

1 Tool Manager

Overview

- Enhancements to ESRI ToolBox and ESRI ModelBuilder Jesse says: Will we literally extend ESRI's ArcToolBox and ModelBuilder framework, or will this be very similar in functionality but built within Envisage? If it is an Envisage application, how does it interact with ArcGIS?
 - At minimum, maintain current functionality of both Jesse says: This is easy if we do this in Envisage, but what about 'interoperability' of tools between ArcGIS and AZ-SMART?
- Will have an indexing system by which end-users can find appropriate tools relevant to their needs Jesse says: I am not precisely sure what this means. A search for tools function maybe?
- Accesses Script Editor to code/implement tools Jesse says: This should not be a problem, script editor could be built into an Envisage application easily, or an editor can be easily accessed from within ArcGIS (e.g. PythonWin).
- Uses ModelBuilder for computer-aided programming (i.e., data flow chart graphical interface)
- Manage scripts: open, create, copy, delete, edit tools and their properties Jesse says: This should not be a problem, but there are security issues here (not sure what they are yet, see comments below).
- Multiple security levels Jesse says: What security levels specifically? This needs to be addressed early in the project.
- Multi-user system Jesse says: Multi-user in what sense? Multiple installs of AZ-SMART? Do they need to be aware of each other? Are models stored centrally and shared between users?
- Ability to share tool based on properties assigned Jesse says: I think this means that if a user logs on and creates a new tool, that they have the ability to share it (or not) with other users.
- Will perform conditionals and loops Jesse says: This should not be a problem.
- Unless specified, all tools should be capable of accepting input from user, script, output from other tools, or a database Jesse says: I take this to mean that any tool can be run as a stand alone script, or used as a 'link in a chain' of other tools.
- Consultant to recommend and ultimately create:
 - Tool archiving procedures
 - Definition and management of production and development versions
 - Prevention of the inadvertent modification and/or deletion of tools referenced elsewhere in the system Jesse says: Hmmm, this sounds like a tool should 'be aware' of where it is being used so that it cannot be deleted or modified and thereby messing up some other part of the system. This sounds great, but how does it get done?

Example Tools from MAG

1.1 Land Use Editor

Jesse says: Is the Land Use Editor a 'tool' that (from MAG above) 'should be capable of accepting input from user, script, output from other tools, or a database'? The Land Use Editor sounds like something quite a bit larger and more involved than the conceptualization of a tool above. Overview

- An ArcGIS application toolbar that provides controls specifically suited for editing and managing land use databases
- Maintains planar polygon topology/grid; Data model aware; Performs validation and domain checking Jesse says: This sounds like the sort of thing that is enforced through the geodatabase and data model, does this belong in the Data Manager?

- Advanced wizards for manipulating, validating, and assembling land use themes using interactive input and configurable rules
- Aggregation of parcels based on predefined rules (e.g. eliminate minor roads) *Jesse says: I am not sure what predefined rules means, even with the example given.*
- Subdivision of parcels or polygons based on predefined rules *Jesse says: Subdivision of parcels in an automated fashion?*
- Variable sized grids with associated attribute data (e.g. areas with high vs. low resolution for modeling and analysis) *Jesse says: Does this mean the ability to create different sized grids from polygonal data, or is there more to this?*
- Can access data in Data Manager or Project Manager *Jesse says: I think data in 'Data Manager' will technically reside in a (geo)database, or Opus cache. Is there a need for something more than that here?*
- Consistency checking across multiple themes *Jesse says: Checking for consistency of what exactly?*
- Summary and indicator statistics *Jesse says: I am not sure what this means.*
- Completely configurable to suit any land use data model, coding scheme, and installation *Jesse says: Are different 'configurations' of a Land Use Editor envisioned? I am not sure I see what would need to be configured here.*
- Similar to current editing capabilities in SAM-IM

1.2 Land Use and Socioeconomic Synthesizer

Jesse says: This sounds like a collection of tools to assist in creating a base year database. Is this envisioned as a single tool? If so, I have the same comment about it as I did about the Land Use Editor above.

- For creating and populating the base year (e.g., 2000) land use database by assembling multiple sources.
- For creating projected land use and socioeconomic datasets based on configurable rules.

1.3 Calibration and Validation

Jesse says: I am not terribly clear on what this tool/collection of tools actually does. Is this for model estimation?

- Utilities for creating calibration data sets based on user supplied specifications
- Use 3rd party programs to perform regression analysis (e.g., ALOGIT, SPSS)
- Utilities for validating calibrated model data against observed data

1.4 Analysis, Visualization, and Reporting

Jesse says: Most of this sounds like a fairly straightforward collection of tools, with a few exceptions noted below.

