

## Making ArcGIS Work for You

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# Topics

- Using ArcMap beyond the Toolkit buttons
  - GIS data formats
  - Attributes and what you can do with them
  - Calculating Acres
  - Determining Map coordinates for locations
  - Making and editing shapefiles; calculating acres
  - Using the data on f:\geodata
  - Data analysis (clip, intersect, buffer, dissolve)

# Introductory Thoughts

- You can use ArcMap and other ArcGIS components outside of Toolkit
  - Quick access to photography, CLU, and other data
  - When not planning or scheduling conservation practices that require reporting
  - In many cases, ArcMap without Toolkit may be an easier and faster way to accomplish a task



To Open ArcMap without Checking out a customer in Toolkit

### Start>>All Programs>>ArcGIS>>ArcMap or ArcCatalog

- 2. Toolkit buttons in ArcMap shorten the steps of some GIS functions, but are limited in their application, for example, to specific data sets. Knowing the "straight ArcMap" way to accomplish these functions allows you to use them for other purposes.
  - Examples: add data to a table, select a subset of a 0 layer based on an attribute, spatially clip the extent of a layer
  - NOTE: Toolkit toolbar buttons **do not** work if you 0 open ArcMap without going through Toolkit

3. This is conceptual training, not step-bystep. ArcMap is a vast toolbox. We will see what some of the tools do, and then you can decide how they apply to your everyday tasks!

# **GIS Data Formats**

- Shapefiles
  - Are actually a collection of 3-7 files, even though you only see the .shp file listed in an ArcMap browse listing
  - Must have a minimum of .shp, .shx and .dbf files for a shapefile to work
  - Cannot double-click on a shapefile to open; must use 'Add Data' in ArcMap
  - Shapefiles can only contain vector spatial data of one type of geometry per file – points, polylines (lines) or polygons

#### Raster datasets

- Data in a grid cell format with each cell being a square representing a certain area on the ground
- .sid raster is used for aerial imagery (NAIP = 1x1 meter cells); sid is a compression format to make imagery files smaller
- .tif raster (ex. DRG topographic maps with 2.47 m x 2.47 m cells)
- GRID raster (ArcGIS specific) are used for digital elevation models; GRIDs are folders rather than files

#### Geodatabases

- Newer data format than shapefiles and stand-alone raster files
- Three types personal, file, and SDE
- Geodatabases can contain mixed types of data (vector point, line, and polygon; raster; external tables, etc.), stored in different **feature classes**
- Geodatabases are stored as a **folder**, ending with .gdb
- Easements data on f:\geodata are in a file geodatabase
- Toolkit uses the personal geodatabase format with some unique customizations for PLU and practice data



## **GIS Servers**

- We are changing from locally stored GIS data to data on centralized servers
- Still use the Add Data button in ArcMap to access these data, but go to GIS Servers to locate data stored at a web URL
- Example: NAIP on http://gis.apfo.usda.gov/arcgis/services





- Where point, line, polygon or raster (grid cell) representing a feature on the ground; map feature
  - Point representing a well, outlet, photo station
  - Line representing a fence or terrace
  - Polygon representing a field boundary, area of homogenous soils
  - Raster cell representing a IxI meter area for which a value like elevation is known



- What information about the point, line, polygon or raster
  - Photo station id, well type of a point
  - Fence type such as barbed or electric of a line
  - Map unit symbol for soils polygon
  - Elevation of a raster

This information is stored in an *attribute* table associated with the spatial data. The link between the spatial map feature and the attribute table is an essential element of GIS.



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In most cases, there is one record or row in the table for each *feature* (point, line or polygon) in the data set



## What can attributes do for you?





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#### **Attributes provide information**

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# Making a shapefile without using the Toolkit button



# Acres as an Attribute

- Add Acres field to table of a polygon layer
- Make sure it is Float type, with at least 0.1 resolution
- Right-mouse click on acres field>>Calculate Geometry

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#### Name the shapefile

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#### Text values are put into double quotes


#### Attributes

 Use attributes to differentiate feature types – not separate shapefiles



• INSTEAD:

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# Editing Data when not in Toolkit



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#### Customize>>Toolbars>>

✓ Polygon Editor ✓ Line Editor ✓ Point Editor ✓ Editor ✓ Topology

- Polygon Editor is a Toolkit Toolbar for editing polygon layers – is a bit more user friendly than the ArcMap Editor toolbar. I recommend using it for most polygon editing.
- Similarly, line and point editor are Toolkit toolbars for those feature types. They are easier to use for basic data entry.



