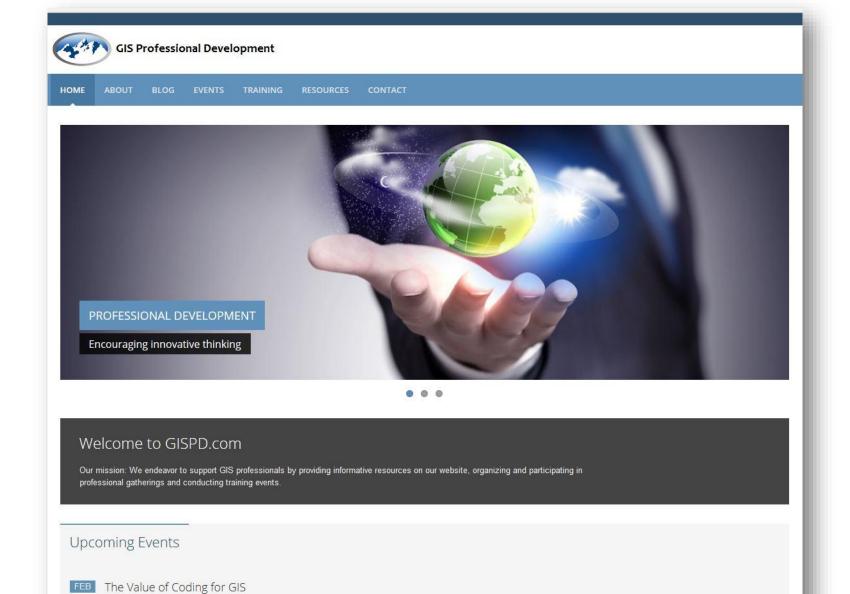


The Value of Coding for GIS

49th Annual Alaska Surveying & Mapping Conference February 19th, 2015

David Howes, Ph.D.
David Howes, LLC
dhowes.com







David Howes, David Howes, LLC

Presentation to be given at the 49th Annual Alaska Surveying & Mapping Conference

Contributors

Bill Dollins - Zekiah Technologies, Inc.



• Jeff Berry - Erlandsen, Inc.



Jason Pardy - NewfoundGEO Consulting



Aaron Paul - First American Title



Matt Stevenson - CORE GIS



Eldan Goldenberg – DRiVEdecisions



Karsten Vennemann - Terra GIS



Mike McGuire - Ascent GIS, Inc.



• Igor Talpalatski - Azimetry



Python Scripting

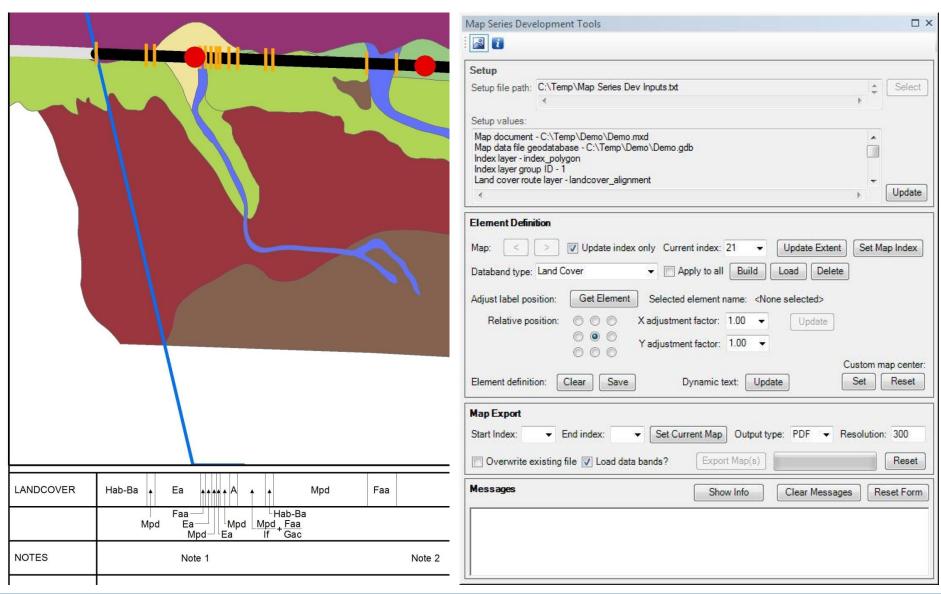
```
Python
>>> # Import the arcpy and os modules.
   import arcpy
   import os
... # Input feature classes to buffer.
... inFCs = "C:/temp/VirtualCampus/PythonDesktop10/Data/Shapefiles/Schools.shp"
... # Output workspace.
... outWS = "C:/temp/VirtualCampus/PythonDesktop10/Data/Westerville.qdb"
... # Buffer distance.
... dist = 1000
... # Split input feature classes into separate feature classes.
   inFCs = inFCs.split(";")
   # Loop through each feature class and create buffers.
   for inFC in inFCs:
        # Figure out the name of the output feature class.
       (filePath, fileName) = os.path.split(inFC)
        dotInd = fileName.find(".")
        if dotInd <> -1:
            newFC = fileName[0:dotInd]
            outFC = newFC + " buffer"
        else:
            outFC = fileName + " buffer"
        # Create the buffer feature class.
        arcpy.Buffer_analysis(inFC, outWS + "\\" + outFC, str(dist) + " Feet")
```



