



We hope you all had a Merry Christmas and enjoyed the break over the festive season. It has been a very steady couple of months here for us, and I know that our programmers welcomed the break. They are now ready to get back into their coding world for 2009.

2008 was an interesting year for the team at ATLAS. Our General Manager, Sarah Heine finished working with ATLAS in October, and interviews were held for her successor in December. We are hoping for this position to be filled early this year.

We have had a few questions around where Andrew Gordon has gone. I would like to confirm that we haven't disposed of him - he is enjoying being semi-retired and is now working with us part time. The balance of his time is spent travelling and on his vipassana meditation with his wife.

Jeremy Snook commenced work and most of you would have met him at one of our user group meetings held in either New Zealand or Australia. He tells me he is enjoying his new role and getting to know some of you through software support. It is great to have Jeremy on our team.

In this issue we are outlining the latest release of ATLAS Forecaster along with updated hardware for ATLAS FieldMan. Of

course we also feature all of our staples such as "What's new with GeoMaster" from Christian and his team; Jeremy's Jottings (replacing Marika's Musings); and an overview of some of the conferences that staff have attended.

I would like to leave you with a photo of our team from the Scion Christmas Party, the theme was a mad hatter's party and this photo was taken right before we stormed the food tent!

Happy New Year and wishing you all the best for 2009.

Bronwyn Smith
Office Manager

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Forecaster Version 1.3

Forecaster version 1.3 has been released. It can be downloaded from the ATLAS web site (www.atlastech.co.nz). Note that you will need to login to the web site and select "Support | Forecaster Support" from the main menu.

Major New Features

The key features that have been added to this version are as follows:

- A new density model called "WQIBasicDensity1", together with a stiffness model called "WQIStiffness".
- A new Radiata Pine Heartwood model by Ping Xu, Dave Cown and Russell McKinley.
- A crop history feature has been added. This allows historic silvicultural events to be associated with a crop by clicking the "Crop History" button in the Crop form and entering pruning and thinning information in a similar way to regimes. Since these events are historic, an age or date must be specified which is prior to the start year and start month which has been specified in the Crop form. It is assumed that no events occur prior to age 3 so the ages or dates specified must not be less than age 3.

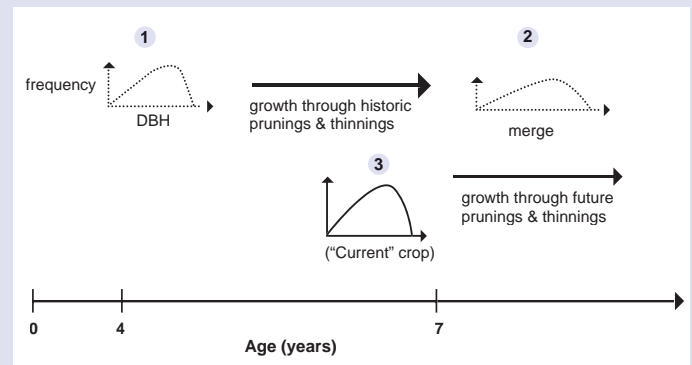
Crop History Explained

The crop history feature was needed for the following reasons:

1. So that annual DBHs and heights can be calculated from planting (some extrapolation is done from age 3 to age 0). These annual DBHs and heights were needed by the WQI models and also by the branch models.
2. So that the 300 Index is derived correctly by the GM300Index growth model. The 300 Index is derived by growing the crop from planting using different 300 Indices until one is found that gives the basal area as entered in the Crop form. If the crop as entered in the Crop form has had any silvicultural operations performed on it (particularly thinning), then the GM300Index growth model needs to know of them when deriving the 300 index. If it does not, it will (incorrectly)

assume that the drop in planted stocking to current stocking is due to mortality, and (incorrectly) assume that current basal area is continuous from an early age up to the current basal area.

