

Dear Ron,

I am writing to share the serious concern many in the local survey community have expressed regarding the recent changes to the Hummaps map search. Since becoming president of our local CLSA Chapter, I have heard a number of complaints in general about the switch from the Hollins Index to Hummaps. These mainly focused on the Hummaps interface along with the fact that many felt that move away from the Hollins Index was brought about with little to no input from the surveyors who depend on this search. Other major concerns have been with the lack of frequent updates combined with errors in the indexing.

At this point you are aware that Hummaps2.0 has major limitations in comparison with both previous searching programs. The County Surveyor's office is responsible for the maintenance of a searchable index of recorded maps and this current version does not meet our basic needs. We pay an index fee to compensate the County for this work, and we put our trust in the County Surveyor that this task will be completed in a timely and accurate manner. Hummaps2.0 appears to be an untested beta version of a program upon which we all depend for our livelihood. It should never have been released as a total replacement for Hummaps without giving the people who use it some time to review and comment.

Prior to the release of Hummaps2.0, multiple people asked me to set up a meeting with your office to discuss the change to Hummaps, since not everyone saw the benefit of moving away from the Hollins Index. I wanted people to be patient in hopes that the updated Hummaps would address some of the issues people had with Hummaps. I viewed an online only map search as a benefit, but not at the expense of the functionality of the search.

I have recently heard some valid issues regarding the use of a strictly online version. We live in an area without consistently reliable internet and some surveyors live and work in areas that do not have internet or cell service. These surveyors depend on having a desktop version of a program with them when they are at home or in the field. This was something I had not considered when I expressed interest in moving to a strictly online platform.

Having worked with Charlie Mack in the past, I was an early adopter of Hummaps and acted as a beta tester of his search engine. As issues were discovered, he addressed problems and over time it became the refined search engine that it was prior to last Friday. It has become my preferred search method and aside from the very intuitive subsection search in Hollins, I use Hummaps almost exclusively.

My hope had been that if we were patient and waited for the "improved" version of Hummaps, we would get something that gave us some of the additional features of the Hollins Index combined with the speed and efficiency of the online Hummaps tool. What came out on Friday is not an acceptable replacement for either Hummaps or the Hollins Index.

Here are some issues that I have found, or that have been brought up by others, relating to release of Hummaps2.0:

- Subsection search does not work. All maps in a given section appear regardless of which subsection is selected.
- Newly indexed maps do not appear in adjacent section searches even when there are corners in common. An example of this is 73S113-114, which is a fairly comprehensive survey of Sections 1 and 2 of T5N, R2E. This survey set the E and W 1/16 corners common to S2 and S35 in 6N 2E. This map does not appear in a search of S35 6N 2E. This seems to be an indexing issue rather than an issue with the new program, but is something that must be corrected.

- Loss of search bar. Being able to simply type a map reference, such as “65S112”, was one of the things about Hummaps that everyone liked. It saves significant time over having to select a map type and then fill out two separate text boxes.
- Inability to search for a specific page of a map. Take the 1965 McIntire Map of Shelter Cove Subdivision (14M73-138). This is a 53 page map and if you want to see a page near the middle you will need to click through 20+ pages since the only options are “next”, “previous”, and “last”.
- In Hummaps1.0 you could click a map, view the image, and then either use the arrow key to go to the next page or hit escape, which would return you to the map list with the map you were just viewing highlighted.
  - 1.0 allowed you input a search, select a map and then continue to page through the next maps from the same search.
  - 2.0 appears to require use of the mouse to click the back button in the browser to go back to the search results list.
  - If you are looking at a four page map, you must hit the back button four consecutive times to get back to the search since you must page through each previous page (or 53 times if you have just looked through the entire Shelter Cove map).
- Inability to zoom in on map images. This was a great feature since it allowed one to quickly see details of a map to determine if it is worth downloading the PDF for printing.
- Maps with two surveyors do not show up if you select either surveyor in the “Surveyor” field of the search. This is a strange issue, but there are maps signed by multiple surveyors.

This is not a comprehensive list of the issues that exist with Hummaps2.0, but is a starting point for a discussion. At this point, the most expedient solution would be to put up Hummaps in its original format. You could leave up a beta version of 2.0 to allow surveyors to test it out while still having a functional tool for map searches.

Michael Hollins reached out to the local surveyors and has indexed the 97 maps from the most recent update. He is generously offering us use of this index while these issues get sorted out. What may end up being the best solution is the County hosting the original version of Hummaps while providing the ability to export updates in a format that will work with the Hollins Index. Charlie Mack said that this would be very easy to do. It would satisfy those of us who prefer Hummaps as well as those who rely on a desktop program for their work.

A number of local surveyors would like to have a meeting with you to discuss how we reach a solution that works for both the local surveyors as well as the County Surveyor’s office. Please let me know when you would be available for such a meeting. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jesse N. Buffington, PLS

cc. Bob Bronkall