http://www.bristolbayonline.com/bbonline/



.NET - Beyond Data-Driven Pages



What is "Coding"?

See How Coding Works, codeconquest.com

http://www.codeconquest.com/what-is-coding/how-does-coding-work/

- Simple instructions that tell a computer what to do
- Complex binary sequences of 1s and 0s that turn transistors on and off
- Language types:
 - Low level languages operate close to binary code (e.g., C++)
 - High level languages operate far away from binary code (e.g., Python)
 - In between e.g., C#, Visual Basic

Why Code?

"Coding is the hottest skill on the job market, the modern-day language of creativity, and a powerful force in the economy"

"coding is ... an innovative and artistic process"

Madeline McSherry, New America Foundation - Why Everyone Should Learn to Code: An Event Recap

http://www.slate.com/blogs/future_tense/2013/03/29/codecademy_hacker_school_why_everyone_should_learn_to_code.html

Why Should Coding Be Important?

- Personal development perspective
 Why should coding be important to you?
 - Professional growth
 - Expanded toolbox
 - Streamline workflows





- Policy perspective

 Why should coding be important to your employer?
 - Return on investment
 - Standard operating procedures
 - Leveraging/freeing up resources

Do You Need to Code?

- Not necessarily, but it can really help
- It depends on your job
 - Very valuable for analysts
 - Helpful for managers (increasing need to understand role of coding)

Levels of Coding

- Scripting and tool development
 - GIS analyst
 - E.g., data manipulation, map-making, glue code
- Application development
 - GIS developer
 - E.g., add-in, plugin
- Software engineering
 - Computer scientists/IT professionals
 - E.g., Microsoft Office

Industry Needs

See Yes, You Need to Code - Bill Dollins, geoMusings.com



"I am very publicly on the record that I think some form of coding skill is essential for any GIS analyst entering the workforce today"



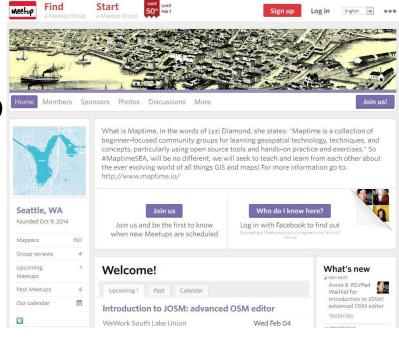
Over the past year, I've been involved in searching for GIS analysts a number of times. As a result, I've noticed a few patterns:

