How to Create a Site Boundary Graphic and GeoFile

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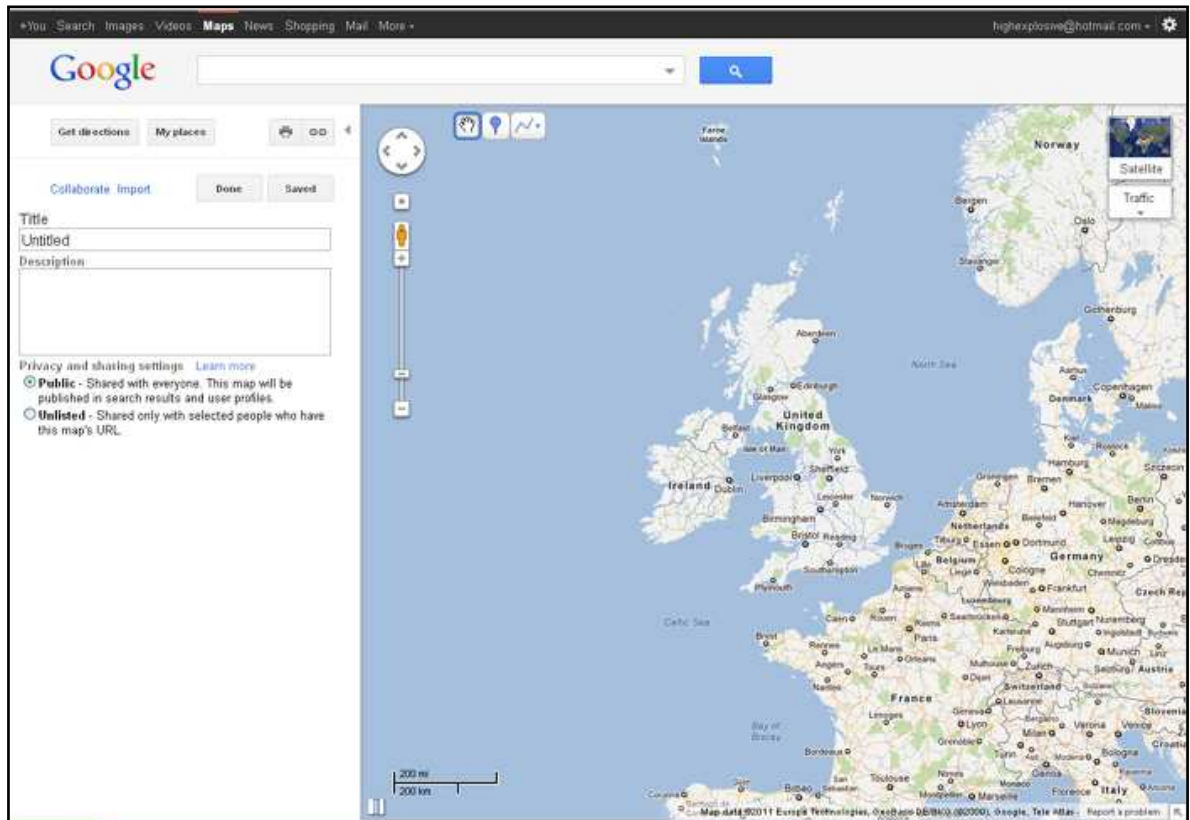**SARG guide on how to create a site boundary file**

1. Introduction

1.1. Determining the extent of a site boundary is an important first step when considering reptile survey. Often, refugia (tins) are required to support the survey effort, and land manager permissions must be granted before any tins are laid. The site boundary helps us to determine the site owner.

1.2. Determining the extent of the site is also necessary for the habitat assessment part of the survey planning. We need to be able to know where one site ends, and another starts, so we can obtain the right permissions, and can optimise the benefits of survey deductions by informing the right land manager.

1.3. This short guide will walk through the steps of *one* means of easily generating a site boundary. This approach is free and open source, and will create a KML geofile, which can be used with Google Maps, Google Earth or other Graphical Information Systems (GIS).

