

Geog332 - Thematic Cartography Project 11 – Lone Star State Precipitation – an Isohyet Map

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Drawing a contour map by Hand

This project is designed to familiarize you with creating a contour map. In this exercise you will be creating an isohyet map illustrating mean annual precipitation in Texas by hand. The precipitation data comes from the Millennium Edition of the Texas Almanac.

Computer Instructions

The Adobe Illustrator® base map needed for this exercise is available on the class website. Your TA can help you download the files to your local hard drive. The Illustrator file can be used in version 8 and higher of Adobe Illustrator®.

I have created several layers in the illustration. You should put all your contours and labels in the layer called CONTOURS. It is the only unlocked layer. When printing the map TURN OFF the points and point labels to create a nice looking map. They are unnecessary once the contours are created.

The final map should be in grayscale and fit on an 11” wide by 8.5” high piece of paper.

In creating the contour map you need to follow the following directions:

- 1) The isohyet interval should be 5 inches. The starting value of your contours should be 0”. In this way your contour intervals should run 5,10,15...
- 2) You should print out the map and sketch by hand on the hardcopy where your contours should run and where your labels should be placed. Take time at this step and create a nearly final map.
- 3) You should then transfer this rough sketch back onto the basemap in Adobe illustrator. The reason you should do this is because Adobe has tools to create smooth lines and you will have an even stroke, which is hard to do by hand – and will help you create a professional looking map. Adobe has the advantage of being able to zoom in and out to the level of detail required in the different parts of the map. It is good practice as well in creating high quality maps.

HINT: I have found the *Pencil Tool* to be very useful in creating smooth curves, although there are other methods to do this as well.

- 4) The isohyets should be black and their width should be 2 points.
- 5) All isohyets should be labeled correctly, following proper labeling conventions.
- 6) If you wish to block portions of the isohyets behind the text, simply insert a gray box the same color as the background between the text and the isohyets.

Turn In

One black and white completed contour map.

If you have any problems do not hesitate to see the TA or me.