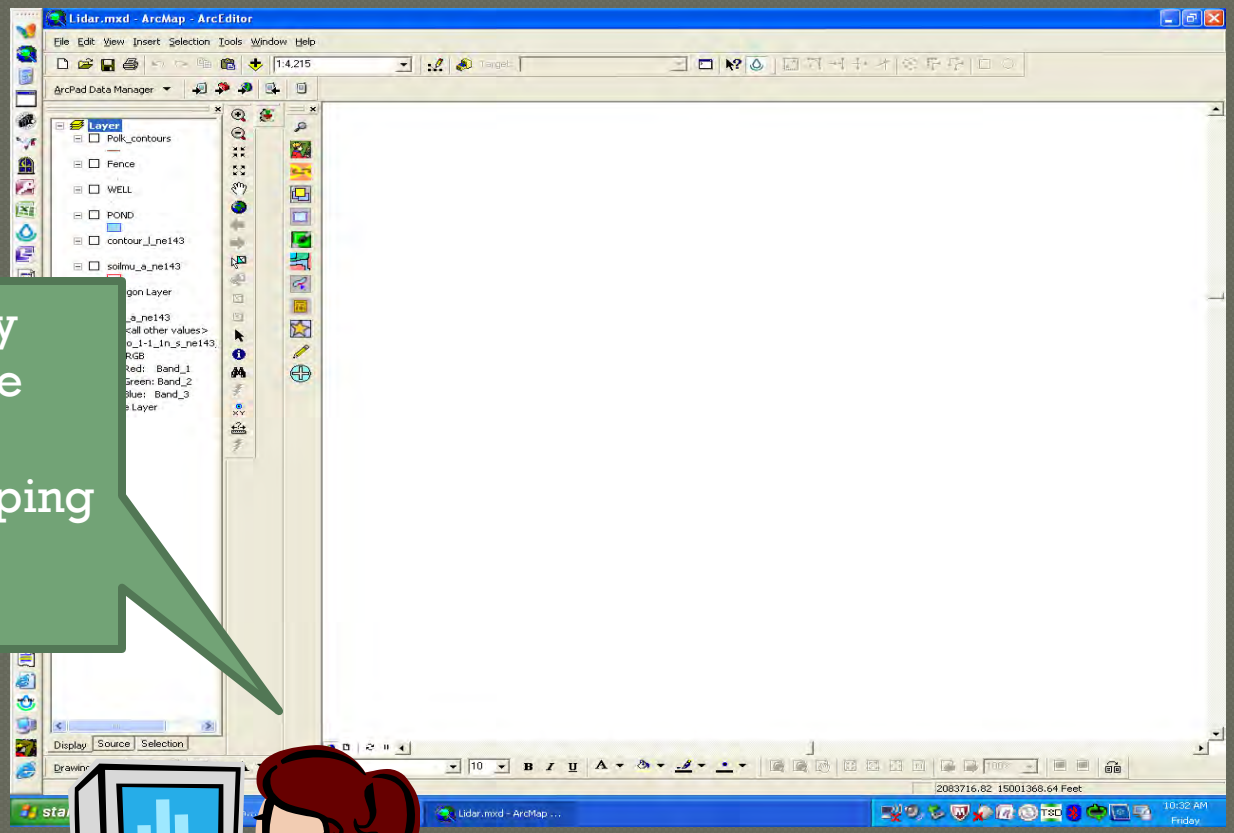
UNDERSTANDING NRCS MAPS

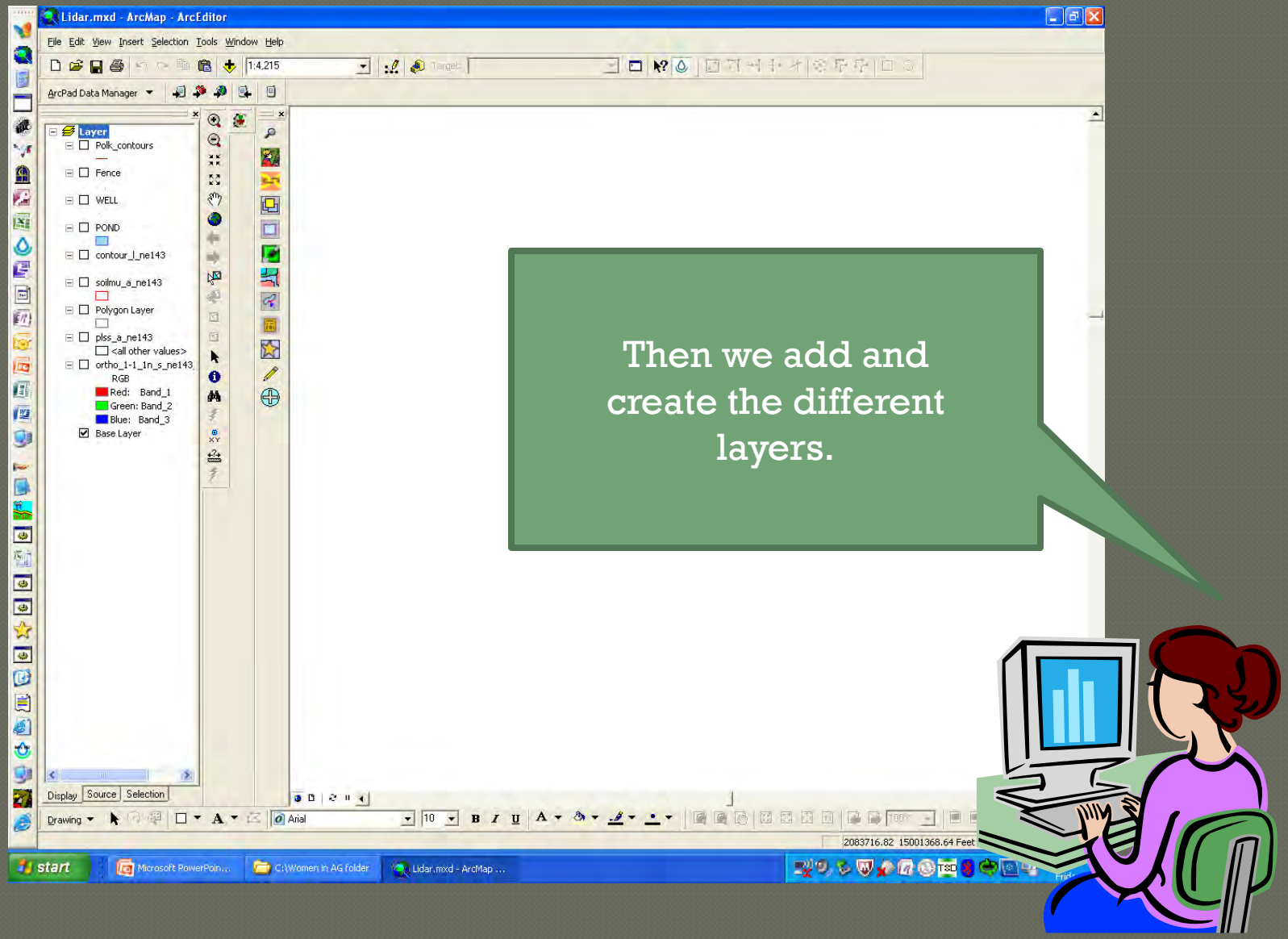
How are they set up?
How do you add layers to a map?
What does the map look like in 3d?

Creating a map of your farm is just like adding layers to a cake.

The layers you add to the map determine the results.

You start by opening the program.
For basic mapping we use "ArcMap"



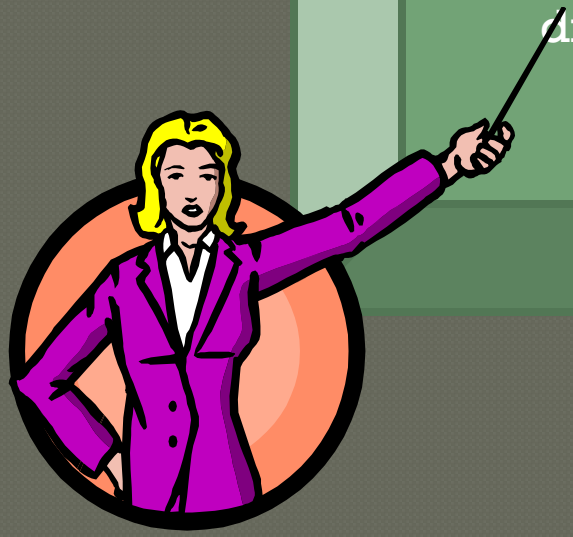


Then we add and create the different layers.

