: High resolution uses a lot of disk space. Use zoom level 15 for large Landscapes, with a tile size of 4096.

2) Click on 'Read Header' button to load the UTM data of the scenery extents

You should see something like this in the message area:

```
Reading Terrain header...
UTM Zone: 18 N
UTM Bottom: 4618673
UTM Right: 387456
Height: 1024
Width: 1024
Resolution: 90
Delta X: -90
Delta Y: 90
```

3) Click on the 'Make GMID' button to generate initial coordinate extent files for each tile. These files will be used by the Maps Downloader. Again, you can see the numbering coordinate system used for the files. These are text files. You will find them in the `./Working/SourceTiles`

**IMPORTANT NOTE:**

**CONFIRMATION CHECK:** Look at the contents of a file, the Lat/Lon coordinates should be as you expected.

## Step Two: Download the image data.

NOTE: The latest version of GoogleSatelliteMapsDownloader and Condor\_Tiles allows us to automate much of this process. To see details on the manual method, reference Appendix Two.

1) Condor\_tiles has created a couple of batch files to automate the process in the :

GM c:\Condor2\Landscapes\hhsc1\working\sourceTiles folder:

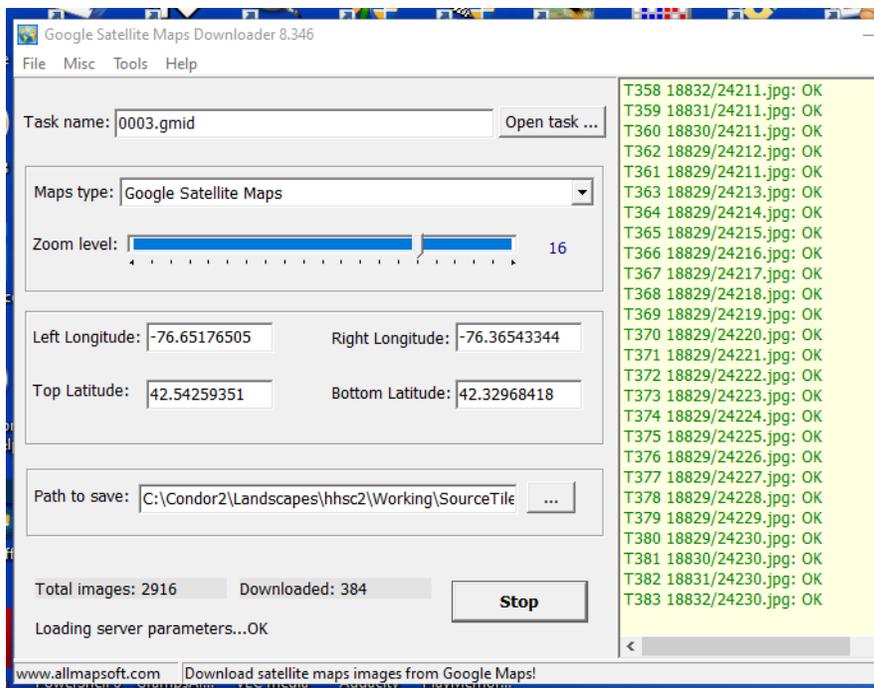
```
-rwxrwxr-x jmortari None 1250 May 11 11:56 ./working/SourceTiles/GMID_ALL.bat
-rwxrwxr-x jmortari None 690 May 11 11:56 ./working/SourceTiles/GMID_ALL_Combine.bat
```

Again, in a Command Prompt window, change to the tiles directory and run GMID\_ALL:

```
> cd \Condor2\Landscapes\hhsc1\working\sourceTiles
> GMID_ALL
```

*Note that some of the batch files call other batch files, so you may not run all the batch files listed.*

This takes about 30 minutes on a 4x4, 16 tile scenery. You will see new windows open and close for downloading and combining files as it works it's way thru the process, e.g.



NOTE: If the scenery has more than 30 tiles, it is possible the process will be interrupted as Google sets limits for downloads. In that case you will have to wait 24 hours to resume. You can just give the GMID\_ALL command again, the tools will skip images that have already been downloaded.

