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for Forestry

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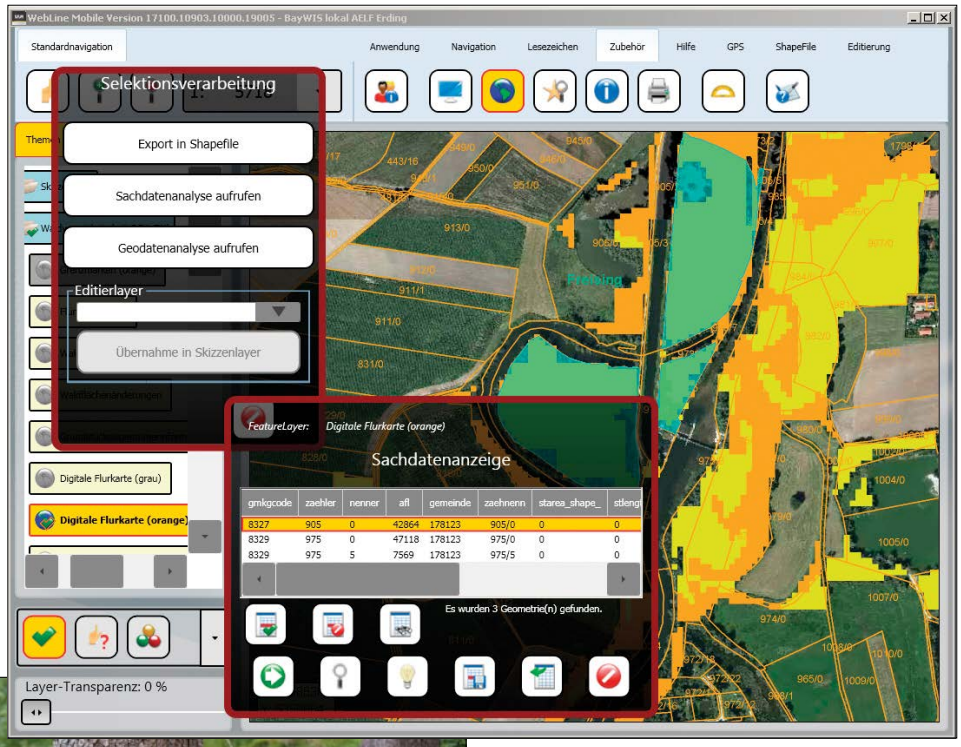
GIS Mobile Apps Improve Bavarian Foresters' Productivity

The Bavarian State Forest Administration is a prime example of how an enterprise GIS can improve productivity. More than 1,200 people use the administration's ArcGIS platform to access and analyze the forest. Administrators, officials, and employees tap into GIS for analysis, workflow, and decision-making support.

To ensure that foresters would actually use the technology, application designers created GIS tools that were not intimidating to nontechnical staff.

The administration's enterprise GIS, the Bavarian Forest Information System, helps foresters whether they are disconnected while working in the forest or online in the office. A mobile application gives foresters access to data including 90 different themes and 130 layers of information. It supports bidirectional synchronization while using only one user interface.



↑ In the field, the forester is able to take advantage of easy-to-use analysis tools. The forest delineation tool has large buttons and is easily operated by nontechnical personnel like foresters. It has built-in GPS, so the position reference does not need to be added.

Because the apps are responsive and easy to use, foresters have adopted GIS and use it for many aspects of their work such as gathering data and analyzing change. For instance, they use a change-of-forest area application to monitor newly harvested and planted forests. Foresters use a tool to capture

↑ Bavarian foresters use GIS to be more productive in the forest.

information on a GPS mobile device, and the IT team processes the data for land survey purposes.

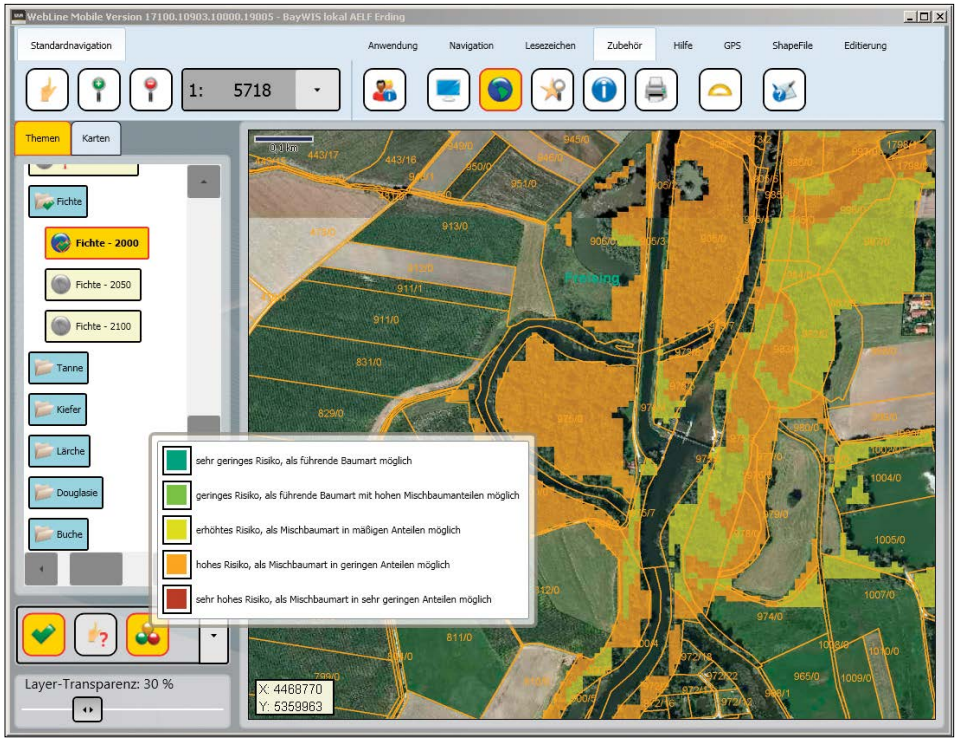
Another app is used for surveying wildlife and compares species population to natural habitat. This count is the basis for issuing hunting permits. By using a GIS app specifically designed for counting species, foresters have reduced the time to perform count tasks by 20 to 50 percent.

Geographic information officer Christian Simbeck explained that a goal of the Bavarian State Forest Administration information technology department is to provide foresters with GIS tools that help them achieve their mission, optimize their workflow, and be more productive.

Simbeck advises GIS application developers to take time to understand precisely what users need before developing applications. This includes knowing who will use the application and what level of technological ability they have. Where will they be working with the tool? Locations may be connected in the office, disconnected in the field, or both if the user is mobile. Finally, developers need to understand the step-by-step details of a workflow.

This successful strategy has been proved by the 1,200 employees who use GIS every day.

Learn about ArcGIS for developers at developers.arcgis.com.



↑ A basic viewer application makes it easy for users to access data.

↑ In this scene, the user can select specific forests for climate protection, forest overview, nature reserves, and county boundaries information and show it on the map.

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