

Including GAP Codes in CPAD

In response to user requests, we have expanded our GAP data in CPAD to quantify the acreage each holding/unit/super unit has within the GAP status categories (1, 2, 3, 4).

GAP Status Definitions

GAP status codes serve as a metric that reflects the long-term management intent (USGS 2020, Prior-McGee 1998) for the biodiversity of the land.

- GAP 1 land has a mandated management plan for biodiversity to prevent conversion of natural land cover and maintain a natural state. Natural disturbance events proceed or are mimicked in the management. Example: Wilderness Areas
- GAP 2 land has a mandated management plan for biodiversity to prevent conversion of natural land cover and maintain a natural state but management practices can degrade natural states and natural disturbance events can be suppressed. Example: National Wildlife Refuges
- GAP 3 lands are managed for multiple uses, they include protection from conversion of natural lands for the majority but can also include recreation, and extraction uses. Example: National Forests
- GAP 4 has no known mandate for biodiversity protection or conversion of natural habitat. Example: Agricultural areas, unknown areas

Data Sources

California Protected Areas Database (CPAD) 2021a:

- CPAD_2021a_Holdings.shp
- CPAD_2021a_Units.shp
- CPAD_2021a_SuperUnits.shp

Protected Areas Database of the United States (PAD-US) version 2.1:

- PAD-US2_1Combined_Proclamation_Marine_Fee_Designation_Easement (feature class)

California Department of Parks and Recreation (CDPR), GAP by management unit (Personal Communication - Natural Resources Division, June 2021)

Methods Overview

The Protected Areas Database of the United States (PAD-US) combined layer includes GAP status codes for over 99% of CPAD lands. While these codes can be subjective and can conflict based on assigning agency, they offer a path forward for understanding management intent with respect to biodiversity in nationally held lands. (Those owned by USFS, BLM, USFWS, etc.).

PAD-US GAP codes are often assigned by designation and other attributes that do not always align to parcel owners and can overlap. Integrating them into CPAD, which is owner-based, parcel-aligned and cannot have overlaps, is not straightforward. Consequently, to resolve this, for each CPAD holding, unit and super unit, we report the acreage under each GAP code. In cases where there is overlap between different PAD-US GAP codes, we allocate the overlapped acreage to the more protective GAP status code. This prevents over-counting acreage by assuming a hierarchy in GAP codes.

In addition to PAD-US GAP codes, California Department of Park and Recreation has assigned GAP codes to the lands they manage. If these differ from the PAD-US codes, the state level codes take precedence.

Processing Steps

PAD-US Data Processing:

A series of geoprocessing steps were followed to produce the acreages:

- 1) Generate a PAD-US layer for each GAP code, and remove all overlaps
- 2) Using an implied hierarchy of GAP codes¹, erase any lower level GAP codes.
 - a) GAP code 1, used as is (most stringent level of protection for biodiversity)
 - b) Subtract GAP codes 1 from GAP code 2
 - c) Subtract GAP codes 1, 2 from GAP code 3
 - d) Subtract GAP code 1, 2, 3 from GAP code 4
- 3) Merge the results of #2 across all GAP codes to have one comprehensive flat GAP layer
- 4) Intersect the hierarchical GAP code layer with CPAD
 - a) Calculate new acreage
 - b) Summarize the acreage of each intersected piece
 - c) Join new GAP code acreage to CPAD

CDPR Data Processing:

- 1) Collect CDPR GAP assignments
- 2) Intersect CDPR GAP layer with CPAD
 - a) Calculate new acreage
 - b) Summarize the acreage of each intersected piece
 - c) Join new GAP code acreage to CPAD (this will overwrite any previously PAD-US assigned GAP codes)