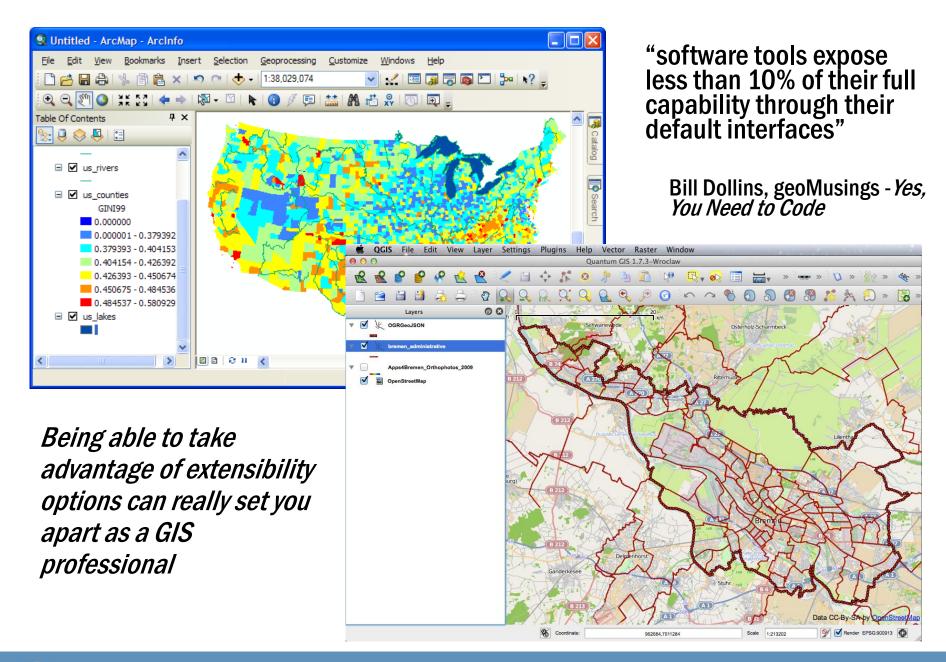
http://blog.geomusings.com/2013/01/30/yes-you-need-to-code/

Technology Trend

Coding has always been valuable for GIS

- Increasing emphasis on coding
- Example: MapTime Seattle (Meetup group)
 - Making a web page and a web map (HTML5, CSS, JavaScript, Leaflet.js)
 - Git & GeoJSON
 - Mapping with D3.js





Coding Types

- Programming
 - Creating an executable formulation of a computing problem

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computer_programming)

- Scripts, programs, add-ins/plugins
- Configuration
 Setting values to adjust base functionality
- Customization
 - Either
 - Hybrid



```
private void LoadLayerNames()
                      //3/6/14
                          //Get layer names for data frame
                          if (cboDataFrame.SelectedItem == null)
                          string dataFrameName = cboDataFrame.SelectedItem.ToString();
                          Utils.ArcGIS.MapDocument mapDocumentUtils = new Utils.ArcGIS.MapDocument();
                          List<string> layerNames = mapDocumentUtils.GetLayerNamesForDataFrame(dataFrameName);
                          mapDocumentUtils = null;
                          if (MessageHandler.StopForMessage())
                             throw new System.InvalidOperationException();
                          _LayerNames.Clear();
                          for (int i = 0; i < layerNames.Count; i++)
                             _LayerNames.Add(layerNames[i]);
                            (_LayerNames.Count > 0)
                             cboLayerName.Text = "<select a layer>";
                      catch (Exception exception)
                          string methodName = System.Reflection.MethodBase.GetCurrentMethod().Name;
                          int messageCode = 0:
                          MessageHandler.CreateMessageDetails(methodName, messageCode, exception);
<ESRI.Configuration xmlns="http://schemas.esri.com/Desktop/AddIns"</p>
                       xmlns:xsi="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema-instance">
  <Name>Field Update Tool</Name>
  <AddInID>{66a7514a-3b68-4f83-93d8-11a07d02a8ef}</AddInID>
  <Description>Tool for updating atttribute table field values.
  <Version>1.0</Version>
  <Image>Images\FieldUpdateTool.png</Image>
  <Author>David A. Howes</Author>
  <Company></Company>
  <Date>4/29/2014</Date>
  <Targets>
    <Target name="Desktop" version="10.2" />
  <AddIn language="CLR" library="FieldUpdateTool.dll" namespace="FieldUpdateTool">
    <ArcMap>
      <Commands>
```

Importance of Coding

"If you choose to get by with just using the GUI tools, you are doing yourself two disservices:

- 1. You are placing yourself at the mercy of others who can code to get around to building the customizations you need.
- 2. You are allowing your skills to erode by not using a significant amount of capability."