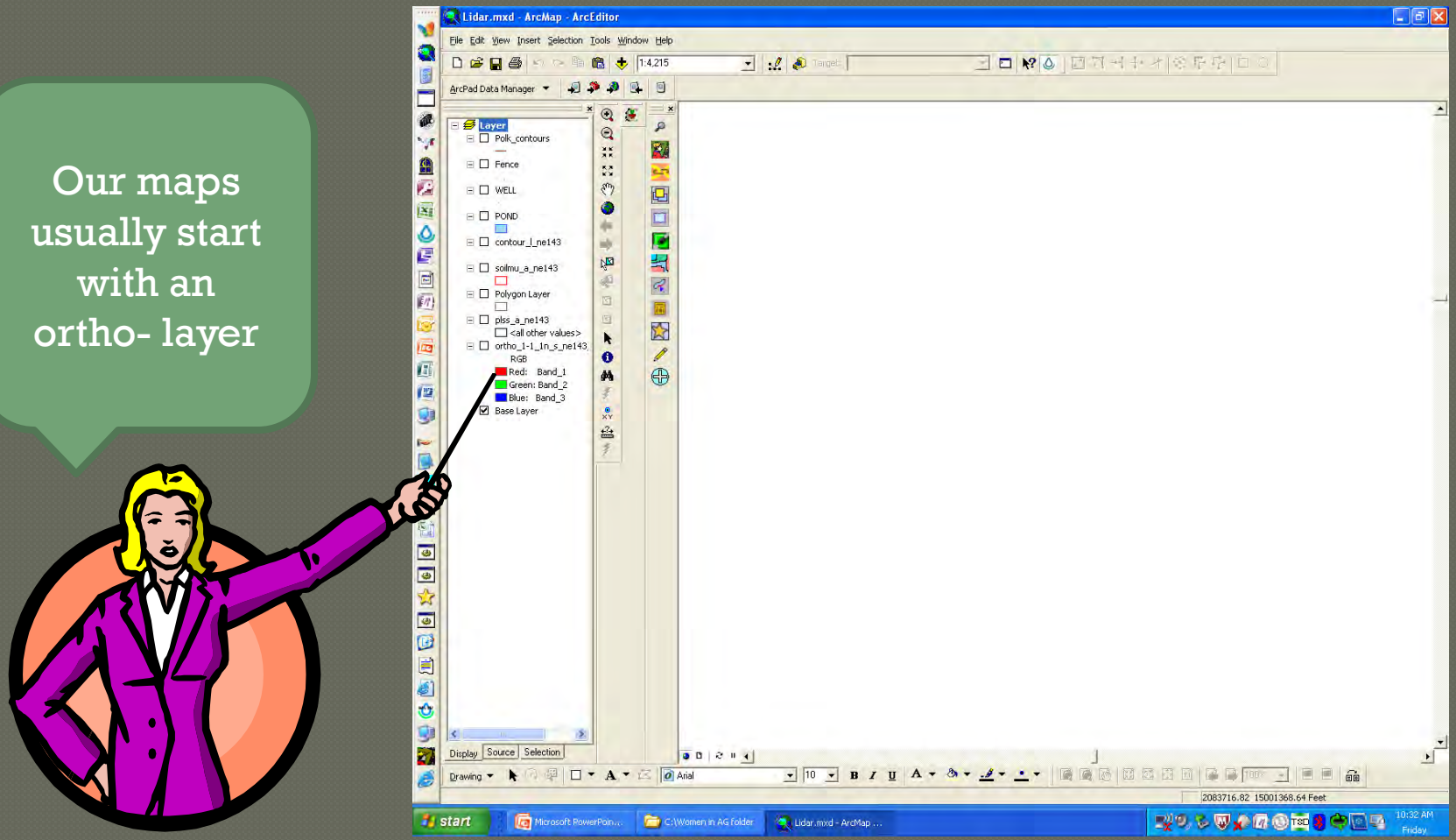
NOTE

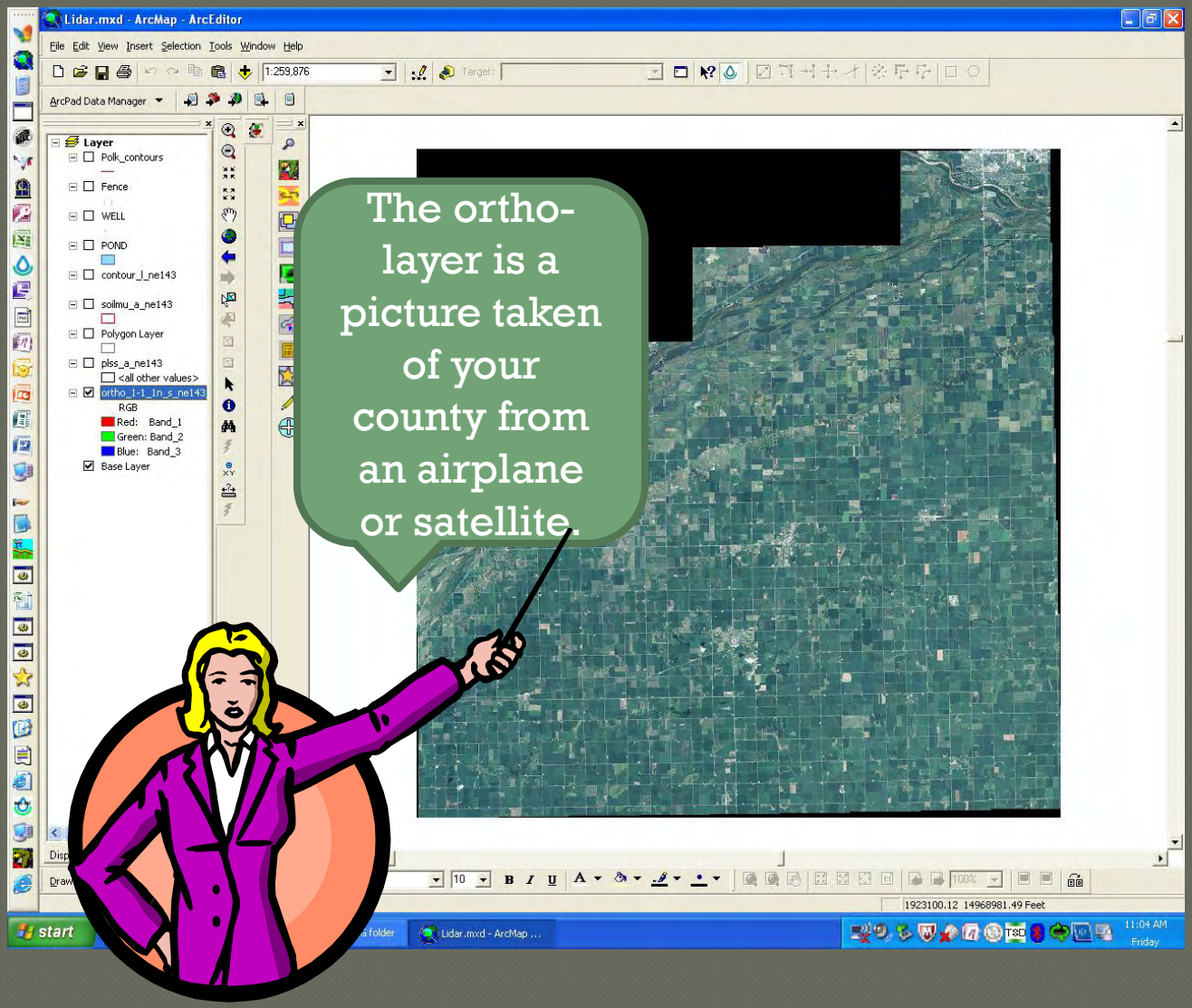
If you stop into our office
for a planning map of
your farm, be thinking about the layers
you would like to see.

Soils, fence, ponds, tanks, wells, terraces,
diversions, ground cover, and more.



Our maps usually start with an ortho- layer

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Blue: Band_3
Base Layer
The ortho-layer is a picture taken of your county from an airplane or satellite.
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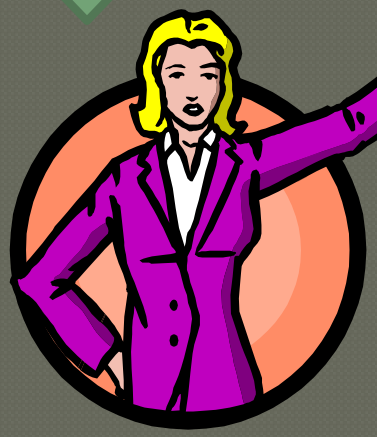
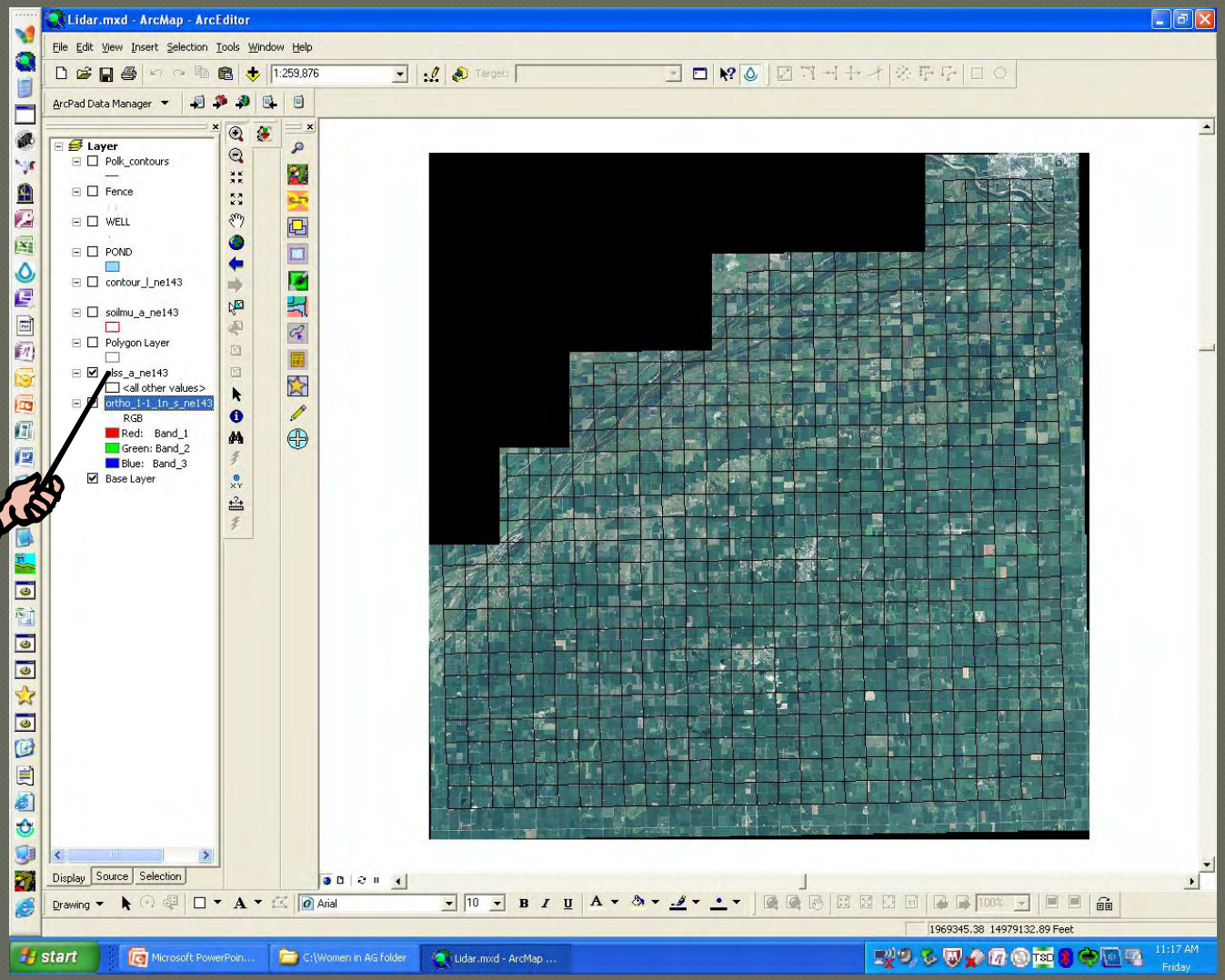
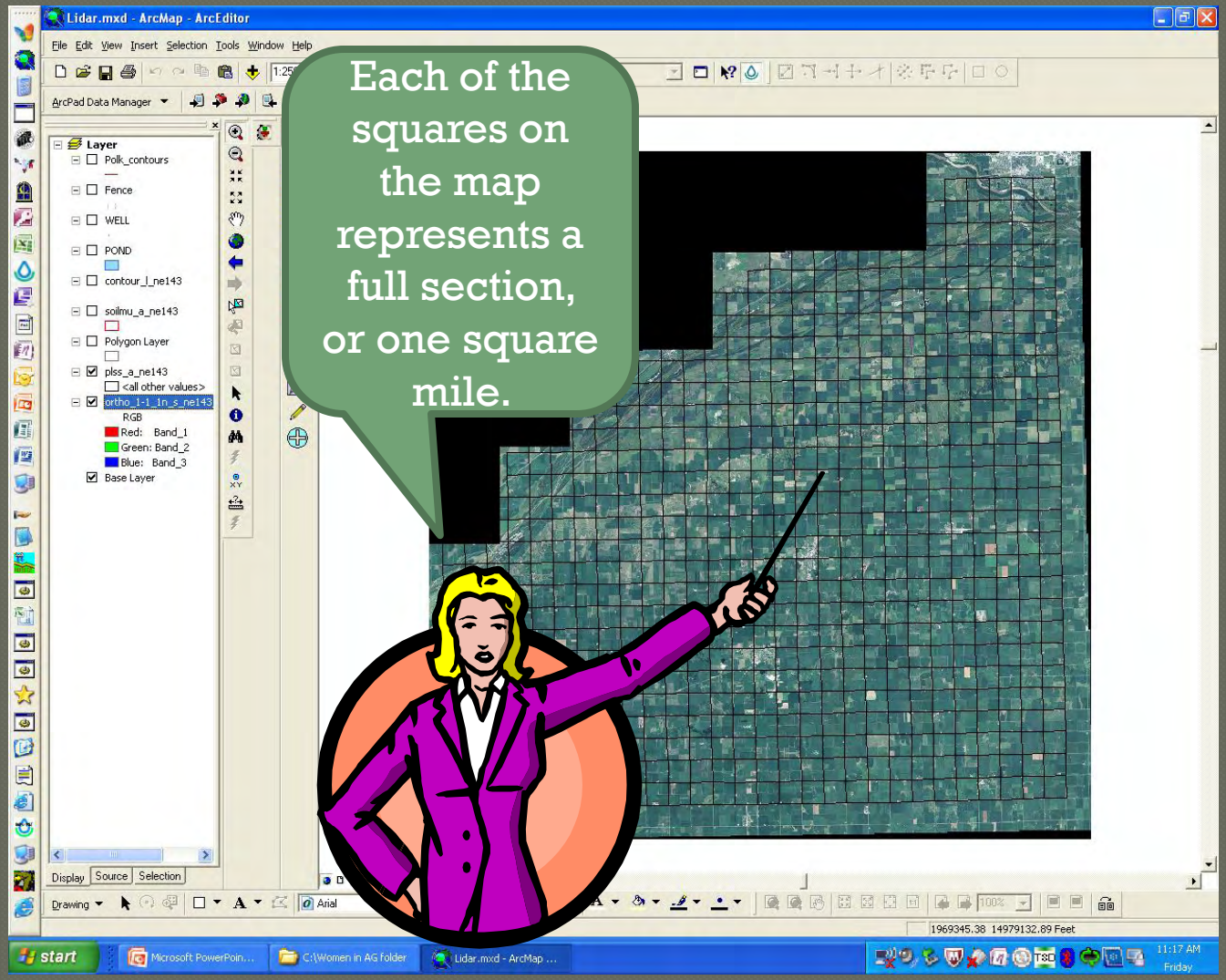
Let's add another layer. This is the PLSS layer