2) At the end of the automatic process, you've created 16 .bmp files, one for each tile:  
/cygdrive/c/Condor2/Landscapes/hhsc1>find ./working/SourceTiles -name "\*.bmp" -print

```
./working/SourceTiles/0000/0000_combined/0000.bmp
./working/SourceTiles/0001/0001_combined/0001.bmp
./working/SourceTiles/0002/0002_combined/0002.bmp
./working/SourceTiles/0003/0003_combined/0003.bmp
./working/SourceTiles/0100/0100_combined/0100.bmp
./working/SourceTiles/0101/0101_combined/0101.bmp
./working/SourceTiles/0102/0102_combined/0102.bmp
./working/SourceTiles/0103/0103_combined/0103.bmp
./working/SourceTiles/0200/0200_combined/0200.bmp
./working/SourceTiles/0201/0201_combined/0201.bmp
./working/SourceTiles/0202/0202_combined/0202.bmp
./working/SourceTiles/0203/0203_combined/0203.bmp
./working/SourceTiles/0300/0300_combined/0300.bmp
./working/SourceTiles/0301/0301_combined/0301.bmp
./working/SourceTiles/0302/0302_combined/0302.bmp
./working/SourceTiles/0303/0303_combined/0303.bmp
```

### Step Three: convert images to Condor tiles

Now each image is converted into a Condor tile, by 'warping' to UTM and 'cropping' to the desired size.

*NOTE: If you took a break in the process and just re-started Condor\_tiles, make sure to select the proper landscape and click on the “Read Header” box.*

This process is automated below, for information on the manual process see Appendix Two. Also, note that these batch files sometimes create messages such as “Cannot find file xxxx.xxx” or assorted Error messages. Not all of these messages are indicating failure of the programs. It’s best to run each step to completion and then check to see if the indicated output has occurred before deciding there is an execution error.

With Condor\_Tiles, click on Make GDAL but do not select a tile, i.e. leave the tile selector blank.

Condor\_tiles creates a batch file ‘GDAL\_XXXX\_TIF.bat’ in each tile folder

```
..\Working\SourceTiles\xxxx and an overall batch file ‘GDAL_ALL.bat’ in the
..\Working\SourceTiles folder.
```

Again, in a Command Prompt window, run GDAL\_ALL to start the process. For a scenery with a total of 16 tiles (4x4), it can take about 15 minutes.

When you're done, again 16 files created in a new directory, these will be large files, >200 Meg each.

```
jmurtari@anvil:/cygdrive/c/condor2/Landscapes/hhsc1>
./working/Terragen/Textures/0000.bmp
./working/Terragen/Textures/0001.bmp
./working/Terragen/Textures/0002.bmp
./working/Terragen/Textures/0003.bmp
./working/Terragen/Textures/0100.bmp
./working/Terragen/Textures/0101.bmp
./working/Terragen/Textures/0102.bmp
./working/Terragen/Textures/0103.bmp
./working/Terragen/Textures/0200.bmp
./working/Terragen/Textures/0201.bmp
./working/Terragen/Textures/0202.bmp
./working/Terragen/Textures/0203.bmp
./working/Terragen/Textures/0300.bmp
./working/Terragen/Textures/0301.bmp
./working/Terragen/Textures/0302.bmp
./working/Terragen/Textures/0303.bmp
```

## Step Four: create the final scenery

- 1) Run the Landscape editor, and pick the landscape, and then in Tools, 'Import tile sized textures'
  - the images in `working/Terragen/Textures` will be loaded as the imagery.
  - this will replace the initial black-and-white terrain based imagery.
- 2) You can check your airport placement with the imagery, and carefully adjust the lat/lon for the proper position.
- 3) In the Landscape editor the run the same export commands as before.
  - a) File → Export flightplanner map
  - b) File → Export forest map
  - c) File → Export thermal map
  - d) File → Export textures to DDS (As the guide says, you'll need the Nvidia legacy texture tools placed in the same directory with the LandscapeEditor.exe for this to work. Say 'No' to export only nonexisting, we want everything recreated. This will take about 40 minutes for a 16 tile scenery.

*NOTE: When this is done you can also use Condor\_tiles to tune the runway position. Start the program, pick the landscape, click on 'Read Header' and then 'Airport Place'. A separate window will appear that allows you to make fine position adjustment using the arrow keys. You will see a blue line also, that is the tow plane track. Make sure to save your changes!*

- e) File → Export terrain hash
- f) File → Export forest hash (These steps are important as an anti-cheat mechanism. ALSO, if you ever try to fly Condor2 and your elevator doesn't work, make sure you have exported these recently).
- g) File → Save Landscape

## Step Five: Splash Screen and Imagery Credits

When Condor loads you see some large images displayed as the scenery is being loaded, in the default Slovenia 2 landscape, 'Two burly guys in a glider!'

