



ALTA/NSPS Question

NSPS

I have been asked to provide a quote for an ALTA survey of an oil refinery. The operating plant covers about 150 acres including its storage tanks. The main question I have is "Do all of the structures within the property need to be located, including the piping and tanks?"

Can anything be shown based on using aerial photography in the background? Any insight you can give me is greatly appreciated.

Response:

The best and most logical way to deal with this would be to suggest to the client that it be covered under Table A Item 15, which reads:

Rectified orthophotography, photogrammetric mapping, remote sensing, airborne/mobile laser scanning and other similar products, tools or technologies as the basis for the showing the location of certain features (excluding boundaries) where ground measurements are not otherwise necessary to locate those features to an appropriate and acceptable accuracy relative to a nearby boundary. The surveyor shall (a) discuss the ramifications of such methodologies (e.g., the potential precision and completeness of the data gathered thereby) with the insurer, lender, and client prior to the performance of the survey, and (b) place a note on the face of the survey explaining the source, date, precision, and other relevant qualifications of any such data.

As explained in the item above, you would need to discuss the ramifications of using – for example - aerial photography (precision and completeness of the data that will be gathered by that means, and shown on the survey plat). Then get a consensus from the lender, buyer (or owner in the case of a refinance), and title company that they are each OK with that methodology and those results. Then, there needs to be a note on the plat/map explaining the source, date acquired, precision, and other relevant qualifications of any such data.

I did this once on a chemical plant, and saved the client probably \$100,000 and a lot of time. The title company did not care (because, in this case, the plant was nearly self-sufficient with its own water and waste water systems, and the gas and electric service were known). The buyer knew what they were buying, so they did not care. There was no lender (pharmaceuticals seem to not have cash-flow problems!). Hopefully this helps.