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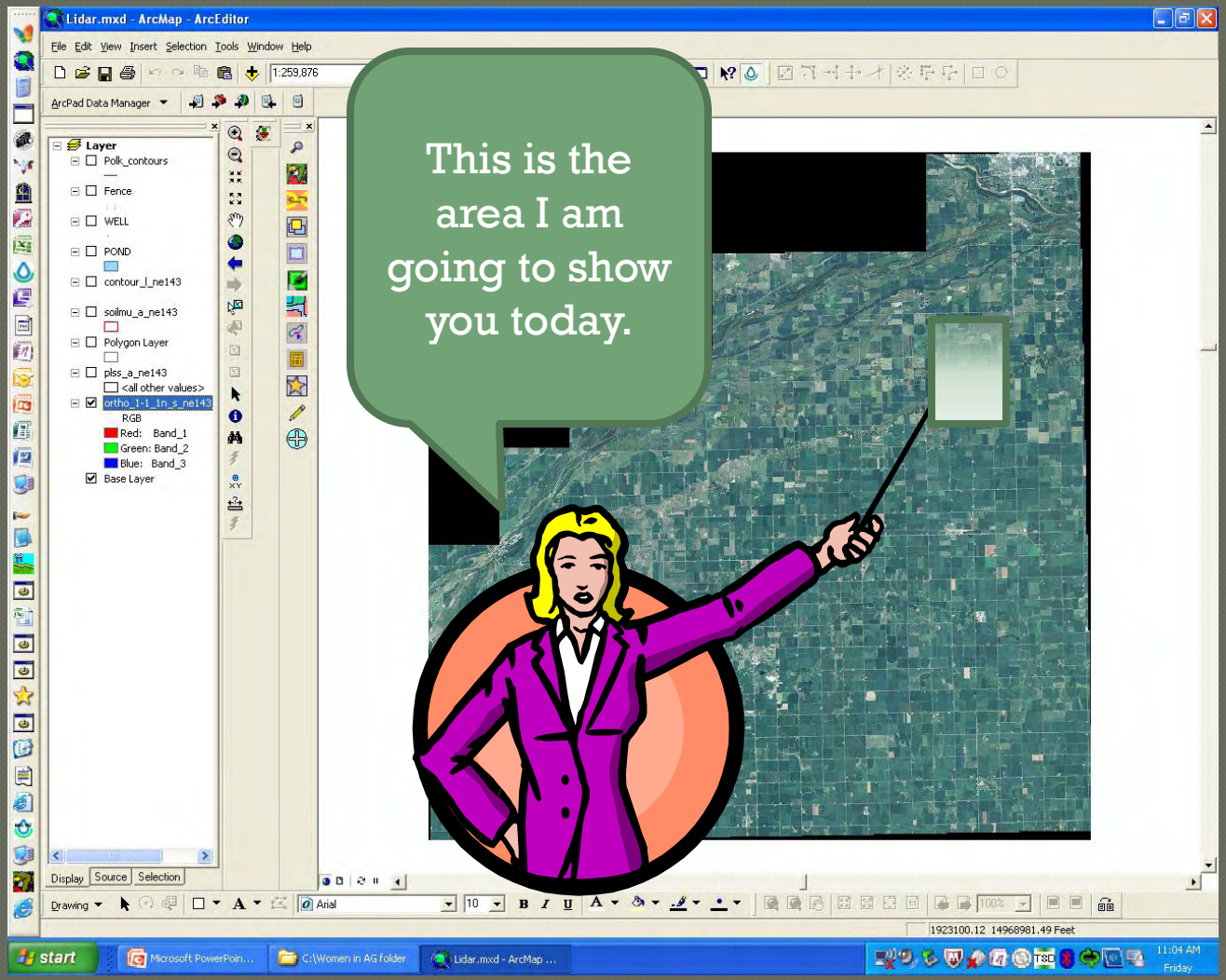
Each of the squares on the map represents a full section, or one square mile.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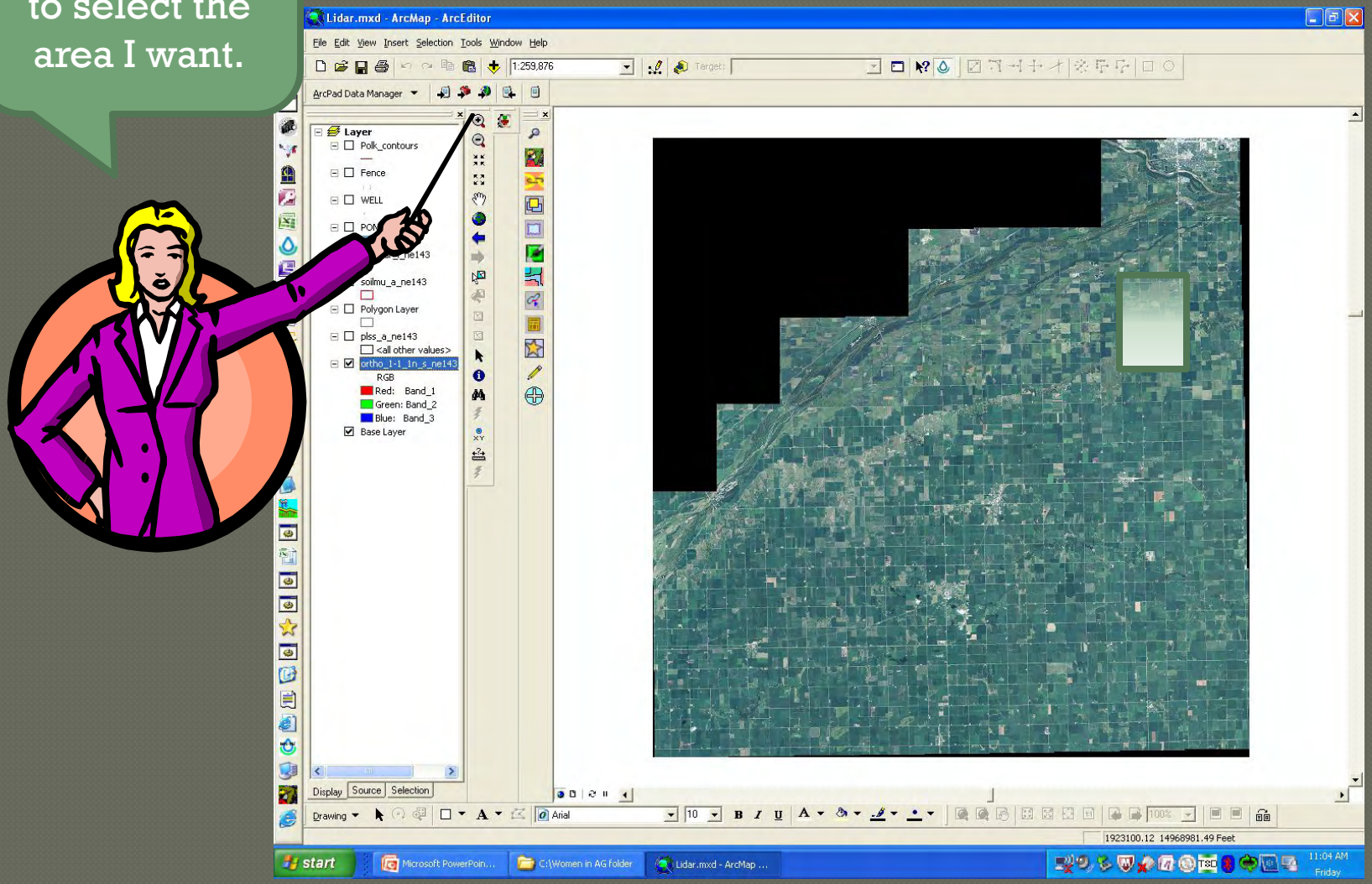
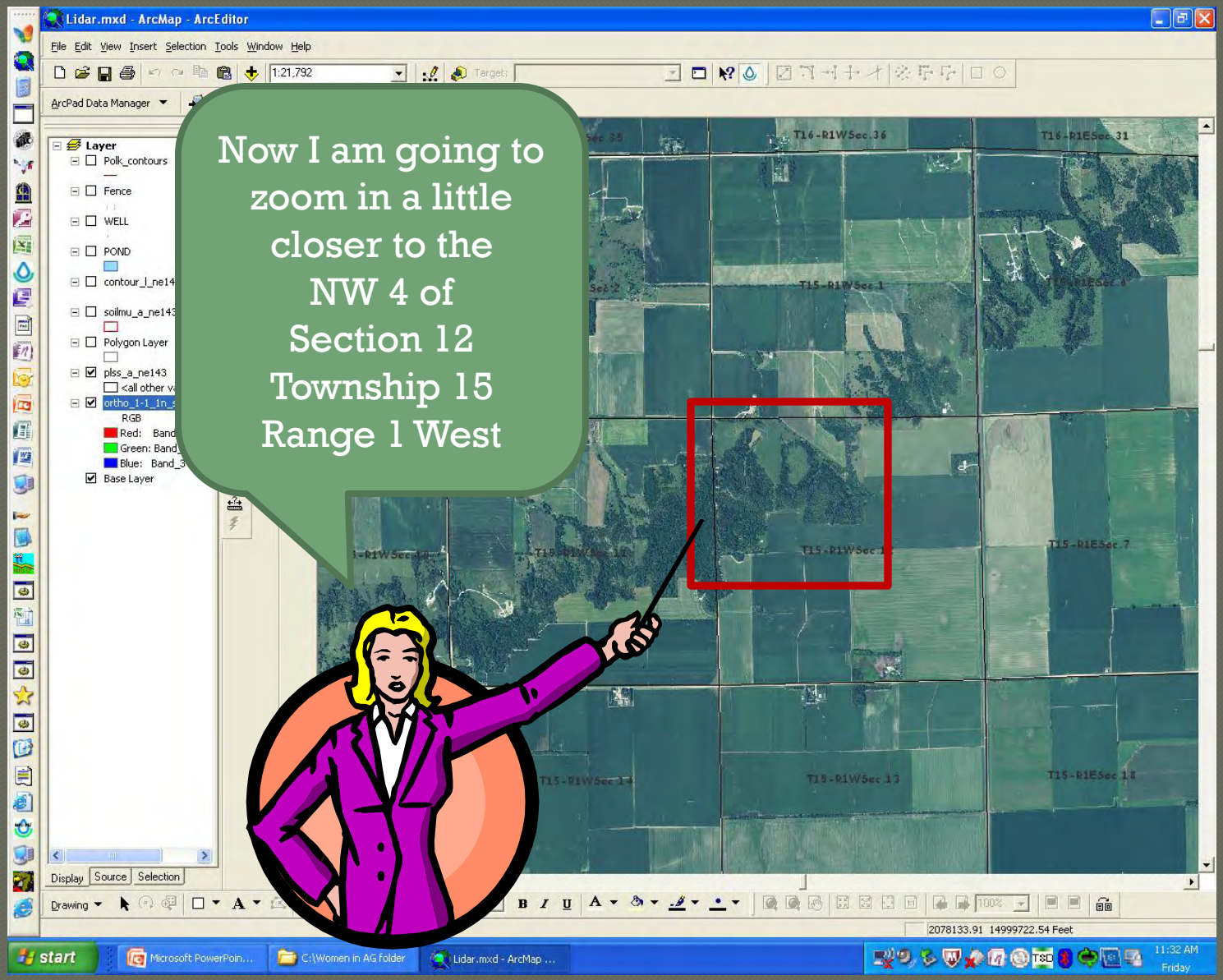
This is the area I am going to show you today.

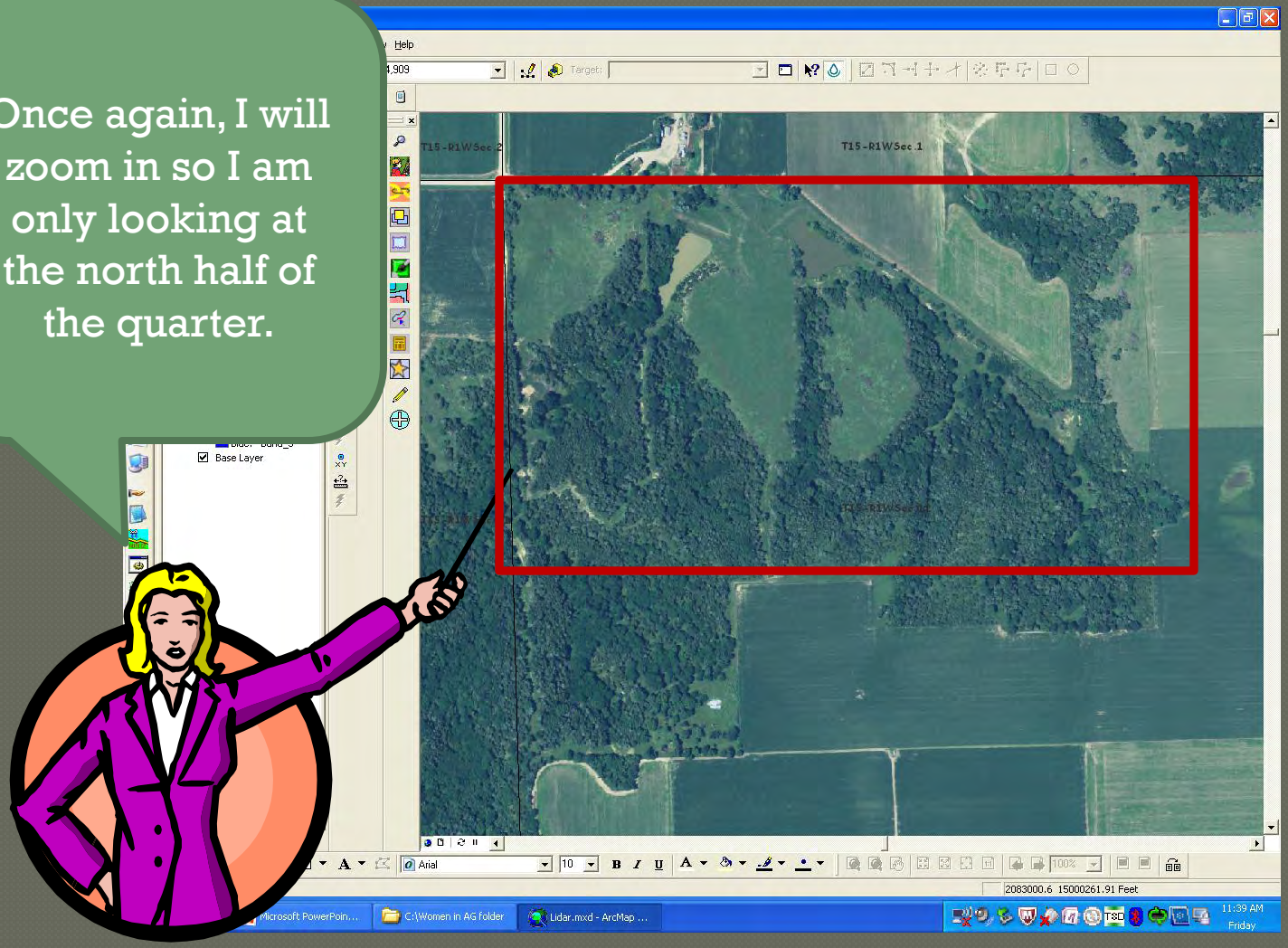
I will use the zoom tool to select the area I want.



