

Chapter 3: Understanding SADA Files

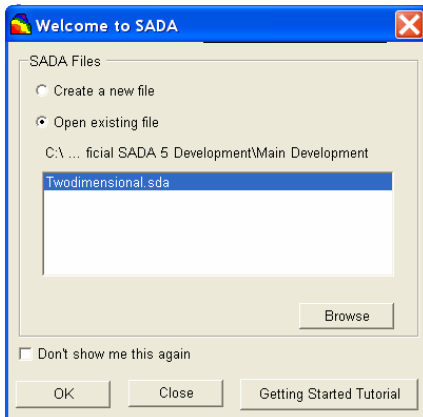
Like many other Windows software packages, SADA creates and uses SADA files denoted by the suffix .sda. With few exceptions, everything is stored in a SADA file. You can then easily pass this file to other folks who can open it and see the work you've done. Any data you wish to use is imported into the file, model parameters are stored there, risk parameters, decision parameters, and so forth. Virtually everything that you create, import, or calculate can be found in your SADA file. (The only exception is Auto-documentation reports discussed later.)

When you install SADA, a handful of SADA files are included in the installation to help users get started using the code. Let's start by opening a SADA file and see what it looks like. If you already have SADA open with the file TwoDimensional.sda open, you are in good shape just read along as we talk about how to open SADA files. If you do not have SADA open or the twodimensional.sda file open, please close SADA and follow the directions.

Start SADA (e.g., Start→Program Files→SADA 5→SADA5 or you may have the shortcut on your desktop). The SADA icon is as follows.



The first time you open SADA you will be presented with the Welcome Screen.



If you do not see this screen, continue reading to find out what you should do next. If you do see this screen, then it is easy to create a new SADA file or open an existing file. Also, you can get information on the quick start tutorial we provide. Finally, if you do not like this Welcome screen to show up each time, select the "Don't show me this again option" and press Close (don't do this for now).

For now, let's open the file TwoDimensional.sda. Select the **Open Existing File** option. To navigate to where the TwoDimensional.sda file is, click on the **Browse** button. The file should be located in the same directory where SADA was installed. If you are unable to find your installation files, you can access them again by visiting the SADA website.

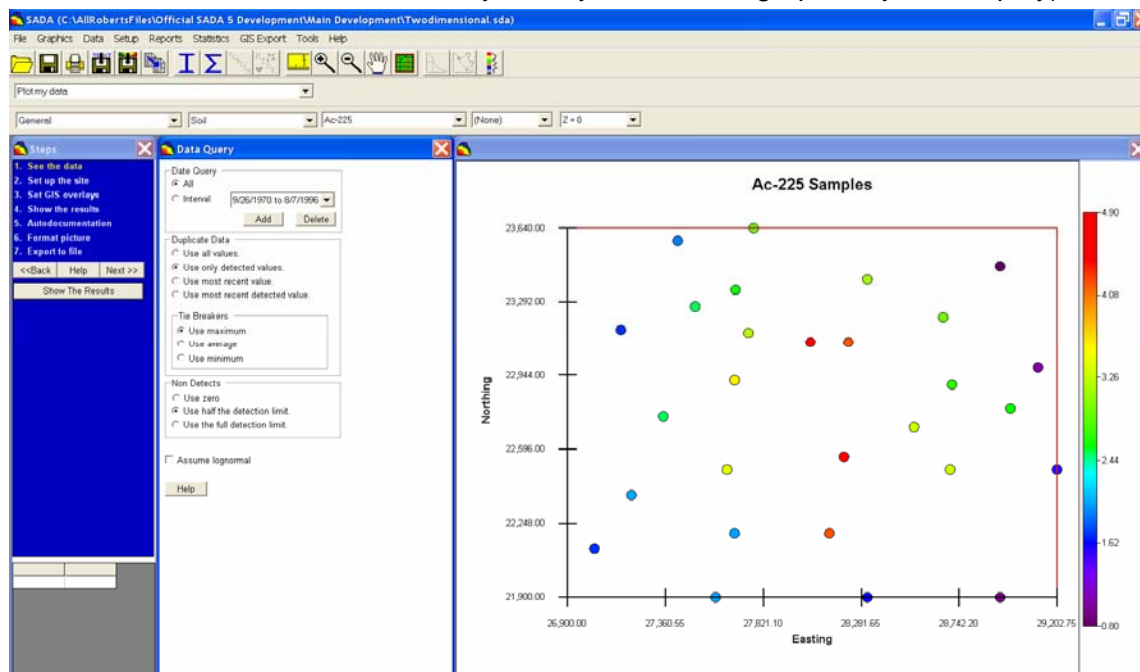
If you did not see this welcome screen, it means that at sometime before someone selected to turn this option off. To make sure you see it in the future, simply go to the menu path:

