

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 4 is the highest possible rating under this system. The letters "a" through "m" that accompany the numbers 1 through 5 are meant to clarify and qualify the number ratings assigned. In some cases, more than one letter is used, as in "2d". 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 881), using available surface and subsurface data. The kinds and reliability of data available determine how the resource potential is calculated (see "Coal Reserves," 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 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.
- 2** Low to medium possibility for substantial coal discoveries; these ratings based mostly on published general, broad-brush geology:
 - f** coal bearing formation close to exposed coal, e.g. other end of basin or syncline (see 2d, above, and Glossary) for 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.
- 3** Medium to high possibility for substantial coal discoveries:
 - 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.
- 4** Known coal, lesser occurrences, and/or less well studied than 5'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.

Notes and Conditions:

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 Fairley Bay Quadrangle, for example, where detailed geological mapping has shown that certain rock units are not coal-bearing. Conversely, it is also possible to have a high rating of 4 or which the data base is limited, but for which geologic conditions are highly favorable for coal resource potential, as in "2d". As a very general indication of the amount and depth of information upon which ratings are based, each rating above has been assigned one of the following confidence symbols:

- Good data base
- △ Medium data base
- Four or very general data base

SYMBOLS

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

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.

SUMMARY: SELAWIK 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.

basin --- Present day land surface

FOLDED ROCKS

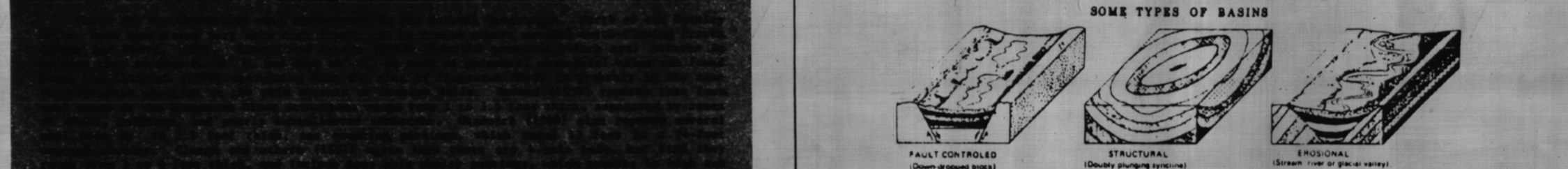
do not necessarily occur in pairs and can cut across each other forming more complex structures like basins.

ash --- Residual mineral impurities left after the combustion of coal. High-ash coal has more than 12 total ash, coal with less than 12 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 toward in all directions (see "syncline"); usually formed by the oblique intersection of two synclines, or by downfolding 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 Selawik 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: sediments (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 Selawik Quadrangle 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 35% 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 material 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 (loosely-transported rock debris) at the base of bluffs, in landslide material, and elsewhere downlope of a coal outcrop.

coal reserves --- 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 intercepts by conventional methods only coal beds at least 1' thick.
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 1/2 to 1 mile.
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 1,000' and a horizontal distance of 1 to 3 miles.

coal reserves --- 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 --- Similar to coal float, but after the fragments of a fractured sub-surface coal bed have been brought 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 flows 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.

STRIKE AND DIP OF ROCKS

results from one or more types of deformation, such as uplift, fault movement, or down-warping of rocks due to the weight of overlying strata.

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 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.

Coal Rank - Based on Moist, Mineral Matter Free Btu/lb

Lignite	8,000 to 8,500 Btu/lb
Subbituminous	subbituminous-A = 8,500 to 9,500 Btu/lb subbituminous-B = 9,500 to 11,000 Btu/lb
Bituminous	subbituminous-A to high volatile bituminous-C = 11,000 to 13,000 Btu/lb high volatile bituminous = 13,000 to 14,000 Btu/lb high volatile bituminous = 14,000 to 16,000 Btu/lb

