

SUMMARY: KOTZEBUE QUADRANGLE

GLOSSARY

anticline/syncline --- Rock structures formed from the large-scale folding of massive rock units; the upward folded portion of the rock is the anticline, with an inverted U-shaped cross section; the downward folded part is the syncline, with a U-shaped cross section.



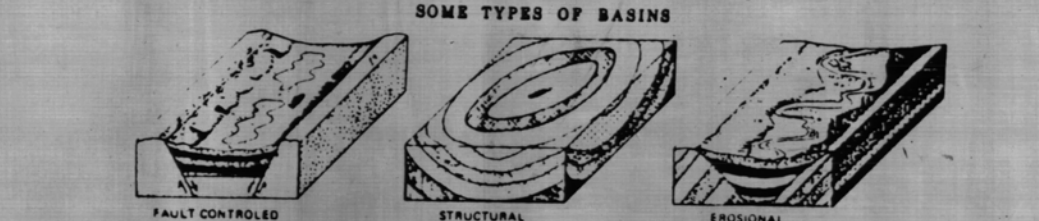
FOLDED ROCKS --- do not necessarily occur in pairs and can cut across each other forming more complex structures like basins.

ash --- Residual mineral impurities left after the combustion of coal. High-ash coal has more than 15% total ash; coal with less than 8% total ash is low-ash coal.

ASTM --- American Society for Testing Materials; sets many specifications for materials and standards for materials testing used in the United States.

basin --- 1) Structural: a syncline that dips inward in all directions (see 'syncline'); usually formed by the oblique intersection of two synclines, or by downwarping of underlying rock strata; the relationship of a structural basin to present topography is largely coincidental; for example, rocks (and coal) of the Cretaceous structural basins of the Point Lay Quadrangle probably formed in a relatively flat environment, were buried by continued sedimentation, and were later folded in two cross-cutting directions to form structural basins; present topography of these basins is a product of differential weathering of the various rock types of which they are composed.

2) Topographic: sediment (and vegetable matter) deposited in an existing valley or basin, where they are compacted into rock (and coal) by subsequent burial; for example, rocks of the Tertiary basins of the Seward Peninsula are much younger than the rocks forming the old valleys they now occupy; such valleys or basins may be relatively undisturbed.



bone coal --- Coal that contains a high percentage of incombustible impurities like clay, dirt, or rock fragments; if the material contains over 25% ash, it is considered to be carbonaceous rock rather than coal and is not included as coal in resource calculations.

Btu --- British thermal unit; one Btu equals the amount of heat needed to raise the temperature of one pound of water one degree Fahrenheit; the standard unit used in the United States to describe the heating value of fuels (most other countries use kilocalories per kilogram as a standard thermal unit).

coal --- A compact, light-weight, dark-brown to glossy-black rock composed of vegetable matter that has been physically and chemically altered to a concentrated combustible product.

coal float --- Fragments of coal displaced from the parent coal bed by erosion; found in stream gravel, in talus (gravity-transported rock debris) at the bases of bluffs, in landslide material, and elsewhere downstream of a coal outcrop.

coal resource --- Identified, recoverable coal resources:

1. **measured** - identified undeveloped coal reserves with the highest degree of geological assurance; calculated by extrapolating coal outcrop and drill-hole data to a depth of 1000' and for a horizontal distance of 1/2 to 1 mile.

2. **indicated** - undeveloped coal reserves with a moderate degree of geological assurance; calculated by extrapolating coal outcrop and drill-hole data to a depth of 1000' and for a horizontal distance of 1 to 1 1/2 miles.

3. **inferred** - undeveloped coal reserves with the lowest degree of geological assurance; calculated by extrapolating coal outcrop and drill-hole data to a depth of 1000' and for a horizontal distance of 1 to 1 1/2 miles.

