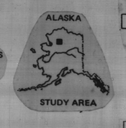
ALASKA DIVISION OF GEOLOGICAL & GEOPHYSICAL SURVEYS

NE SHUNGNAK & NW HUGHES



SCALE 1:63,360

1 0 1 2 3 4 MILES

1 0 1 2 3 4 5 KILOMETERS

by
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DESCRIPTION OF MAP TERRAIN UNITS

BEDROCK

Bx — Bedrock, undifferentiated. Includes "in-place" igneous, metamorphic and sedimentary rock lithologies. Bedrock may be exposed as outcrops or covered by soil and other unconsolidated surficial materials.

Bx-w — Bedrock, frost rived, and weathered. Includes frost-riven, weathered, and decomposed rock lithologies mentioned above. Bedrock usually underlies mineral soil or other unconsolidated surficial materials.

FLUVIAL DEPOSITS

These are sedimentary deposits consisting of unconsolidated, sorted, and stratified clay, silt, sand, gravel, pebble, cobble, and boulder size clasts that have been transported by, suspended in, or laid down by a stream or river.

Fd — Delta Deposits. Alluvial deposits that primarily consist of sand and silt. Delta deposits form at the mouth of a stream or river that flows into a standing body of water such as a lake or ocean. Deltas tend to be triangular shaped. The outer margin of a delta extending into the ocean may also be subject to tidal and current influences, and thus may have associated tidal flats.

Ff — Alluvial fan deposits. Gently sloping cone-shaped deposits of sand, gravel, and minor silt alluvium that forms where a stream issues from a narrow mountain valley upon a plain or broad valley, or where a tributary stream is near or at its junction with the main stream, or wherever a constriction in a valley abruptly ceases or the gradient of a stream suddenly decreases; it is steepest and coarsest near the mouth of the valley where its apex points upstream, and it slopes gently and convexly outward with gradually decreasing gradient and particle size.

Fp — Flood-plain deposits. Sand, gravel, and minor silt and clay alluvium deposited by high (flooding) stream or river water that was spread out over a flood-plain. These deposits are usually thickest and coarsest near the stream or river banks, and thinner and finer away from the banks. When the precise flood-plain type is not apparent due to mapping scale and resolution, and the relative size of the flood-plain is in question, then this terrain unit is used.

Fpb — Braided flood-plain deposits. Sand, gravel, and minor pebbles, cobbles, boulders, clay, and silt alluvium deposited in and along a stream or river with an interlacing or tangled network of several small branching or reuniting shallow channels that are separated from each other by branch islands or channel bars, resembling in plan the strands of a complex braid. Braided flood plains are the result of a stream or river possessing a much higher sediment load than it can transport. Braided flood-plains usually consist of coarser grained sand and gravel sediments.

Fpb-c — Braided flood-plain cover deposits. Clay, silt, and fine sand that is held in suspension and deposited on a flood-plain by flood waters that cannot be contained within the stream or river channel. The deposits are thickest and coarsest near the channel banks, and thiner and finer away from the banks.

Fto — Old fluvial terrace deposits. Old, higher elevated, braided, and meandering flood-plain silts, sand, and gravel deposits. Deposits are long, narrow, relatively level or gently inclined and bounded along one edge by a steeper, descending slope which terminates on the active flood-plain or lower terrace, and along the other edge by a steeper, ascending slope. Old terraces are commonly dissected and covered with tundra tussocks, deciduous or coniferous vegetation. Old terrace deposits are not flood prone.

DESCRIPTION OF TERRAIN UNIT TYPES, SYMBOLS, AND MAPPING METHODS

This map is based on landform analysis by air photo interpretation of color infrared aerial photography. Landforms are elements of the landscape formed by a single geologic process or a combination of associated processes. Landforms have identifiable visual characteristics that include topography, vegetation, permafrost indicators, and drainage patterns. Each landform also has characteristic constituent materials with a recurrent range of geotechnical properties. Landforms were mapped from the ground surface to a depth of about 10 m (30 ft). Each landform is labeled with a 1 to 4 letter code. The upper case letter indicates the genesis of the deposit, for example F for fluvial (stream or river) deposits; the lower case letters indicate specific landforms in each genetic group, for example Ft for Fluvial terrace deposits and Fpm for Fluvial meander flood-plain deposits.

