

I am a Registered Professional Land Surveyor and Licensed State Land Surveyor of the State of Texas. I've been surveying for 35 years.

With respect, I strongly oppose the merging of the Texas Board of Professional Land Surveying into the Texas Board of Professional Engineers and Surveyors. The Sunset Commission's recommendation to merge the two boards with only one professional land surveyor representing us sets a dangerous precedent whereby the land surveying profession in Texas will be grossly underrepresented by its peers and will be subject to biases and subjectivity from another profession that historically loathes land surveyors.

What the Commission proposes will threaten the livelihood of the professional land surveyor, paving the way for the eventual elimination of the license to practice land surveying in Texas. I and my fellow land surveyors have worked hard to get to where we are, and we have the right to choose our profession and the right to earn a living from that profession.

We are perhaps the least understood and underappreciated profession. A land survey is often an afterthought in an engineering or architectural project. It's not that we as land surveyors can't educate engineers, architects and lawyers—we all have tried to educate—it's because the layperson doesn't want to understand the many tasks and responsibilities the professional land surveyor is required to do. It is this tremendous responsibility entrusted on us, one which we swore an oath to protect the safety of the public, that we as a profession take very seriously, and our regulatory board enforces rigorously.

The evolution of the land surveying profession being derived from the engineering disciplines is true. But what hasn't changed is the judicious responsibility and use of the application of laws that govern boundary location. That's what sets us apart from the scientific and engineering professions.

The layperson sees a land surveyor as someone that looks through a telescope and walks around looking for rocks and sticks. We are much more than that. We have knowledge, skill and experience in:

- The law of land boundaries, and historic case law pertaining to boundary surveys
- Professional surveying principles, techniques, and procedures
- Geodesy, astronomy, and mapping projections
- Mathematics and statistical analysis

- Aerial photogrammetry, and forestry
- Surveys of public lands, surveys of navigable and non-navigable streams
- The history and functions of the Texas General Land Office, Texas Public Domain, Territories and Boundaries of the State as outlined in Title 2, Texas Natural Resources Code, as it pertains to vacant and unappropriated land, location of coastal boundaries and the gulfward boundary of Texas, Permanent School Fund land, Asylum and University Fund lands
- Gradient boundary surveys in determining state ownership of the beds of navigable streams under Spanish civil law and English common law
- Littoral surveys in determining state ownership of coastal boundaries under Spanish civil law and English common law

I could go on. This is our profession. Please allow us as peers to regulate our profession through the Texas Board of Professional Land Surveying.

We accept the challenges of the dangers, extreme environmental conditions, and hardships that come with our profession with gusto! Because, who else is going to do it? Definitely not the GIS community, or from other professions that work from an office or cubicle and never have to go to the field and get dirty, cold, wet and hot. It is what we do—along with using our intelligence and analytical skills that sets us apart.

In closing, I want to read a quote from a true American and statesman that sums up our profession:

*"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat."*

—President Theodore Roosevelt