It's easy to create your own. We'd recommend at least 1920x1080 in size (HDTV/16:9 ratio) and JPG format. Your landscape has an Images subfolder. It will be empty, but you can copy the files and they are used in random order. As you see below, just use a number as the name, starting at 0 (zero).

```
Directory of C:\Condor2\Landscapes\hhsc1\Images
05/12/2020  08:12 AM          1,714,475 0.jpg
05/12/2020  08:12 AM          1,528,563 1.jpg
05/12/2020  08:12 AM          2,053,719 2.jpg
```

**See APPENDIX THREE about imagery usage.** Not real practical to put tags in the landscape that will never be seen. We'd suggest adding some text somewhere on your Splash Screens to credit Google. ALSO, don't forget to give us a LITTLE LOVE! We'd be happy if you'd share the source of help, e.g.

Satellite images: Google Maps

Help from: SoaringTools.Org

*CONGRATULATIONS – you should have a flyable landscape! If you'd like to share it, let us know and we'd be happy to offer a download from our site.*

*Now you just need to create a nice airport/runways. You can find some excellent tutorials on using the different Landscape utilities and how to create a detailed airport in their "Downloads" area -> <https://www.condorsoaring.com/downloads-2/>*

*Be prepared for some reading, the English version of the Airport Creation tutorial has over 130 pages!*

## OPTIONAL EXTRA PROCESSING

None of these items are required, but they can enhance your scenery:

### Easy Tool to Create Grass Runway Adding a real runway



This can be a lot of work. But if you need just a grass strip you can [download Airport Maker](#) (by Jiří Brožek) from our site. Just unpack to your desktop and you'll see the Icon.

In this example will assume the name of the Airport in your landscape is "Lawrence." Then follow these steps.

1. Start Airport Maker
2. In the Runway parameters box, enter the width and length (IN METERS!).
  1. Side marker count: 1
  2. Corner makers: Outer
  3. Marking style: Painted Grass
3. In the Grass surface, enter the size of any grassy area that surrounds the runway (experiment). Use the "Offset" values to move the grass.
4. Windsock – change the offset values to move it's position.
5. Generate OBJ Files - A 'Save as' dialog pops up. You want to pick the Airports folder for your landscape (it should be empty if you've never created an airport). Then enter the "File name" as "Lawrence", do not choose anything for "Save as type". Press the "Save" button.
6. You should see these files in the Airports folder and can close Airport Maker;  
  
LawrenceG.mtl\* LawrenceG.obj\* LawrenceO.mtl\* LawrenceO.obj\*
7. You can close Airport Maker.
8. Convert the files to Condor format – As part of the "Condor Landscape Toolkit" you downloaded earlier in the tutorial, you will find the "Object Editor". Double-click and start the application.
9. Choose "File" → "Open Obj"
  1. Open the LawrenceG.obj, you'll see some info appear.
  2. Select "File" → "Save to C3D" and the Airports folder should already be selected with the

proper file name. Just press the “Save” button.

3. Repeat the steps above for the LawrenceO.obj file.
10. You should now see two additional files in the Airports folder and can close Object Editor.

LawrenceG.c3d\* LawrenceO.c3d\*

11. Those are the only two files required in the Airports folder, you can delete the others.
12. Congratulation! You should now see a real surface in Condor 2. If you do not, or see blotches, check the ‘flattening’ of your airport area. A bumpy surface will project above the runway.

## Correcting artifacts in the imagery

NOTE: The Landscape Editor uses the nVidia nvdxt program to export DDS tiles. nvdxt has two bugs which can result in ‘water puddles’ on the landscape in dark spots, with 3 color compression instead of 4. A workaround is to use nvdxt with a different output (dxt5 instead of dxt1a ).

Condor\_Tiles generates a batch file ‘DDS\_XXXX.bat’ in each tile folder  
..\working\SourceTiles\XXXX and an overall batch file ‘DDS\_ALL.bat’ in the  
..\working\SourceTiles folder. You can click on DDS\_ALL as a work-around.

