

Softproofing

In Photoshop and Lightroom

You know how beautiful an image can look on your computer screen. Then when you make a print it often looks dull and frankly disappointing.

A monitor is able to display a bright and contrasty range of colours, far more so than a paper print.

Softproofing tries to simulate on-screen what a print is likely to look like.

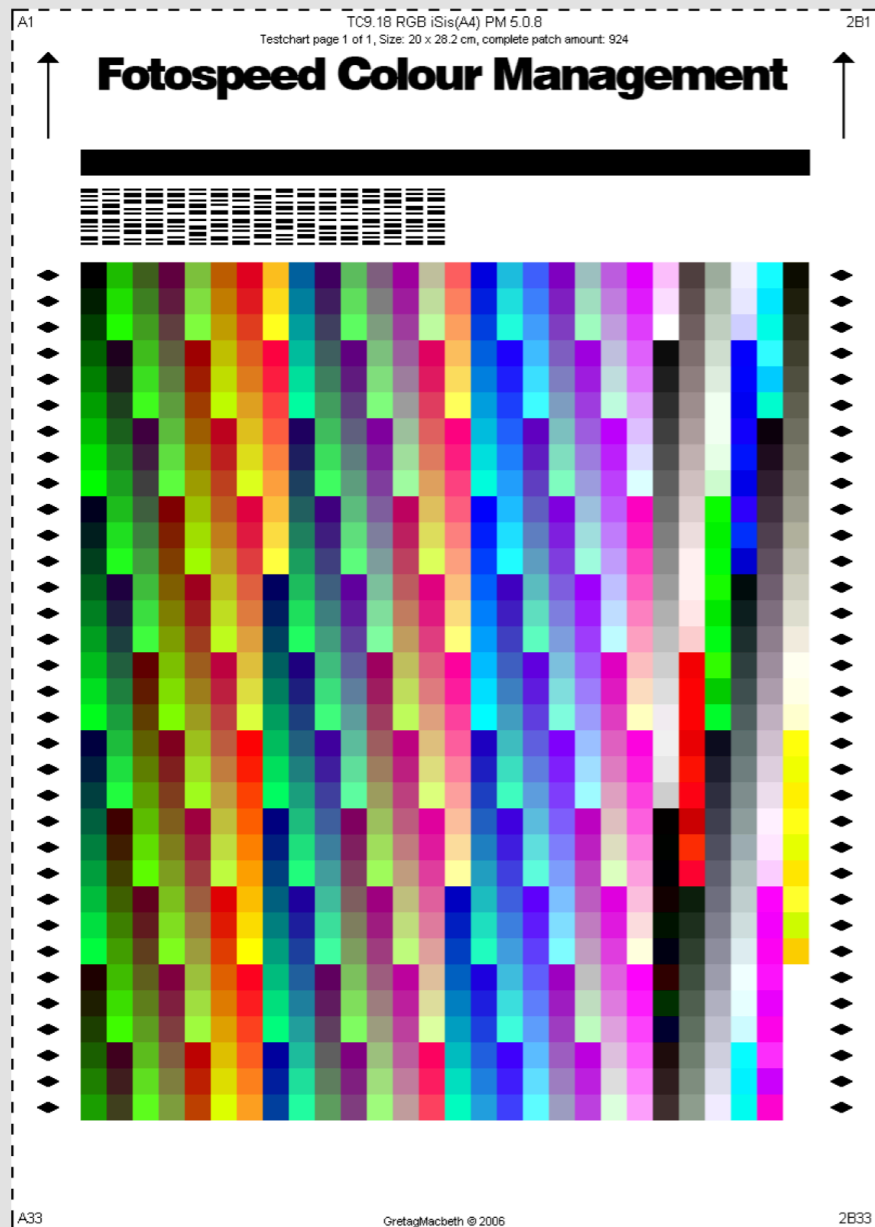
So you adjust the softproof image on-screen until it matches your original and a print should then be the best possible, or at least closer to that.

You'll need to find an ICC profile for the paper you are using and preferably one that includes the printer and inks too.

I use an Epson printer with Epson paper and inks so when I print I use the Epson profile for that combination but it's never produced the best quality first time. I have to make small test prints and keep adjusting to get what I want.

I've recently bought some paper from Fotospeed who offer a free profiling service.

I downloaded some software of a test chart and printed from it Photoshop with no adjustments.



I posted the print to Fotospeed who scanned it and emailed to me a profile for my particular printer, inks and paper.

Profile Installation Instructions – PC

Start by saving your profile from the email to your desktop.

Then go to your file explorer and locate the profile.

Right click on the saved file, (the icon of this should show as an RGB triangle), and select the top option which is ‘Install Profile’.

If you have Photoshop/Lightroom/Elements open on your computer already, close and re-open them to refresh and bring the profile into the application.

To find your profile in the future, go to your file explorer and enter into the search bar – ‘ C:\Windows\System32\spool\drivers\color ‘ which will take you to the profiles folder on your computer.

To un-install your profile from your computer, go to the profile as shown in No.5 and delete it.