Tools→Show Open Dialogue at Startup

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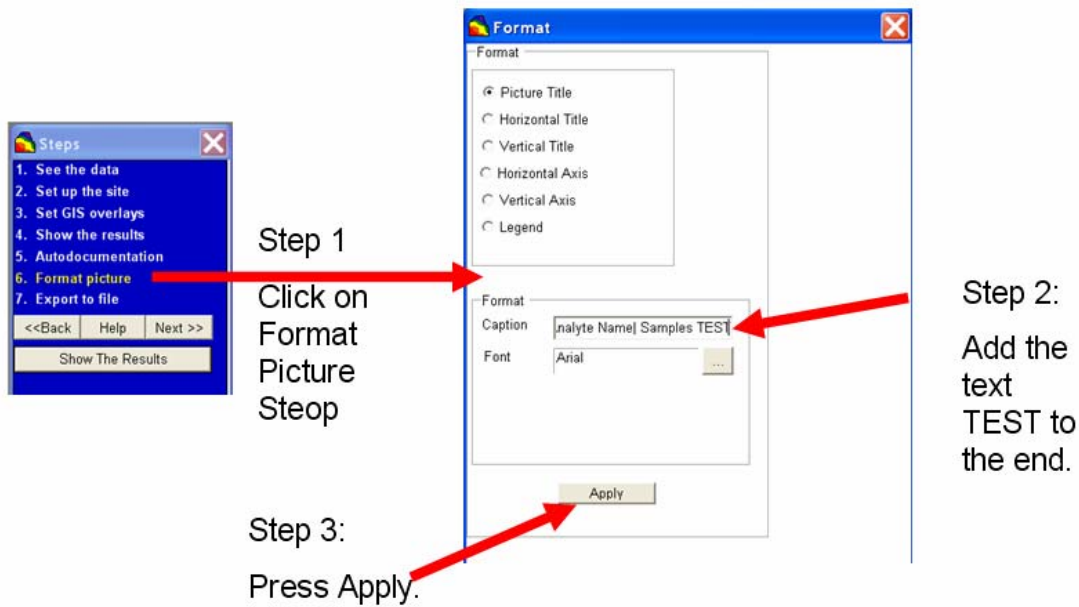
The next time you open SADA, the welcome screen will appear. In the mean time, you will select Files→Open from the main menu. Navigate using the open window dialogue to TwoDimensional.sda and press Open.

The SADA file is now opened and you should see something like the following (depending on the version of TwoDimensional.sda, you may see a more graphically rich display).

