



LINE EDITOR: Importing from Text Files

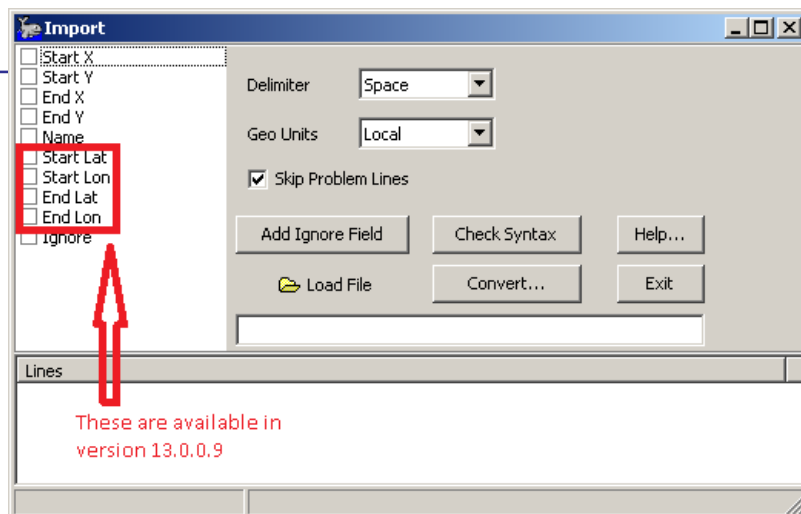
By Bill Bergman

The LINE EDITOR has the ability create new lines from information stored in a text file. This facility acts as a mechanism for transferring line information generated by an external program to the HYPACK® software. We have tried to accommodate various potential input formats, rather than specifying a rigid predefined one, by using a 'smart' parsing approach. This flexibility costs increased complexity, that is, there is a little more setup work for you, but not much, and it is (hopefully) intuitive.

1. **Open the import dialog in the LINE EDITOR.** From the file menu select the 'import' option. A dialog similar to the one in Figure 1 will appear.

FIGURE 1. Import Dialog in the LINE EDITOR

The general concept is that 1 line from the text file corresponds to 1 planned line and that the information to populate the planned line should be separated in a regular fashion. We will call the pieces of line information 'fields' for the rest of this article.



2. **Load a text file by clicking the Load File button.** The lines of the file will be displayed in the Lines section of the dialog. You can click on any line and a copy of its text will be placed in the edit control. This is handy for being able to cursor through an individual line as an aid in trouble shooting lines that fail to parse correctly.
3. **Tell the parser how to identify each field in the source line by specifying a delimiter.** The choices are 'space', 'comma' and 'tab'. These are popular choices and should handle most any file.
4. **Provide a 'field definition' for each field in the line.** The possible field definitions, listed on the left of the dialog, are:
 - **StartX, StartY** - The parser expects the field to represent a projected coordinate part for the start of the line.
 - **EndX, EndY** - The parser expects the field to represent a projected coordinate part for the end of the line.
 - **Name** - Text which will be used for the planned line name.
 - **StartLat, StartLon** - The parser expects the field to represent a geographical coordinate part for the start of the line.
 - **EndLat, EndLon** - The parser expects the field to represent a geographical coordinate part for the end of the line.
 - **Ignore** - The parser will skip this field.

Only checked field definitions will be considered by the parser.

5. **Match the field definitions to the fields in the text line.** Drag the field definition up or down in the list with the mouse. The parser builds its field list from top to bottom. You may add additional 'ignore' fields by clicking [Add Ignore Field]. Drag them in to place as needed.
6. **Enter the Geo Units** (Geodesy Units). This tells the parser if a Latitude, Longitude pair needs to be datum shifted before projecting to XY. The choices are Local and WGS84.
7. **Choose how to handle lines that do not conform to your description.** The **Skip Problem Lines** check box, when checked, informs the parser to continue even if it encounters a line it disapproves of. Handy for files where valid line information is not available for every line of the text file.

It's all setup, now what?

8. **Click [Check Syntax]** (Optional). This performs a 'dry run' on the file. That is, it behaves just like pressing [Convert], except *NO lines will be generated yet*. If any lines fail to parse correctly, you have the chance to modify the settings and try again. This ensures you don't end up with partially generated lines in the LINE EDITOR.
9. **When you are satisfied, click [Convert]** and your lines will be imported.