Profile Installation Instructions – Mac

Start by saving your profile from the email to your desktop.

Then go to your Finder and go to the top of your screen where it will say ‘Go’. On this drop-down select ‘Go to Folder’.

This will then open a box in which you can type into. Type in ‘ ~/Library ‘ and it will take you to your library folder.

Inside this, locate your ‘Color Sync’ folder and double click to open.

Inside this will be another folder named ‘Profiles’. Double click on this folder to open.

Then drag and drop the profiles from your desktop into the profiles folder in your Library.

If you have Photoshop/Lightroom/Elements open on your computer already, close and re- open them to refresh and bring the profile into the application.

This profile was a bit better than the Epson one but still not good enough. So I investigated softproofing.

I found this brilliant YouTube tutorial.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=njFgYba3IHU>


It lasts 30 minutes though I kept pausing it while working through it. I heartily recommend it.

Along with the ICC profile Fotospeed sent me a test chart for me to experiment with.





I have made two versions of a similar test chart.
If you would like a copy of either please tell me.

Can you see every step
in the greyscale?
Especially 0-1 and 19-20



1 - Sharpness Check
2 - Sharpness Check
3 - Sharpness Check
4 - Sharpness Check
5 - Sharpness Check
6 - Sharpness Check
7 - Sharpness Check
8 - Sharpness Check
9 - Sharpness Check
10 - Sharpness Check
11 - Sharpness Check
12 - Sharpness Check
13 - Sharpness Check
14 - Sharpness Check
15 - Sharpness Check