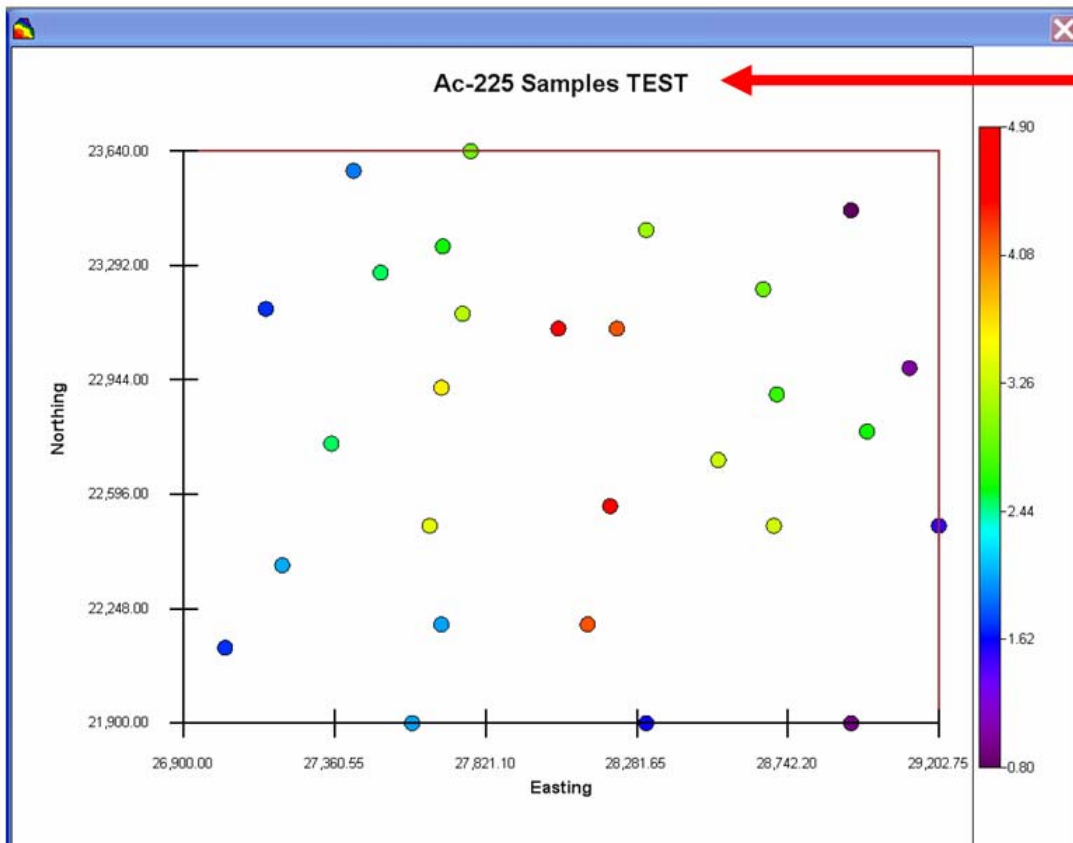


At the top of the SADA interface, you will see the name of your SADA file (TwoDimensional.sda). Much of the rest of SADA is now enabled, and you can see the first contaminant in the data set (Ac-225). If you need to refresh your memory on the SADA layout, revisit the introduction section just a few pages back.

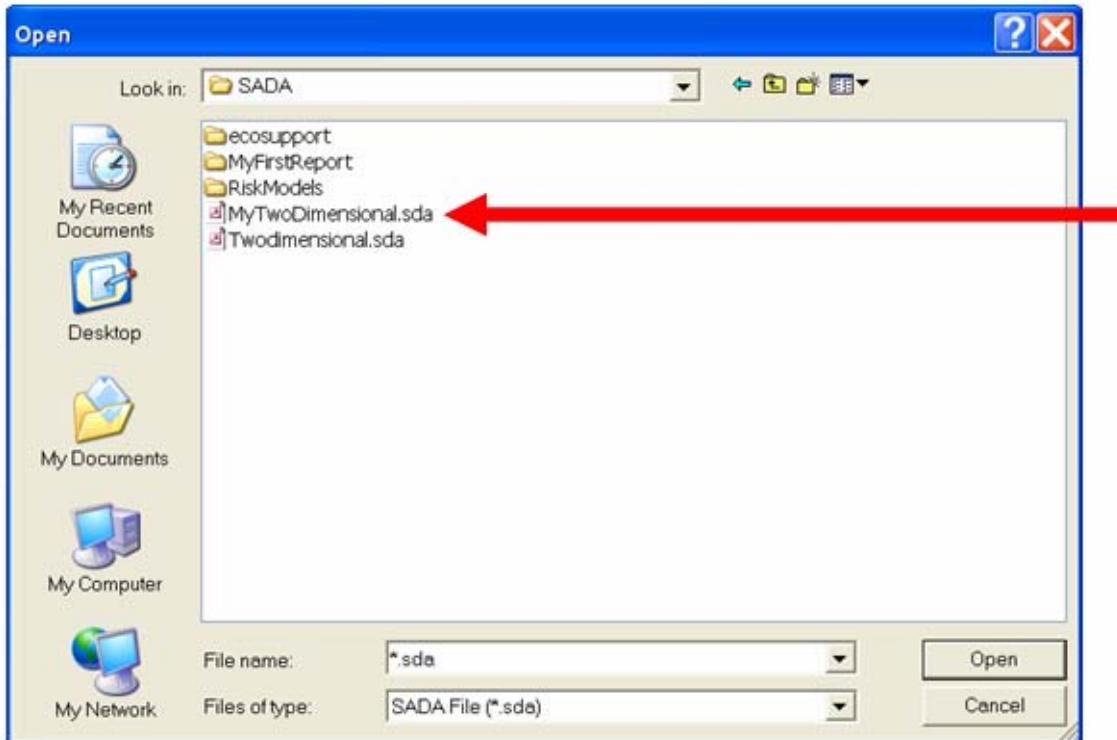
What does it mean to edit your SADA file? Well we'll now make a trivial change so you can see what it means. On the left hand side of the screen, you'll see a blue window. This is the Steps Window. You should see a step called Format Picture. Click on this step.