NOTE: dxt5 DDS files are twice as large as dxt1 DDS files. Condor\_Tiles provides a Utility to convert dxt5 DDS tiles to dxt1 DDS tiles which effectively reduces the file size by 50% and still maintain 4 color compression.

Click on the Utilities button and click the dxt Convert button and select all (ctrl-A) the tiles in the Textures folder.

## Creating custom thermal maps & forest maps

You can create custom thermal/forest maps for Condor. It can be a lot of work. Condor\_Tiles has some support for using publicly available data to automate the process. Below are some notes. As of this tutorial version, we have not tried it!

*Helper\_OSM\_GEO.txt By Nick Bonniere*

For thermal and tree maps, it can be done by hand, basically ‘painting’ forests, roads, fields, etc.. onto a background of each tile. This takes way too long, but will match the textures very closely.

For a landscape in Canada, the Geogratis website can be used, but it only covers

the Canadian landmass.

An alternate way is to use the database from Open-Street-Maps which has shape files for roads, lakes, rivers, forests, etc... The database is not complete, but for some areas it is quite good. Whatever is missing can then be filled in manually.

In Condor-V1 the various maps had this resolution:

Terrain-map - 90m  
Thermal-map - 90 m  
Combined forest map with  
- Deciduous Forest-map - 45m  
- Coniferous Forest-map - 45m  
Textures maps - variable resolution in Textures folder

In Condor-V2 the various maps have this resolution:

Terrain-map - 90m and .tr3 maps at 30m in HeightMaps folder  
Thermal-map - 90 m  
Combined forest maps in .for ForestMaps folder with  
- Deciduous Forest-map - 11.25m  
- Coniferous Forest-map - 11.25m  
Textures maps - variable resolution in Textures folder

OSM ESRI shape files are available in a reasonable format from GeoFabrick. You can use OpenOffice database to look into the .dbf files to look for items of interest such as roads and rivers. The OSM shape files can be downloaded from GeoFabrik:

<https://download.geofabrik.de/index.html>

For the Pennsylvania Landscape Ridge-North-2 recently created, a download of the .shp.zip is needed for the Pennsylvania state from North-America. Because the scenery extends around and south of Pennsylvania, the states of Maryland, Virginia and West-Virginia are also needed. Use Google-Earth for example to find all the states/regions that is needed.

It is possible to download a whole region or by state. It depends on what you want and how big it is.

The .shp.zip file type is what is needed.

<https://download.geofabrik.de/north-america.html>

pennsylvania-latest-free.shp.zip  
maryland-latest-free.shp.zip  
virginia-latest-free.shp.zip  
west-virginia-latest-free.shp.zip

There is a button on Condor-Tiles 'Make-Geo', that creates a GeoDatabase folder and creates batch files for each condor tile. You then unzip the shape files into the geodatabase folder and for each, change the name, if desired, such as Pennsylvania.shp for example. It is actually a folder that contains all the shape files.

In each sourceTile, there will be 3 batch files. One for thermal, GEO\_t\_0000.bat, one for deciduous forest GEO\_V2\_b\_0000.bat, and one for coniferous forest GEO\_V2\_s\_0000.bat. You can run these batch files individually or use the 3 batch files, GO\_b.bat, GO\_s.bat, GO\_t.bat, in the GeoDatabase folder that call all the

individual batch files, one at a time. It is best to start by doing one tile individually, and if it looks good, then run the overall batch file and go away for a few hours, as all the tiles get generated.

Note that OSM has only a 'forest' definition, not a deciduous nor a coniferous distinction. A blank coniferous map will be generated as it is needed for the Landscape Editor.

You can view and modify the resulting tiles with Condor\_Tiles with the 'Edit Forest' and 'Edit thermal'. The background textures tile is shown and is overlaid with the thermal or forest. Press the 'v' key to toggle the overlay.

Because the shape lines are narrow, it is best to usually 'shrink' the forest which provides more margin around lakes, rivers, roads, so that no tree ends up on roads or lakes, etc...

Forest maps end up in Working/Terragen/Forest folder, and with the landscape editor, you can import them, and then export the forests and export the forest-hash.

Thermal maps stay in each SourceTile folder. There is a button on Condor\_Tiles 'Make thermal' that will generate the thermal map. Each type of geographic structure is assigned a thermal value 0 to 255, basically a heat index for thermal generation. You can edit the default values if you want.