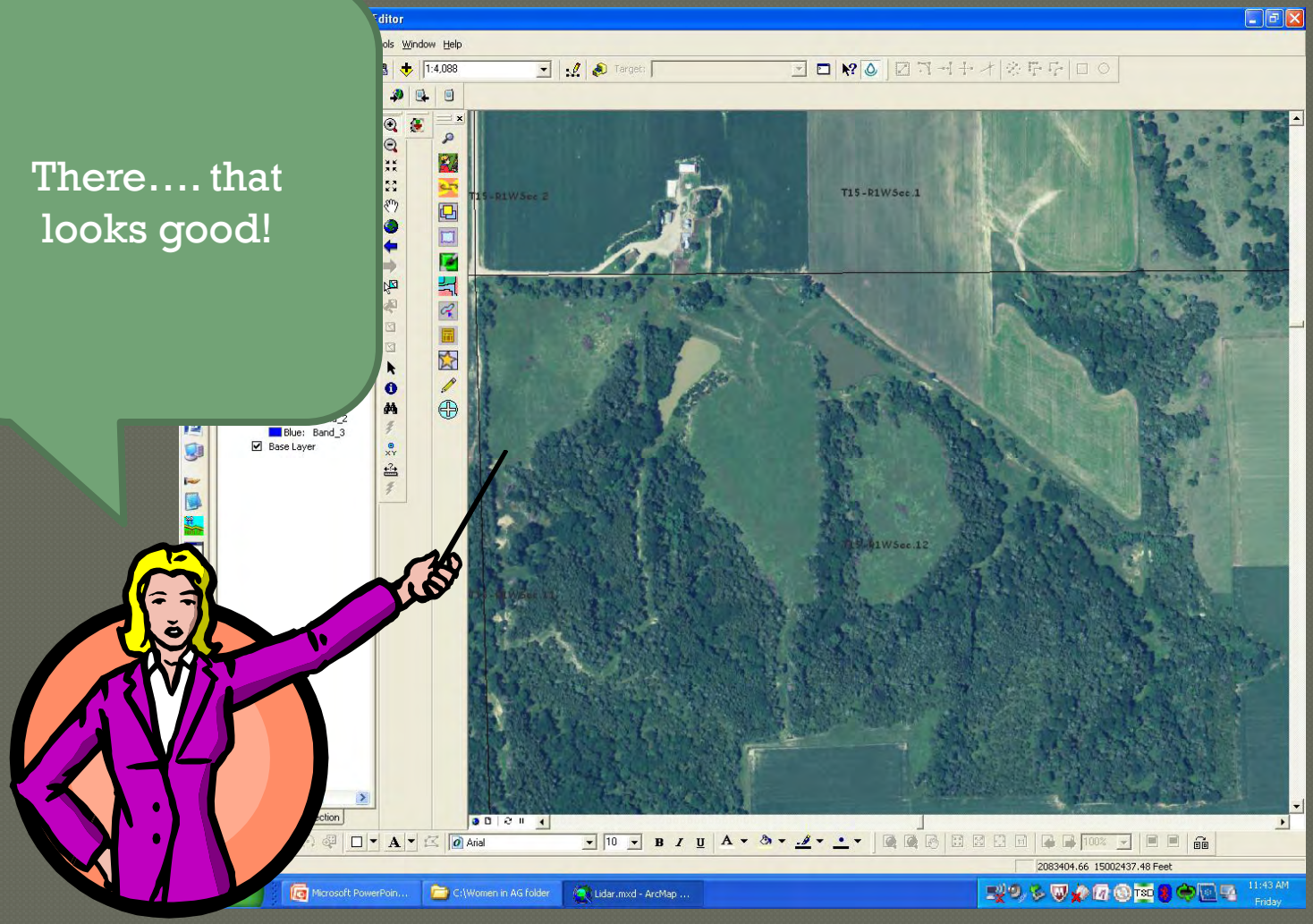


Now I am going to zoom in a little closer to the NW 4 of Section 12 Township 15 Range 1 West

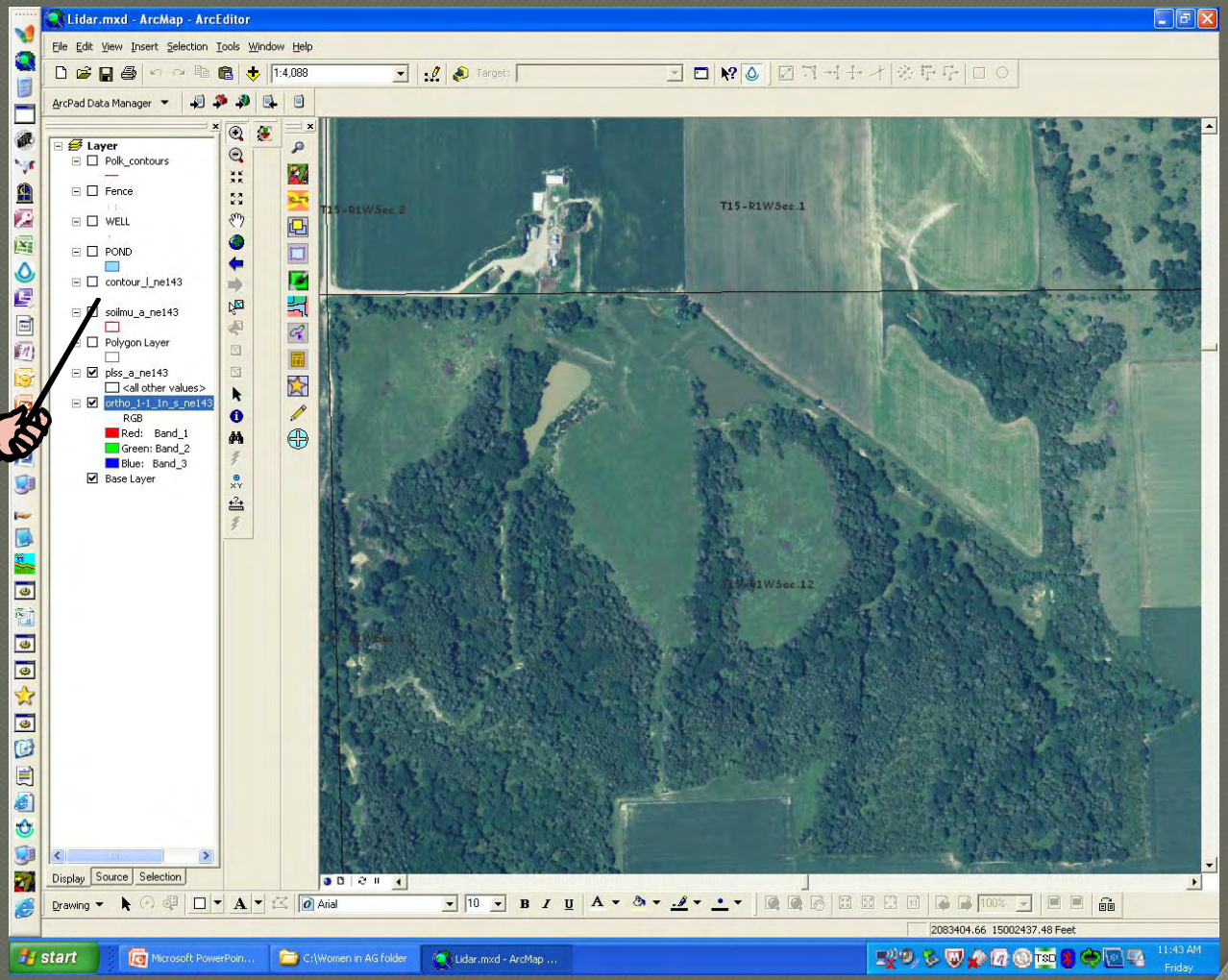
Once again, I will zoom in so I am only looking at the north half of the quarter.



There…. that looks good!

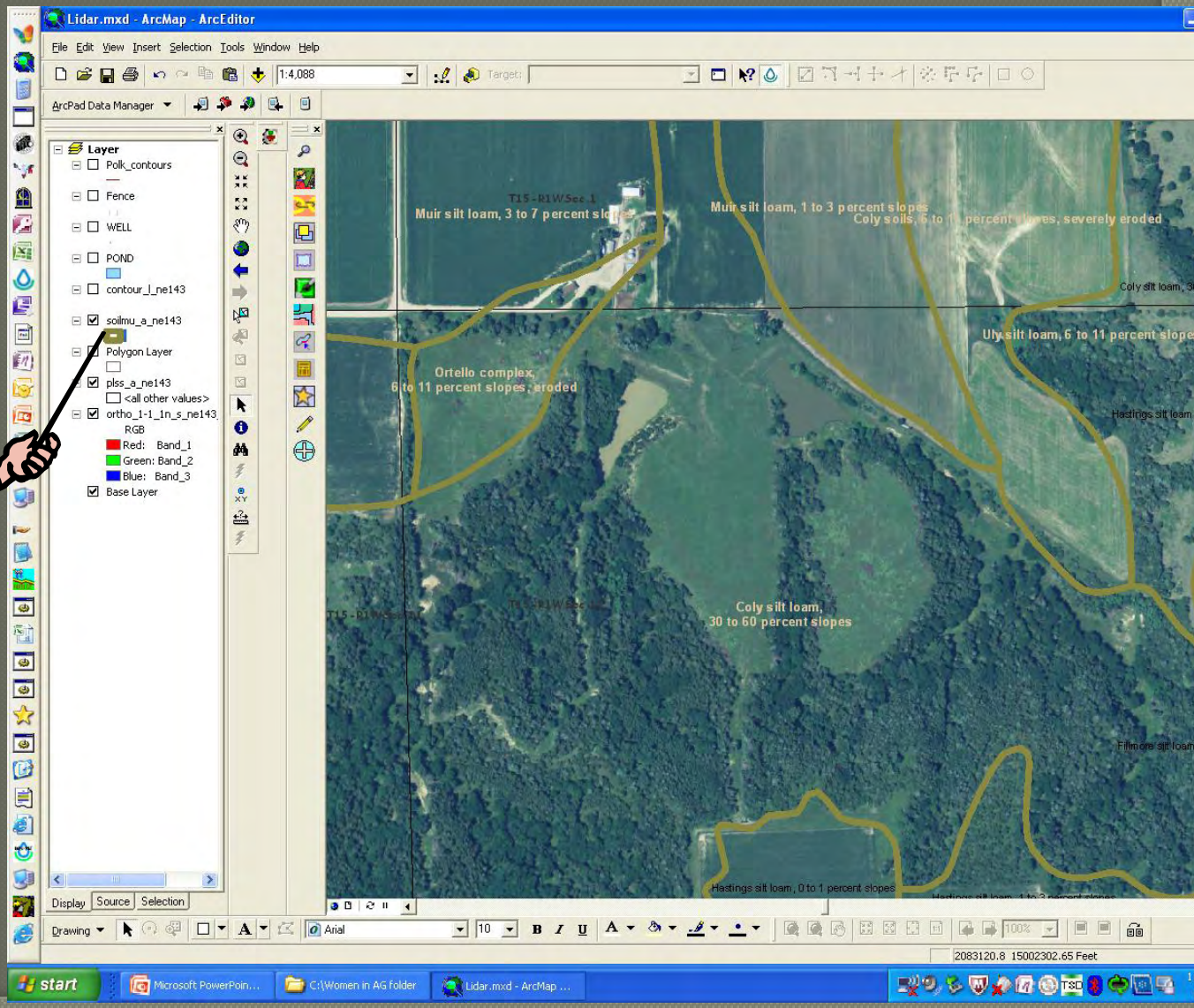


Now let's add a couple more layers.
Some of the layers are already in my computer…….

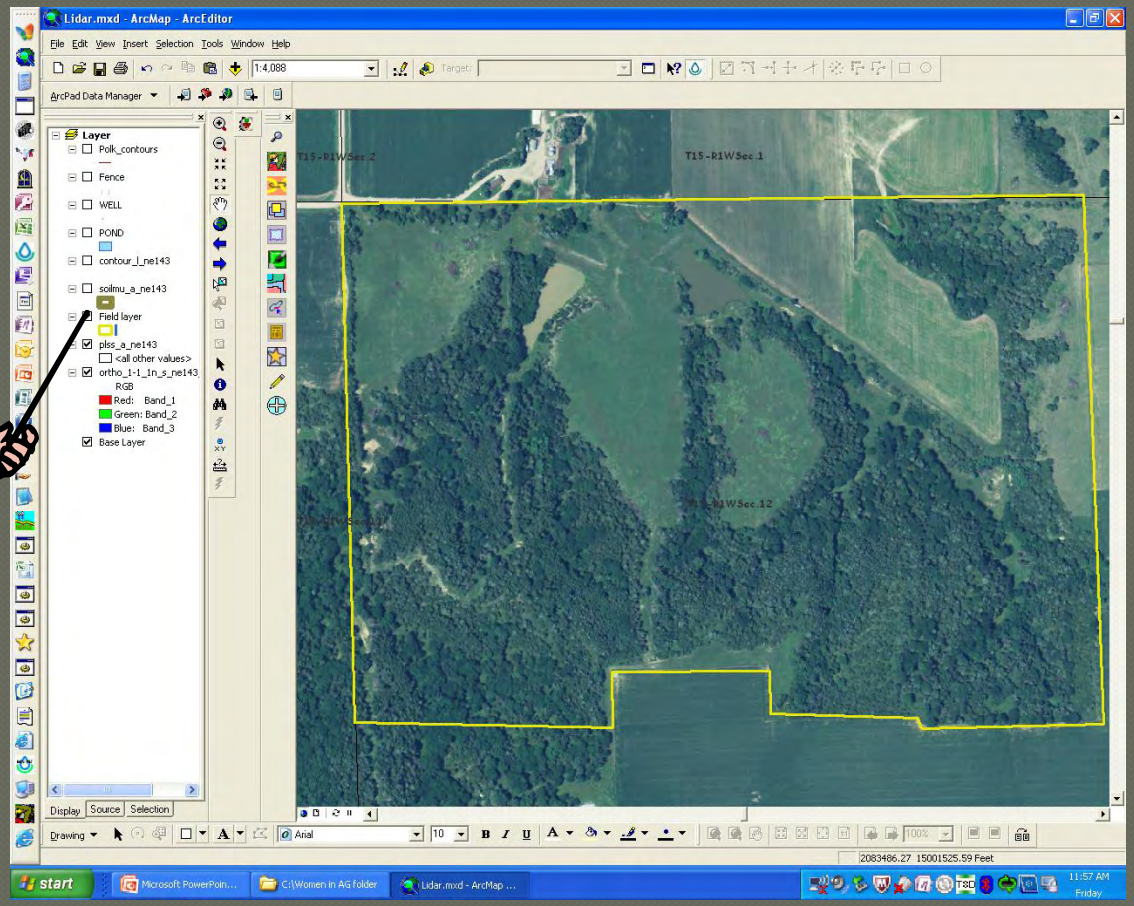


For example the soils layer.