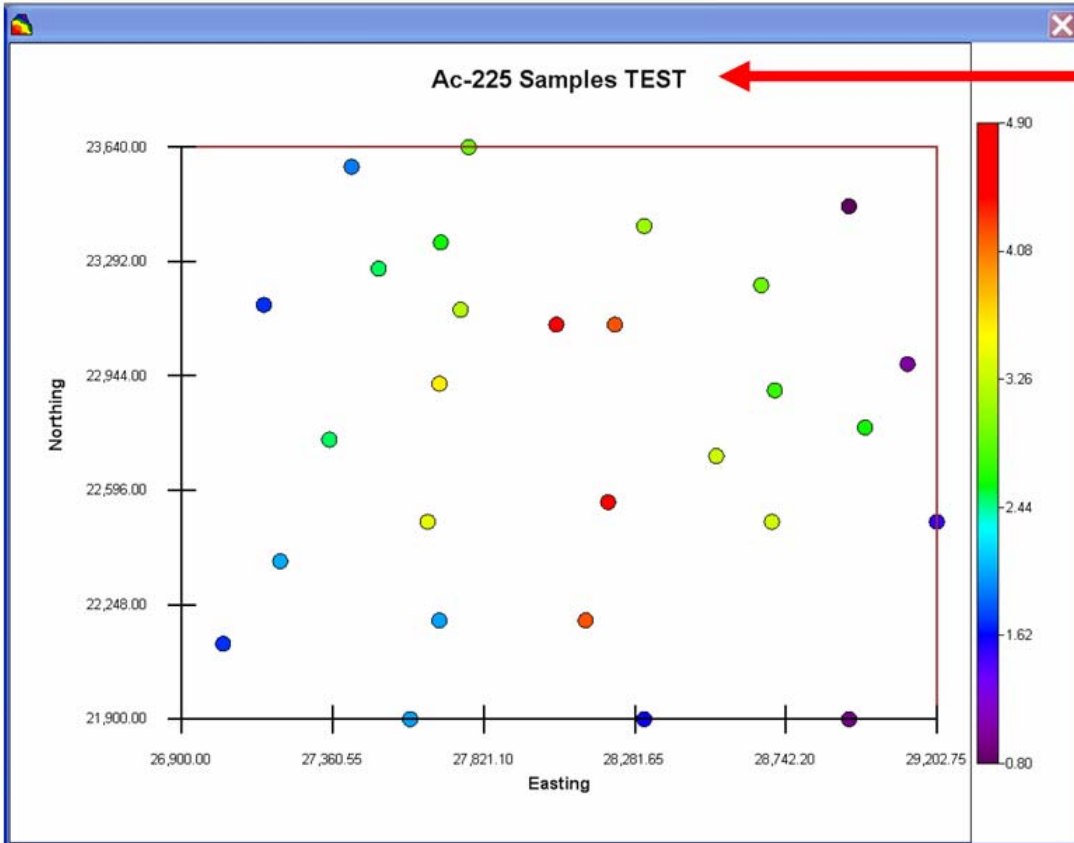
The window on the right will change. This is the parameters window, and it adjusts itself to reflect whatever step you are on. You can learn more about this later. In the parameters window, there is a text box called Caption. Add the word TEST to the end of the text you see there. Press the Apply button. Notice in the graphics window that the title of the picture changed and now includes the word TEST. This is part of the format feature, and you can learn more about this later.



