



Idaho Board of Licensure of Professional Engineers and Professional Land Surveyors

Professional Land Surveying Guidance Document



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ABOUT

The purpose of this document is to promote consistency, transparency, and fairness in the administration of the Board's regulatory responsibilities. It is intended to help licensees, applicants, and members of the public understand how the Board generally interprets and applies the statutes and administrative rules within its jurisdiction.

This document does not have the force or effect of law, and it does not establish new rights, obligations, or defenses beyond those contained in applicable statutes and rules. In the event of any conflict between this guidance and Idaho law, the statutes and rules control. Because each licensing matter may present unique facts or circumstances, the Board retains the discretion to evaluate situations on a case-by-case basis.

This document is provided solely for informational purposes under the Idaho Public Records Law, which requires the Board's deliberative materials to be publicly accessible. It is not legal advice, nor should it be relied upon as a substitute for consulting the governing law or seeking assistance from qualified legal counsel. Licensees and applicants are strongly encouraged to obtain independent legal advice regarding how Idaho law applies to their specific facts, circumstances, or concerns.



CORNER RECORDS

CORNER PERPETUATION AND FILING RECORD FILING - NOTICE

It has been brought to the attention of the Board that some professional land surveyors have not been complying with Title 55, Section 16 of the Idaho Code relating to Corner Perpetuation and Filing. The Board is initiating procedures to assist counties in the maintenance of these records and investigation.

55-1612. Penalty. Professional land surveyors failing to comply with the provisions hereof shall be deemed to be within the purview of Section 54-1220, Idaho Code, and shall be subject to disciplinary action as in said section provided.

Approved 01/1978, NB 3 Updated 06/10/2020, 05/27/2026

CORNER PERPETUATION AND RECORDING OF SURVEYS

Inspection of county records by the Board indicates that several licensees have been laggard in filing the corner perpetuation forms and record of erroneous and unnecessary surveys as required by the Idaho Code. For the information of the Idaho licensees, the sections of the Idaho Code, Chapter 16, Corner Perpetuation and Filing, and Chapter 19, Recording of Surveys, of Title 55, are included in the Roster, and it is requested that all licensees refer to these Chapters affecting land surveying in the State of Idaho.

Approved 01/1980 NB5, 05/27/2026

November 11, 2010
John L. Dunn, P.L.S., Latah County Surveyor
Latah County Courthouse
P.O. Box 8068
Moscow, ID 83843

Dear Mr. Dunn:

At its meeting on November 8-10, 2010 the Idaho Board of Licensure of Professional Engineers and Professional Land Surveyors reviewed your communication to the Board dated September 14, 2010 relating to recording fees for a corner record. The Board reviewed the matter and concluded that context makes it clear that the reference to a "cornerstone marker" in Idaho Code Section 31-3205(4) means a "corner record" as required in Idaho Code Title 55 Chapter 16. The Board shares your concern that there is an ambiguity as to the filing or recording fee, and we suggest that the Idaho Society of Professional Land Surveyors contact the Idaho Association of Counties and ask them to submit legislation to clarify the fee.

Please call if you have any questions.

For the Board,

Gary L. Young, P.E./L.S.
Board Chair
2010-11 Meeting

DLC/GLY/dc:Dunn, John.

Cc: ISPLS, P.O. Box 7886, Boise, Idaho 83707
IAC, P.O. Box 1623, 700 W. Washington, Boise, ID 83701

Updated 7-30-2020

EASEMENTS

DRAIN FIELD EASEMENTS RECORD OF SURVEY REQUIRED

Some Public Health Districts now require that drain field easements be located and monumented by a professional land surveyor. When such services are performed, the conditions specified in Idaho Code Sections 55-1904(2) and (3) exist and a Record of Survey must be filed.

Approved 11/2008 NB 42, 05/27/2026

MONUMENTS REQUIRED FOR EASEMENTS

55-1901, Idaho Code states that the provisions of this chapter are supplementary to existing laws relating to surveys, subdivisions, platting and boundaries. 55-1904(5) includes easements and lease areas. This links the Record of Survey law and Platting law together and provides the justification to require the monumenting of irregular shaped easements in a subdivision. As the first surveyor “field locating” the easement, they are required to set monuments and file a survey.