Bill Dollins, geoMusings - Yes, You Need to Code

"If you don't code you risk settling for what you're given, which may not be the best solution for the task at hand"

Ralph Straumann, in response to Yes, You Need to Code

Benefits of Coding

- 1. Satisfaction
- 2. Efficiency
- 3. Repeatability & validation
- 4. Freedom
- 5. Enablement
- 6. Creativity
- 7. Clarity & logic
- 8. Documentation & organization
- 9. Integration & interoperability
- 10. Employability

Benefits of Coding - Efficiency

- Tasks can be quantified
 - Level of effort
 - Cost
 - Value

Justifies creation of streamlining tools and processes

Copy Map Point Tool (Python Add-In)



47 8 56.6348 N, 122 16 3.1519 W



```
World • United States • WA • Pierce Co
56 class CopyMapPoint(object):
        """Implementation for CopyMapPoint_addin.copy_map_point (Tool)"""
           self.enabled = True
           self.cursor = 3
        def onMouseDownMap(self, x, y, button, shift):
           """Copies map x,y to the clip board in degrees, minutes, seconds."""
           # Get the spatial reference from the data frame.
           mxd = arcpy.mapping.MapDocument('current')
           map sr = mxd.activeDataFrame.spatialReference
           # Get the clicked point and reproject it.
           map_point = arcpy.PointGeometry(arcpy.Point(x, y), map_sr)
                                                                                                                              47.1490652222222. -122.267542194444
           wgs84_sr = arcpy.SpatialReference(4326)
           transformation = arcpy.ListTransformations(map_sr, wgs84_sr)
                                                                                                                                                       Zoom Send
           if transformation:
                                                                                                                               Directions
              wgs84_pt = map_point.projectAs(wgs84_sr, transformation[0])
              wgs84_pt = map_point.projectAs(wgs84_sr)
            # Set the hemisphere indicators.
           if wgs84_pt.firstPoint.X > 0:
              east or west = 'E'
              east_or_west = 'W'
           if wgs84_pt.firstPoint.Y < 0:
              south_or_north = 'S'
              south_or_north = 'N'
           # Get the lat/long values in the required format.
           x_dms = dd_to_dms(wgs84_pt.firstPoint.X)
           y_dms = dd_to_dms(wgs84_pt.firstPoint.Y)
           # Our new wrapped versions of os.startfile and webbrowser.open startfile = run_in_other_thread(os.startfile)
           open_browser = run_in_other_thread(webbrowser.open)
           open_browser("www.maps.google.com")
```

| НОМЕ | ABOUT | BLOG | EVENTS | TRAINING | RESOURCES | CONTACT |
|------|-------|------|--------|----------|-----------|---------|
| | | | | | 1990 | |

Resources

You are here: Home > Resources

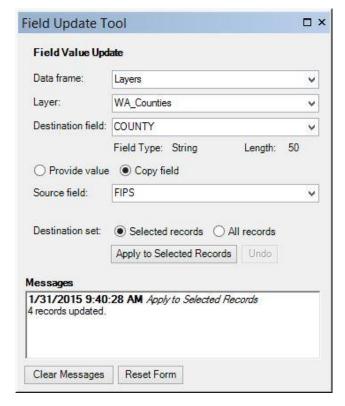
Presentations

| # | Date | Presenter(s) | Title | Type/Venue |
|---|----------|--|--|---|
| 1 | 10/15/14 | Howes, D.A. and Pardy J. 2014. | Extending ArcGIS for Desktop: Python and .NET Add-Ins in a Nutshell (abstract) | Session conducted at 2014 Northwest GIS Conference, Lynnwood, Washington, USA |
| 2 | 10/20/14 | Howes, D.A. and Stevenson M. 2014. | Opening the Door to Open Source GIS (abstract) | Session conducted at 2014 Northwest GIS Conference, Lynnwood, Washington, USA |

Code Samples

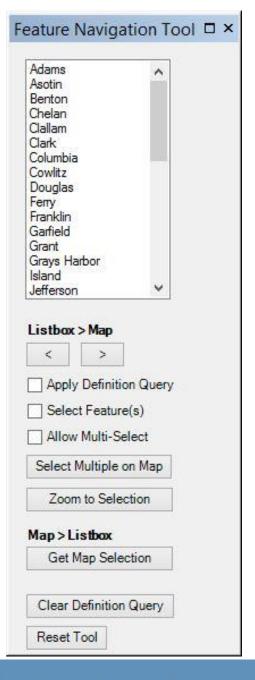
| # | Date | Item | Туре | Description | Download Link |
|---|----------|------------------------|--------|---|------------------|
| 1 | 10/20/14 | Get Map Point Tool | NET | ArcMap 10.2 .NET (C#) add-in tool to allow the user to click on the map and obtain a lat/long string representing the clicked location. Based on a code snippet created for a client project and used with permission. | GetMapPoint |
| 2 | 10/20/14 | Copy Map Point Tool | Python | ArcMap 10.2 Python add-in tool to allow the user to click on the map and obtain a lat/long string representing the clicked location. | CopyMapPoint |