Terrain units may be composed of one or more landforms. Several different kinds of terrain units are possible, depending on the spatial arrangement of these landforms. All of the following types occur within the project area. Simple terrain units consist of only one landform (e.g. meander flood-plain deposits, Fpm). Layered terrain units consist of one landform overlying another (e.g. basin colluvium and slopewash deposits overlying frost rived and weathered bedrock, Cbs/Bx-w). Mosaic terrain units consist of two or more landforms each of which comprises more than 20 percent of the area. However, because of complex distribution patterns or mapping resolution, the landforms cannot be separated. A plus "+" symbol is used with the dominant landform listed first (e.g. abandoned flood-plain deposits plus fluvial terrace deposits, Fpa + Ft). Complex terrain units consist of three or more landforms in various arrangements indicating both layered and mosaic aspects (e.g. basin colluvium and slopewash deposits plus gelisolifluction deposits overlying frost rived and weather bedrock, Cbs + Cgs/Bx-w; or gelisolifluction deposits overlying a veneer of older glacial till deposits which in turn overlies frost rived and weathered bedrock, Cgs/Gto-v/Bx-w).

DESCRIPTION OF MAP TERRAIN UNITS

Fpm — Meander flood-plain deposits. Interstratified sand, gravel, and silt deposited in and along mature, well developed, s-shaped, freely meandering river and stream channel margins. The deposits are successively and laterally accreted, thus forming channel and point bars. The laterally accreted deposits commonly display scroll bar and swale topography. Bankfull silt deposits overlie and cap the channel deposits. The scroll bar and swale topography usually has thin silt overlying the bars or ridges and thick silt deposits within the swales.

Fpm-c — Meander flood-plain cover deposits. Interbedded fine sand, silt, and organic silt deposited in flood basins from overbank flood flows. Deposits overlie and mask bar or accretion deposits. The deposits are vertically accreted during repeated high overbank flood flows and they form the relatively flat interchannel areas of the flood-plain. Flood basins often reflect underlying depositional patterns (oxbow lakes forming in swales of scroll bar and swale topography).

Fpa — Abandoned flood-plain deposits. Includes braided and meandering flood-plain silt, sand, and gravel deposits that are overlain by silt mixed with organic matter and peat. Deposits are covered by swampy bogs and grass, muskeg tussocks, or low deciduous and coniferous vegetation. These deposits are characteristic of mature flood-plains and are no longer part of the active flood-plain. An abandoned flood-plain would be flooded very infrequently.

COLLUVIAL/MASS WASTING DEPOSITS

Cbs — Basin colluvium and slopewash deposits. Loose, mixed, heterogeneous and incoherent mass of fine to coarse soil material, alluvium, and/or rock fragments. Can include retransported glacial deposits, terrace alluvium, eolian and lacustrine deposits, and fines winnowed from coarse material on upper slopes. Sand and silt-size material mixed with organic matter occupy low gradient piedmont slopes, at the base of gentle slopes or hillsides, and valley bottoms. Sediments are moved downslope by both gravity and unconcentrated surface runoff. Deposits are derived from slow, continuous downslope creep and flow of saturated silt and fine sand, plus rainwash, sheet and rill wash, and spring sapping. Deposits are usually perenially frozen.

Cc — Coarse colluvial deposits. Loose, heterogeneous, fine-to-coarse soil material that is mixed with angular frost-riven rock fragments. Colluvium occurs on steep upper slopes and on relatively flat upland surfaces. Colluvium on slopes usually has undergone significant downslope transport by creep and is usually coarser due to sapping and winnowing of fine-grained interstitial silt and sand. Colluvium on upland surfaces usually shows little or no downslope movement, thus the material ranges from fine to coarse depending upon the underlying bedrock lithology, intensity of frost action, and other weathering processes.

Cgs — Gelisolifluction deposits. Water-logged soil and other unsorted and saturated surficial material ranging from silt to gravel that is slowly flowing from higher to lower ground. Deposits can show crude stratification parallel to the slope. This is a type of solifluction associated with seasonally-frozen ground and permafrost, and although similar to soil creep, gelisolifluction is more rapid depending on moisture content, grain size, and gradient. Gelisolifluction occurs mainly at moisture values approximating or exceeding the Atterberg Liquid Limit (i.e. values at which soils have little if any shear strength). Moisture is provided by rain, thawing snow, and melting ground ice; permafrost prevents the downward migration of the moisture. Silt is more prevalent than clay size particles and tends to remain wet longer than coarse-grain sizes. Silt is particularly subject to flow because it lacks cohesion and slakes readily, thus requiring less moisture than clay for flow. Gelisolifluction processes mainly form lobe, bench, and sheet-like deposits.

