

## Lab 1 - Getting to Know Open Source GIS

The last ten years has seen an explosion of Open Source GIS software projects. This exercise will introduce you to the main web portals to the Open Source GIS world, and to each software package you'll be learning to use in this course. You will also begin to understand the sheer number of different geospatial software solutions that are out there? **Important:** please answer all the questions in your words based on your understanding. Copy-and-paste will be unacceptable.

### FreeGIS.org

Go to the FreeGIS site [www.freegis.org](http://www.freegis.org). **Click the Software link.** It's on the upper right side of the page at the top of the brown box.

The new page has a table that lets you sift through software packages by various filters. Next to **Operating System** click **Windows**. The result is displayed below the table. Click on **Show: Short** and **Sort by: Name** to put them in alphabetical order. Scroll down until you find Quantum GIS (QGIS). Click **Quantum GIS (QGIS)** link (in brown) to open the Free Summary of QGIS.

**Q 1.** When was the first change implemented? Look under Changes: and scroll to the bottom of the list.

Now click on the **homepage link** (at the top of the page) to go to the QGIS page. Click on **About QGIS**.

**Q 2.** What is QGIS?

**Q 3.** What year did development of QGIS begin?

Click on the **Features** link underneath About QGIS on the Main Menu.

**Q 4.** Can QGIS use ESRI shapefiles?

**Q 5.** Can it read raster image files?

Go to the **Download** section.

**Q 6.** Is the source code available for download?

**Q 7.** From what you have learned from the QGIS website why might you choose to use ArcGIS over QGIS or visa versa?

Explore other parts of the site.

### Open Source GIS

Go to the **OpenSourceGIS** page [www.opensourcegis.org](http://www.opensourcegis.org) and find a project that looks interesting to you.

**Q 8.** Go to its web page and write a description of it here along with its name.

### **OSGeo**

Go to the **OSGeo** Website: <http://www.osgeo.org/>

Click on the **About the Foundation** link. What is OSGeo?

Go to [http://www.osgeo.org/content/faq/foundation\\_faq.html](http://www.osgeo.org/content/faq/foundation_faq.html) These are the FAQ's for OSGeo. Many of your initial questions will be answered here. Scroll down to the Open Source heading.

**Q 9.** What is OSGeo's stance on Commercial Software? Proprietary Software?

### **GRASS GIS**

Click on the **GRASS GIS** link to the right under **OSGeo Projects → Desktop Applications**. From there go to the **GRASS homepage**.

**Q 10.** Will GRASS run on Windows?

Click on the **About GRASS GIS** link.

**Q 11.** What is the number for the latest GRASS GIS released?

### **MapTools**

Go to the MapTools site: <http://maptools.org/>

**Q 12.** What is MapTools?

### **GeoServer**

**Go to the GeoServer website** <http://geoserver.org>

**Q 13.** What is GeoServer?

**Click on the certified OGC logo**

**Q 14.** What does 'OGC compliance' mean? Why does it matter?

**Grading:** 14 points in total, 1 point/question

*Credit: This lab was originally developed by Kurt Menke with GeoTechCenter.*