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Baltimore, MD 21218. *Embedded minimal surfaces with finite topology*. Preliminary report.

The study of minimal surfaces with one end embedded in  $\mathbb{R}^3$  is currently a rich area of research. We determine an explicit geometric decomposition for any complete, properly embedded minimal surface in  $\mathbb{R}^3$  with finite genus and one end. As a corollary we show all such surfaces have Weierstrass data asymptotic to a helicoid. (Received August 19, 2008)