Crg — Rock glacier deposits. Mass of poorly sorted, coarse, angular bedrock rubble chiefly of boulder size fragments, and fine interstitial material mixed with ice. Deposits extend as thick, steep-fronted lobate or tongue-like masses from the front of cliffs or cirque walls in mountainous terrain. Deposits are situated on gently to steep slopes in mountain valleys and move under influence of gravity and interstitial ice. Terminus areas of the rock glacier are marked by a series of transverse arcuate ridges and a steep, unvegetated active face. Some rock glaciers are stagnant or inactive and no longer contain interstitial ice.

Ct — Talus deposits. Angular pebbles, cobbles, and boulders derived from mechanical weathering (frost-riven) of rugged bedrock exposures, which accumulate as a mass at the base of cliffs and steep slopes as a result of gravity and flutial processes. Deposits form steep cones or aprons and often grade into protalus ramparts, rock glacier, or other colluvial deposits.

GLACIAL DEPOSITS

Gmo — Older glacial moraine deposits. Diamicton consisting of clay, silt, sand, pebble and cobble gravel, and boulders deposited directly by glacial ice. Deposits are unsorted, unstratified, and range from loose to compact. Deposits occur as ridges and mounds along the lateral and terminal margins of since-receded glaciers. Moraines have an eroded and subdued surface morphology, and are fluted, rilled, and gullied by streams and usually covered by loess.

Gty — Younger glacial till deposits. Heterogeneous diamicton consisting of clay, silt, sand, pebble and cobble gravel, and boulders deposited directly by glacial ice. Till is unsorted, unstratified, and ranges from loose to compact. Locally contains patches of sorted and bedded drift. Till is deposited in sheets from the surface and base of a glacier as it recedes.

Gto — Older glacial till deposits. Heterogeneous diamicton consisting of pebble and cobble gravel, boulders, sand, silt, and clay deposited directly by glacial ice. Till is unsorted, unstratified, and ranges from loose to compact. On moderate to steep slopes till forms a thin discontinuous cover or veneer (Gto-v) that contains numerous unmapped patches of colluvium and alluvium. The till is also commonly fluted, rilled, and gullied and has a compact "plastered-on" appearance. In large valley bottoms and on plains, thick till sheets often remain and appear as knob and kettle topography. This irregular, subdued topography is till in the form of discontinuous ridges, knolls and hummocks surrounding closed depressions. These depressions usually contain ponds and organic deposits.

THERMOKARST DEPOSITS

Ttl — Thaw lake and thaw basin deposits. Shallow lakes or drained lakes (basins) that are formed and enlarge by differential thawing of ground ice and permafrost (thermokarst). If a lake is present a thaw bulb may underlie the lake, otherwise thaw basin deposits are generally underlain by permafrost at depths between 3 and 5 m (9-15 ft). Because of drainage changes, erosion, and deposition, thaw lakes in permafrost are dynamic features that tend to change their configuration and slowly migrate over the tundra. The lakes or basins commonly contain a layer of plant debris above the underlying sediments which may range from silt to gravel. The plant debris is derived from collapse of vegetated, migrating lake shores and is often overlain by a layer of organic silt. In glaciated areas, glacial themorkarst (the melting of buried glacial ice in till or outwash) forms kettle holes and thaw depressions that are sometimes difficult to distinguish from permafrost thermokarst.

Tbd — Beaded drainage deposits. Series of small pools connected by short streams. Deposits are associated with thaw lakes and contain a layer of plant debris that is underlain by thick silt and overlain by a thin layer of organic silt. Pools and drainage courses result from thawing along ice wedge polygons (patterned ground).

PERIGLACIAL DEPOSITS

Ppg — Patterned ground deposits. Ground exhibiting symmetrical patterns in the form of circles, polygons, and nets (upland tundra tussocks or hummocks). Patterned deposits are caused by upfreezing of certain sediment sizes by intensive frost action in the permafrost active layer. Deposits consist of silty, sandy, and gravelly mineral soils with humic material. Patterned ground development is influenced by the number of freeze-thaw cycles, moisture content, and grain size. Deposits occur mainly on flat ground and gentle slopes.

MISCELLANEOUS DEPOSITS

Mo — Organic deposits. Decaying vegetable matter, humus, muck, and peat intermixed with varying amounts of clay and silt. Swamps, bogs, marshes, muskegs, and upland tussock tundra all contain organic deposits. These deposits frequently occur in association with other lowland deposits.

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A.D.G.G.S. ENGINEERING

NE SHUNGNAK & NW HUGHES QUADRANGLES

ENGINEERING GEOLOGY

This report is a preliminary publication of DGGS. The author is solely responsible for its content and will appreciate candid comments on the accuracy of the data as well as suggestions to improve the report.

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