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MapLines

March 2010

A Quick Roundup of GIS, Maps and More from GreenInfo Network

Dear Friend,

Happy Spring from your friends at GreenInfo Network! This edition of MapLines features free/low cost GIS tools and resources! Also in this issue, informative GIS Blogs we read to stay on top of GIS technology and news.

In every edition of MapLines we offer instruction for tips and tricks in our GIS Geek Corner. This month's trick is using Advanced Drawing Options in ArcMap.

On to the news!

Spring has sprung! The days are longer and the weather is getting nicer for bike riding. Google has just added bicycle directions to their maps. Plan your next bike route here: <http://googleblog.blogspot.com/2010/03/biking-directions-added-to-google-maps.html>

What We Are Doing

We've developed a collection of tools to make some of our ArcMap tasks more efficient. Now they are available for you to use. You can find and download the tools at our mapsportal.org site: <http://www.mapsportal.org/doc/GreenInfoTools/GreenInfoTools.html>

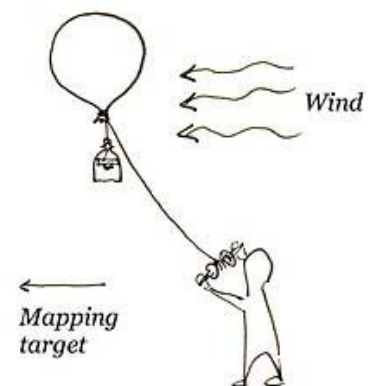
Tools, Data, and other mapping resources

Open Topography: The OpenTopography Portal is a [GEON Project](#) initiative to build an online system that provides access to high-resolution topographic data, web-based processing tools, and enables the user community to share knowledge, experiences and resources. This site is worth exploring for the resources and data sets. Data sets are limited but we hope to see OpenTopography grow and reach its goal of making it easier to access high resolution topographic data. <http://www.opentopography.org/index.php>

Visual Simulation Tool

This is a free visual simulation tool used to "see" potential impacts from coastal development or sea level rise. Users can download background pictures and insert the objects (hotel, house, marina, or other objects) of their choosing. The CanVis tool was developed by the U.S Department of Agriculture's National Agroforestry Center. The NOAA Coastal Services Center expanded the tool to include coastal objects. <http://www.csc.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/tools/canvis/index.html>

Grassroots mapping: Aerial photography in its simplest form: inexpensive digital cameras attached to helium balloons and kites. Grassroots Mapping has worked with a number organizations and communities in Lima, Peru to produce maps with children and adults. The images taken with the "community satellites" are georeferenced and stitched into maps which are 100x higher resolution than those offered by Google, at extremely low cost. In some cases these maps may be used to support residents' claims to land title. Go to <http://grassrootsmapping.org/> to read more about what Grassroots mapping is up to and how to make your own "community satellite."



Blogs we read: Here are the links to a few blogs that we read to keep up with the latest trends and news in the GIS world.

We've told you about ESRI's Mapping Center blog (<http://blogs.esri.com/Support/blogs/mappingcenter/default.aspx>) in a previous newsletter. But did you know you can access and subscribe to any one of ESRI's blogs by visiting their blog index? (<http://www.esri.com/blogs/index.html>).

Google's Earth and Maps team blog about updates to their products at the Lat Long Blog (<http://google-latlong.blogspot.com/>).

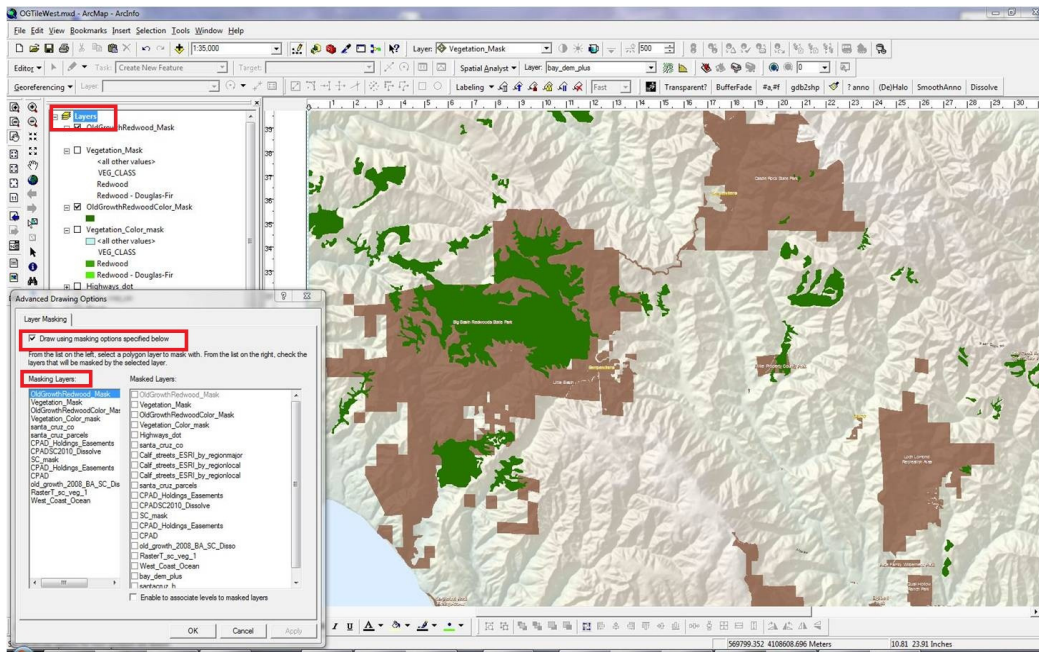
Matt Ball at Vector1Media writes the Spatial Sustain blog, focusing on "spatial design for sustainable communities" (<http://vector1media.com/spatialsustain/>).