ArcMap Field Update & Feature Navigation Tools (.NET Add-Ins)



Extending ArcGIS for Desktop Using Python and .NET Add-Ins, 2014 Washington GIS Conference

http://gispd.com/training



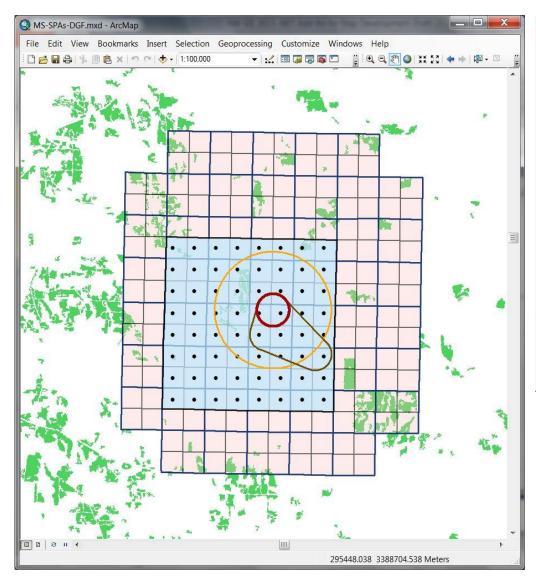
Benefits of Coding - Repeatability & Validation

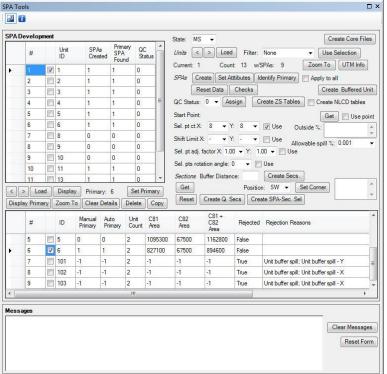
- Allow for re-running processes and custom validation procedures
- Increases confidence in methods and results

Crash-resistant processing

E.g., Species Protection Area tools

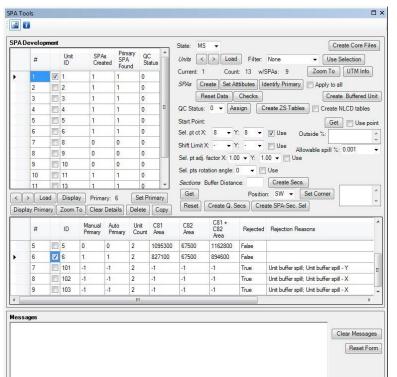
Species Protection Area Tools





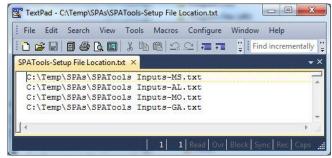
.NET add-in & external code

Species Protection Area Tools - Operation

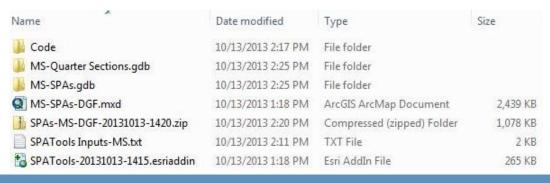


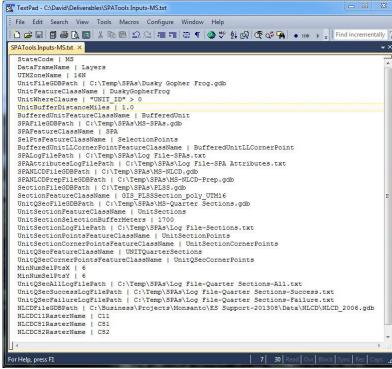


Log file Setup file location file



Setup file





Benefits of Coding - Freedom

Work with command line

- Build sequences of instructions using libraries of functions, e.g., GDAL
- Build your own...