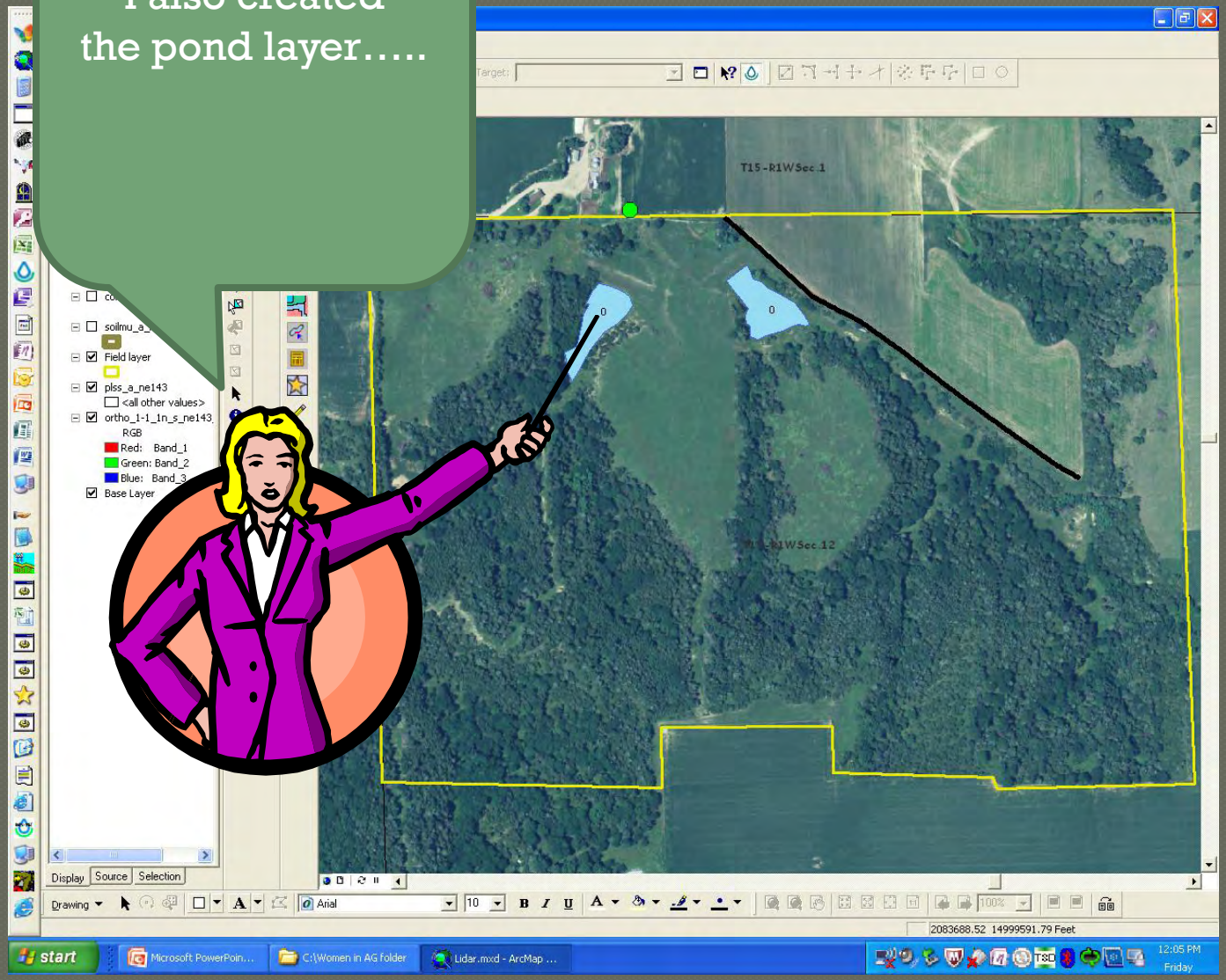
Some layers you and I have to create……



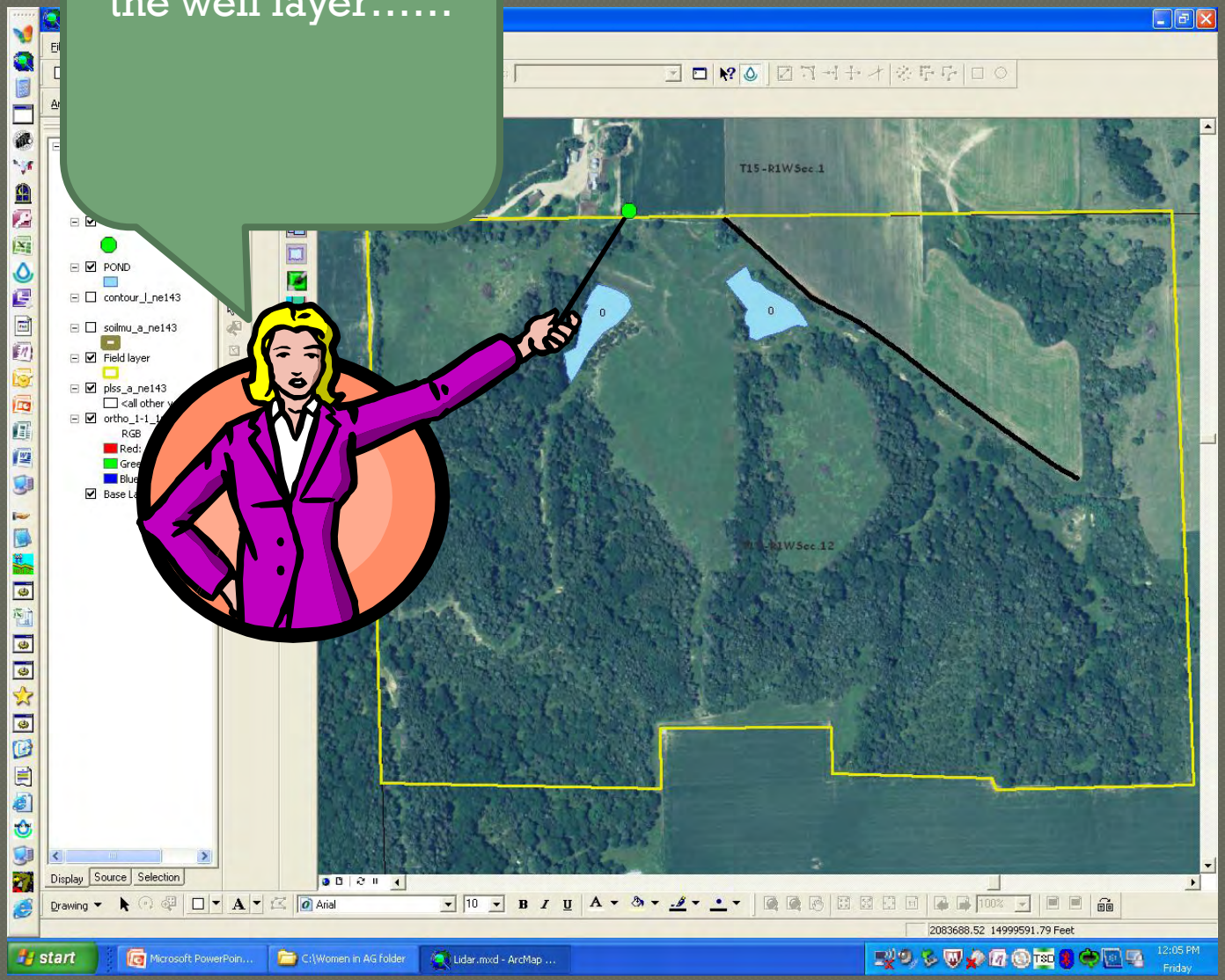
I drew this field layer……

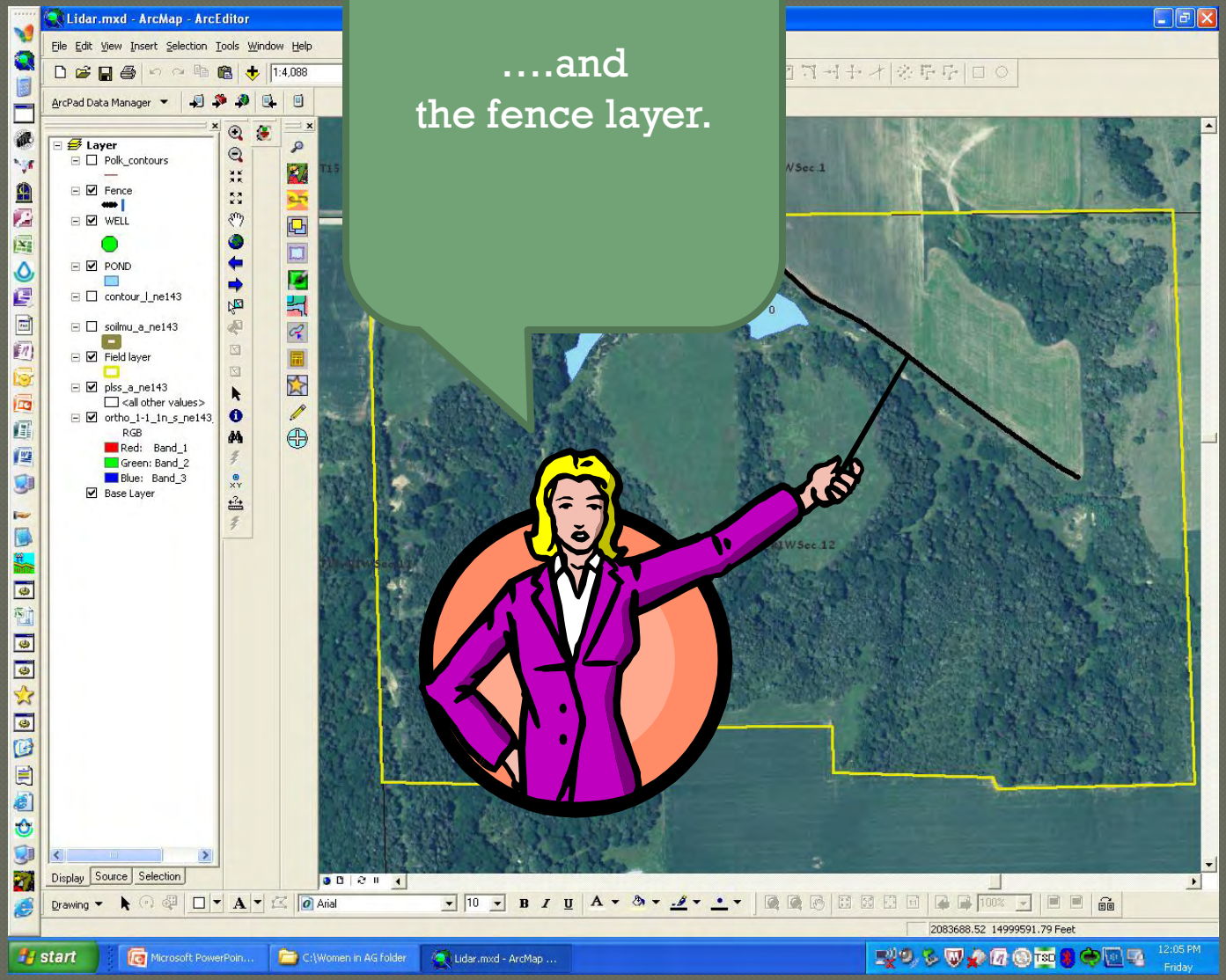


I also created the pond layer…..