1.4. Overall, it should take you no more than 10 minutes to create a site boundary geofile using the following guide.
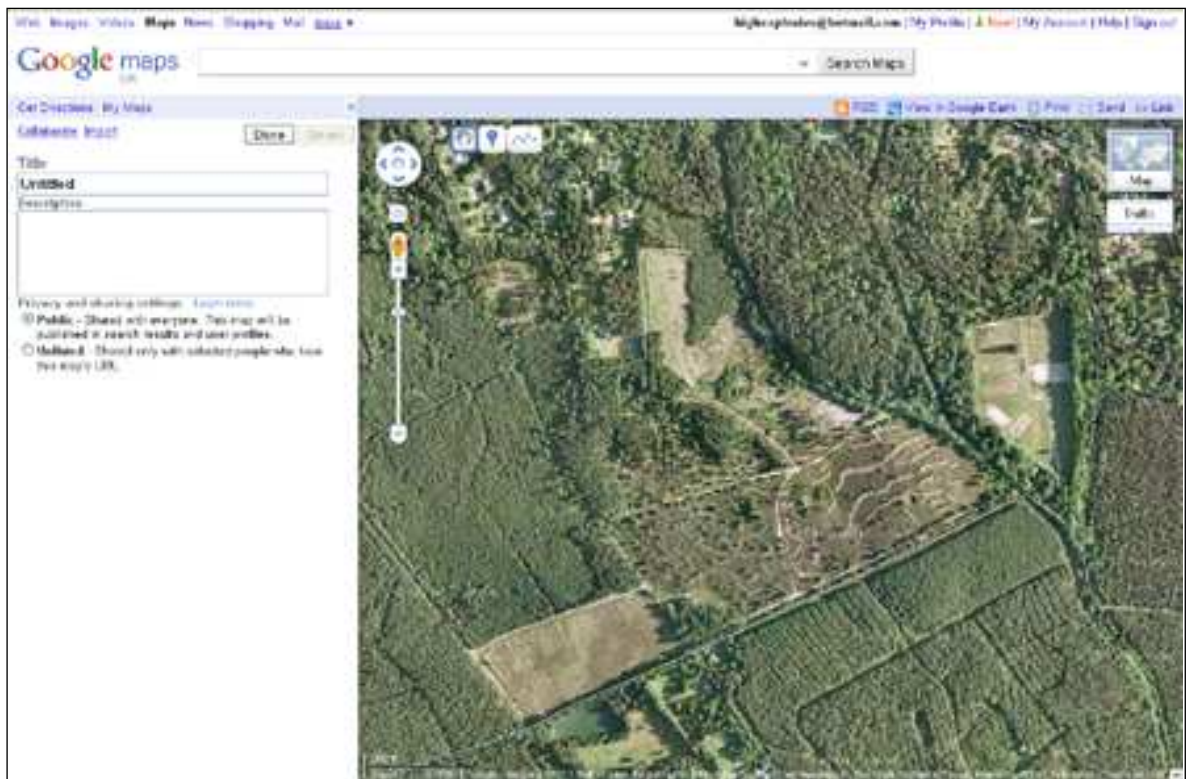
2. Google Maps Account

2.1. Your first step is to navigate to the Google Maps web page. You can either use a web search engine (such as Google or Bing), searching for 'Google Maps', or click on the following link: http://maps.google.co.uk/

2.2. You will need to create a free Google Account, or to log in if you already have an account. Both can be achieved by clicking the 'My Maps' button near the top-left of the web page, and then clicking the 'Get Started' button.
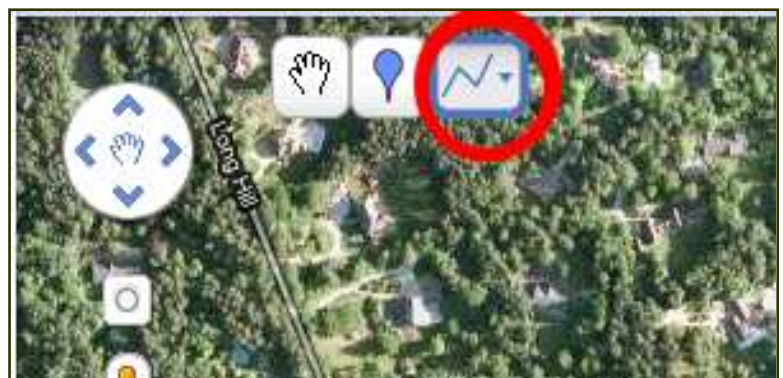
3. Using the Google Map

