

Package ‘ForestTools’

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Type Package

Title Analyzing Remotely Sensed Forest Data

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Author Andrew Plowright

Maintainer Andrew Plowright <andrew.plowright@alumni.ubc.ca>

Description Provides tools for analyzing remotely sensed forest data, including functions for detecting treetops from canopy models, outlining tree crowns and generating spatial statistics.

Depends R (>= 3.4)

License GPL (>= 3)

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LazyData true

Imports imager, sp, APfun, raster, rgeos, methods

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Suggests testthat, knitr, rmarkdown

URL <https://github.com/AndyPL22/ForestTools>

BugReports <https://github.com/AndyPL22/ForestTools/issues>

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CHMdemo	<i>Canopy height model demo</i>
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Description

A small section of a canopy height model of a forest in British Columbia, Canada.

Usage

CHMdemo

Format

A RasterLayer

Cell values are equal to canopy height above ground (in meters)

ForestTools	<i>Forest Tools: A package for analyzing geospatial forest data</i>
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Description

Forest Tools provides functions for analyzing remotely sensed forest data. Functions like [vwf](#) and [mcws](#) are applied to rasterized canopy height models, and can detect treetops and outline their respective crowns. [sp_summarise](#) can summarize tree counts and attributes within particular areas of interest or within continuous spatial grids.

kootenayBlocks	<i>Kootenay forest - Cut blocks</i>
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Description

Boundaries of cut blocks within a 1.5 hectare section of forest in the Kootenay mountains, in British Columbia, Canada. Each block contains trees of different levels of maturity. Overlaps with [kootenayTrees](#), [kootenayCrowns](#) and [kootenayCHM](#).

Usage

kootenayBlocks

Format

A [SpatialPolygonsDataFrame](#) with the following attributes:

BlockID numerical identifier for each block

Shape_Leng length of polygon on meters

Shape_Area area of polygon in square meters

See Also

[kootenayTrees](#) [kootenayCHM](#) [kootenayCrowns](#)

kootenayCHM	<i>Kootenay forest - Canopy height model</i>
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Description

A canopy height model of a 1.5 hectare section of forest in the Kootenay mountains, in British Columbia, Canada.

Usage

kootenayCHM

Format

A [RasterLayer](#)

Cell values are equal to canopy height above ground (in meters)

Source

Data acquired from a photogrammetric drone survey performed by Spire Aerobotics on June 16th, 2016.

See Also

[kootenayTrees](#) [kootenayBlocks](#) [kootenayCrowns](#)

kootenayCrowns	<i>Kootenay forest - Tree crowns</i>
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Description

Outlines of tree crowns corresponding to the [kootenayTrees](#) treetops. Generated using [mcws](#).

Usage

kootenayCrowns

Format

A [SpatialPolygonsDataFrame](#) with the following attributes:

height height of the tree's apex, in meters above ground. Inherited from [kootenayTrees](#).

winRadius radius of the moving window at the treetop's location. Inherited from [kootenayTrees](#).

crownArea area of crown outline in square meters

See Also

[kootenayTrees](#) [kootenayCHM](#) [kootenayBlocks](#)

kootenayTrees	<i>Kootenay forest - Dominant trees over 2 m</i>
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Description

Dominant trees from a 1.5 hectare section of forest in the Kootenay mountains, in British Columbia, Canada. Trees were detected by applying the [vwf](#) function to the [kootenayCHM](#) raster dataset. Only trees over 2 m above ground were detected.

Usage

kootenayTrees

Format

A [SpatialPointsDataFrame](#) with the following attributes:

height height of the tree's apex, in meters above ground

winRadius radius of the moving window (see [vwf](#)) at the treetop's location

See Also

[kootenayCHM](#) [kootenayBlocks](#) [kootenayCrowns](#)

Description

Implements the [watershed](#) function to segment (i.e.: outline) crowns from a canopy height model. Segmentation is guided by the point locations of treetops, typically detected using the [vwf](#) function. See Meyer & Beucher (1990) for details on watershed segmentation.

Usage

```
mcws(treetops, CHM, minHeight = 0, format = "raster", OSGeoPath = NULL,
     verbose = FALSE)
```

Arguments

treetops	SpatialPointsDataFrame . The point locations of treetops. The function will generally produce a number of crown segments equal to the number of treetops.
CHM	Canopy height model in raster format. Should be the same that was used to create the input for treetops.
minHeight	numeric. The minimum height value for a CHM pixel to be considered as part of a crown segment. All CHM pixels beneath this value will be masked out. Note that this value should be lower than the minimum height of treetops.
format	string. Format of the function's output. Can be set to either 'raster' or 'polygons'.
OSGeoPath	character. Optional path to the OSGeo4W installation directory. If both OSGeo4W and Python are installed, this will enable the function to use a faster algorithm for producing polygonal crown outlines (see Details below).
verbose	logical. Print processing progress to console.

