# GPX Plugin for ArcGIS

**Importance**

GPX (the GPS eXchange Format) has become the de-facto standard for lightweight exchange of GPS data (waypoints, routes, and tracks) between devices and applications. All modern Garmin GPS devices use the GPX format. ESRI does not support GPX. Being able to view GPX data directly in ArcGIS significantly streamlines most GPS workflows.

**Background**

ESRI does not provide any ability to directly read GPS data, and GPS manufacturers do not save their data in an ESRI supported data format. This disconnect has lead to a proliferation of third party tools and processes to extract data from a GPS device so that it could be converted to a format that could be viewed in ArcMap. The process was often confusing, and frustrating for the casual user. Often the user needed to go through these steps just to preview the data to see if it was what they needed for their project.

The GPX Plug-in allows ArcGIS (Catalog and Map) to recognize a GPX file just like any other data source (shapefile, geodatabase, CAD file, etc), so you can view your GPS data in ArcCatalog/Map without doing anything more than connecting to your GPS device.

**Technical Details**

The GPX plug-in is a small, simple extension to ArcGIS. It is a single file (dll) that needs to be registered with ArcGIS by an administrator (registration program provided). Once the plug-in is registered, any GPX files available to your computer will appear in ArcCatalog. The waypoints, routes and tracks within the GPX file can be viewed in geographic, tabular or 3D modes. From ArcCatalog the GPX features can be dragged and dropped onto an ArcMap document. The GPX data will automatically re-project on the fly to match the map. While the GPX data is readonly (similar to CAD files), ArcMap allows you to export the GPX features to a shapefile or geodatabase for editing. This plug-in does not allow you to create GPX files, or convert other formats to GPX format.

**Screenshot**

**Key Features**

* View native GPX data in ArcCatalog and ArcMap without any conversion software.
* View all attributes and use the attributes to symbolize, filter, and label data
* Easily export the GPX files to shapefile or geodatabase

**Additional Information**

The GPX Plugin and registration instructions can be obtained at

Contact Regan Sarwas ([Regan\_Sarwas@nps.gov](mailto:Regan_Sarwas@nps.gov)) for additional information on the GPX plugin.