



Four-X Hint Wizardry



This hint is part of a semi-regular series 'published' on the Whittle User's Email Discussion Group

This has absolute nothing to do with Merlin, Harry Potter or the Lord of the Rings, this hint is about Four-X's project Wizard, a really good reason to upgrade to version 2.3. It's job is to guide you through setting up a new project and it takes a lot of the work out of setting up appropriate nodes and filling out all the dialogue boxes [well a heck of a lot of the dialogue boxes, you can customise them later]

The wizard is activated whenever you select "Create a NEW project" at startup or File/New from the menus or the "Blank Page" icon on the Toolbar menu.

Project details is the first stage in the wizard and it is all about where your data is stored. The wizard is set up to use a project name, which is then automatically set up to the project save file (it ends in .FXP), the project sub-directory (in which that FXP file will be saved and any files you import and export can be saved) and a working sub-directory (where all the working files Four-X uses are stored, and there will be a lot of them!). The only really important issue is not to use spaces in this file names, but the wizard will not let you type a space.

If the files or directories don't exist the wizard will create them

If you do not want to use the default names, you can use the file browser button to select specific files or just type them in. [This is where you need to take care not to select directories with spaces in the name.]

Clicking on NEXT> takes to the next stage, which is Model Files to Import into your project.

The three choices are pretty self-explanatory. You can load a block model (.mod file) or a set of pit shell designs (.res file), with the option of also supplying a matching parameter file. [It is assumed to have the same filename as your model or results file with the extension .par] The project only option, just sets up a blank project and doesn't load anything.

NEXT> now takes you onto Process Type description. This sets the default type of Scenario node to be used in analysis. In the wizard the three types, Standard Extracted, Blended Bulk and Blend and Process Extraction are mutually exclusive. However you can have combinations within your project if you define them manually later.

Some of the wizard screens will only appear if you have the required options in your ini file. If you do not have the option it will skip to the next screen.

NEXT> now gets you to Stockpile Usage (if you have blending, buffer stockpiles or stockpile optimization modules). If you want to use stockpiles you will need to supply a stockpile code and define rock types that are to be considered for stockpiling.

NEXT> goes to the process methods. Any process names in the parameter file will be already set up (if you supplied a parameter file during the import stage). You can still define these later if you want, but entering it now will save setting it up for every rock type.

NEXT> reaches the production scenarios where you can specify your mining and/or milling capacity limits. You can set up several different scenarios under different names.

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This will be blank as this information is not stored in the parameter file and it is a good idea to enter at least one case here.

NEXT> Takes you onto the stage where you define what standard type of analysis you would like set up. These are not mutually exclusive [So be a devil and select them all]. The pit by pit graph is particularly important for determining the optimum pit and you will definitely then want to look at a specific schedule to determine mining and plant utilisation.

NEXT> rolls onto sensitivity analysis (only the spider diagram) and if you want to run it, you are given a selection from a set of common criteria. You can always skip these and set up another later criteria once the project is set up.

NEXT>. If you have the optimize stockpile option then it moves onto the stockpile and cut-off optimisation, You only have two choices: Don't do it [and wait patiently for the good times to come] or DO IT [**Maximize the up front profit, NOW**]

NEXT> brings you to the final Summary screen, which gives a brief summary of what you have defined. Now you can utter the magic words and press the FINISH button. [**I was joking about the magic words, just click on Yes to say you are sure you want to create the project**]

You can sit back and watch the various stages you have defined being set up without any further typing of repetitive mousing and clicking. When it finishes you have a project set up and in most cases it will be ready to run. If you're not convinced this is magic, think back and remembers how much tedium has been removed from starting a new project.

You can use the <PREVIOUS button to go back. FINISH can also be used at any time but only those steps defined will be undertaken. CANCEL aborts the wizard and you just get a blank project. I'll let you find out what HELP does [**and does not do;**)]

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