-----  
-----  
Details about OSM data:

Open Office can be used to open the database file to have a look at details.

gis\_osm\_buildings\_a\_free\_1 - (big file - OpenOffice may crash)  
gis\_osm\_landuse\_a\_free\_1 - forest, orchard,  
- allotments, cemetery, commercial, farm, grass,  
industrial, meadow,  
- nature\_reserve, park, quarry,  
- recreation\_Ground, residential, retail, scrub,  
vineyard  
gis\_osm\_natural\_a\_free\_1 - beach, cliffs, etc. Nothing useful  
gis\_osm\_natural\_free\_1 - peaks, springs, trees, etc. Nothing useful  
gis\_osm\_places\_a\_free\_1 - village, town, locality, island, etc  
gis\_osm\_places\_free\_1 - village, town, locality, hamlet, etc  
gis\_osm\_pofw\_a\_free\_1 - churches  
gis\_osm\_pofw\_free\_1 - churches  
gis\_osm\_pois\_a\_free\_1 - park, golf course, graveyard, etc  
gis\_osm\_pois\_free\_1 - restaurant, pub, hotel, university, etc  
gis\_osm\_railways\_free\_1 - rail lines  
gis\_osm\_roads\_free\_1 - (big file - OpenOffice crashes)  
gis\_osm\_traffic\_a\_free\_1 - parking  
gis\_osm\_traffic\_free\_1 - crossings, junctions, turning circles, etc  
gis\_osm\_transport\_a\_free\_1 - railway stations, bus stations, etc  
gis\_osm\_transport\_free\_1 - bus stop, railway stations  
gis\_osm\_water\_a\_free\_1 - river, lake, reservoir, bog, etc  
gis\_osm\_waterways\_free\_1 - canal, river, stream, etc

# APPENDIX ONE – General notes on Scenery Creation

by Nick Bonniere

1) A scenery is a made up of a group of tiles

2) Each tile is 23 km x 23 km (14.29 mi x 14.29 mi), which is actually a resolution of 90 meters times 256 = 23.040 km

If you pick 4 tiles, I would suggest you offset the airport from the center a bit so it falls fully into one of the 4 tiles, otherwise it will be cut-up into 4 pieces. Not absolutely necessary, just a suggestion so you can view the airport in one tile only.

3) The original resolution of 90 m is based on Space Shuttle elevation data (STRM)

4) Condor 2 uses a resolution of 30 meters, which is 3 times the resolution of Condor 1, and 30m STRM data is available

5) The last 1/4 tile edge of a scenery is not flyable. So if you have one tile, only the centre 1/2 or 11.5 km x 11.5 km is flyable, If you use 2 x 2 tiles, i.e 4 tiles, 46 km x 46 km, only the centre 34 km x 34 km is flyable, etc...

6) The projection used is UTM, (Universal Transverse Mercator), This means that all elevation data and photographic data needs to be converted to UTM coordinates.

7) Tiles are in a grid of rows and columns starting at the bottom right corner (South East), which is tile 0000. The first two digits are the column number and the second two digits are the row number. Above tile 0000.bmp is tile 0001.bmp. The tile to the left is tile 0100.bmp

8) You can use multiple resolutions. For LakePlacid, the centre tile is hi-res 8192x8192, while all the other tiles are 4096x4096. The file size increases by a factor of 4, 48MB file (at 4096) instead of 192MB (at 8192).

9) Notes on Tile system zoom level and Condor resolution

- Tile system zoom level (approximately)
- zoom level 1 - each pixel is 78184 m (equator), 55284 m (45 deg latitude)
- zoom level 2 - each pixel is 39092 m (equator), 27642 m (45 deg latitude)
- .....
- zoom level 10 - each pixel is 152.7 m (equator), 108.0 m (45 deg latitude)
- zoom level 11 - each pixel is 76.3 m (equator), 54.0 m (45 deg latitude)
- zoom level 12 - each pixel is 38.1 m (equator), 27.0 m (45 deg latitude)
- zoom level 13 - each pixel is 19.1 m (equator), 13.5 m (45 deg latitude)
- zoom level 14 - each pixel is 9.5 m (equator), 6.7 m (45 deg latitude)
- zoom level 15 - each pixel is 4.8 m (equator), 3.4 m (45 deg latitude)
- zoom level 16 - each pixel is 2.4 m (equator), 1.7 m (45 deg latitude)
  