Now select from the main menu File→Save As...
Save the TwoDimensional.sda file as MyTwoDimensional.sda.
Now select File→ Close
SADA asks one more time if you would like to save the file. We just saved it, so say NO.
Now select File→Open, and navigate to where you saved MyTwoDimensional.sda.



Select MyTwoDimensional.sda and press Open.
Notice that the modification to the content of your project ("TEST") was saved.



This is a very trivial example of how a .sda file stores everything you do in SADA. The important thing to know about SADA files is the following:

Nothing is stored in the SADA file until you save the file. This is consistent with common Windows applications such as Excel or Word, each of which have their own files.

Any data that you import into the SADA file is completely contained within the SADA file. What this means is that any changes to the data you may make in the SADA file DOES NOT affect the original data file or database from which it came. The change is only internal to the SADA file. Conversely, any change in the original source file or data base will not affect the data values in the SADA file.

Throughout SADA, you will have opportunities to import a variety of things such as toxicity values, custom screening values, ecological benchmarks and so forth. These values are copied and brought into the SADA file just like data. Therefore, any changes to these parameters done inside SADA are not reflected in the original file or data base. The converse is also true.

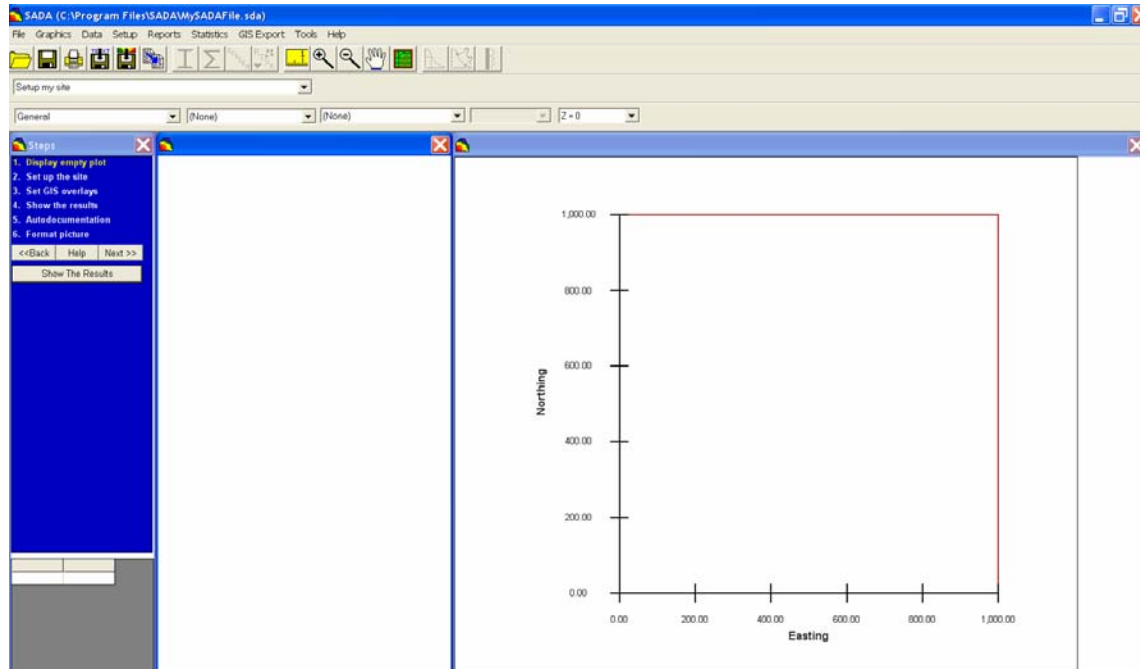
SADA files do not store GIS Layers and Autodocumentation Reports. You will need to send these along with your SADA file to anyone you wish to use them.

New Files

You can also create a new SADA file very easily. From your Welcome Screen, press the New button. Or alternatively, from the main menu select **File→ New**

You will be presented with a Windows Save dialogue box. Enter the name you want to call your SADA file (e.g., MySADAFFile.sda) and press Save. SADA will respond by creating a

"blank canvas" SADA file. The file is essentially empty because you have not brought any data into it yet. Therefore, a lot of functions are disabled.



You can do a few preliminary things, such as setup your site, bring in GIS layers, or create a new sample design. You'll learn more about these later.

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