The following diagram shows an example of the processes occurring during a simulation in Forecaster with a crop which has been measured at age 7 and which has a crop history associated with it:



The simulation begins with a crop created at age 3 (see 1 above). This crop will be grown through the historic events up to the start year and month specified in the crop (see 2 above). At this point the crop will be merged with the "Current" crop as specified in the Crop form (see 3 above). This merged crop will then be grown through any future events specified in the regime.

The regime will be merged with the historical events specified in the crop history. This is done so that those events in the regime which have already been performed are skipped over.

ATLAS Modelling Software User Group Meeting

In mid-November ATLAS hosted User Group Meetings in both Melbourne and Rotorua. These meetings are always of great benefit to us, as we hope they are to you as well! It is the easiest way to bring your ideas to the attention of other users, and of hearing ways which other users have thought of to address common problems. Similarly the meetings are great for ATLAS too, since it allows us to gauge the importance of various features to users, and provides direction for future development so we can maximise the value of these products for industry use.

This round of meetings saw a total of 22 users attend our modelling UGM (covering FieldMan, Cruiser, Forecaster, Yield Table Manager and Harvest Scheduler). As well as presenting recent and upcoming enhancements for these products we also received a number of requests for future enhancements – features which enhance the application of these products within the industry. Work has already been started on several of

these suggestions, and the remainder have been documented and prioritised.

To jog the memories of those who were there, and as a resource for those who couldn't attend, the minutes of these meetings have now been uploaded to our website (there's a link from the front page at www.atlastech.co.nz). When reviewing these minutes, if any other great ideas spring to mind, please feel free to bring them to our attention!

One of the ideas raised was the concept of offering advanced user training courses in products such as Forecaster. The general response at the meetings was pretty positive, so this looks likely to be something we might offer in the first half of 2009. If you or any of your colleagues are interested advanced training for any ATLAS software, please get in touch with us at software.support@atlastech.co.nz and let us know which product, how many people, and any specific areas of interest.

GeoMaster Update

"Um Jeremy ... we were supposed to take *that* off ramp..." 11pm on the Tullamarine Highway, and trying to find Clayton (Melbourne). We also discovered (around midnight) that our hotel address, number 301, occurs twice on Springvale Road about 10km apart. The CSIRO campus, once located, provided an excellent venue for our ATLAS User meetings which brought together a mix of new and experienced users. Given the high level of user interaction, the meetings would probably have been worthwhile even if ATLAS hadn't managed to show.

A similar event held in Rotorua the following week gave New Zealand- based users a chance to catch up, and also get updated on the latest developments and discuss plans at ATLAS.

One of the key aims of these meetings was to present new developments in GeoMaster/Harvest Manager v1.12. Some of the significant enhancements presented include:

Making the reclassification of land use between commercial and non-commercial temporal so that land use change over time can be tracked and reported.

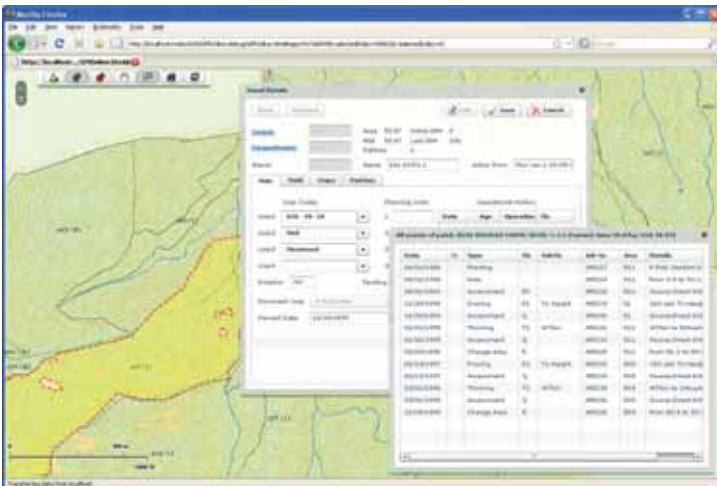
The ability to integrate with ATLAS modeling tools, in particular, the Height/Age models for predicting current Mean Top Height.