Benefits of Coding - Enablement

- Learning to code
 - Opens new doors
 - Advance your professional capabilities
 - Increases your standing
- Access (more) open source options
- Open source experience makes you a better proprietary software user

See

- Opening the Door to Open Source GIS
- Explorations into Open Source GIS
- Treading Into Open Source GIS

http://dhowes.com/presentations, http://gispd.com/events

Benefits of Coding - Creativity

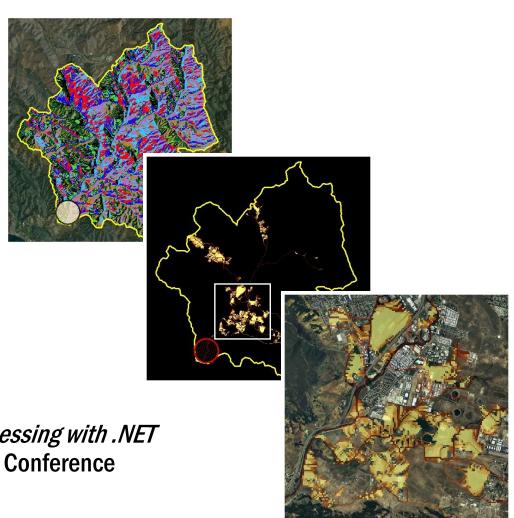
 Required functionality may not exist

Develop new processes, & procedures

E.g., extended flow accumulation computation

See *The Value of Automation: Geoprocessing with .NET and ArcObjects*, 2008 Washington GIS Conference

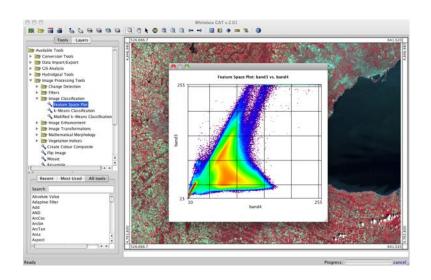
http://dhowes.com/presentations



Benefits of Coding - Clarity & Logic

- Coding helps you think clearly and logically about problems
- Understand what's really happening under the hood

E.g., Whitebox



http://www.uoguelph.ca/~hydrogeo/Whitebox/index.html

Benefits of Coding - Documentation & Organization

Create a record of actions

- Allow for reproduction of results at any time
- Build a repository of methods

See

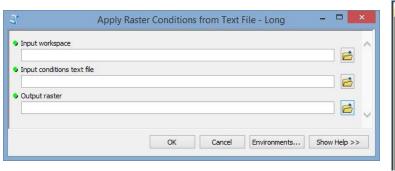
How Good are Your Data and Analyses? Communicating Quality. Part 3 of 3: Analysis, 2014 Washington GIS Conference

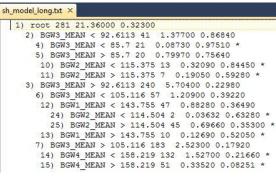
http://dhowes.com/presentations

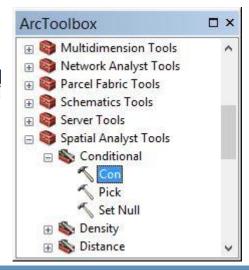
Benefits of Coding - Integration & Interoperability

- Don't come to a halt if a few core programs won't do everything you need them to do
- Bring together the best of all worlds

E.g., using data from R in ArcMap







Benefits of Coding - Employability

- Look at most GIS analyst job openings?
- Ability to code demonstrates interest in
 - Your career
 - Advancing yourself
 - Investing in your capabilities

Demonstrates appreciation for GIS investment

Start small

Be realistic & don't overdo it

Resist the temptation to start coding too soon

Help others and learn from them

- Be persistent
- Keep plenty of backups

Use code storage systems (repositories)
 E.g., Subversion, GitHub

- Consider re-use and readability
 - By yourself
 - By others

- Keep code neat, simple, clean
- Use plenty of comments

```
//This comment will save me a lot of grief later
```

Follow style standards

Python PEP 8 Style Guide
 https://www.python.org/dev/peps/pep-0008/

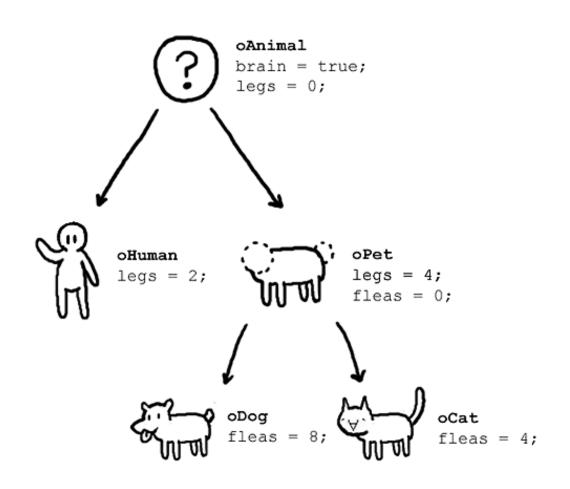
C# Coding Conventions
 https://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ff926074.aspx