colour-science.com
Switzerland

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15 - Sharpness Check

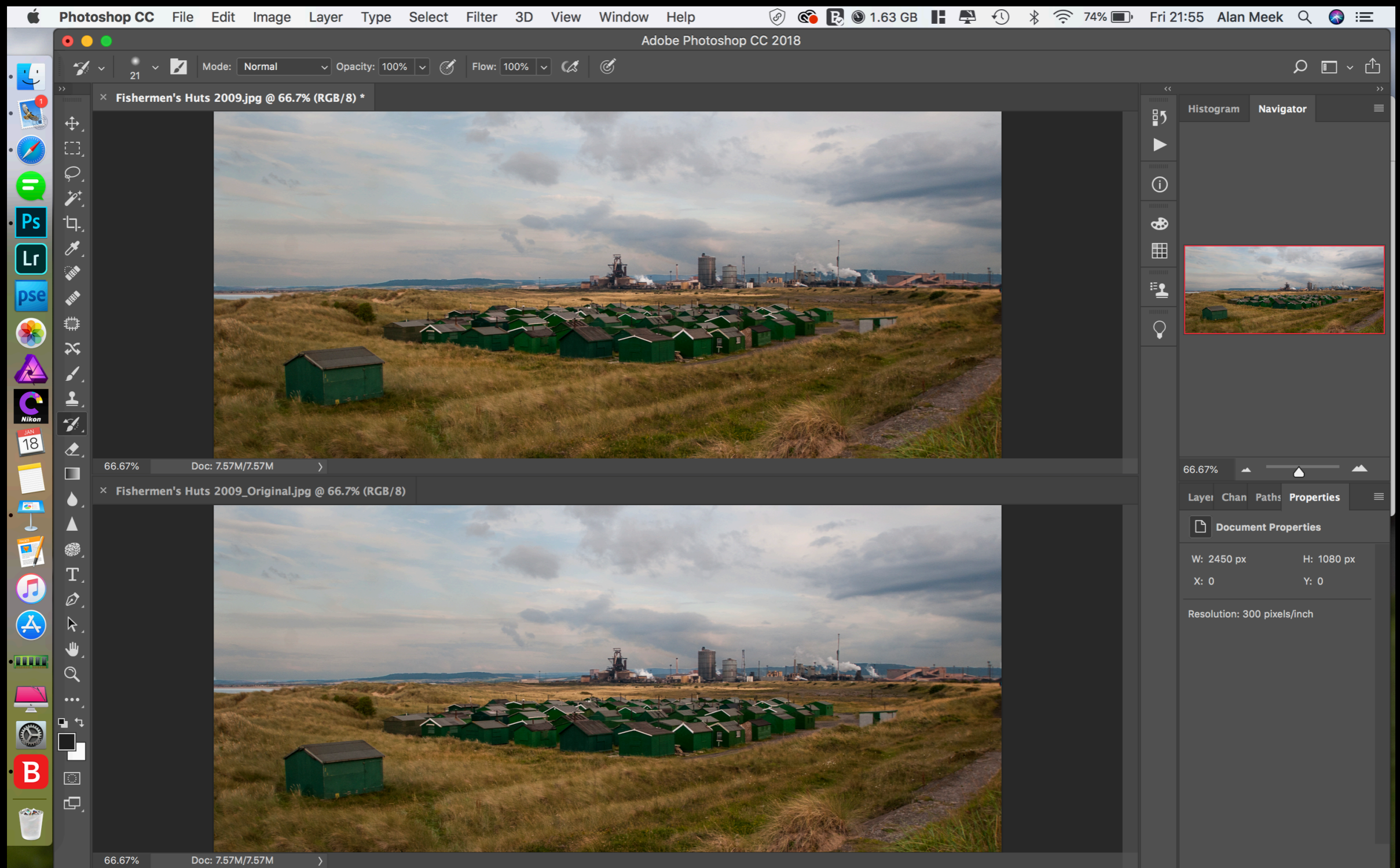


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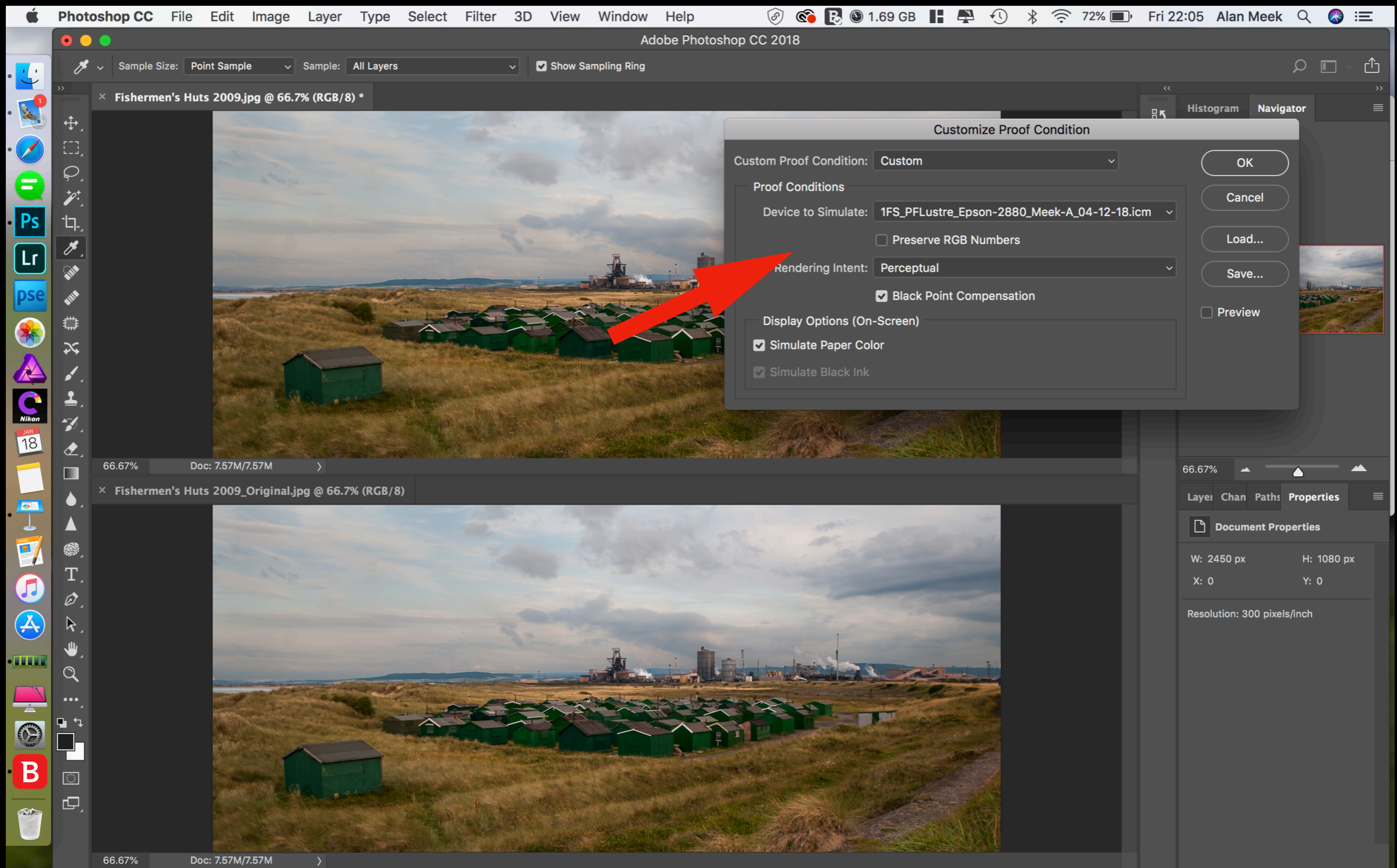
Softproofing uses my new profile but also lets me add adjustments to the individual image and I'm finding that my first prints are much improved.

To use softproofing find the image you want to use. Duplicate it and add "Original" to its file name.

