QGIS Application - Feature request #15537
Inconsistent Usage of Field Aliases

2016-09-06 02:26 PM - Spencer Gardner

Status:	Open		
Priority:	Normal		
Assignee:			
Category:	Unknown		
Pull Request or Patch supplied:	No	**Resolution:**	
Easy fix?:	No	**Copied to github as #:**	23460

Description

I recently worked with a map where another user had defined aliases on a couple of fields. While trying to build expressions in the field calculator and other contexts I became confused because the alias names that I saw in the attribute table were not available in the expression builder. After some searching (and panic over the thought that the shapefile was corrupted) I realized that the expression builder refers to fields by their actual name without any reference to the alias. Since I wasn't aware that aliases had been set it didn't occur to me to check there.

It is highly confusing to use column aliases in some contexts and actual names in other contexts. To improve user experience this should be unified. There was a mailing list conversation in 2014 <https://lists.osgeo.org/pipermail/qgis-developer/2014-September/034551.html> about this issue but as far as I can tell nothing was done about it.

There seem to be good arguments for using actual names and for using aliases so I think the best solution will need to accommodate both usage patterns. What is clear is that using aliases in some contexts and not in others is not an intuitive design.

Has this been discussed more recently than my 2014 reference? If not, the API changes to 3.0 might be a good opportunity to tackle this usability issue.

History

#1 - 2017-05-01 12:46 AM - Giovanni Manghi

- Easy fix? set to No

#2 - 2017-09-22 09:55 AM - Jürgen Fischer

- Category set to Unknown