3.1. Once 'logged in', click on the '*My Places'* button again, and then click on the 'Create map' red button. You should see a webpage which looks like the image below.
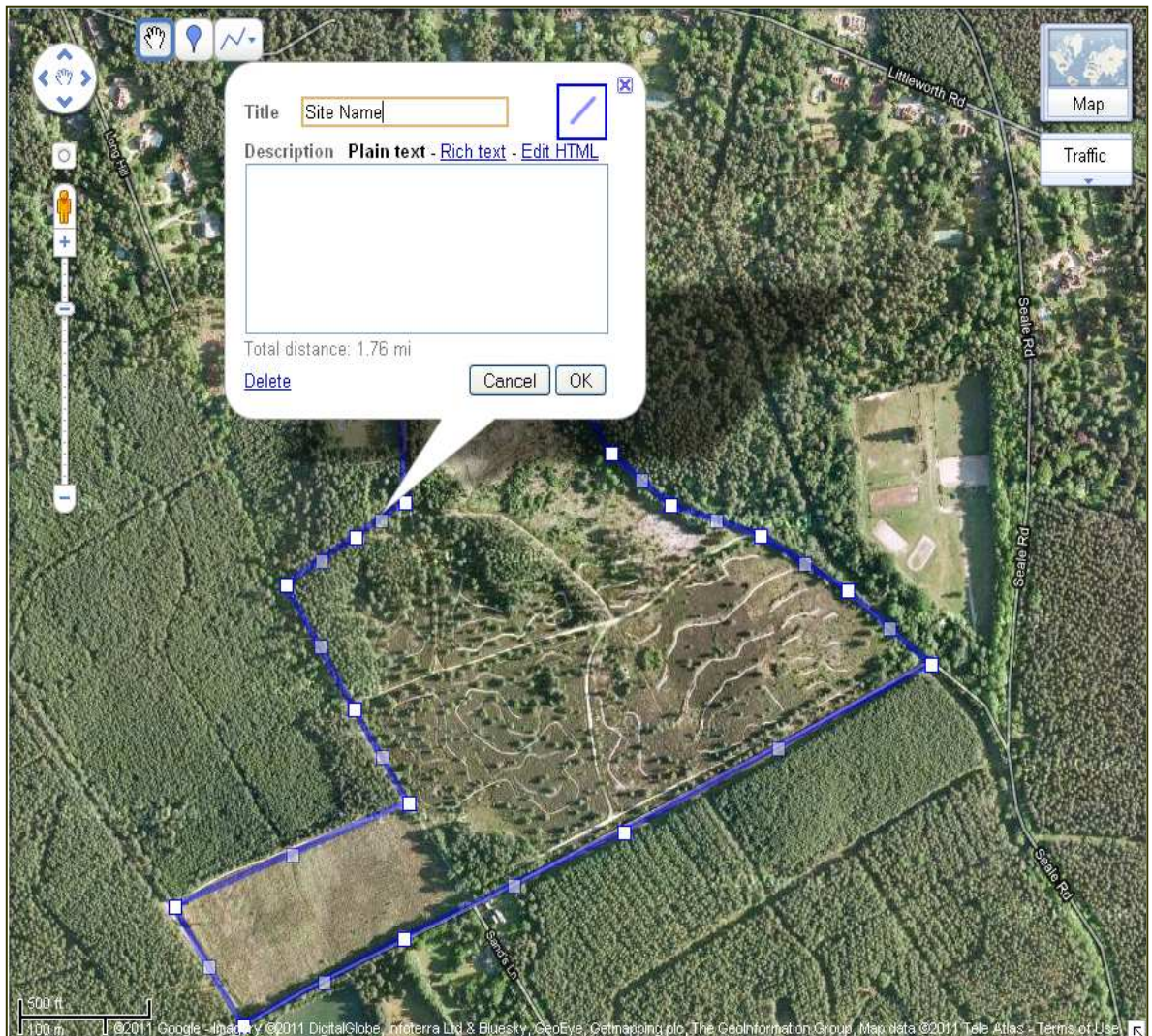
3.2. Use your mouse to zoom into your site area. Double-clicking zooms in, and click-and-drag moves the map. Arrange the map so that you can see the entire target site, as large as possible on the screen.

3.3. Click on the 'Line Draw' icon at the top-left on the map (not the page). Then click around the site border, creating a polygon. Finish the polygon by clicking onto the first marker you created.