Approved 11/09/2018, NB62, 05/27/2026

RIGHT-OF-WAY PLANS REQUIRE PLS

If Right- of-Way Plans are the result of a field survey, the information derived from which is used to prepare legal descriptions for conveyances, then the work falls within the definition of the practice of professional land surveying contained in Idaho Code. Such work must be performed under the responsible charge of a person licensed as a professional land surveyor and the work product must be sealed, signed and dated by the professional in responsible charge.

Approved 06/2001, NB 31, 05/27/2026

TEMPORARY EASEMENTS DON'T REQUIRE MONUMENTS

Temporary easements do not require monumentation.

Approved 01/02/2018, NB60, 05/27/2026

MONUMENTS

MONUMENT “PAVED OVER” DISTURBED

Paving over monuments with an overlay or chip seal does not disturb them as “disturbed” is used in Idaho Code Section 55-1613, nor is the monument “defaced,” “injured,” or “removed” as those terms are used in Idaho Code Section 54-1234. Prior to a “rotomilling” operation or other construction, monuments should be located by a professional land surveyor so they can be reestablished if they are “disturbed,” as required under Idaho Code Section 55-1613.

Approved 11/01/2011, NB48, 05/27/2026

MONUMENTS UPGRADED TO BLM STANDARDS

One of the provisions of 55-1608, Idaho Code, requires that in every case where a corner record of a survey corner is required to be filed or recorded under Idaho Code Title 55 Chapter 16, the Corner Perpetuation and Filing Law, “Any monument set shall conform to the provisions of section 54-1227, Idaho Code, and shall be surmounted with a cap of such material and size that can be permanently and legibly marked as prescribed by the manual of surveying instructions issued by the United States department of the interior, bureau of land management, including the license number of the professional land surveyor responsible for placing the monument.” The same basic requirement applies when a PLS encounters a nonmetallic corner set in a survey conducted by an agency of the United States government. The requirements for marking the caps are contained on pages 109 to 121 of the *Manual of Surveying Instructions 2009 Edition* of the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management.

Approved: 11/2012, NB50, 06/17/2020, 05/27/2026

REPLACE WITH A CONFORMING MONUMENT IN SUBDIVISION

Idaho Code 50-1303 reads in pertinent part, “50-1303. Survey — monuments — Accuracy. The centerline intersections and points where the centerline changes direction on all streets, avenues, and public highways, and all points, witness corners and reference points on the exterior boundary where the boundary line changes direction **shall be marked with magnetically detectable monuments the minimum size of which shall be five-eighths (5/8) of an inch in least dimension and two (2) feet long** iron or steel rod unless special circumstances preclude use of such monument...” **[emphasis added]**

The language “shall be marked with” is affirmative and clear. A ½ inch rebar would have to be replaced to comply with code. The remaining language gives some latitude by giving minimum dimensions.

Approved 11/09/2018, NB62, 05/27/2026

PLATS

SEAL ON ALL PLAT SHEETS

All “map” sheet(s) of the plat must be sealed, signed, and dated as well as the “Surveyors Certificate”. Idaho Code §54-1215(3)(c) states, in pertinent part, “Each plan or drawing sheet shall be sealed and signed by the licensee or licensees responsible for each sheet.” Idaho Code §50-1309 states, in pertinent part, “The professional land surveyor making the survey shall certify the correctness of said plat and he shall place his seal, signature and date on the plat.”

Approved 10/2002, NB 33, 05/27/2026

PRACTICE OF PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYING

AUTHORITATIVE PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYING

The Board guidance regarding authoritative professional land surveying is intended to provide an understanding on the services and activities that require a PLS license and those that do not. “Authoritative” is defined in Idaho Code 54-1202(1) as a service or product that is certified by a PLS in accordance with established principles of professional land surveying when used to describe products, processes, applications or data resulting from the practice of professional land surveying.