Planet Geospatial is an overwhelming (though comprehensive) GIS blog aggregator. Subscribing to Planet Geospatial will also subscribe to the three blogs above (<http://planetgs.com/>).

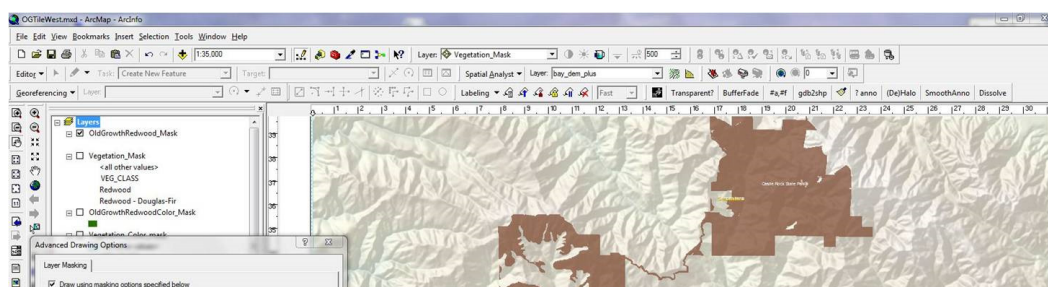
GIS Geek Corner

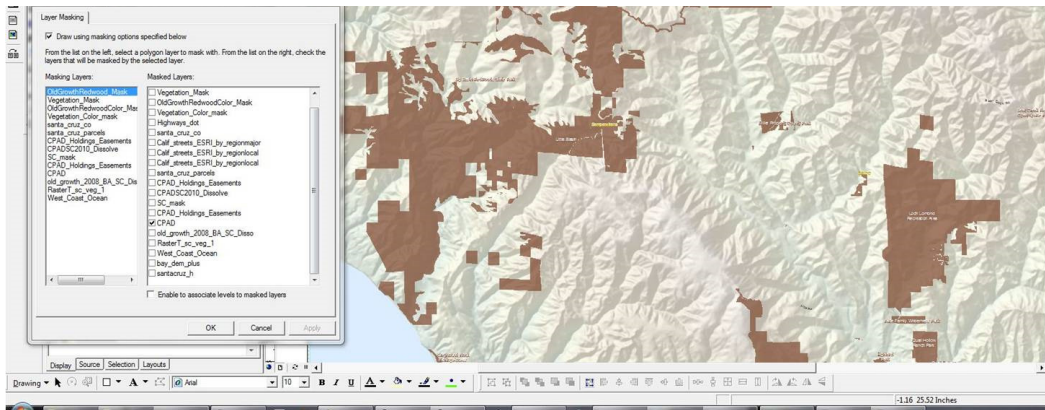
Advanced Drawing Option: A great way to mask without having to create a new shapefile in ArcMap.

- 1) Right click on Layers
- 2) Click on Advanced Drawing
- 3) Check "Draw using masking options specified below"
- 4) Select the layer on the left column (masking layers) that you want to "knock out" or "mask" This will only work with a polygon shapefile and must have no transparency. (see Transparency Work Around below)
- 5) Select the layer on the right to be masked. Click when you're done.



Green polygon is masked (see image above) in image below





Transparency Work Around

Do the same steps as above except make an extra copy of the shapefile in your layers. Label the shapefile copy to differentiate between the masking layer and the one to be used with a transparency. Very useful when you are working with a lot of shapefiles with transparency, it keeps the colors legible.

Happy mapping!

The GreenInfo Team

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Got great tips for us to put in our newsletter? Send 'em to gin@greeninfo.org!

We'd love to keep you on the **MapLines** list – but if you would like to unsubscribe, no problem, just click the link at the bottom of this message, and thanks for reading. We also respect your privacy and won't sell or trade your email address.

Check out these other GreenInfo Network managed web sites: www.parkininfo.org, www.landtrustgis.org, www.calands.org, www.protectedlands.net

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