- For many polygon data layers, the goal is to account for ALL land area once and only once, i.e. no gaps and no overlaps
- Topology is a term used for the relationships among data; one type of topology is "polygons share boundaries with no gaps or overlaps"
- Examples soils, CLU with a few exceptions (some gaps or voids), PLU





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Using the appropriate Edit tools ensures topology rules are followed and data is of good quality

Polygon Editor Toolbar Use **Add Feature Tool** for a new polygon Use **Split Feature**: to split existing polygon for inclusion polygons

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To Split a Feature:

- Select the feature to split
- Use Split Feature Tool
- Begin outside the selected feature
- Digitize the cut line
- End outside the selected feature and double-click to end

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#### Inclusion polygon:

- •Select Feature to contain the polygon
- •Use Split Feature Tool
- •Digitize the inclusion, making sure to **redigitize** exactly over the starting point . Right-mouse click and select Finish Sketch.
- •This error message means the end point was not redigitized closely enough – retry

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Filling a void: First confirm it is a void by doing an Identify in the hole – if no attributes are shown it is a void.

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#### Filling a void: **Add feature tool**; digitize around void Select new polygon and polygon with void Merge (M) – this makes a polygon in the void If want only one polygon, select and Merge again



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#### **Caution on using R on Polygon Editor** to reshape a feature:

- Works on boundaries not shared with another polygon
- Does not work on shared boundaries



<sup>461706.938 4132895.452</sup> Meters



To reshape a shared boundary:
I. Select polygon to edit with the Topology
Edit tool from the topology toolbar.
2. When the polygon turns magenta,
use Reshape Edge tool from
Topology toolbar.

lumber of elements selected: 1

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# General Comments on Polygon Editing

 Merge polygons back together if a split or inclusion is not needed (Select polygons to merge; M on Polygon Editor toolbar or Editor>>Merge on Editor Toolbar).
 Deleting polygons often leaves voids you don't want.  Most common reason the Split Feature tool is grayed out is when more than one polygon is selected; can only split one polygon. 😪 Untitled - ArcMap - ArcInfo

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Jumber of features selected: 2

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Error in digitizing resulted in 2 polygons on top of each other;

Merge to one and proceed with split

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- Starting from scratch, such as merging polygons and resplitting, is often much easier than trying to reshape shared boundaries
- Be cautious, however, if editing polygons associated with CONTRACTS.

### Making Use of Data on f:\geodata

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🗉 🧰 climate		Common_land_unit	File Folder
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# Highlights

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#### \wetlands\nwi\_a\_mo<fips>.shp national wetlands inventory data

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   o.shp since 2008\*
- \* FSA uses this layer for recons of CLU no need to make a map for them

Some layers are updated frequently! Request updates if you suspect it is not current.





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### Metadata

- Information about a data layer
- Stored in a .txt, .met, .xml or .doc file
- Example:
  - Mapclassification.doc explains NWI coding; stored at f:\geodata\wetlands
  - metadata.txt stored with cultural\_resources\_a\_mo.shp



# Data Analysis

 ArcToolbox – accessed from Geoprocessing>>ArcToolbox or from the ArcToolbox icon







#### Example:

## Show only the contours covering one tract

 Clip – creates a new layer containing the features of the input layer limited to the geographic extent of the clip layer



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#### Example:

Soil Maps Units by fields of a single tract

Intersect – creates

 a new layer that
 combines the
 features of two
 input layers, limited
 to the geographic
 extent of the
 smaller layer


## Intersect



Soils Inventory Button in Toolkit – then has some reporting functions built in – in this case the Toolkit button saves several steps!





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Instead, what if you wanted the soil map units by subwatersheds of a drainage area:



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Use Soil Data Viewer to assign Hydrologic Soil Group to Watershed\_Soils Again, summarize a subwatershed selection





## Other tools

- Analysis>>Proximity>>Buffer
  - Works like the Toolkit buffer tool with a few more options
- Data Management Tools>>Generalization>>Dissolve (removes boundaries among polygons of the same attribute, such as dissolve CLU on TractNBR for a tract boundary layer)



## Summary

- ArcMap is a powerful tool that can make certain tasks easier or more effective
- Do not be caught thinking that GIS is a mapping tool – it can assist with map making but is so much more!