

Plat of Survey & Tax Parcel Maps

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What is a Plat of Survey?

A plat of survey (Fig. 1) is a legal map drawing that depicts a single property, or multiple properties, surveyed by a field crew and certified by a licensed land surveyor. A plat of survey is extremely useful for farmers and landowners. Furthermore, a plat of survey is especially important to woodland owners and foresters when establishing property lines and boundary corners prior to timber harvesting activities. A typical plat of survey will indicate acreage, legal description, location of old fencing, property lines, and corner posts.

Where to Find a Licensed Land Surveyor?

Land surveyors must be licensed to practice in Illinois. According to the Illinois Professional Land Surveyors Association's website, "A Professional Land Surveyor is a person who has qualified by education and experience, and who has passed an examination for registration required by the State of Illinois to practice Land Surveying in Illinois."

Boundary surveys are by far the most frequent services requested by forest landowners. A boundary survey is used to establish the property lines of particular tract of land. Boundary surveys are especially important when harvesting timber in order to avoid boundary line disputes and timber trespass issues.

Find an Illinois Land Surveyor

<http://iplsa.org/IPLSA/FindASurveyorPublic.aspx>

How Much will a Boundary Survey Cost?

Boundary survey costs vary by parcel and by individual surveyors. Surveyor fees are dependent upon several factors, including extent of services, property size, current land use, terrain, deed research, and the known location of existing survey pins or corner posts. Generally speaking, the more complex and comprehensive the boundary survey, the higher the cost.

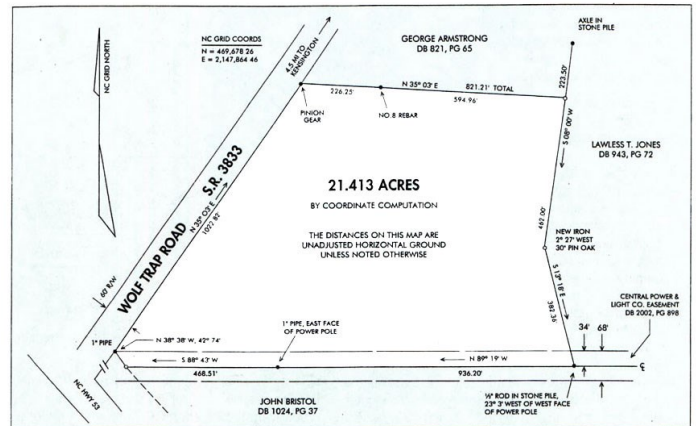


Figure 1. An example of a plat of survey (source: web1.cnre.vt.edu).

For example, a complete boundary survey will generally be more expensive compared to a partial boundary survey whereby only one corner pin or perimeter line requires surveying. A reputable surveyor will be able to provide landowners with a written estimate in advance of any on-site land surveying work. Things to consider when contacting a land surveyor:

- Partial Boundary Survey vs. Complete Boundary Survey?
- Do you need your property lines to be flagged or marked at designated intervals (i.e., property line midpoints)?

What is a Tax Parcel Map?

A tax parcel map (Fig. 2) is used by your county tax assessor's office to identify parcels of land for the purpose of levying property tax assessments. Most Illinois counties maintain a geographic information system (GIS) website that can be used to locate, view, access, identify, print, and download tax parcel data by property index number (PIN), address, or ownership. It is important to note that a tax parcel map should not be confused with a legal boundary survey or a plat of survey prepared by a licensed land surveyor.

Illinois County GIS Resources

www.gis2gps.com/GIS/illcounties/illcounties.html



Figure 2. An example of a tax parcel map accessed directly from the Champaign County GIS Consortium website (<http://www.maps.ccgisc.org/public/>).

Please note the Illinois County GIS Resources website is not exhaustive and it may not be completely up-to-date. Therefore, users should conduct a direct Internet search using their favorite search engine to locate a specific county GIS website. Alternatively, landowners can directly contact their county tax assessors.

Planning a Timber Sale?

Did you know that boundary surveys qualify as a legitimate timber sale expense when coordinated with a landowner’s timber sale? Well, they do and it should be noted that legitimate timber sale expenses are 100% tax deductible according to the National Timber Tax website: www.TimberTax.org

Websites related to current topic:

Illinois County GIS Resources
www.gis2gps.com/GIS/illcounties/illcounties.html

Illinois Professional Land Surveyors Association
www.iplsa.org

Minimum Standards of Practice for Illinois Land Surveyors
www.ilga.gov/commission/jcar/admincode/068/068012700000560R.html

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