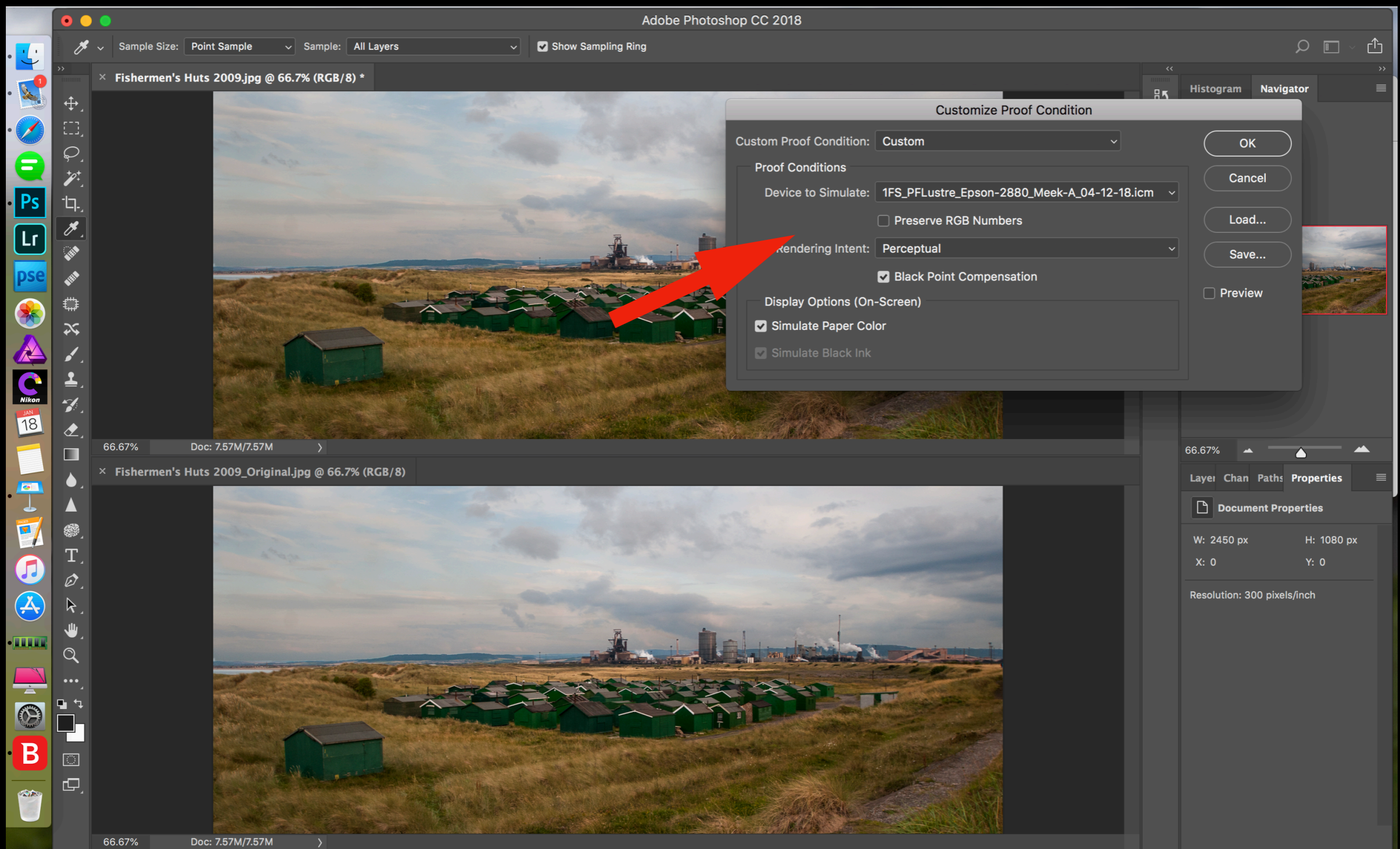
Now open both in Photoshop and use
“Window / Arrange / 2 Up” so you see them both.