- Condor resolution
- tile size 256 - 23040 m, each pixel is  $23040/256 = 90$  m
- tile size 512 - 23040 m, each pixel is  $23040/512 = 45$  m
- tile size 1024 - 23040 m, each pixel is  $23040/1024 = 22.5$  m
- tile size 2048 - 23040 m, each pixel is  $23040/2048 = 11.25$  m
- tile size 4096 - 23040 m, each pixel is  $23040/4096 = 5.625$  m
- tile size 8192 - 23040 m, each pixel is  $23040/8192 = 2.8125$  m

## APPENDIX TWO – manual run of downloader/combiner

In Part Two of this document (Photo Scenery Creation), Steps Two and Three cover the downloading of image data and how it is combined into tiles usable for Condor. This is now an automated process, but below is more detail to cover the old manual method.

### Downloading images manually

1) Run the GoogleSatelliteMapsDownloader downloader.exe.

a) Click on "Open Task" and select the Initial\_0000.gmid file. Make sure "Zoom level" is set to 16 (or whatever was selected earlier) and "Maps type" is Tiles.

b) After it opens change the "Task name;" box to keep the original since the file will be overwritten:

Initial\_0000.gmid to 0000.gmid (*YOU ARE NOT changing the actual file name, just the Task name.*)

c) You should see LAT/LON values fill in (taken from the file), and they should make sense with your scenery location.

d) Click on "Start" to begin the download process.

You should see a "Downloaded" count in the lower left, it should eventually reach the "Total images" number. If it seems to get stuck, or no progress, make sure you can reach the google site.

e) What's actually happening:

- a folder 0000 will be created and a set files will be downloaded into that folder
- these files are 256x256 images that cover the desired area, but actually cover more area than needed
- at the end, the file 0000.gmid will contain the actual coordinate extent of the downloaded tiles

f) REPEAT the above steps for all 16 tiles – don't make any typos! *Yes, this is a bit time consuming. We're trying to convince them to create a command line version of the tool that could be used as part of a larger script.*

2) Still in the downloader. Select "Tools -> Map Combiner", that will take care of merging all the individual 256x256 files.

a) Select the "0000.gmid" file (NOT the one prefixed with "Initial\_") and untick all image types except bitmap. For Automatic generation of Condor Tiles, also select TIFF image type.

b) REPEAT for all 16 tiles.

## Combining images

1) Start Condor\_tiles. To create the batch file that will do this, on Condor\_tiles, pick the desired tile in the "Tile" section, 0000 in this case, and click Make GDAL

- a batch file ./Working/SourceTiles/000/GDAL\_0000.bat will be created.
- double-click on the batch file and it will process the data
- a new image 0000.bmp will be placed into the Working/Terragen/Textures folder

REPEAT for each tile, 0001, 0002, etc...

You can do these simultaneously if your PC has the memory. Each is independent.

ALTERNATE: If you have a unix shell available, a command similar to the below will process all.

```
jmurtari@anvil:/cygdrive/c/condor2/Landscapes/hhsc1/working/SourceTiles> for dir in `ls -d
0*`; do echo "#### Processing $dir"; cd
/cygdrive/c/condor2/Landscapes/hhsc1/working/SourceTiles/$dir; ./GDAL_$dir.bat; done
#### Processing 0000
....
```

## **APPENDIX THREE – Licensing, Google and Satellite Imagery**

This tutorial uses imagery data collected by various satellite sources and compiled by Google and made available for download. We're happy to acknowledge the great help that is. Licensing can always be an issue (see link below for more info and references).

We certainly feel we are making 'FAIR USE' of their imagery and transforming it into a new product. That all being said we strongly advise NO COMMERCIAL use, e.g. You shouldn't setup a website where people give you coordinates and you spit out a scenery they can download for a fee. It might be OK, but it might not under FAIR USE.

More on FAIR USE → <https://FreeGeographyTools.com/2007/fair-use-and-google-earth-imagery>

You can certainly acknowledge Google. We'd suggest adding some text somewhere on your Splash Screens, some have used: "Satellite Imagery – Google Maps"

## APPENDIX FOUR – Distortion: Flat map over round earth

Some of you interested in enigmas and brain-teasers may be asking, “How can satellite photos of a ROUND Earth be flattened?” Well just think back to older flat maps you’ve seen... mercator projections, etc....

by Nick Bonniere

When you fly in real-life, you are flying over a sphere. When you fly in Condor, you are flying over flat terrain which is a projection of a sphere onto a flat surface. For Condor this projection is UTM (Universal Transverse Mercator). Just like for any flat map such as a paper map, the projection results in distortion. The further away from the centre point of the projection, the more the distortion and that is why you need to pick the closest UTM zone.

