

## **A Note About GPS Formats**

Unfortunately, different companies use a few different formats to express latitude and longitude. This is a little like the difference between inches and feet. In practice you can readily find out what format your GPS or program wants, and just use that format.

Probably the most common is to divide the earth into 360 degrees and express latitude and longitude in degrees. In this format, Station Road Bridge is at N41.31868 W81.59158. Values are given in this format in the first two numeric columns of Bill Miller's table and are called "Decimal Degrees". Many car GPSs can use this, including Garmins and TomToms.

A similar format uses the same numbers but expresses North as a positive number and West as a negative one. In this case, Station Road Bridge is at 41.31868 -81.59158. This format is used by the MapQuest web site.

Alternately, you could divide the earth into 360 degrees and then divide each degree into 60 minutes. In this format Station Road Bridge would have a longitude of W81 degrees and 35.495 minutes, and a latitude of N41 degrees and 19.121 minutes; all four values have to be put into your GPS. Values in this format are given in the final two numeric columns in Bill Miller's table, and are called "Degrees and Decimal Minutes".

Less often you might even see the earth divided into 360 degrees, each degree divided into 60 minutes, and each minute divided into 60 seconds. We don't list values in this format, but can help you with it if you need it.

Bill Miller is happy to answer questions if you call him at his phone number listed in the club directory. Bob Shroy will also help if you call or email him, with a number or address listed in the club directory. Bill uses a TomTom and Bob uses a Garmin, but both can talk about several kinds.