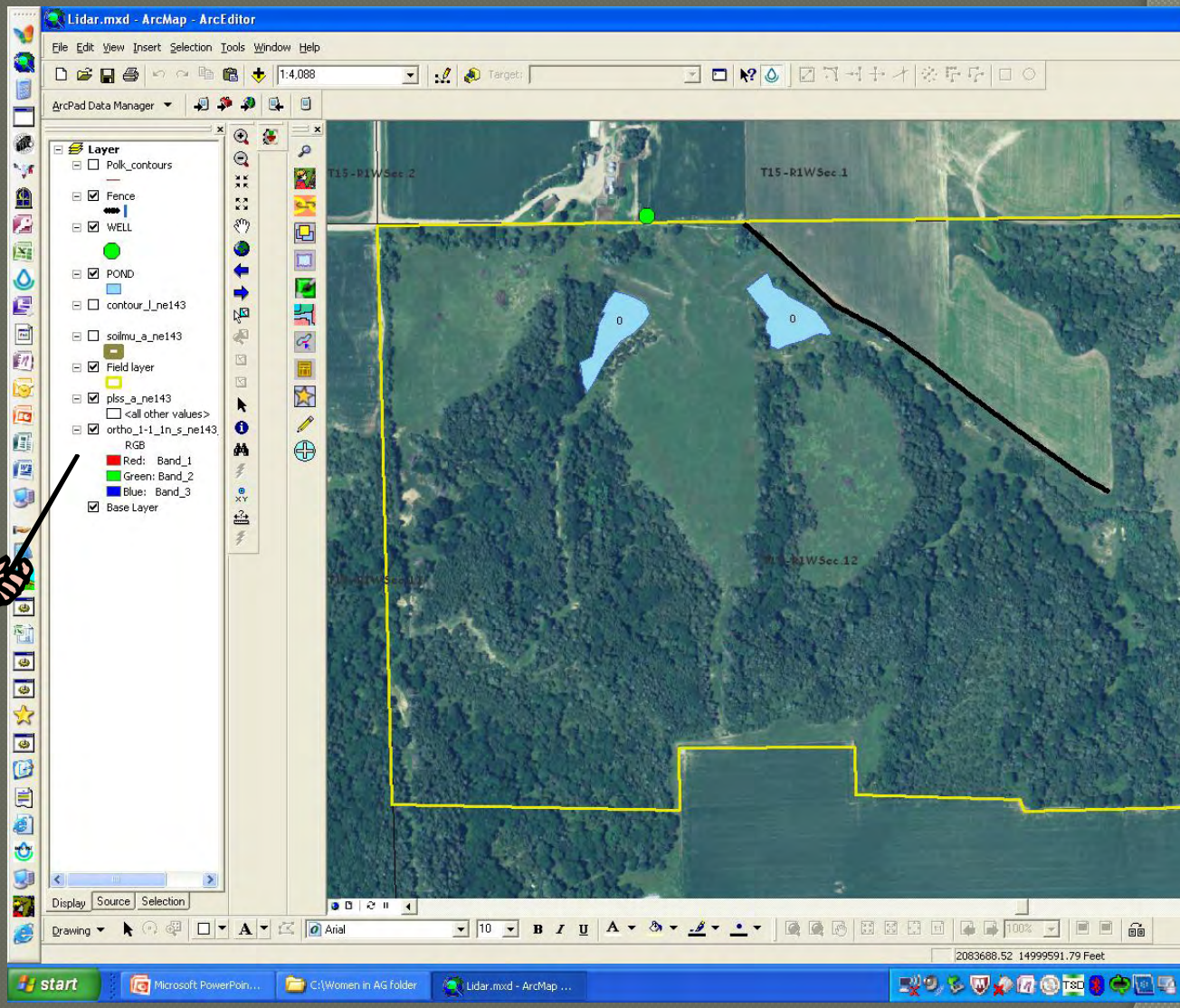
the well layer……





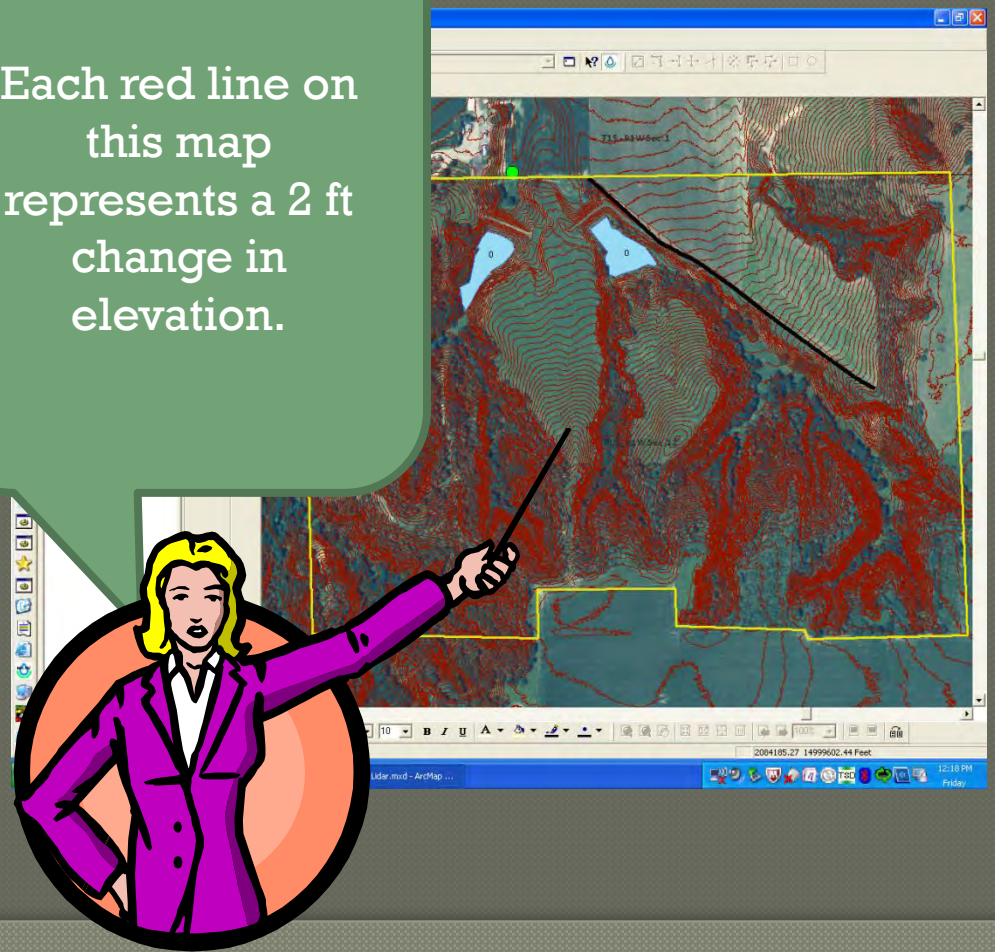
....and
the fence layer.

If you were to stop by the NRCS office in your county, the staff will help you create a map with the layers you need for your farm plan.



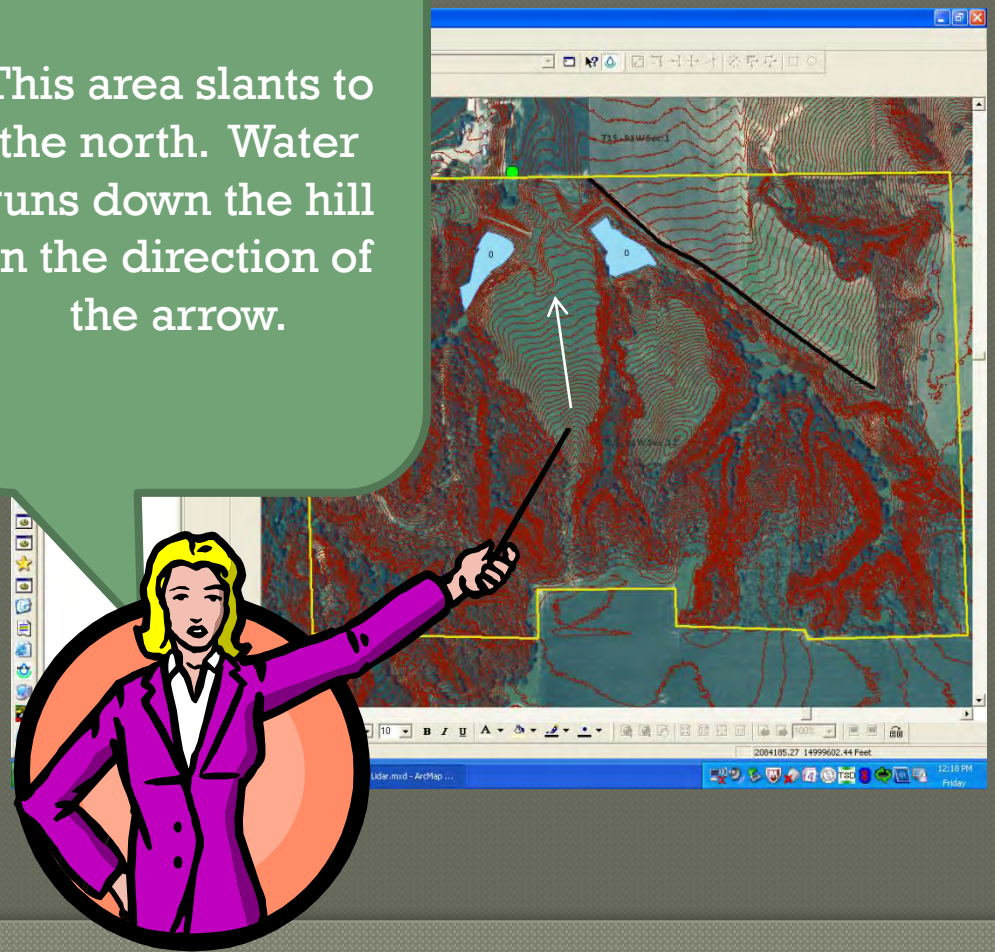
Let's look at one of my favorite layers. This is the new 2 ft contour layer.

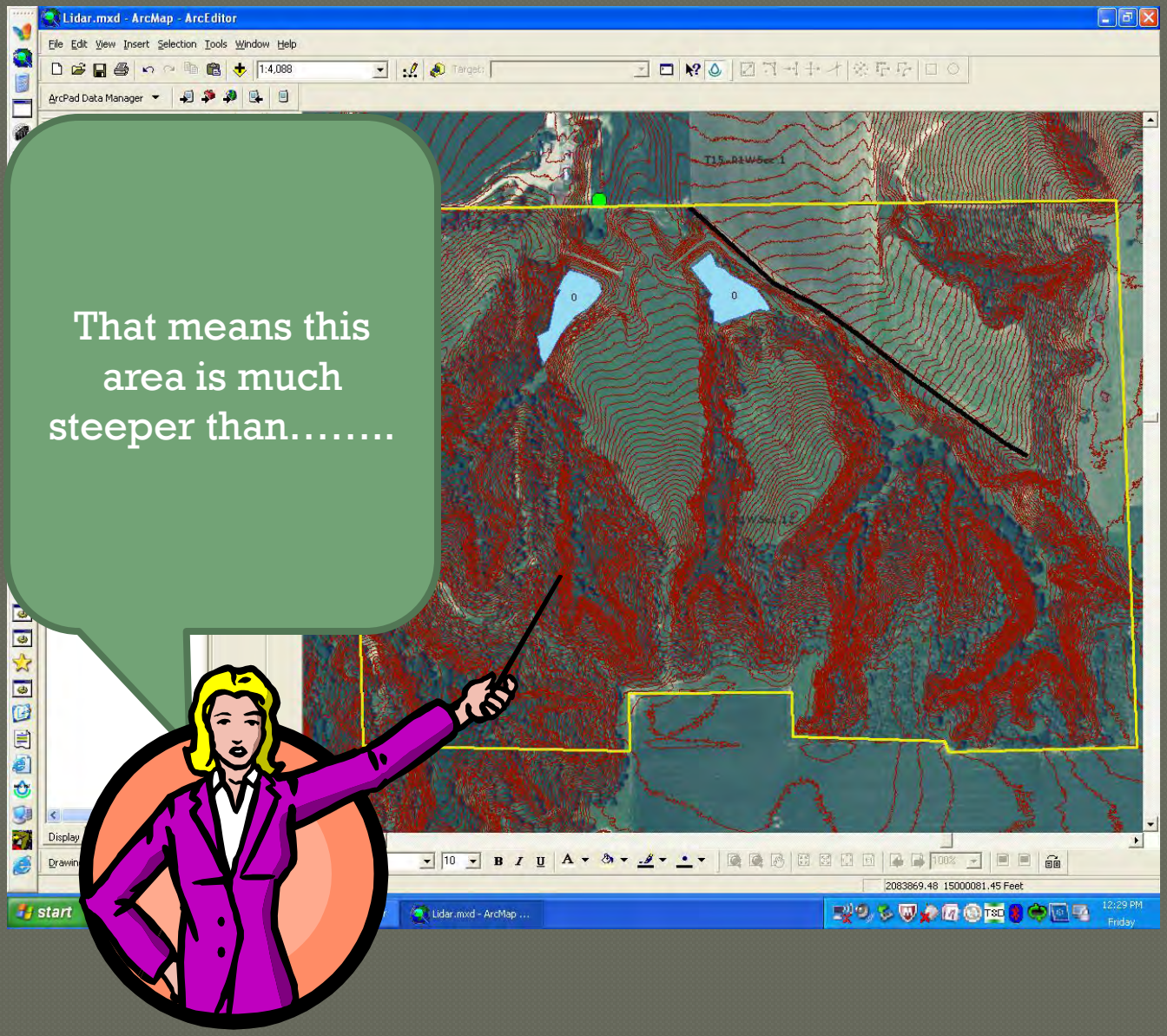
Each red line on this map represents a 2 ft change in elevation.