Conventions for your language of choice

Think in terms of objects

Object-oriented code

- Professional
- Re-usable
- Clean



- Adopt a cookbook approach create code "recipes"
- Get each piece working in turn

 Think of all the ways something can fail and cover for them as required

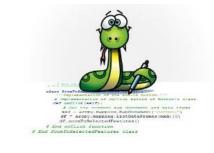
- Think about how your tools could be misused
- Handle errors cleanly
- Develop strong testing methodologies
 E.g., unit tests

Path for Growth - ArcGIS for Desktop

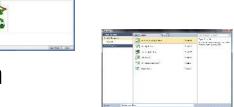
- Python command line in ArcMap
- Standalone Python scripts
- Create a geoprocessing tool
- Create a Python toolbox
- Create a Python add-in
- Create a .NET Windows form application
- Create a .NET ArcGIS for Desktop add-in













Path for Growth - Open Source GIS

 Write a spatial SQL query http://postgis.net/



 Write a Python script that uses the GDAL library http://www.gdal.org/



 Create a Leaflet.js (JavaScript) webmap http://leafletjs.com/



- In QGIS
 - Write a Python script
 - Create a Python plugin
 - http://plugins.qgis.org/
 - http://www.qgisworkshop.org/html/workshop/plugins_tutorial.html



Resources

- Interactive Development Environments (IDEs)
 - PyScripter
 - Microsoft Visual Studio 2012 Express
 - Eclipse
- Esri ArcGIS Resource Centers
- Open source GIS help pages
- Blogs (e.g., <u>geoMusings</u>, <u>GISPD.com</u>)
- FOSS4G
- GISPD.com
- MapTime Seattle (Meetup group)
- CUGOS.org

Education

University of Alaska Anchorage - Geomatics

http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/geomatics/

King County GIS Center

http://www.kingcounty.gov/operations/GIS.aspx

Coursera

https://www.coursera.org/

edX

https://www.edx.org/

Penn State

http://open.ems.psu.edu/courseware

- GEOG485 GIS Programming and Automation
- GEOG585 Open Web Mapping
- GISPD.com

http://gispd.com

- Extending ArcGIS for Desktop Using Python and .NET Add-Ins
- Extending ArcGIS for Desktop with Python and .NET: Geoprocessing Tools and Add-Ins

Questions?

Slides available at http://gispd.com/events



Thanks for Coming

Please Stay for

The (not so) Secret (but very necessary) Skills of GIS Professionals

Slides available at http://gispd.com/events

Image Credits

- https://watergis.files.wordpress.com/2012/03/python.jpg
- https://darcymullin.files.wordpress.com/2011/08/growth1.jpg
- http://www.blairkaplan.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/policy.jpg
- http://www.udel.edu/johnmack/frec480/arcmap_intro2.png
- https://me4bruno.files.wordpress.com/2012/02/ggis-osm-admin4-border.png
- http://blogs.yis.ac.jp/18heminke/files/2013/01/freedom-jumping_00376259-1s2s8xq.jpg
- http://www.uoguelph.ca/~hydrogeo/Whitebox/img/FSP.png
- http://www.derekyu.com/tigs/forums/tutorials/gmtut/gmtut-008.png
- http://resources.arcgis.com/en/communities/python/GUID-8326AF89-5095-47EC-A9A8-FAFD06B8867E-web.jpg
- http://resources.arcgis.com/en/communities/analysis/GUID-BDAFEA8B-3BE9-425F-99C8-DBA1E02EB5E2-web.png
- http://img.scoop.it/PCbXE8EdKoLX-urHpRfsrjl72eJkfbmt4t8yenImKBVvK0kTmF0xjctABnaLJIm9
- http://1.bp.blogspot.com/_R3IQEFF9yoE/TLn9MIEsiII/AAAAAAAAA3s/01K9nCWfphE/s1600/WindowsFormsApplication.jpg
- http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/7b/Logo_square_postgis.png
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GDAL
- http://wiki.openstreetmap.org/wiki/Leaflet
- http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/71/QGis_Logo.png