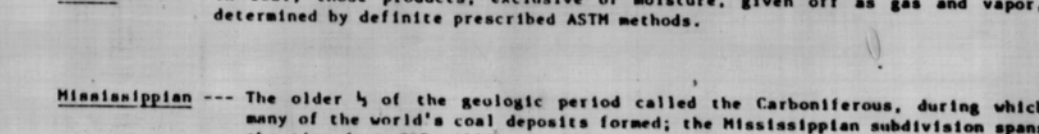
coal reserve --- Natural deposits of coal in the earth's crust, occurring in a form and amount such that economic extraction is currently or potentially feasible; includes both reserves and presently non-economic deposits most likely to become mineable in the future.

coal rubble --- Similar to coal float, but often the fragments of a fractured sub-surface coal bed fractured to the surface through freeze-thaw action, or the fractured and fragmented coal particles that accumulate from the weathering of a surface or near-surface coal occurrence; found close to the parent coal bed.

coke --- A form of coal, usually of bituminous rank, that softens and fuses when heated to just below the point of ignition; during this process, volatile compounds escape as gases, leaving a dull-gray, porous mass called coke.

deformation --- Any physical change in the attitude, shape, or volume of rocks from the configuration they had when formed; folding, tilting, and warping are forms of deformation, as are compression (squashing) and tension (stretching).

dip --- The angle a tabular rock unit forms with the horizontal.



fixed carbon --- The solid residue, other than ash, obtained by destructive distillation of coal; determined by definite prescribed ASTM methods.

strike --- The line formed by the intersection of the dip plane of a tabular rock unit with the horizontal; for example, if the dip is some angle toward the west, then the strike is north-south (see 'dip').

stripping ratio --- The ratio of overburden (soil and rock covering the coal) to coal being mined by strip mining methods; reserve estimates usually omit coal deposits with stripping ratios higher than about 10:1 because these are seldom economic.

volatile matter --- In coal, those products, exclusive of moisture, given off as gas and vapor, determined by definite prescribed ASTM methods.

Mesozoic --- The older of the geologic period called the Carboniferous, during which many of the world's coal deposits formed; the Mesozoic period subdivides again into the Cretaceous and the Tertiary.

Cretaceous --- Geologic period spanning the time from 140 million to 65 million years ago; many of Alaska's coals were formed during the Cretaceous period.

Tertiary --- Geologic period spanning the time from 65 million to 1.5 million years ago; many of Alaska's coals are Tertiary in age.

Quaternary --- Geologic period spanning the time from the end of the Tertiary through the present, or the last 1.5 million years.

The many types of coal in Alaska are classified, or ranked, according to physical and chemical properties. A coal's rank is determined by laboratory testing of its properties using ASTM standardized methods. Rank is based primarily on heating value (Btu/lb.) and content of certain physical components. The main coal rank classifications are: A) lignite - very low heating value and moisture; B) subbituminous - medium to high rank; and C) semi-bituminous - very high rank. Each of these rank classifications has discrete subdivisions (see below), and distinct properties that help to determine the optimum potential of the coal. The uses that are appropriate for one type of coal may not be appropriate for another type.

Classification and use are determined by a coal's rank, its heating capacity, and its weathering characteristics. Whether it remains compact or readily crumbles and decomposes under surface conditions; whether it is suitable for use in power generation; and its weathering behavior and low heating value capacity are important factors. The main coal rank classifications are: A) lignite - very low heating value and moisture; B) subbituminous - medium to high rank; and C) semi-bituminous - very high rank. Each of these rank classifications has discrete subdivisions (see below), and distinct properties that help to determine the optimum potential of the coal. The uses that are appropriate for one type of coal may not be appropriate for another type.

COAL RESOURCE RATING CRITERIA

The following resource rating criteria are organized on a scale of 1 - low to 5 - high potential. A rating of 1 indicates virtually no possibility for substantial coal discoveries, and no known coal in the area. Categories 2 and 3 are for possible but unverified occurrences of coal. A 5 is the highest possible rating under this system. The letters "a" through "m" that may accompany the numbers 2 through 4 means to clarify and justify the number ratings assigned. In some cases, more than one letter is used, as in "2c". These letters are only explanatory, like footnotes, and do not weight the ratings.

