Version Control Tips

TMPD Webinar: Records Management & Data Governance

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File Version History

File Version History refers to saving new copies of your document when changes are made. In order to avoid having several copies of the same file, you would save those changes using a naming convention that show the current version.

You could name your file using **dates** or the use of **v (for version)** e.g. **Filename_v2_2022** - this shows the version you are working with and the date.

When sharing the file with others on the team, they would change the version and add their initials to end of filename (e.g. **Filename_v3 2022_JP**).

Once the changes are accepted, you can save the final version (e.g. **Filename_2022_final**). This lets all the users know the file has been reviewed, all changes accepted and this file is ready for publication.
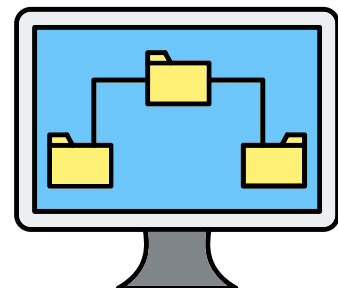
GIS Naming Conventions

In GIS, you may have several copies of one Layer, but each copy has a different GIS process performed on it. Using a naming convention can assist in the file history of the layer and will allow you to go back to a previous version, should a file become corrupted.

One way to name your Layers includes **Layer_Name** and the process that has been performed on it. These naming conventions also assist in knowing what stage the file is in, and what needs to be done before it is final.
Once you are happy with the outcome of all the processes, you can delete the previous versions, leaving you with the final finished layer.

Examples:

- Layername_digitized
- Layername_cleaned
- Layername_built
- Layername_transformed
- Layername_projected
- Layername_merged
- Layername_joined
- Layername_final

Image/Photo Naming Conventions

When enhancing photos, images and other media, you may want to use a similar example as the GIS.

- Image_original
- Image_transparent
- Image_cropped
- Image_Mosaic
- Image_Final

The Importance of "Save As"

Timestamping is the most common version control. However, without saving your project to a new name, you've overwritten the original file. This could be costly both in time and value.

Some programs will allow you to do a history recall, which has been quite the image saver in the past.

So when making changes, always make sure that you "Save As" and create your new file name.