The closer the lines are together, the steeper the slope is on the ground.

This area slants to the north. Water runs down the hill in the direction of the arrow.

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ArcPad Data Manager
That means this area is much steeper than……..
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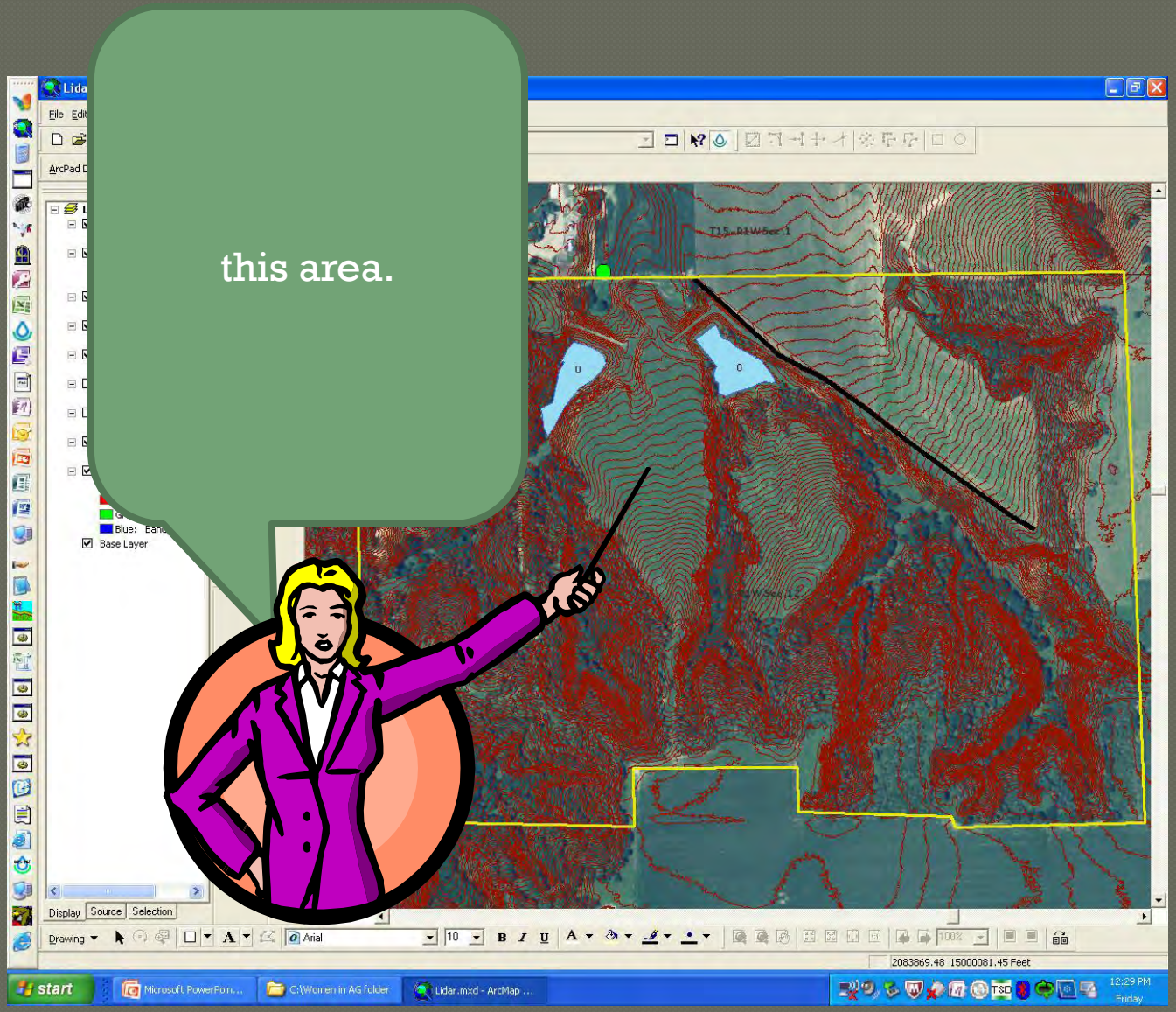
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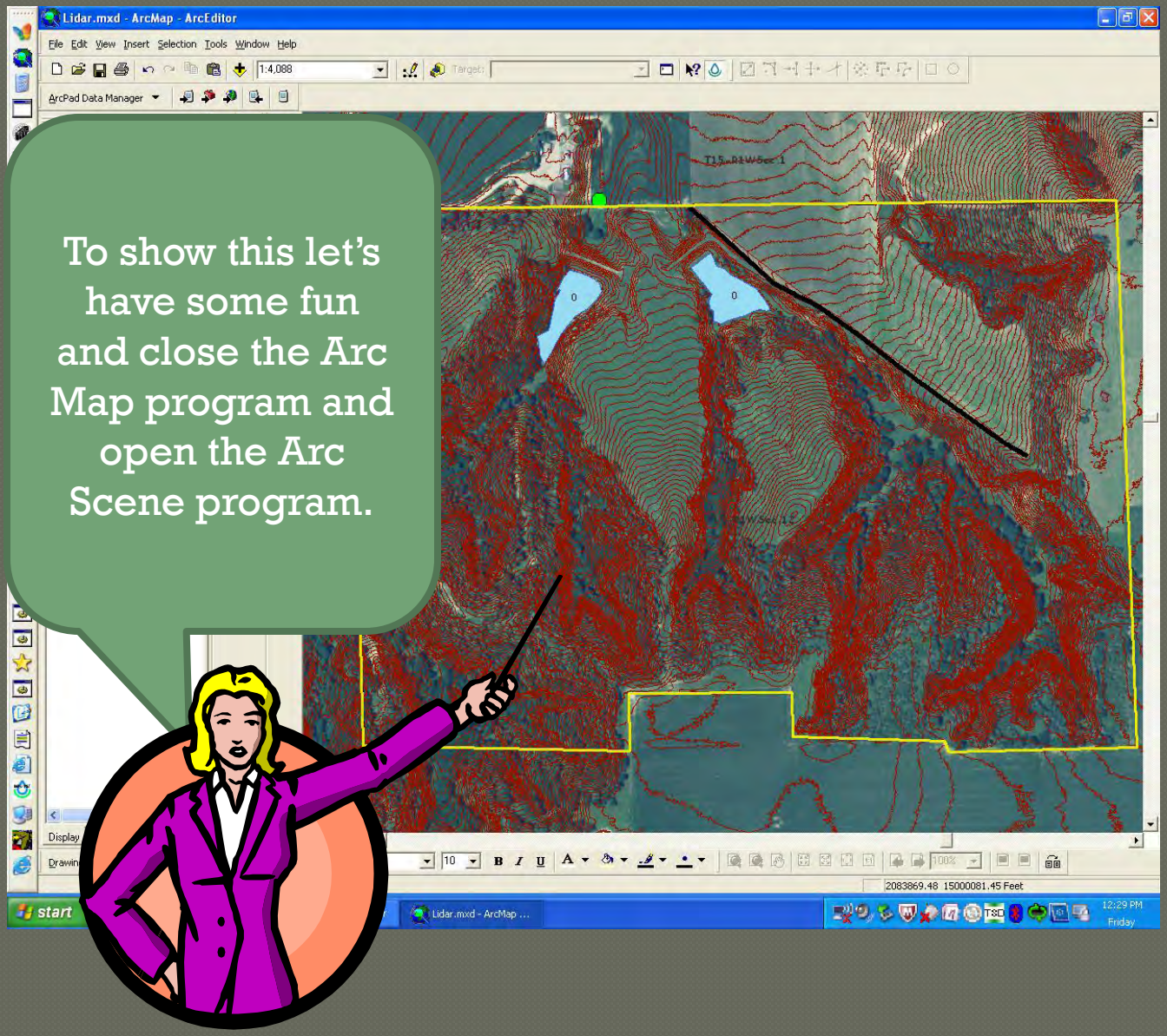
Lidar.mxd - ArcMap - ArcEditor
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To show this let's have some fun and close the Arc Map program and open the Arc Scene program.
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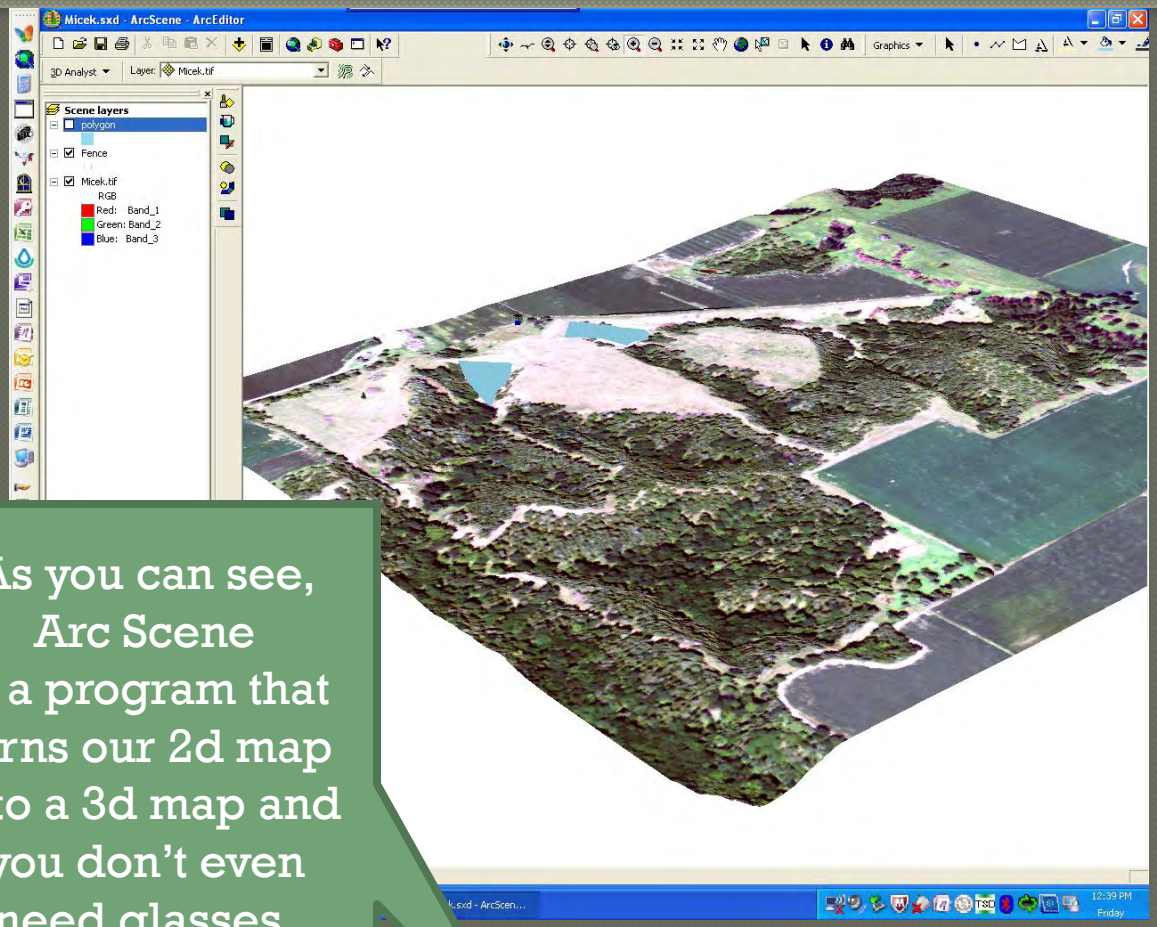
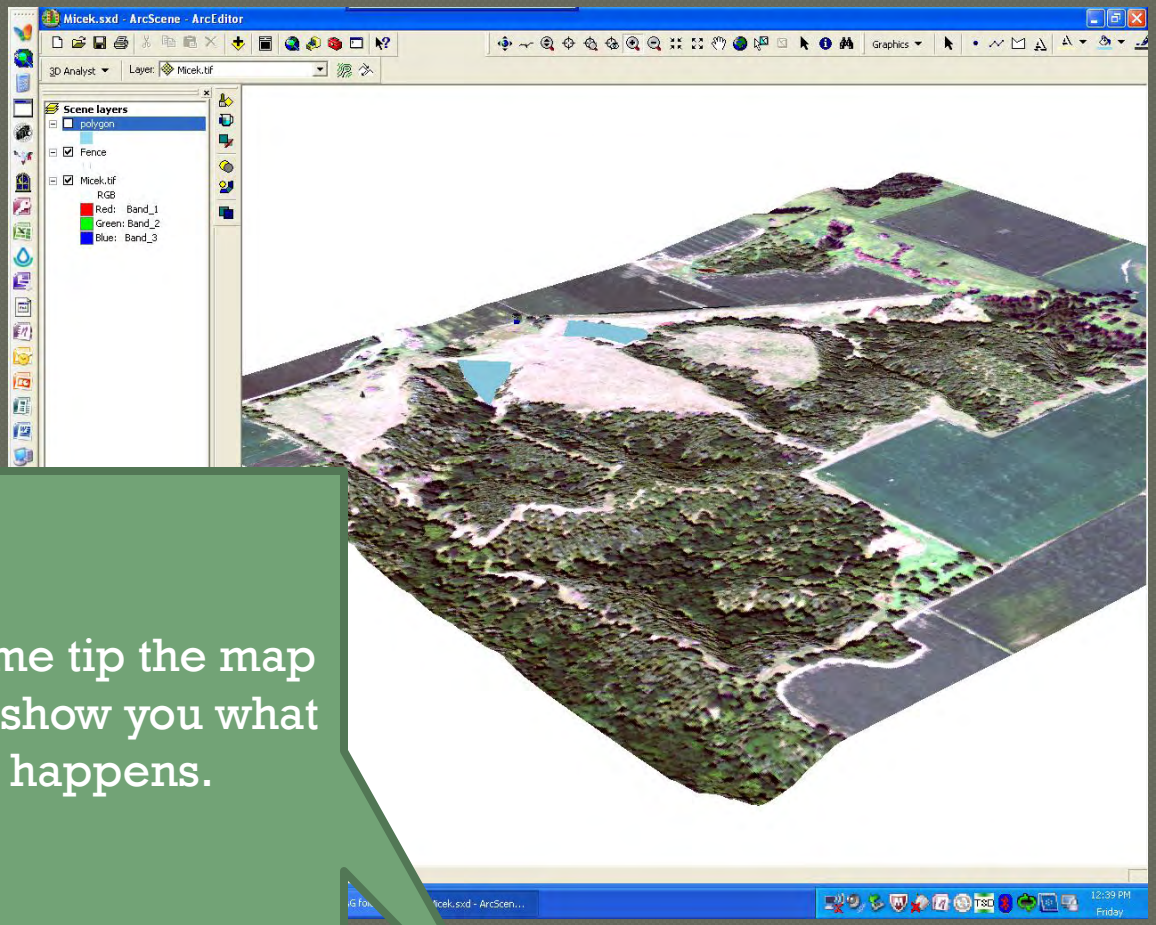
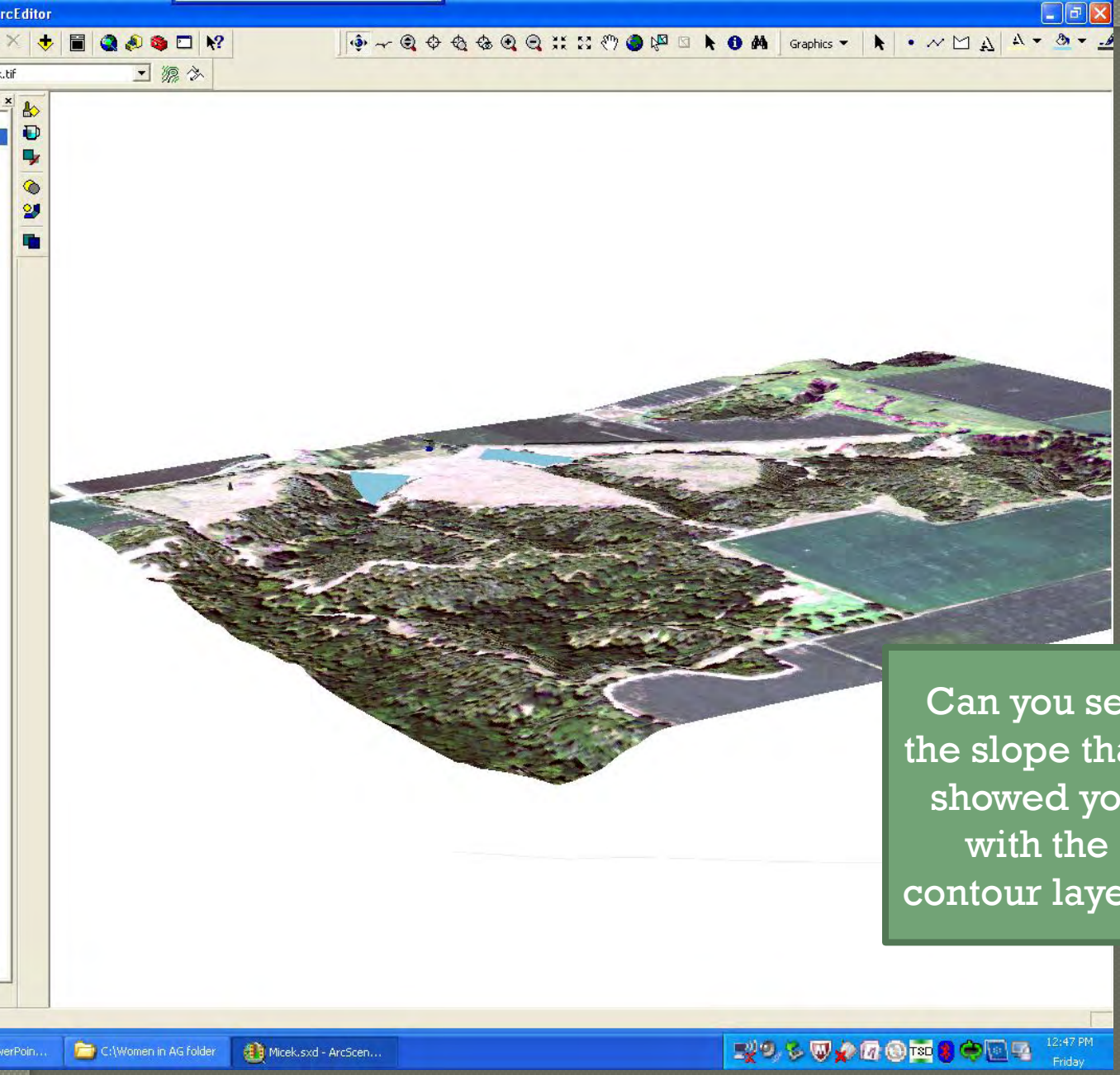