Coal Rank - Based on Dry, Mineral Matter Free Fixed Carbon %

Bituminous (low volatile)	11,000 to 14,000 Btu/lb	66-70%
Bituminous (low volatile)	14,000 to 16,000 Btu/lb	70-82%
Sub-bituminous	8,500 to 11,000 Btu/lb	66-72%
Anthracite	14,000 to 16,000 Btu/lb	82-92%

Types of Coal

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 the properties using ASTM standardized methods. Rank is based primarily on heating value (Btu/lb) and content of certain chemical components. The main coal rank classifications are: 1) lignite - may have 20-30% moisture; 2) subbituminous - low to medium rank; 3) bituminous - medium to high rank; and 4) anthracite and anthracite - very high rank. Each of these rank classifications has distinctive characteristics (see below), and distinct properties that vary to determine its optimum potential use. The uses that are appropriate for one type of coal may not be appropriate for another type.

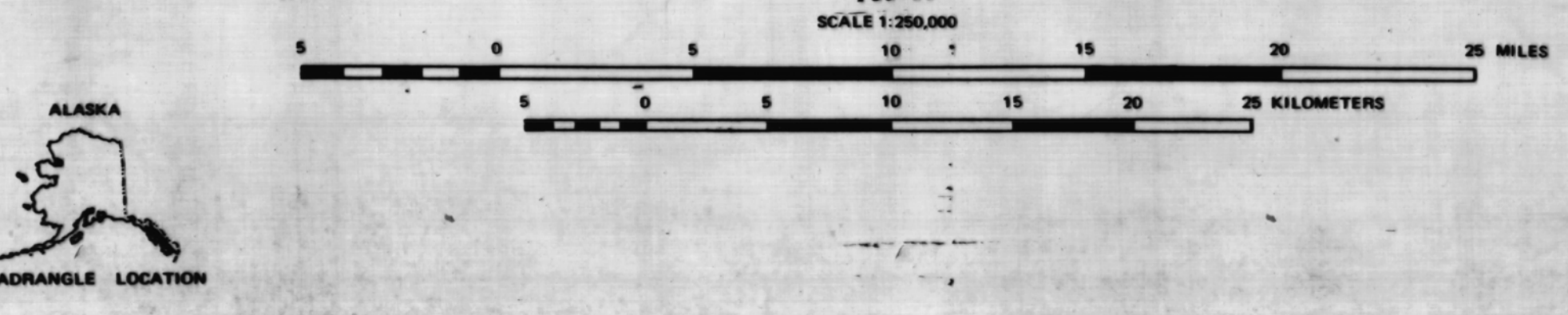
Classification and use are determined by a coal's rank, its heating capacity, and the weathering characteristics (whether it remains compact or readily crumbles and decomposes under surface conditions). Lignite and subbituminous coals are often satisfactory for local use, such as home heating and power generation, but poor weathering behavior and low heating values typically make the long distance transportation and storage of low-rank coal impractical. Bituminous coals are of higher rank than lignite and subbituminous coals, and may be coking, caking or non-caking. Caking and non-caking coals soften and flow prior to ignition. The escape of volatile components, under heat in the absence of oxygen, results in a dull-gray, porous mass called "coke" and a gas called "coal gas." Caking and non-caking bituminous coals are not suitable for metallurgical use, but have high heating values, and do not weather so badly as lower rank coals. Lignite, subbituminous and anthracite coals are used for power generation. Anthracite, the highest rank of coal, has the highest heating value per pound, with the lowest moisture content. Anthracite is difficult to burn, but it is very hard and durable. Anthracite is a very high fixed-carbon content, anthracite becomes graphite, which cannot be used for fuel.

USGS Earth Resources Topographic Map, Date 1:250,000

Head Sheet Notation

THIS REPORT HAS NOT BEEN READ BY THE DIRECTOR, HAS NOT RECEIVED OFFICIAL PUBLICATION STATUS, AND SHOULD NOT BE QUOTED AS SUCH. DATA USED IN THIS COMPILATION ARE AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION AT THE DGGG OFFICE, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA.

Alaska Department of NATURAL RESOURCES



SYMBOLS

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