Details

This function can return a crown map as either a [raster](#) or a [SpatialPolygonsDataFrame](#), as defined using the `format` argument. For most analytical purposes, it is preferable to have crown outlines as polygons. However, polygonal crown maps take up significantly more disk space, and take longer to process. It is advisable to run this function using a raster output first, in order to check its results and adjust parameters.

Using the 'polygons' output format provides the added benefit of transferring treetop attributes (such as *height*) to the newly created polygons. The area of each crown will also automatically be calculated and added to the polygons' data under the *crownArea* field. Furthermore, "orphaned" segments (i.e.: outlines without an associated treetop) will be removed when `format` is set to 'polygons'.

By default, polygonal crown outlines are produced internally using the `rasterToPolygons` function from the [raster](#) package. This function is problematic due to it being 1) very slow and 2) leaking memory when applied to multiple datasets. An alternative is provided for users who've

installed OSGeo4W and Python. By setting the OSGeoPath path to the OSGeo4W installation directory (usually 'C:\OSGeo4W64'), the function will use the *gdal_polygonize.py* GDAL utility to generate polygonal crown outlines instead.

Value

Depending on the argument set with `format`, this function will return a map of outlined crowns as either a `RasterLayer` (see [raster](#)), in which distinct crowns are given a unique cell value, or a `SpatialPolygonsDataFrame`, in which each crown is represented by a polygon.

References

Meyer, F., & Beucher, S. (1990). Morphological segmentation. *Journal of visual communication and image representation*, 1(1), 21-46.

See Also

[wvf sp_summarise watershed](#)

OSGeo4W download page: <https://trac.osgeo.org/osgeo4w/>

Examples

```
# Use variable window filter to detect treetops in demo canopy height model
ttops <- wvf(CHMdemo, winFun = function(x){x * 0.06 + 0.5}, minHeight = 2)

# Set minimum tree crown height (should be LOWER than minimum treetop height)
minCrwnHgt <- 1

# Use 'mcws' to outline tree crowns
segs <- mcws(ttops, CHMdemo, minCrwnHgt)
```

quesnelBlocks

Quesnel forest - Cut blocks

Description

Boundaries of cut blocks within a 125 hectare section of forest in the Quesnel Timber Supply Area, in British Columbia, Canada. Each block contains trees of different levels of maturity. Overlaps with [quesnelTrees](#) and [quesnelCHM](#).

Usage

```
quesnelBlocks
```

Format

A [SpatialPolygonsDataFrame](#) with the following attributes:

BlockID numerical identifier for each block

Shape_Leng length of polygon on meters

Shape_Area area of polygon in square meters

See Also

[quesnelTrees](#) [quesnelCHM](#)

quesnelCHM

Quesnel forest - Canopy height model

Description

A canopy height model of a 125 hectare section of forest in the Quesnel Timber Supply Area, in British Columbia, Canada.

Usage

quesnelCHM

Format

A RasterLayer

Cell values are equal to canopy height above ground (in meters)

Source

Data acquired from a photogrammetric drone survey performed by Spire Aerobotics on September 15th, 2016.

See Also

[quesnelTrees](#) [quesnelBlocks](#)

quesnelTrees *Quesnel forest - Dominant trees over 2 m*

Description

Dominant trees from a 125 hectare section of forest in the Quesnel Timber Supply Area, in British Columbia, Canada. Trees were detected by applying the [vwf](#) function to the [quesnelCHM](#) raster dataset. Only trees over 2 m above ground were detected.

Usage

```
quesnelTrees
```

Format

A [SpatialPointsDataFrame](#) with the following attributes:

height height of the tree's apex, in meters above ground

winRadius radius of the moving window (see [vwf](#)) at the treetop's location

See Also

[quesnelCHM](#) [quesnelBlocks](#)

sp_summarise *Spatial Summarization*

Description

Summarization tool for calculating tree counts and statistics within various spatial units.

Usage

```
sp_summarise(trees, areas = NULL, grid = NULL, variables = NULL,
             statFuns = NULL)
```

Arguments

trees [SpatialPointsDataFrame](#) or [SpatialPolygonsDataFrame](#). The locations of a set of trees, typically detected from a canopy height model using [vwf](#). Tree attributes, such as height or crown size, should be stored within this object's @data slot. Tree crowns delineated using [mcws](#) can also be used.

areas [SpatialPolygonsDataFrame](#). An optional set of polygons corresponding to areas of interest. Tree counts and statistics will be returned for each area.

grid	RasterLayer (see raster) or numeric. An alternative to the areas argument. Using grid will compute tree counts and statistics within the cells of a spatial grid. Grid size and placement can be defined by inputting a raster object. A single numeric value can also be used, in which case the function will generate a grid with a cell size equal to this value.
variables	character. The names of tree attribute variables (stored in the trees@data slot). In addition to tree counts, the function will compute statistics for each of these variables. Only numeric variables are accepted.
statFuns	list. A named list of custom functions that are used to compute tree attribute statistics. If none are provided, default statistics are mean, median, standard deviation, minimum and maximum. Note that each element of the list should have a name that describes the statistics generated by the function. See below for details on defining custom functions.