As you can see,
Arc Scene
is a program that
turns our 2d map
into a 3d map and
you don't even
need glasses.

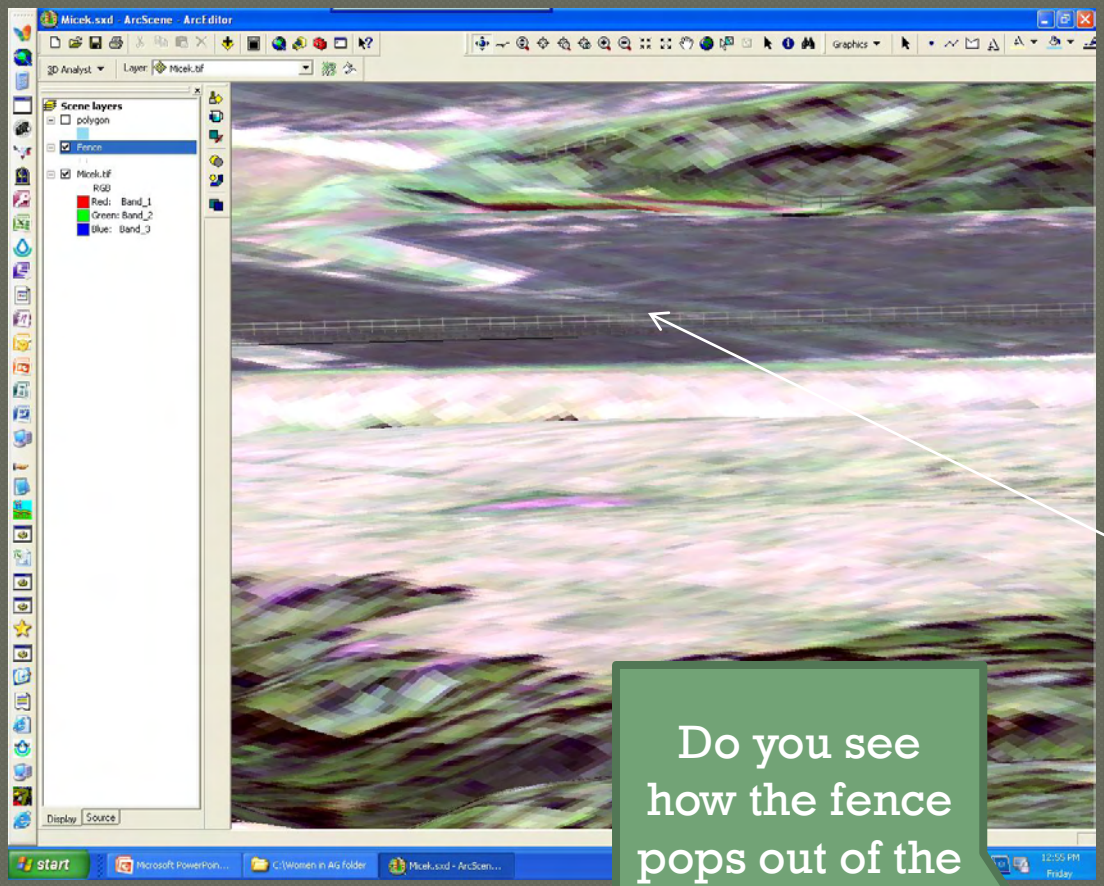


Let me tip the map and show you what happens.



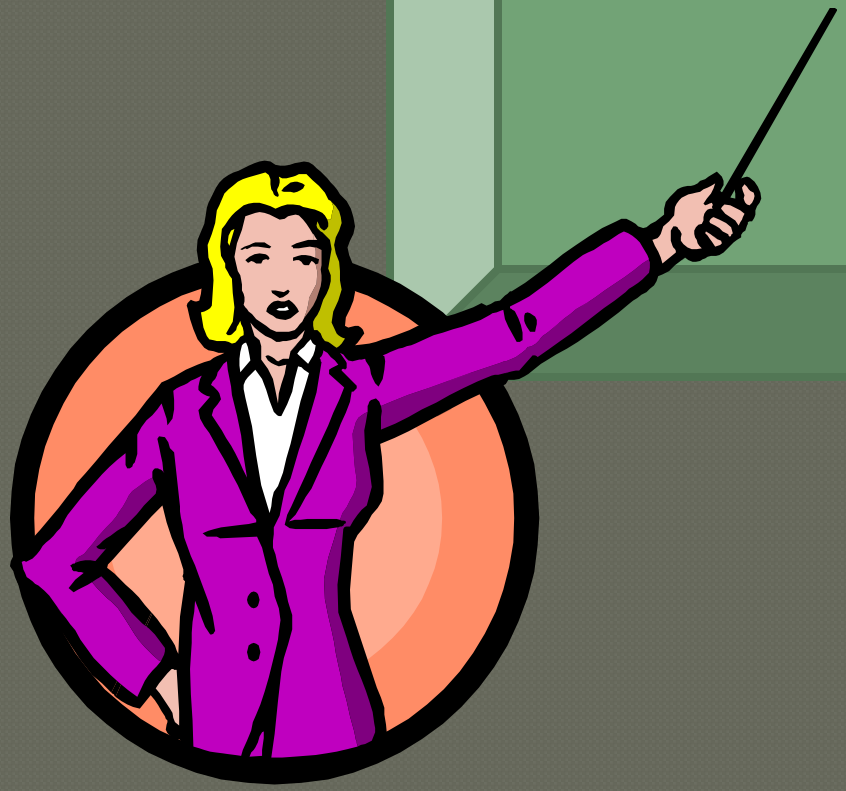
Can you see the slope that I showed you with the contour layer ?

Now I will zoom in and show you the fence. Keep your eye on the area by the arrow.

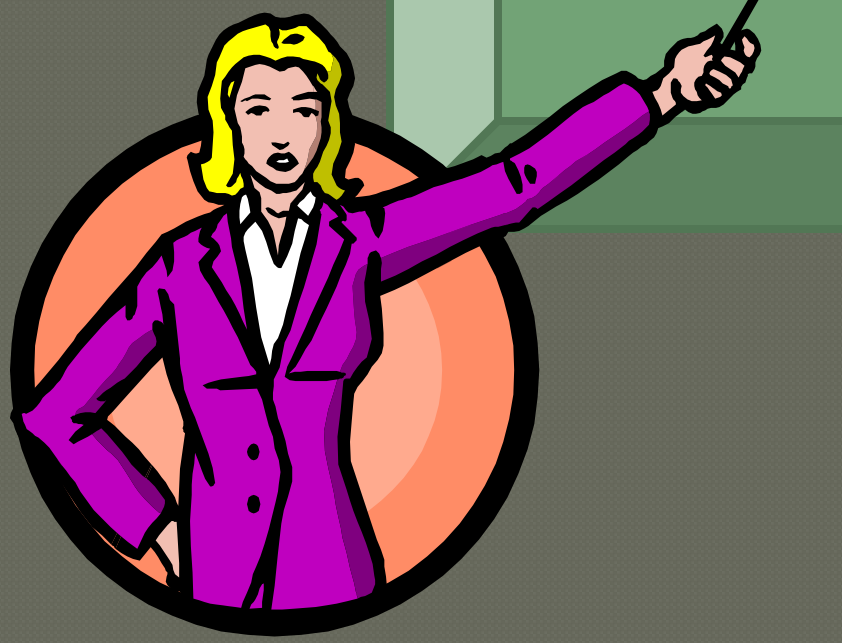


Do you see how the fence pops out of the ground.

3d is something new to the office. It is a great planning tool and is fun to use.
I'm still learning how to size objects, and when you zoom in, the photo's loose some of their clarity.



If you are interested in learning more about your farm , call ahead to your local NRCS office and make an appointment to learn more about your farm. All maps we create are free of charge, and if you like they can be emailed to you so you can make as many copies as you like.



Today I showed you how we create planning maps.
It's as easy as baking a layer cake.
Just let us know what flavors you would like.