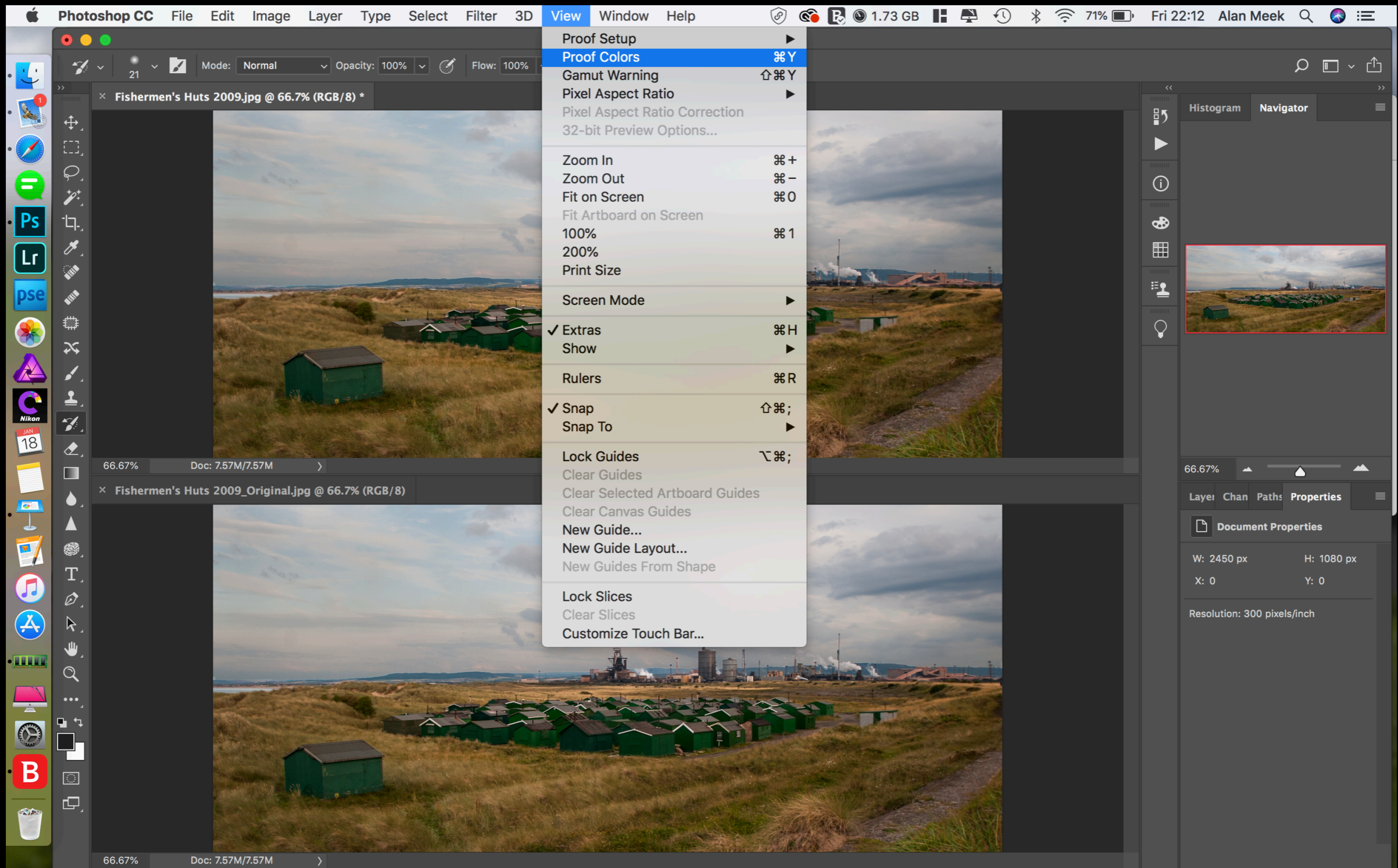
In “Device to Simulate” choose your ICC profile from the drop-down list.



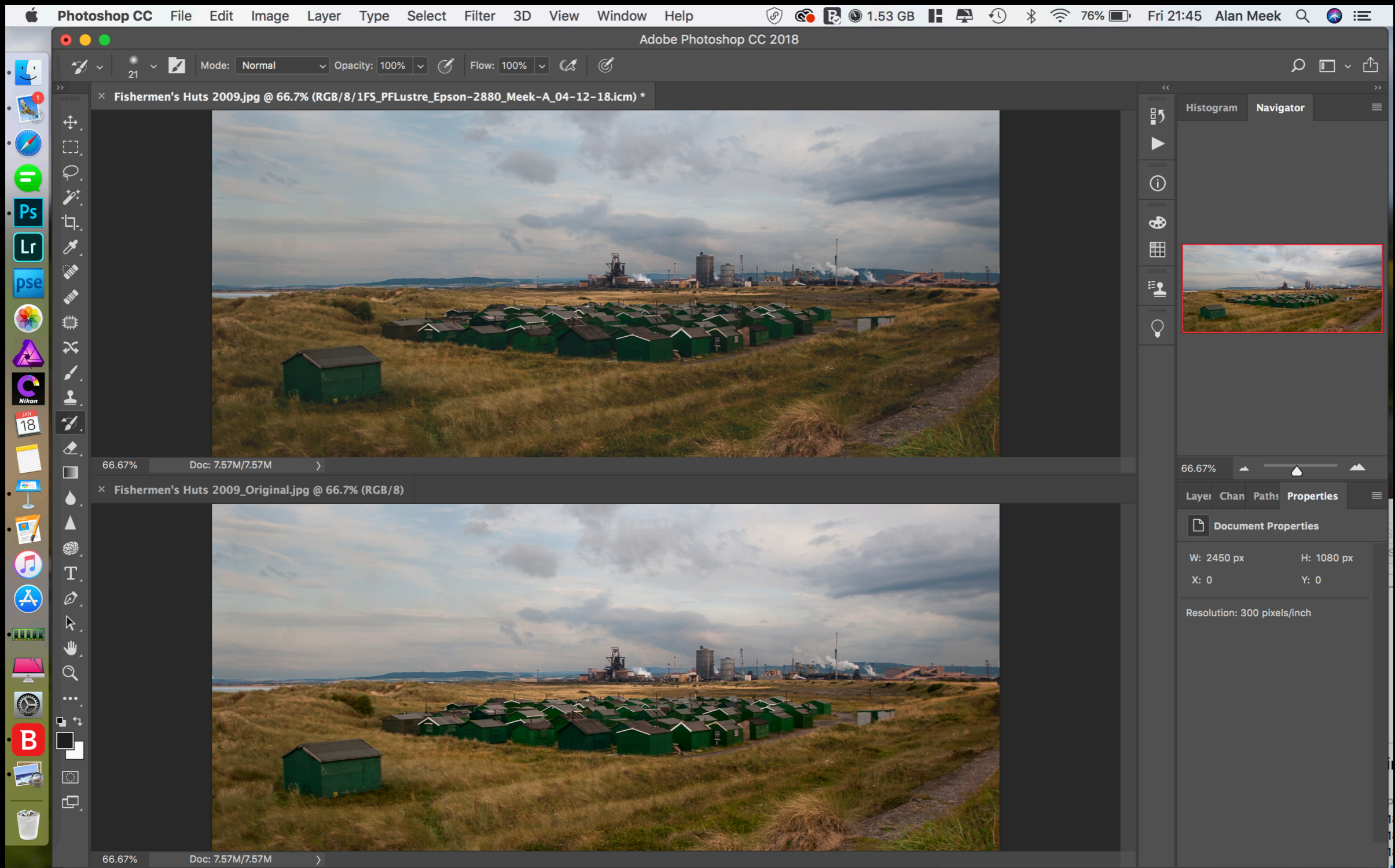
Tick the boxes for “Black Point Compensation” and “Simulate Paper Colour”.