Example

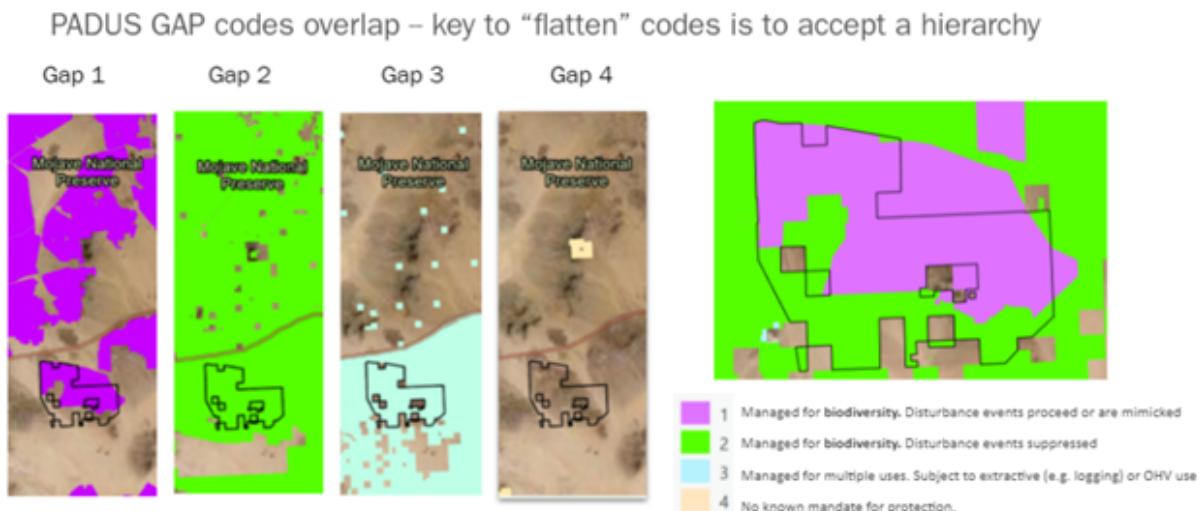


Figure 1: In PAD-US, Marble Mountains Wildlife Area is assigned multiple, and overlapping, classifications. Using the method presented here, the final assignment is partially to GAP 2 and partially to GAP 1 once one accepts a hierarchy in favor of the most stringent protection level.

¹GAP codes were not developed with the direct intention of being a hierarchy, but the numeric scale provides a meaningful way to resolve areas with multiple GAP codes assigned - selecting only the most protected.

Data Dictionary for GAP Fields

| Field Name | Description | Data Source | Data Type | Domains |
|------------|---|---------------|-----------|--|
| HOLDING_ID | Unique ID from CPAD Holdings | CPAD | Long | N/A |
| ACCESS_TYP | Access Code | CPAD | Text | Open Access Restricted Access Unknown Access No Public Access |
| GAP1_ACRES | Acres under GAP status 1 | PADUS or CDPR | Double | N/A |
| GAP2_ACRES | Acres under GAP status 2 | PADUS or CDPR | Double | N/A |
| GAP3_ACRES | Acres under GAP status 3 | PADUS or CDPR | Double | N/A |
| GAP4_ACRES | Acres under GAP status 4 | PADUS or CDPR | Double | N/A |
| TOT_GAP_AC | Total GAP acres. Sum of GAP status 1,2,3,4 acres. | N/A | Double | N/A |
| GAP_SOURCE | Data source for GAP data | N/A | Text | CDPR (<i>California Department of Parks and Recreation</i>) PADUS (<i>Protected Areas Database of the United States</i>)" |

Important Notes

GAP codes are a work in progress. Previous CPAD releases have included approximate or inferred GAP codes. These were based on key attributes about the owner/manager of the land as well as the name. As of CPAD2021a these have been retired, specifically the columns DES_TP and GAP_STS.

Because GAP acreages are an estimate, they have been rounded. Any holding less than 1 acre rounds the GAP acreage two decimal places. Holdings that are 1 acre or larger have their GAP acreage rounded down to the nearest whole numbers. The GAP acreage is displayed with 2 decimal places for consistency. Note that this rounding helps reduce the reporting of slivers and helps reduce the perception of higher accuracy beyond what is significant. The error introduced, as a result of this rounding, is less than 1% of total CPAD lands.

The new methods described above should yield more meaningful results for national lands while still allowing for more detailed local GAP codes to be incorporated as was done with state CDPR assigned GAP codes.

We invite other land-owning and land-managing agencies to share their assigned GAP codes of their respective lands, as well as feedback on these new methods. These are critical in helping us shape our next steps. Please reach out to cpad@calands.org