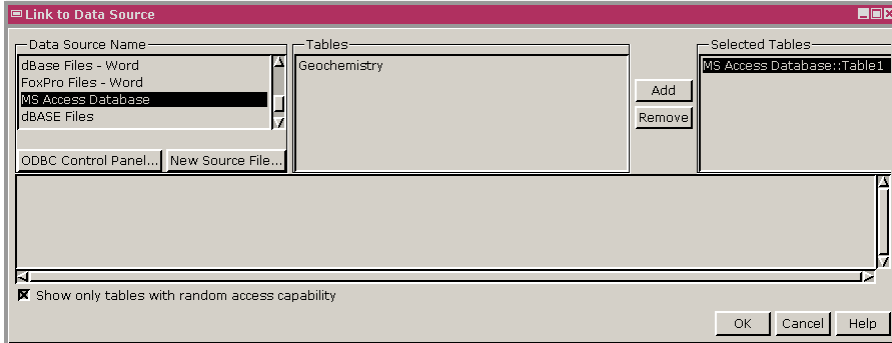# Improved Linking to Databases via ODBC

TNTmips has always supported direct linking to a few external database formats. The advent of Open Database Connectivity (ODBC) and TNTmips' support thereof made it possible for you to link from TNTmips to any database format for which you have an ODBC driver. Linking to a database rather than importing a copy to TNTmips' internal format lets you view and perhaps manipulate the database both in TNTmips and the original database software without the need to keep track of the version to which changes have been made (because there is only one version). Whether you can write to the database from TNTmips is determined by the software to which it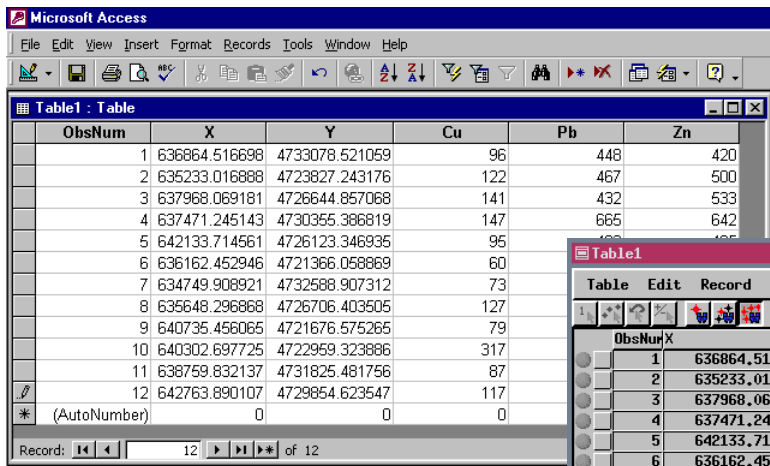 is linked. Rather than the date/time stamp used for direct linking by TNTmips to determine if the link information needs to be updated, the dynamic, changing nature of the external database file is automatically managed by ODBC.

You can now set up your ODBC links directly for any raster, vector, CAD, or TIN object in the Spatial Data Display process or in any process where you can view and use these Objects' databa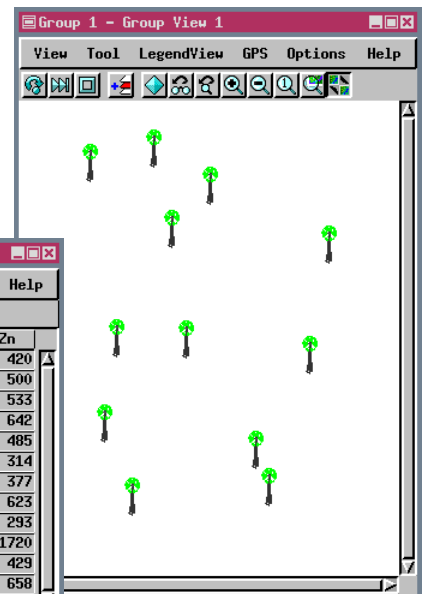ses. Previously, linking to ODBC data sources was only available in the Import process. Now, you can simply choose Link to Data Source from the menu that drops down from the Make Table/Form icon in the table/selection icon row. When you choose this option, the Link to Data Source window opens with all previously defined data sources listed on the left. If your desired data source is not on the list, you can add a new data source by clicking on the ODBC Control Panel button. Clicking on this button opens the same ODBC Data Source Administrator window that opens when you choose ODBC Data Source from your Control Panels. You can establish links to more than one data source and to tables from more than one file for the same data source at one time.

TNTmips' ODBC Driver Manager support has also been upgraded from 1.x to 3.5x. The major benefit of this upgrade is Unicode support, which is necessary for the correct display of some languages, such as Japanese.

For the time being, ODBC links still must be set up through the Import process to be available for use in Pin Mapping (as shown here).

This table was created in Microsoft Access and is being viewed in both TNTmips and Microsoft Access. Changes made to the table in Microsoft Access are viewable in TNTmips as soon as the changes are saved.