Getting Trimble differential GPS data into your GIS

1. Turn on the Trimble and push the left button to activate TerraSync (the actual program within the Windows Mobile device that allows us to collect and transfer GPS data).

2. Connect the Trimble to the computer with the miniUSB cable. Ignore the "Windows Mobile Device Center" window if that pops up, other than clicking to connect the device without setting it up.

3. Open GPS Pathfinder on the workstation.

Within Pathfinder do the following. Note, before doing the steps below you have to build a new project (it will prompt you if you don't have one).

1) Download the data from device, using GPS Pathfinder program.

Menu Utilities>Data Transfer. In here click Add button, choose the file and click Transfer.

2) Make differential correction to get highest precision.

Menu Utilities>Differential Correction

Navigate and open the downloaded .SSF file, and click the buttons to process. Note you have to pick a base station and sometimes none are available. If this happens you can sometimes use uncorrected data (data will only be like 1m precision). Otherwise it will go through an exhaustive inversion to differentially correct the points, and generate a .COR file.

3) Get the data out into a format you can use inside a GIS

Utilities>Export

You need to convert the .COR file into something we can read into a GIS. There are plenty of formats to use for export, but the basic one that should work is ESRI Shapefile. Click the Sample ESRI Shapefile Setup and then Properties in the lower right. Make sure the fields of interest in Point Features are clicked.

Note, if all measurements from different files on the device ARE IN ONE project on Pathfinder, and you use ESRI shapefile then the export file from Pathfinder WILL OVERWRITE previous exports.

4) Import this into GlobalMapper

Note, the datum matters so be mindful of the one you used for the GPS acquisition and the GIS coverage you use.