Field Precision LLC

Integrating the NotePad++ editor with Field Precision programs

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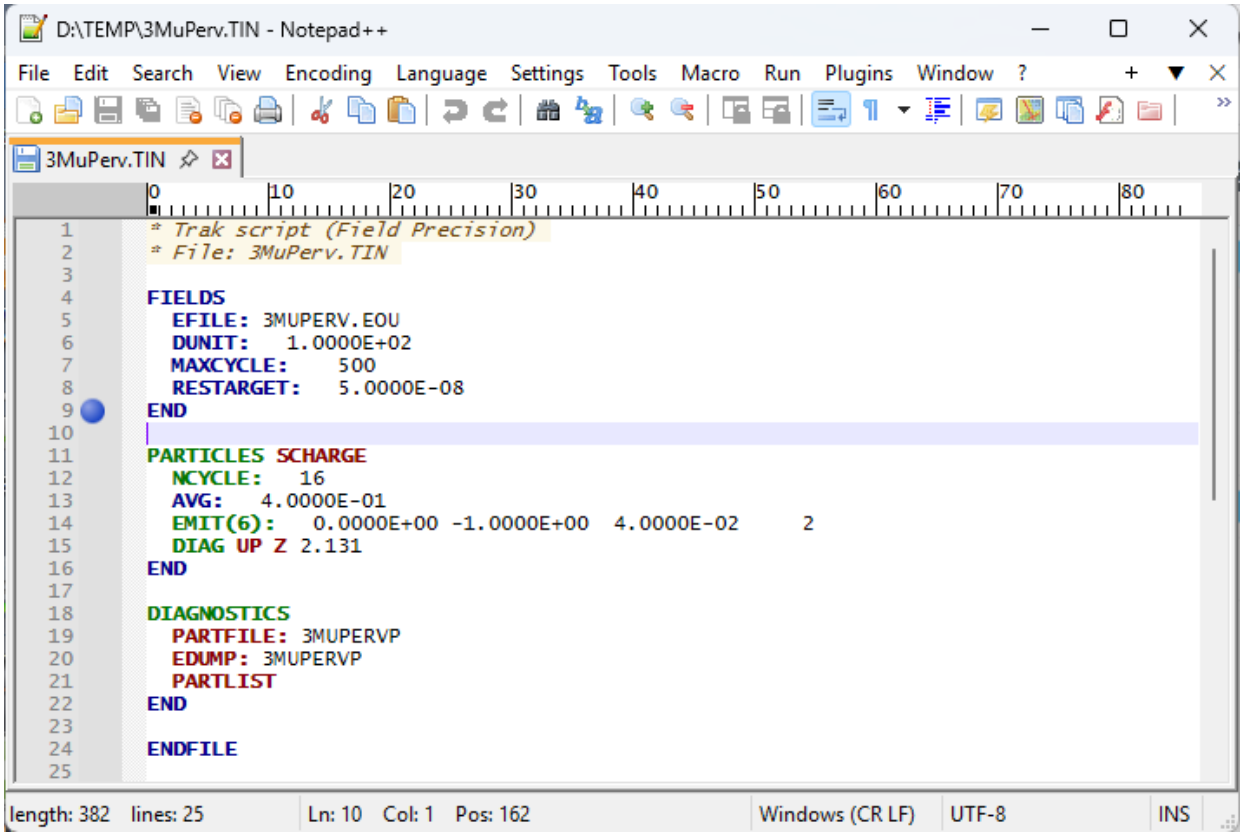

Figure 1: **NotePad++** screen with syntax highlighting for Field Precision programs.

Field Precision programs utilize a hybrid approach to user input, combining interactive dialogs with text scripts. The goal is to gain the advantages of both techniques. The dialogs do the work of remembering input options and data structures. In turn, they create a text input script that can be modified with an editor. There several advantages to using scripts as an intermediary:

- Complete input data is available to the user.
- Quick parameter checks and modifications are possible without the necessity of walking back through a menu tree.
- Exchanges of run setups with colleagues is easy.
- Extensive background calculations can be performed under the control of batch files, Perl or Python scripts or user programs.
- A text editor provides a familiar environment that extends over all programs.

Most Field Precision programs feature built-in basic text editors to inspect inputs and make small changes. Advanced editors have attractive features like syntax highlighting, spell checking and

macros. This tutorial describes how to obtain the powerful **NotePad++** editor, popular with code developers, and reviews integration with Field Precision software.

NotePad++ is freely available at:

`https://notepad-plus-plus.org`

Download and run the installer. When you first run the program, there will probably be things you don't like. Be patient because there is an extensive array of menu options and plugins for customization. In this report, we will concentrate on a sample of changes to make the screen look like Fig. 1. The most important action is to add syntax highlighting for Field Precision input scripts. The file `fieldp.xml` is included in the `TextbooksAndReference` folder of new installations and is available at

`https://www.fieldp.com/manual_download.html`

Copy the file to the directory

`C:\Users\(User name)\AppData\Roaming\Notepad++\userDefineLangs\`

Appropriate syntax highlighting will be applied to files with the suffixes of Field Precision input scripts (*e.g.*, `MIN`, `TIN`, `HIN`,...). Note that the syntax file is in text format, so you can make changes to colors or entries.

Here are examples of some of the customizations we made.

- Auto-completion may be nice on phones, but is annoying on normal keyboards. To turn it off, go to `Settings/Preferences/Auto-Completion` and uncheck the `Enable` box.
- To change the font type and size, go to `Settings/Style Configurator`. We've always felt that Lucida console makes everything seem much more definite.
- We got used to the column ruler in **ConText**. The `ColumnTools` plugin adds the ruler shown above the text in Fig. 1.
- The plugin `DSpellCheck` provides interactive spell checking in text files. It is inactive in computer code or Field Precision files.
- Bookmarks are a useful built-in function for long files. One is set in Fig. 1 (blue ball in the left margin).
- An orange line in the left margin indicates parts of a file that have been modified. The feature may be useful in coding, but otherwise tends to be distracting. To turn it off, go to `Settings/Preferences/Margins-Border-Edge` and uncheck `Show in the margin` under `Change history`.