The areas outlined in heavy black on the map have been calculated according to the U.S. Geological Survey resource classification system (U.S.G.S. Circular 983), using available surface and subsurface data. The kinds and reliability of data available determine how the resource potential is calculated (see 'Coal Resource' Glossary).

1 Very low to low possibility for substantial coal discoveries; sedimentary and other rock units not known to host coal; these "barren" units vary from map to map; this rating based almost entirely on published general, broad-brush geological maps.

2 Low to medium possibility for substantial coal discoveries; these ratings based mostly on published general, broad-brush geology:

- a** units with very minor coal shows elsewhere; possibly favorable rocks but no coal known at location;
- b** queried rock unit or undifferentiated group (two or more rock units mapped together, so presence of coal-bearing unit is uncertain);
- c** cover of recent (Quaternary) unconsolidated sediments suspected of being underlain by a formation that hosts coal elsewhere;
- d** Tertiary basin; most of the coal on the Seward Peninsula is lignite (lower quality coal) found within Tertiary-aged sedimentary rocks confined in areas called basins (see 'basin,' Glossary); therefore, all such basins on the Peninsula potentially contain coal deposits;
- e** unverified report of coal occurrence; off-hand reference to coal in published geological report; other second-hand or unconfirmed reports.

3 Medium to high possibility for substantial coal discoveries:

- f** coal bearing formation close to exposed coal, e.g. other end of basin or syncline (see 2d, above, and Glossary) from known coal deposits;
- g** scattered, small surficial coal shows or float (see Glossary) that may be weathering out of a hidden coal deposit;
- h** "mined out" or formerly subeconomic sites where future investigation may reveal usable coal resources;
- i** Cretaceous basin (see 2d, above, and Glossary): composed of Cretaceous-aged rocks known elsewhere to contain medium to large tonnages of good quality (subbituminous to bituminous) coal; rated higher than 2d both because of likely higher coal quality and because of high tonnage potential demonstrated, for example, by the large Cretaceous-aged Cape Beaufort coal field.

4 Known coal, lesser occurrences, and/or less well studied than 3's:

- j** marginal because of low rank (low Btu), low tonnage, structural complexity, or thin beds (even if coal is good quality and present in large amounts, thin beds may mean too much admixed waste);
- k** indicated and inferred resources (see Glossary) of 5's in favorable geology.
- m** may include cases where drilling has disclosed some coal but where its extent is still unknown.