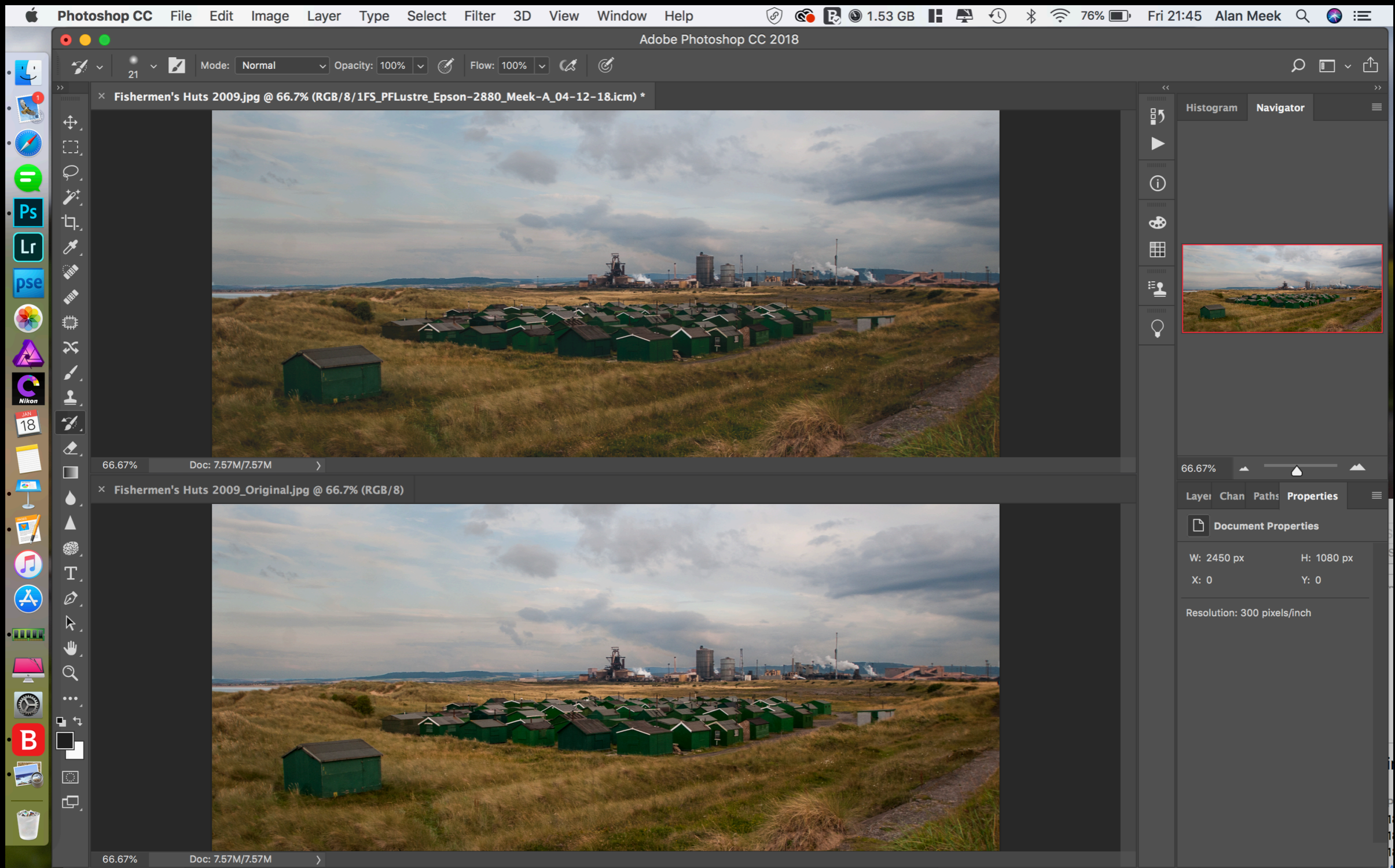
Now go to “View / Proof Colors”.