- A spatial calculator to perform computations on socioeconomic databases, examples:
 - Incorporate data from external sources; *Jesse says: Data external to what: the project/scenario, the database, or other? What role does this have in the system?*
 - Prorate projections to polygons based on a demographic property; *Jesse says: I am not sure what this means. This sounds like a model to me.*
 - Drop point data into polygons (TAZ or land use polygons);
 - Perform row and column normalization and matrix balancing
 - Automatically summarize land use themes according to other polygon geographies (e.g., TAZs)

- Calculate socioeconomic and land use statistics (population, employment, acres by type) for user defined areas based on geospatial rules.
- Compute indicators and measures on land use or other polygon geographies (e.g., job-housing balance).
- Capability to export tables to any file format, including custom format text files needed by travel models as well as ArcIMS; Users can define and save various file formats into a library of templates, and recall them for later exports. *Jesse says: Which formats specifically? We need a list. The mention of ArcIMS here is curious, what role will ArcIMS have in this? This statement also implies that users should be able to define and save their own file formats beyond standard ones. We need more information about this.*
- Provides methods by which end-users can define series of thematic maps to be generated automatically
- Provides methods by which end-users can define statistical tables and reports to be generated automatically

1.5 Data Manipulation and Conversion Utilities

Jesse says: There is definitely some overlap here between the Analysis, Visualization, and Reporting tools and the Data Manager.

- Data available in a number of different file/DBMS formats: MS Excel spreadsheets, MS Access, Formatted ASCII files, Geodatabases, MySQL, etc.
- A library of utilities for accessing/converting data from one form to another so that it can be accessed directly by tools implementing models

1.6 Accessibility

Jesse says: It sounds like they simply want us to recommend a travel model system for them to use. This has a curious location under the 'Tool Manager' though, does that imply something more?

- Consultant to recommend and implement methodology or methodologies for travel times from geography to geography. Examples include:
 - Accesses travel times directly from third party systems used by MPOs (e.g., EMME/2, Cube)
 - Accesses travel times directly from modified third party systems using larger levels of geography
 - Creates travel times within AZ-SMART without using 3rd party systems

1.7 Submodels

Jesse says: This needs expansion and explanation.

1.8 Site Suitability Tools

Jesse says: To some extent this sounds like what Opus does automatically through its models, but perhaps MAG is looking for something more interactive than what we are used to.

- Characterizes potential development sites throughout a region with respect to its suitability for development;
- A toolbox for portraying site characteristics from other GIS users (e.g., age and condition of structure, land value, proximity to highways, distance to developed land, residential market within 3 miles, etc.) *Jesse says: This sounds a lot like what a GIS already does: symbolize the characteristics of spatial data, is there more to this?*
- Creates input datasets used in calibration *Jesse says: I do not understand what exactly this would create.*
- An important component of allocation of lands during a projection, using calibrated factors

1.9 Allocation Tool

Jesse says: This is the key simulation 'tool' (although I am not sure this is a tool as it is defined in the Tool Manager above). Many of these things are done by Opus during a simulation run. What I think is missing from Opus, and what MAG expects to see, is the ability to run the simulation in an interactive manner. Below I have inserted comments where I have a question on whether or not Opus does this.

- A key tool for projecting growth in a region
- At minimum, maintain current functionality of SAM-IM
- Process works by selecting lands, among candidates, to be built in order to absorb growth based on an evaluation of their inherent site suitability characteristics
- Features include but are not limited to:
 - Observes constraint layers that prohibit development due to environmental or policy factors
 - Observes general plan layers that designate acceptable conforming land uses and densities
 - Accepts any land use coding scheme that the user defines
 - Allocation sectors (variables of interest for projections) are user-defined Jesse says: This is a little different than Opus, not sure how to reconcile Opus and SAM-IM here.
 - Sectors are allocated in a user-defined sequence. Jesse says: I think this is different than Opus too.
 - Mechanism by which large development tracts are subdivided into parcels appropriate in size for the development considered Jesse says: There is a lot of work here to subdivide and aggregate polygonal parcels
 - Ability to observe adopted land use plans and densities on a polygon/grid basis
 - Development Velocity Curve dictates the pace at which developments are built Jesse says: We need to implement the 'Velocity Curve' idea into Opus.
 - Observes regional control totals of growth, or growth forecasts for subareas, as defined Jesse says: I am ignorant as to how this differs from densities allowed in the plan. I am not sure if Opus does this or not.
 - Address "mixed use" polygons
 - Address redevelopment and demolition Jesse says: Does Opus do this?
- Same process can be used, with different inputs, for vacating lands due to demolition and redevelopment Jesse says: This sounds like a 'negative growth' idea.
- Controlled by a number of different switches and rules supplied by the user that control how the allocation process specifically works Jesse says: Exactly what switches and rules?
- Driven by a set of projected control totals of population and employment change that apply to the entire region or subareas of it Jesse says: Again, is this fundamentally different than Opus?
- Can control subarea growth at different geographic levels Jesse says: I am unsure what this means.
- Capability for "gravity effects" model projection mechanisms reacting to measures of accessibility, land use constraints and opportunities, growth trends, and other socioeconomic attributes
- Provides specific treatment of known developments scheduled to be underway Jesse says: This combined with the Velocity Curve represents new Opus functionality.
- Provides support for analysis of scenarios:
 - Generates alternative scenarios of land use and socioeconomic projections
 - Ability to work on complete area or revision-areas (sub-parts of complete modeling area)
 - Interactive designation of "revision areas"; Capability to manipulate both polygon and grid

