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Volunteer to Have Your Driving Habits Tracked, Help Reduce Traffic

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Is your bumper-to-bumper commute leaving you listless? How about contributing to a social science experiment?

A new partnership between Nokia, NAVTEQ and the University of California Berkeley will allow drivers to use their GPS-enabled cell phones as traffic probes. According to [Navigadget](#), phones registered with the Mobile Millennium project will submit traffic data for highways and side streets in order to improve the commute times of similarly positioned drivers. Still in its early stages, Mobile Millennium is only open to drivers between the San Francisco Bay Area and Lake Tahoe ski area.

As our [GPS reviews](#) indicate, sharing real-time traffic data is one of the latest trends in GPS navigation. The [Dash Express](#) was the premier device for Wi-Fi connectivity and community sharing, but its parent company recently announced that it will [discontinue the Express in favor of licensing its software](#).

Those interested in the project, known as Mobile Millennium, can register online and download the free software. Nokia, NAVTEQ and UC Berkeley expect "more than 10,000 handset owners will allow their GPS data to be tracked," according to [Twice](#).

"As vehicles pass through the system's virtual trip lines -- geographic markers defined by GPS coordinates -- the phones will send anonymous speed and location readings to servers," [GPS World](#) explains. "The data will be integrated into traffic models that produce an estimate of traffic flow, then relayed back to the mobile phones and posted online."

Howard Hayes, NAVTEQ's vice president of traffic, told [Twice](#) that, "The inclusion of live mobile data represents a significant technological advance for the traffic industry, and will provide more accurate real-time traffic information for travelers."

Though the project is now limited to drivers travelling between the Bay Area and Lake Tahoe, "all Bay Area residents with smart phones or internet access will be able to receive traffic information that includes probe data," [Navigadget](#) says. According to [GPS World](#), a more widespread system could be available as early as April 2009.

Find out which portable navigation devices provide the best real-time traffic data using U.S. News' [GPS reviews](#).

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