A. Activities Included within Authoritative Professional Land Surveying

Activities accomplished by or under the responsible charge of a professional land surveyor (unless specifically exempted in subsection B of this section or in 54-1202(12)(b), Idaho Code) include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. The creation of maps and georeferenced databases representing authoritative locations for boundaries, the location of fixed works, or topography. This includes maps and georeferenced databases prepared by any person or government agency where that data is provided to the public as a survey product;
2. Original data acquisition, or the resolution of conflicts between multiple data sources, when used for the authoritative location of features within the following data themes: geodetic control, orthoimagery, elevation and hydrographic, fixed works, private and public boundaries, and cadastral information;
3. Certification of positional accuracy of maps or measured survey data;
4. Adjustment or authoritative interpretation of raw survey data;
5. Geographic Information System (GIS)-based parcel or cadastral mapping used for authoritative boundary definition purposes wherein land title or development rights for individual parcels are, or may be, affected;

6. Authoritative interpretation of maps, deeds, and other land title documents to resolve conflicting data elements;
7. Acquisition of field data required to authoritatively position fixed works or cadastral data relative to geodetic control;
8. Analysis, adjustment or transformation of cadastral data of the parcel layers with respect to the geodetic control layer within a GIS resulting in the affirmation of positional accuracy.

B. Activities Excluded from the Practice of Authoritative Professional Land Surveying

A distinction must be made in the use of electronic systems between making or documenting original measurements in the creation of survey products, versus the copying, interpretation, or representation of those measurements in such systems. Further, a distinction must be made according to the intent, use, or purpose of measurement products in electronic systems to determine a definitive location versus the use of those products as a locational reference for planning, infrastructure management, and general information. The following items are not to be included as activities within the definition of the practice of professional land surveying:

1. The creation of general maps
 - a. Prepared by private firms or government agencies for use as guides to motorists, boaters, aviators, or pedestrians;
 - b. Prepared for publication in a gazetteer or atlas as an educational tool or reference publication;
 - c. Prepared for or by education institutions for use in the curriculum of any course of study;
 - d. Produced by any electronic or print media firm as an illustrative guide to the geographic location of any event;
 - e. Prepared by laypersons for conversational or illustrative purposes. This includes advertising material and users guides.
2. The transcription of previously georeferenced data into a GIS or LIS by manual or electronic means, and the maintenance thereof, provided the data are clearly not intended to indicate the authoritative location of property boundaries, the precise definition of the shape or contour of the earth, and/or the precise location of fixed works of humans;
3. The transcription of public record data, without modification except for graphical purposes, into a GIS- or LIS-based cadastre (tax maps and associated records) by manual or electronic means, and the maintenance of that cadastre, provided the data are clearly not intended to authoritatively represent property boundaries. This includes tax maps and zoning maps;
4. The preparation of any document by any federal government agency that does not define real property boundaries. This includes civilian and military versions of quadrangle topographic maps, military maps, satellite imagery, and other such documents;

5. The incorporation or use of documents or databases prepared by any federal agency into a GIS/LIS, including but not limited to federal census and demographic data, quadrangle topographic maps, and military maps;
6. Inventory maps and databases created by any organization, in either hard-copy or electronic form, of physical features, facilities, or infrastructure that are wholly contained within properties to which they have rights or for which they have management responsibility. The distribution of these maps and/or databases outside the organization must contain appropriate metadata describing, at a minimum, the accuracy, method of compilation, data sources and dates, and disclaimers of use clearly indicating that the data are not intended to be used as a survey product;
7. Maps and databases depicting the distribution of natural resources or phenomena prepared by foresters, geologists, soil scientists, geophysicists, biologists, archeologists, historians, or other persons qualified to document such data;
8. Maps and georeferenced databases depicting physical features and events prepared by any government agency where access to that data is restricted by statute. This includes georeferenced data generated by law enforcement agencies involving crime statistics and criminal activities.

Approved 04/08/2020, 05/27/2026

RECORDS OF SURVEY

SURVEY OF LEASED SITES

When a field survey is conducted and corners and/or boundaries are created to define the location of a leased site, professional land surveying, as defined in Idaho Code §54-1202(12) is being performed. As such, a person licensed as a Professional Land Surveyor in Idaho must be in responsible charge of such services. Further, if a field survey is conducted, monuments must be set and a Record of Survey must be filed as required under Idaho Code §55-1904(2).

Approved 06/2001, NB31. Updated 06/19/2020, 05/27/2026

FILING OF AMENDED SURVEYS AND PLATS

If a professional land surveyor needs to revise a previously recorded subdivision or record of survey, the revised document should clearly state that it is a revision to a previously recorded document and the revised document should contain the instrument number of the document that it is intended to revise. Since the original document of record cannot be altered, the surveyor should notify the County Recorder of the fact that a revision has been filed so that if someone were to request the original document they would also be notified of the existence of a revision.

Approved: 07/1992, NB 18. 05/27/2026