Details

Input trees can either be point locations ([SpatialPointsDataFrame](#)) or crown outlines ([SpatialPolygonsDataFrame](#)). If crown outlines (or other polygons) are inputted, they will be partitioned between spatial units according to their geographic centroids.

In addition to tree counts, statistics for the trees' attributes can also be generated. These attributes should be defined within the @data slot of the input. Only numeric variables are accepted.

By default, the statistics generated for each attribute will be its mean, median, standard deviation, minimum and maximum. However, custom functions can also be used with the statFuns argument. This should be a named list of functions, wherein each list element is given a name to represent the statistic computed by the function.

For example: `list(qunt98 = function(x, ...) quantile(x, c(.98), na.rm = TRUE))`

Furthermore, custom functions should:

- Be able to accept numeric vectors.
- Be able to handle NA values.
- Have an ellipsis (three dots) in their arguments: `function(x, ...)`
- Return a single numeric value.

Value

Tree count and, if any variables are supplied, tree attribute statistics. If no areas or grid is supplied, the tree count and statistics are computed for the entire trees dataset, and returned as a 'data.frame' object. If areas are defined, an identical [SpatialPolygonsDataFrame](#) will be returned, with all computed statistics appended to the object's @data slot. If a grid is defined, tree count will be returned as a RasterLayer, with cell values equal to the number of trees in each cell. If a grid and variables are defined, a RasterBrick (see [brick](#)) will be returned instead, with tree count and attribute statistics stored as stacked layers.

See Also

[vwf mcws](#)

Examples

```
# Load sample data
library(ForestTools)
library(sp)
data("kootenayTrees", "kootenayBlocks", "kootenayCrowns")

# Get total tree count
sp_summarise(kootenayTrees)

# Get total tree count, tree height and crown area statistics
sp_summarise(kootenayCrowns, variables = c("height", "crownArea"))

# Get tree count, height statistics for specific areas of interest
areaStats <- sp_summarise(kootenayTrees, areas = kootenayBlocks, variables = "height")

# Plot according to tree count
plot(areaStats, col = heat.colors(3)[order(areaStats$TreeCount)])

# Get tree count and height statistics for a 20 x 20 m spatial grid
gridStats <- sp_summarise(kootenayTrees, grid = 20, variables = "height")

# Plot gridded tree count and statistics
plot(gridStats$TreeCount)
plot(gridStats$heightMax)
```

vwf

Variable Window Filter

Description

Implements the variable window filter algorithm (Popescu & Wynne, 2004) for detecting treetops from a canopy height model.

Usage

```
vwf(CHM, winFun, minHeight = NULL, maxWinDiameter = 99,
    minWinNeib = "queen", verbose = FALSE)
```

Arguments

CHM	Canopy height model. Either in raster format, or a path directing to a raster file. A character vector of multiple paths directing to a tiled raster dataset can also be used.
winFun	function. The function that determines the size of the window at any given location on the canopy. It should take the value of a given CHM pixel as its only argument, and return the desired <i>*radius*</i> of the circular search window when centered on that pixel. Size of the window is in map units.

minHeight	numeric. The minimum height value for a CHM pixel to be considered as a potential treetop. All CHM pixels beneath this value will be masked out.
maxWinDiameter	numeric. Sets a cap on the maximum window diameter (in cells). If an improperly calibrated function is set for winFun, it may produce overly large windows that would perform poorly and significantly slow processing time. This setting can be disabled by setting to NULL.
minWinNeib	character. Define whether the smallest possible search window (3x3) should use a queen or a rook neighborhood.
verbose	logical. Print progress to console if set to TRUE.

Details

This function uses the resolution of the raster to figure out how many cells the window needs to cover. This means that the raster value (representing height above ground) and the map unit (represented by the raster's resolution), need to be in the `_same unit_`. This can cause issues if the raster is in lat/long, whereby its resolution is in decimal degrees.

Value

[SpatialPointsDataFrame](#). The point locations of detected treetops. The object contains two fields in its data table: `height` is the height of the tree, as extracted from the CHM, and `winRadius` is the radius of the search window when the treetop was detected. Note that `winRadius` does not necessarily correspond to the radius of the tree's crown.

References

Popescu, S. C., & Wynne, R. H. (2004). Seeing the trees in the forest. *Photogrammetric Engineering & Remote Sensing*, 70(5), 589-604.

See Also

[mcws sp_summarise](#)

Examples

```
# Set function for determining variable window radius
winFunction <- function(x){x * 0.06 + 0.5}

# Set minimum tree height (treetops below this height will not be detected)
minHgt <- 2

# Detect treetops in demo canopy height model
ttops <- vwf(CHMdemo, winFunction, minHgt)
```

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