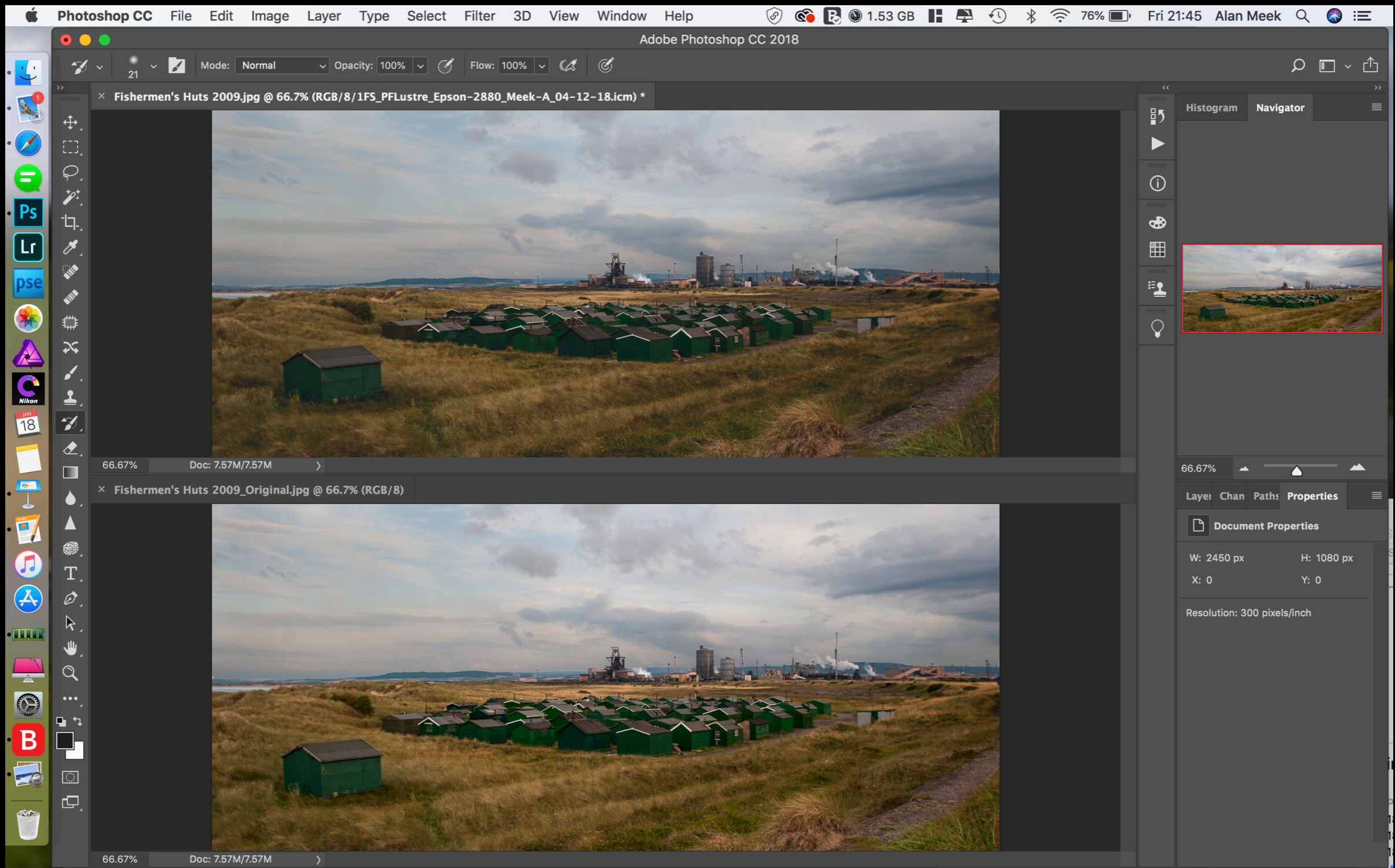
The ICC profile name is added to the image title and you can see the changed colours and tones.



Cmd + Y or Ctl Y is the shortcut to toggle the change on and off.



If you like you can now print it off. Make sure that “Photoshop Manages Colors” is set.



But you'll probably want to make adjustments to contrast, colour, etc. to make the softproof match the original as closely as possible. Then print it off.

It's worth saving those adjustments, as described in the YouTube video, so that you can add them to future images.

Softproofing is also possible in later versions of Photoshop Elements.