- Migrates changes in downstream years; that is, changes made to a 2010 forecast migrated automatically to subsequent years; Jesse says: Does this mean that the user should have the ability to observe some prediction in 2010, decide that it is wrong, modify it manually, then restart the model from there? Or are changes to 2010 expected to automatically 'propagate' to subsequent years *without* re-running the model? This sounds complicated whatever it is.
- Provides different ways to react: Jesse says: This again implies mid-simulation run interactivity. How are we going to handle this? What should a user be able to change in the middle of a simulation run?
 - When build-out conditions are reached in individual subareas
 - How active developments are treated
 - With respect to policy initiatives
 - To demolition and redevelopment
- Different applications of the Allocation procedure in the projection model stream: Jesse says: I am fairly confused by this description of functionality.
 - Regular production projections
 - "Min-Max" procedure to create set of floors and ceilings to estimate reasonable growth potential
 - "Scenario Builder" enabling analysis of changes to land use and other policy variables.

2 Data Manager

Overview

- Enhancements to ESRI ArcCatalog Jesse says: An extension to ArcCatalog makes sense to me here, sort of. This raises the question of how are 'tools' accessible in and out of the ArcGIS environment, and specifically where do they reside?
- At minimum, maintain current functionality
- Access to, development, and maintenance of all data Jesse says: All data including Opus cache?
- Create and track relationships (spatial and rule based) between datasets Jesse says: ArcCatalog and the geodatabase framework have a lot of functionality built in for this sort of thing. I am not exactly sure what it means to 'track' a relationship though, perhaps just document it?
- Uses tools from Tool Manager Jesse says: Exactly how this is accomplished I do not know, see comment above.
- All data potentially used by more than one project. Examples include: Jesse says: Data being used across projects/scenarios makes sense, but is it the same data, copies of data, or just changes to data that are being used in different projects/scenarios?
 - Land Use Codes
 - Base Year
 - Allocation Sector Names
 - Legends
 - Symbol table associated with global variables
- Metadata must be maintained for all datasets Jesse says: What kind of metadata and in what format?
- Security Jesse says: This is a big issue that needs consideration up front and outside of simply the 'Data Manager' framework. What types of users are there and what can they do and not do?
- Consultant to recommend directory structure Jesse says: This should not be difficult once some other details are worked out.
- Consultant to recommend and ultimately create data archiving procedures Jesse says: Does archiving mean a database backup strategy? AZ-SMART will undoubtedly produce copious amounts of data in different formats.

3 Project Manager

Overview

- Create new projects and scenarios, or open projects and scenarios that have been created previously for further analysis **Jesse says: I am a little unclear about the difference between projects and scenarios. Do you 'run' a project, or do you 'run' a scenario?**
- Links tools from Tool Manager with data from Data Manager using ESRI ModelBuilder concepts **Jesse says: This sounds like a version of ESRI's model builder that allows functions (tools) and data (tables, feature classes, etc.) to be linked in a flowchart fashion to compose a project/scenario.**
- Selects required components and limits execution of model to tools necessary for the scenario subset. **Jesse says: I think that the model builder type interface above implicitly limits projects/scenarios to running only tools that were included within them. Is there more to this feature that I am missing?**
- Accesses all data relevant to potentially more than one project via the Data Manager **Jesse says: I am not sure I understand this.**
- Stores all data relevant to only that one project within a project. Examples include:
 - Projection Years
 - Switches utilized in the project
 - Status of the project
 - File and database names etc. **Jesse says: So do projects/scenarios 'store' data, copies of data, or references to data?**
- Controls model execution: start, stop, and restart model execution **Jesse says: This makes sense to me.**
- Access the status of a model while executing **Jesse says: This makes sense to me.**
- Access various execution logs and error logs associated with a model run **Jesse says: This makes sense to me.**