3.4. Once the polygon is completed, a pop-up window will appear. Type your site name into the 'title' box. You may choose to add an optional description.
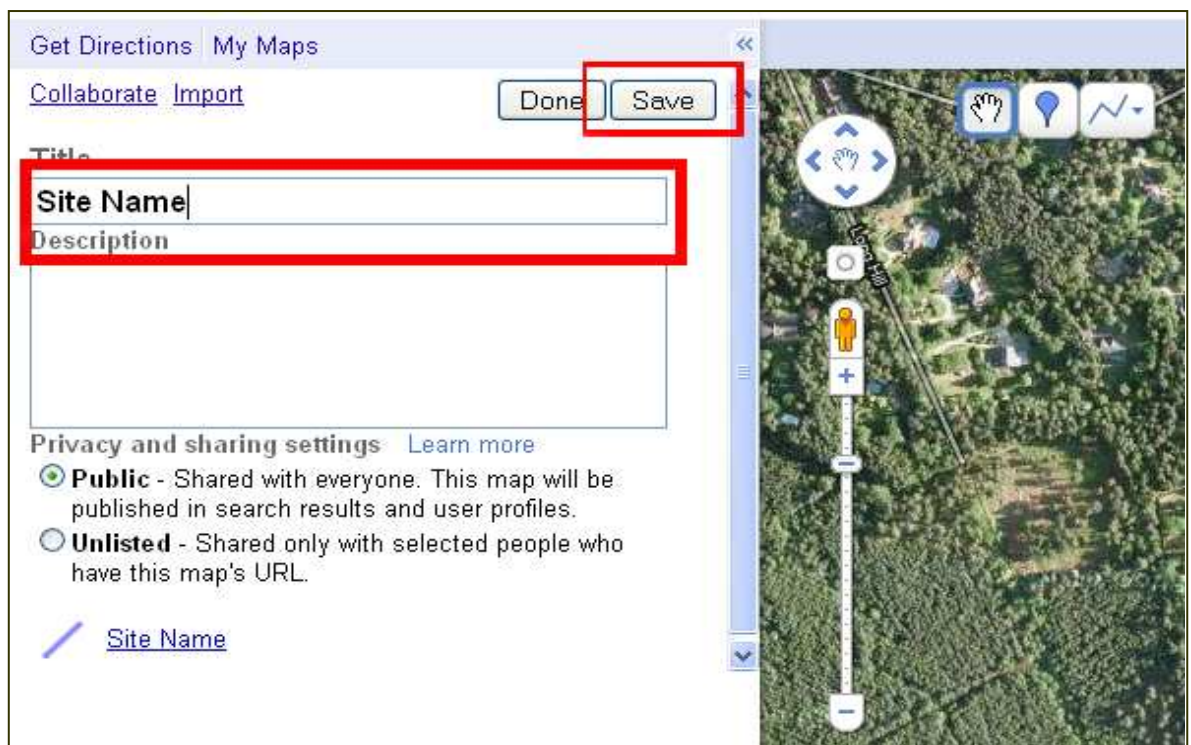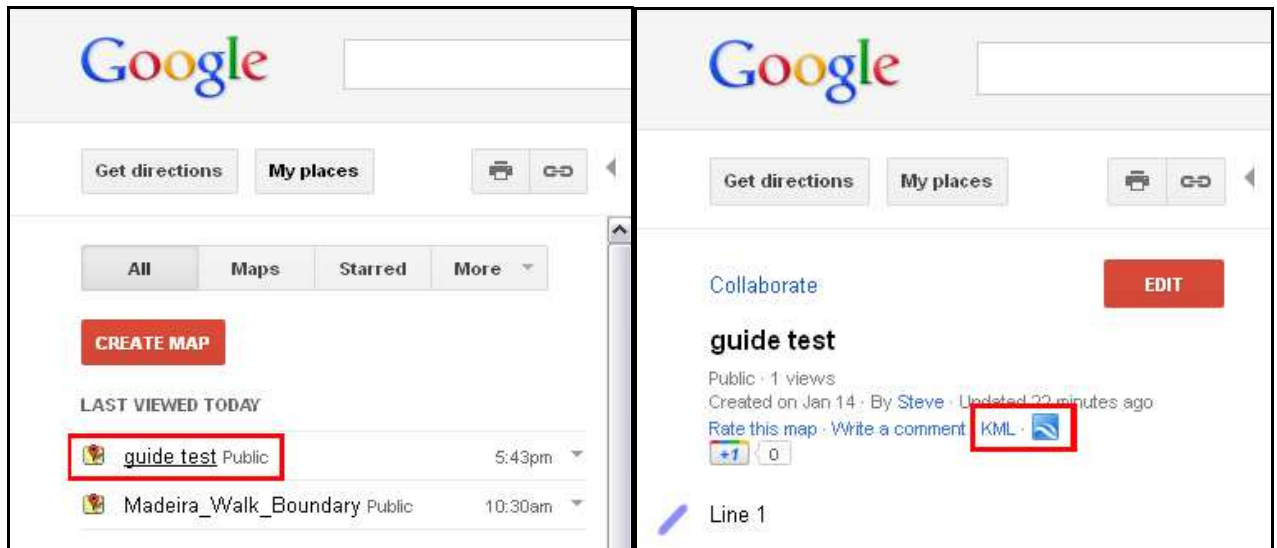

3.5. Next, click the polygon format button:

3.6. We recommend the following settings: Line colour: RED, Line width (pixels): 5, Line opacity (percent): 100. Then click 'OK'.

3.7. On the left-hand pane, type in the site name, then click on the 'Save' button, which should change to 'Saved'. Then click 'Done'.

3.8. You may need to wait for a few minutes for the file to register on the Google server, when it is registered, clicking on the file name in My Places will give you a 'download as KML option.

3.9. That's it ! You now have a KML geofile of your site boundary, which should look a little like the image below.