<u>**BE Computing**</u>

Quick Plotting Tips – Digital Commons

Best Practices

- **Plot at least 1 day before the project is due.**

- Plot at off times such as early mornings or evenings.

- Set a document resolution of **150dpi or less**.

- Use **JPEG** or **PDF** format.

- The plotter cannot plot all the way to the edge of the paper! Be sure to allow at least a 1/8" border (so the maximum plottable width is 35.75").

- **Always set a custom paper size when plotting.** The exact process is a little different in each application, but the basic steps are:

  - Select File/Print
  - In the Printer menu, select "\\RIPPER\Gould_Color_Plotter"
  - Click on Properties -> Advanced... -> Page Size -> Postscript Custom Page Size
  - Set the Width to 36 (inches)
  - **If the longest edge of your document is longer than 36 inches, set the Length to the length of this edge and choose "Short Edge First"**
  - **If the longest edge of your document is 36 inches or less, set the Length to the length of the shorter (i.e. other) edge and choose "Long Edge First"**

- After you send your plot, go to the help desk and let the consultant know that you've sent a plot and would like to preview it. (Note that it'll take a couple minutes for the plot to arrive at the ripper and be processed.) When you and the consultant have previewed the plot and decided that it's OK, the consultant will release the plot to be plotted as soon as the plotter is available.

Application-specific Tips for Plotting

1. **Plotting from Adobe Acrobat**

   a. Set the Custom Page Size width to 36":

In Acrobat, select Print. In the printer menu, select "\\RIPPER\Gould_Color_Plotter." Then click on PROPERTIES-> ADVANCED... -> PAGE SIZE -> POSTSCRIPT CUSTOM PAGE SIZE. The custom page size MUST be set to 36" wide, even if the document is only 20" x 20" or even if it the document is wider than 36". Once the width is set to 36", set the height to the other dimension.

Don't worry if the orientation is opposite of the file's actual dimensions since Acrobat will rotate the document to fit onto the plotter page. (NOTE: After you type in the length, click the mouse someplace in the box. If you just hit "Enter" after typing in the number, your new dimensions will not be saved.)

b. Make sure your plot looks okay in the print preview window:

Once you've set the Custom page size, exit out of all the windows until you are back at the first print window. Take a look at the Preview box - it will show a small version of your document and the page dimensions. By default the "Auto-Rotate and Center pages" box should be clicked, so Acrobat will have rotated your document to fit the page dimensions you set earlier. Be mindful that the "Shrink oversized pages to paper size" box is checked by default, so if you've set your page dimensions wrong, Acrobat will shrink it to fit the page. IF IT DOESN"T LOOK RIGHT IN THE PREVIEW WINDOW IT WON'T LOOK RIGHT WHEN YOU PLOT IT. Try changing from Landscape to Portrait (or back).

2. **Plotting from Adobe Illustrator**

If you are using Adobe Illustrator, it is strongly advised NOT to plot from the Illustrator program directly. Illustrator has a tendency to drop out layers when it plots, especially if it's a large and complex file. If you do decide to plot from Illustrator, the instructions are the same as for Adobe Photoshop (see the Photoshop hints on this page).

A better option is to save the Illustrator file as a PDF and then plot that file from Adobe Reader or Adobe Photoshop. Make sure to UNCHECK the "Keep Illustrator Editing capabilities" in the pdf dialog box when saving from Illustrator. This generally works well.

To be safe, open up the Illustrator .PDF file in Adobe Photoshop and then resave it as Photoshop .PDF. Photoshop will save it in a format that has no layers, so nothing can be dropped out. Open the Photoshop .PDF in Acrobat or Photoshop and plot from there (see instructions below). Acrobat sends the file to the ripper in a compressed format which makes it much faster than Photoshop. You lose some image quality and some colors might shift, but for most purposes it is insignificant.

3. **Plotting from Adobe InDesign**

For documents created in InDesign, first export out as a PDF then open with Photoshop, flatten the image and resave as either a jpg or pdf. Open in Adobe Photoshop and plot from that application (see the Photoshop hints on this page).

4. **Plotting from Adobe Photoshop**

Use the "Print with Preview" command rather than the Print command. Follow the same instructions for Acrobat to set the Custom Page Size. Always set the custom page width to 36", and rotate the plot to fit. IF IT DOESN'T LOOK OKAY IN THE PREVIEW WINDOW, IT WON'T PLOT CORRECTLY. Try changing from Landscape to Portrait (or back).

5. **Plotting from SureTrak**

Go to File -> Print Setup. Select "PDF995" as the printer and set paper size to "PostScript Custom Page Size". Go to Properties -> Advanced and again set paper size to PostScript Custom Page Size. Set width and height to 36". Click 'OK' and select File -> Print. Set Print Quality to 144 dpi and click 'OK'. PDF995 will prompt you for a name of your document. Once the PDF is saved, open and follow the above instructions for plotting from Acrobat or Photoshop.

6. **Plotting from Primavera Project Planner (P6)**

Go to File -> Page Setup. Select "all on one page". Export to PDF as either Arch-D (24" x 36") or Arch-E (36" x 48"). Open the resulting PDF file in Acrobat and plot from there in the usual way (be sure to select "PostScript Custom Page Size", set the width to 36" and the height to 24" (for Arch-D) or 48" (for Arch-E), select "Long Edge First" for Arch-D or "Short Edge First" for Arch-E).

7. **Details for CAD plotting**

- Select Ripper Plotter
- Select Properties
- Make sure Custom Properties is selected
- Press the Custom Properties button
- Select Landscape (if necessary)
- Select Advanced…
- Bring the menu down again, and select PostScript Custom
    - Adjust Width and Height as necessary
    - Width always 36.00" or less
    - Adjust Paper Feed Direction to Short Edge First if height is greater than 36.00"
    - Otherwise, Long Edge First
    - Press OK for all menus
- Paper Size will default to Letter—change to Postscript Custom Page Size
- Select PostScript Custom in the menu again
- Double check all settings, then press OK to send
- Allow a few minutes to process on BE Computing computers, then check plot with Help Desk to release.

8. **Details for ArcGIS plotting**

Another exception is plotting from ArcGIS. To our knowledge, the best way to plot from ArcGIS is to save the file as a JPEG and print from another application.

9. **Details for Powerpoint plotting**

If you're working on a Mac, transfer your Powerpoint file to a Windows PC - there are issues with plotting from Mac Powerpoint, such that it's a lot easier to simply do this from a Windows PC.

From Powerpoint use "Save As" and select the "PDF" option, and save the file as a PDF. Then open the PDF file in Acrobat. At this point plot normally from Acrobat (i.e. custom paper size, etc).