Case Study

National Hedgerow Map™ fills 'gap' in available data for specialist environmental consultancy

Client:

The Environment Partnership (TEP) is an environmental consultancy supporting sustainable development in the UK and Ireland with environmental design and planning advice with a strong emphasis on personal service.

Industry:

Environmental Services

Product:

National Hedgerow Map™

> *"We've used the NTM™ and NHM™ datasets together for strategic site assessments. Both datasets complement each other and have similar structures, so it's easy to work with both at the same time. Having access to the NTM™ and NHM™ means we can complete an initial review of habitats and vegetation at our desks and advise our clients on which sites might require further on-site surveys and provide initial strategic spatial insights regarding potential BNG issues and carbon sequestration analysis."*
>
> Beth Jones, GIS Consultant at TEP

Summary:

TEP has been using data from Bluesky's National Hedgerow Map™ (NHM™) to assess potential implications as part of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) legislation by accurately identifying where hedgerows are located and to provide additional attribute data to support habitat classifications. In addition, it also supports analysis around baseline carbon sequestration assessments for their clients.

Challenge:

Introduced in February 2024, BNG legislation was established to create and improve natural habitats by ensuring developments have a measurably positive impact ('net gain') on biodiversity. Now mandatory, developers must deliver a BNG of at least 10%, meaning there will be more or a higher quality of natural habitat than there was prior to any development.

As an environmental consultancy supporting sustainable development in the UK and Ireland, TEP's clients – who range from housing developers to utilities and landowners/estates – are often looking to explore and procure substantial amounts of land, therefore a strategic understanding of the ecological position of sites is financially very important. Accurate calculations are vital and give an insight into how much of a site can be developed whilst still adhering to BNG guidelines.

Solution:

As Bluesky's hedgerow dataset provides location, height, volume, vegetation extent, and centrelines for vegetation below three metres in height, TEP began applying the data shortly after it was launched to conduct baseline habitat calculations in line with BNG guidelines.

The NHM™ can also be used for hedgerow carbon capture calculations thanks to its volumetric data capability, which benefits TEP as they are supporting multiple land-based organisations in understanding their annual carbon sequestration budget to facilitate progressive and challenging net zero ambitions.

Results:

The NHM™ data has enabled TEP to fill an important gap in their data by accurately identifying where hedgerows are located and providing additional attribute data supporting habitat classifications and carbon capture calculations for their clients in line with BNG legislation.

As the NHM™ perfectly complements Bluesky's established National Tree Map™, both datasets can be used together to help TEP conduct strategic site assessments for clients, providing early insights into any potential issues. The accessibility of the NHM™, means TEP can complete an initial review and advise clients at their desks, saving time as the need for an initial on-site survey can be reduced.

Specification	
Layers	1. Vegetation Polygons (Vector Polygon) - Representing the vegetation extent of each feature 2. Centrelines (Vector Line) - Length of each feature represented as a central line 3. National Tree Map™ - All 3 layers of NTM™ are included
Coverage	England, Wales & Scotland
Accuracy Z	± 1m rmse
Classification Criteria	Vegetation between 0.5 - 2.99m in height (NTM™ - Trees over 3m in height)
Formats	Include: ESRI Shape, MapInfo Tab, Geodatabase, Geopackage, DWG, KMZ
Standard Projection	British National Grid

Get in touch today at **info@woolpert.com**