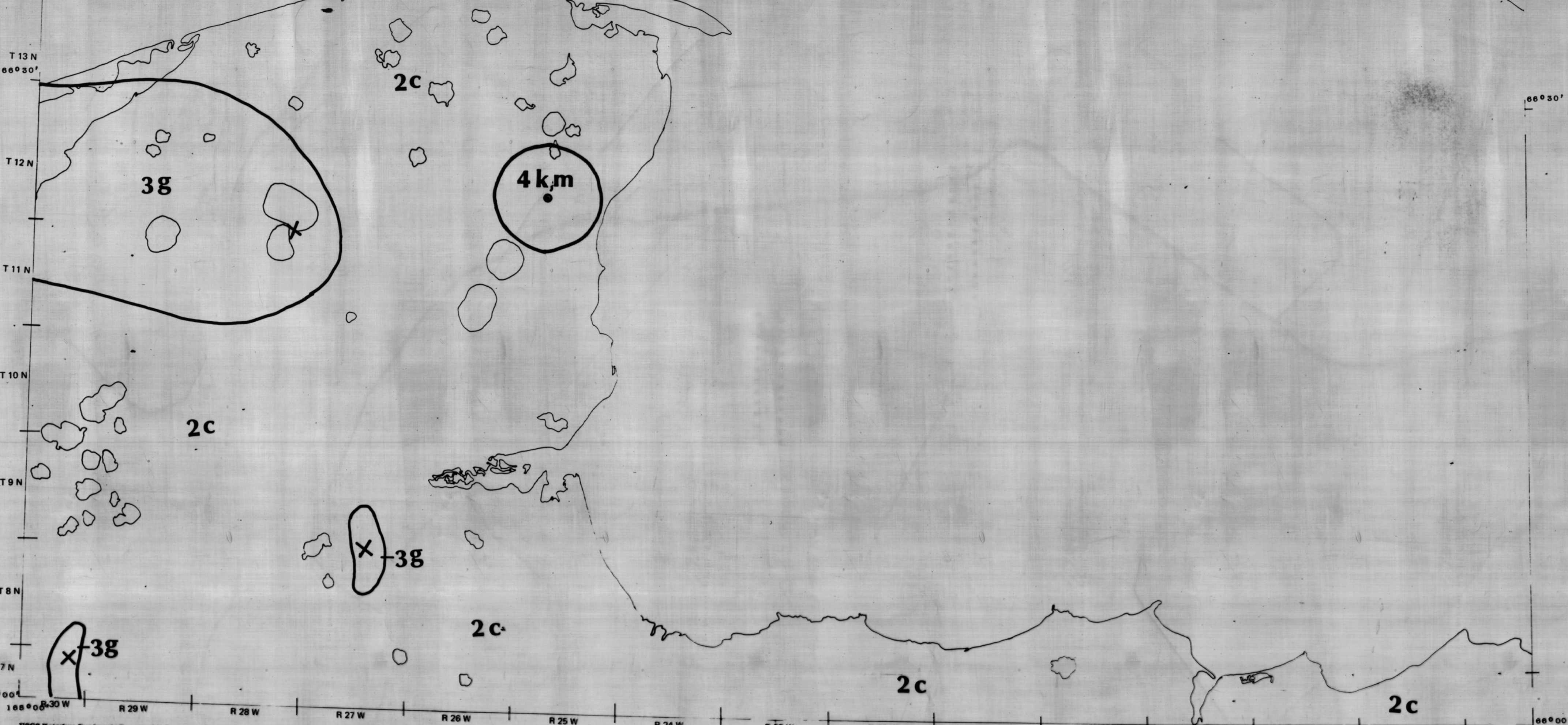
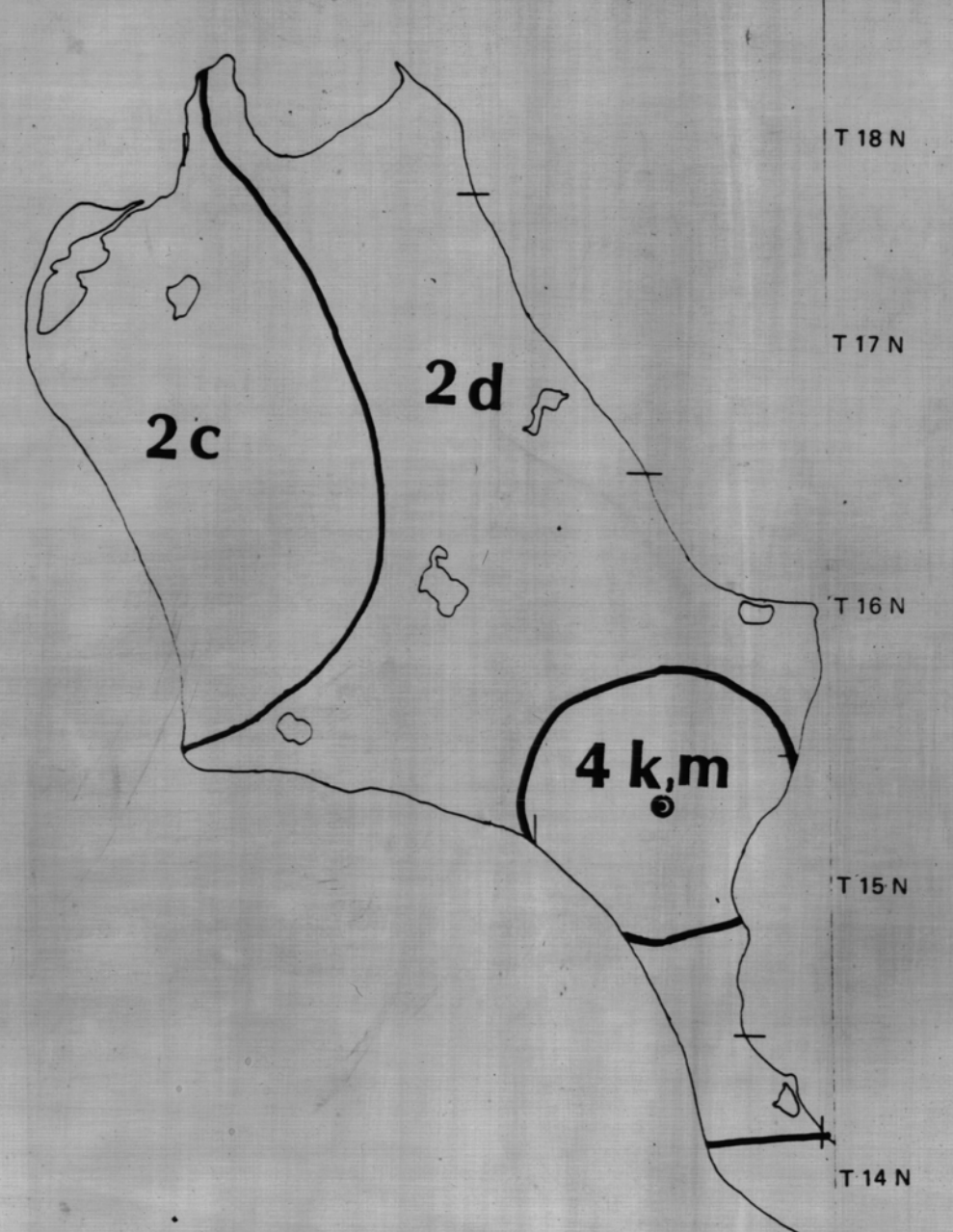
5 Known coal, medium to large measured resources (see Glossary) of usable quality coal. There is a large size difference between the smallest and largest but even the smallest is known to contain reserves that might be mineable under the right conditions. For example, the Chicago Creek coal deposit, on the Seward Peninsula, contains only one known thick bed of coal and is confined to a topographic basin (see Glossary); estimated tonnage for this deposit is a fraction of those calculated for the Deadfall syncline; and the Chicago Creek coal is lignite, while the Deadfall syncline coal is of higher, bituminous rank. Nevertheless, Chicago Creek rates a 5 as easily as the Deadfall syncline, for it contains potentially marketable coal, in adequate tonnage, close to tidewater.

Note Confidence

Each number rating, 1 through 5, has typical typical levels of data confidence. A rating of 1 often implies limited geological data as well as a lack of coal potential. A rating of 5 usually implies more and better data, as well as greater coal potential. It is, however, possible to have a rating of 1, signifying low or non-existent coal potential, based upon a high level of data. This is the case in parts of the Point Lay Quadrangle for example, where detailed geological mapping has been completed. In these areas, the data are so good that it is also possible to have a high rating of 4 for which the data base is limited, but "good". As a very general indication of the amount and depth of information upon which ratings are based, each rating level has been assigned one of the following confidence symbols:

- Good data base
- Medium data base
- Fair or very general data base

These symbols are not meant as comments on the quality of work done by previous investigators, which in most cases is difficult to judge without rechecking the geology on the ground.



SYMBOLS

- ▲ FORMER COAL MINE
- COAL OUTCROP OR PROSPECT
- ✕ COAL FLOAT (GENERAL LOCATION)
- DRILLING DONE IN THIS AREA

USGS Kotzebue Quadrangle Topographic Map, Revised 1956 Edition

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ALASKA Department of NATURAL RESOURCES