When images are downloaded, they have already been flattened based on a tile projection system. For use with Condor, they have to be re-projected to UTM. This is where epsg:3857 and epsg:4326 come in. They refer to the projections and coordinates. If you use the right one, you minimize distortions, but if you use the wrong one, you introduce more distortion. Over small distances, the distortion is small and in a Condor tile (23040 metres wide), the difference between epsg:3857 and epsg:4326 is about 10 to 15 metres.

For your 5x5 scenery, you can determine the overall effect of the UTM projection. You take the lat-long coordinates of opposite corners and do a great-circle calculation, and for condor you do an arithmetic distance calculation.

For 5x5, Condor opposite corner distance is  $(2*(5*23040)^2)^{0.5} = 162.92$  Km

Great-circle calculations for one diagonal is: 162.85 km, the other diagonal is: 162.84 km

As you fly in Condor, you are totally un-aware of any distortion. Reaching a turn-point is simply a few more metres away than in real-life, and for a 5x5 about 250 feet over 100 mi.

NEXT REV NOTES:

he Landscape

Editor draws the airport G file with asphalt and grass areas, as well as the defined runway.

Condor\_Tiles draws the defined runway and its centre (red), and three items in blue: 1) the glider take-off path on the left, the tow plane landing path on the right with its return to the take-off position, and the standard position of a windsock (square).

- Adding Trees, Flatening

NOTE: I noticed you didn't have a runway. Right now they aren't covered in our Tutorial. I can give you one tip for a smoother takeoff. Load your scenery in the landscape editor. Click on 'Airports' and zoom in on your location. Then click on 'Height map' and you will see a bunch of elevation numbers. Then click on 'FLATTEN'. Set the 'Altitude' to what you used for the Airport, and then to start an 'Edge slope' of about 1:3 and a 'Radius' about 25 pt. When you move your cursor you will see two circles. The inner circle will be forced to that exact elevation, the outer circle will be a slop area for a gradual transition.

Makes for a much smoother takeoff. You have to go thru all the save steps as below. WARNING - there is no easy way to undo these changes!

# APPENDIX FIVE – GNU Free Documentation License

Reference: <https://www.gnu.org/licenses/fdl-1.3.en.html>

Version 1.3, 3 November 2008

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## APPENDIX SIX – Misc: Turnpoint files, splash images

**Turnpoints** - If you look in the top folder of your landscape, you will find a <landscape>.cup (just put your turnpoints in that file).

Splash Screen Images – These are displayed while Condor2 is loading your landscape. These are stored in the <landscape>\Images folder (just check Slovenia), they are .jpg, 1920x1080, and use a number for the name. It will cycle thru them.

Below are some other notes on turnpoint usage and formatting:

- \* On your first use of a landscape the turnpoints are loaded from a file in the landscape directory with the name <landscape>.cup
- \* After first use Condor stores a copy of the turnpoints in a file located in Documents\Condor\Turnpoints\<landscape>.cup It then uses that file exclusively and ignores any changes you might make to the turnpoint file in the landscapes directory.
- \* If changes are made to the turnpoints file in the landscape directory with a new release of the landscape, you must delete the turnpoint file in the Documents\Condor\Turnpoints folder first before starting Condor. It will then use the new file.
- \* Visibility of turnpoints depends on the "Style" field being a '1' in the turnpoints file followed by no other data. If something is not showing up, try changing the value, perform the steps above, stop/start Condor, and it should appear. Example:

Before:

```
"Yadkinville", "YADKNVLL", US, 3608.550N, 08043.083W, 1050ft, 3, , 1200ft, , "Turn Point, Landable, Land to the East, RW width: 50"
```

After:

```
"Yadkinville", "YADKNVLL", US, 3608.550N, 08043.083W, 1050ft, 1, , , ,
```

- \* You can create your own turnpoints in the Flight Planner by clicking right and selecting "New" -> "Turnpoint". Those will be stored in your Documents directory copy only.