The ability to assign, in bulk, yield tables (from Yield Table Manager) to stands.

Extending harvest events to include a yield component. Previously yield could be allocated to a stand, but not easily to production thinning events.

A new reporting model that enables clients to define their own report format in Microsoft Word, and have GeoMaster populate data sections within the report.

The development of the web interface *GeoMaster Online* has also been progressing well, as displayed at the meetings. But as usual, we have to juggle priorities in order to meet needs from a range of clients, and some of the other projects that we're keen to progress at the same time include Roding Manager and Risk Manager. There is still interest in the idea of GeoMaster Mobile, and of course with new clients coming on board comes the need for data conversion and implementation.



Jeremy's Jottings



It's been a busy 3 months for me as I've been finding my way around a new role, and there seems to be a new challenge thrown my way every day!

The standard support call (if there is such a thing) seems to be dominated by "this is what went wrong – how do I fix it?" There are two other very important things we need to know before we can tell you how to fix it:

1. How urgent it is for you (if it's a show-stopper then we are happy to drop (almost!) everything to help you)
2. What you did right before it all went wrong... The first thing which I need to do is to replicate the problem, so that I can then show the developers here, and they can utter some magic words and throw some pixie dust at it (or do something else that is equally incomprehensible to me!).

This is where screenshots are most useful. Don't be afraid to load up an email with screenshots and error messages – the more info you can give us, the easier it will be for us to replicate the problem and then get onto solving it.

The "PrtScn" keyboard button is useful – PrtScn copies your entire screen to the clipboard, while Alt + PrtScn copies just the active window. For even more flexibility, I recommend a screenshot application. There are hordes of these available (for free or very cheap) on the web. I've taken a liking to Pixelmetrics CaptureWiz. Additional functionality includes capturing an area of your screen by dragging a rectangle around it (great for capturing buttons!), capturing the mouse cursor or even capturing a movie while you perform an operation. These tools will not only make life easier for me, but are also great for adding screenshots to presentations, internal documentation, etc.

Happy New Year!

Jeremy

We're on Google!

ATLAS Technology is now searchable on Google maps. We recently added our business location to Google maps. Now you can get directions to where we are and even save our location to your own personal "My Maps" page.

Check us out here:

<http://maps.google.com/maps?q=ATLAS+Technology,+Rotorua>



FieldMan News

A New Allegro

Some heartening news on the hardware front – Juniper Systems has released a new model of their popular Allegro rugged field computer. We had been concerned that Juniper were putting all of their development into the PDA-style (keyboard-less) Archer, but the newly-released Allegro MX has the same form factor as the familiar CX and CE models, i.e. shape, size and keyboard.

The main changes that the MX brings are: a USB port, a slot for a microSD memory card, a bit more speed, and the latest version of Microsoft's OS for mobile devices – Windows Mobile 6.1.

The ATLAS team has trialed FieldMan on an MX, revealing that in this version of the OS, Microsoft has changed some of the key codes (thanks a lot Bill!), requiring a few minor modifications to our software. This has been done, and we will continue testing to ensure that FieldMan behaves as expected on Windows Mobile 6 devices such as the Allegro MX.

Tips and Tricks

For those of you who deal with Allegros (or other mobile devices) connected to your PC, here are a couple of things that will make life a bit easier:

ActiveSync Remote Display allows you to display your Allegro's screen on your PC, *and interact with it!* It is one of the Microsoft's **Windows Mobile Developer Power Toys**, downloadable from <http://tinyurl.com/56rdb0>.

If you want to deal to that annoying screen that prompts you to "Set Up a Partnership" every time that you connect an Allegro, then check out the article at <http://support.microsoft.com/kb/270136>, which shows how to make all devices connect as a Guest. Take some care with this, since it involves a change to your PC's registry.

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