Soft Proof in Photoshop Elements

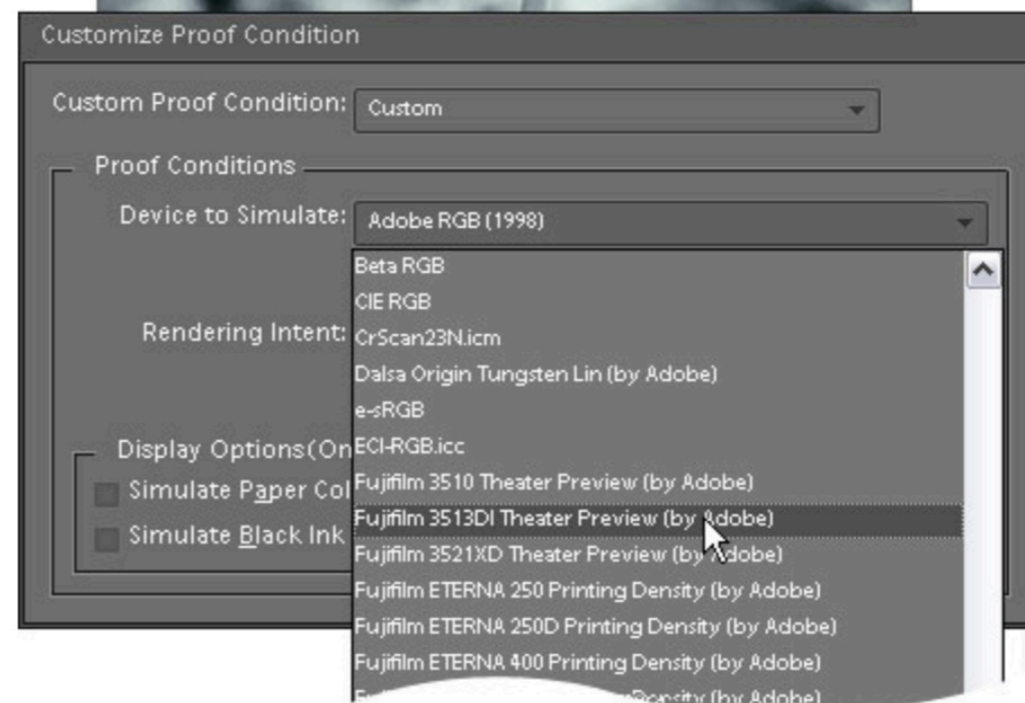
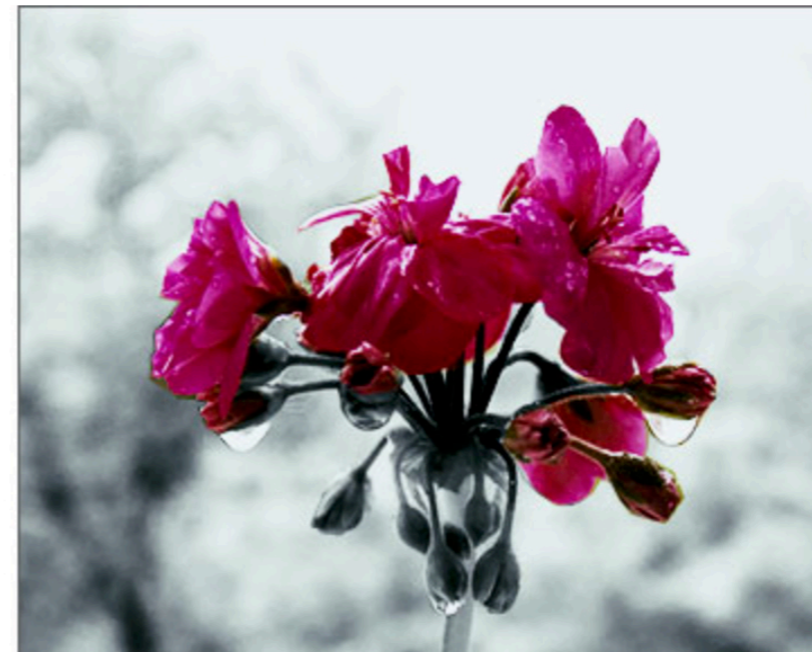


The "Soft Proof" utility allows you to preview how your image will be output by a particular device, such as a monitor, commercial press, desktop printer, etc. This feature doesn't affect the image file; it only alters the way it is displayed in the Photoshop Elements window.

1. Open an image of your choice.
2. In the "Effects" palette, double-click the "Soft Proof" pictogram. A "Customize Proof Condition" dialog box will appear.
3. From the "Device to Simulate" menu, select a profile of your target output medium. For example, it may be an ICC file supplied with your ink jet printer.
4. The selected profiles allow further customizing. For example, for a printing device you may simulate real dingy paper by selecting the "Simulate Paper Color" option.
5. Click "OK" to apply the changes.
6. If necessary, fine tune the image tone / color to the target output device.

Tip. For accurate previewing, make sure that your monitor is calibrated, and the required ICC profile is installed in your operating system.

The selected profile works just for the current document during the current session. You may assign different profiles for each image opened in Photoshop Elements.



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