

Figure 1—East-central North Slope of Alaska showing location of Umiat quadrangle (outlined in white) and major geologic provinces. National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPRA) outlined in yellow.

**GEOLOGIC MAPS OF NORTHERN ALASKA**  
Edited by  
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Arctic Alaska hosts a spectrum of geology and a wealth of natural resources matched by few areas on Earth. Prior to the 1940s, geologic investigations in the region mostly related to coastal surveys and inland reconnaissance studies. Nevertheless, the potential for petroleum accumulations beneath Alaska's North Slope and for mineral deposits in the Brooks Range was recognized through the observations of the early explorers. World War II demonstrated an urgent need for domestic energy and mineral resources and stimulated the initial systematic geologic mapping in northern Alaska as a basis for energy and mineral exploration. The geologic maps generated by these initial efforts also served as the foundation for additional petroleum exploration in the wake of the oil embargo of the 1970s. A few years into the 21st century, the natural resources of northern Alaska again are a focus of national attention. The need for detailed geologic maps is greater than ever, not only as a basis for petroleum and mineral exploration, but also for land-use planning and mitigating the environmental impacts of developing these resources.

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) performed the initial systematic mapping of the geology of Alaska's North Slope, including the northern front and foothills of the Brooks Range, between 1944 and 1953. Maps resulting from that work were published between 1960 and 1966 as USGS Professional Paper 303. Since that time, numerous geologic maps of individual quadrangles, or parts of quadrangles, have been published by the USGS and by the Alaska Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys (ADGGS). Until now, no attempt was made to produce an integrated set of geologic maps using a uniform scale and cartographic standards, and consistently applied stratigraphic nomenclature. SIM-2817 is a set of digital geologic maps comprising approximately 1,250,000 quadrangles, each assigned a unique letter file (for example, this map of the Umiat quadrangle is SIM-2817-A). The objective of these reports is to provide a new unified set of geologic maps of the northern flank and foothills of the Brooks Range using a uniform scale and cartographic style, as well as consistent stratigraphic nomenclature.

Although this collection of geologic maps incorporates significant contributions by many geologists who have mapped in northern Alaska during the past six decades, it would not be possible except for one geologist. This compilation is a testament to the career contributions of Charles G. (Gil) Mull, who has spent nearly forty years mapping the geology of the region for the petroleum industry, the USGS, the ADGGS, and the Alaska Division of Oil and Gas.

**GEOLOGIC MAP OF THE UMIAT QUADRANGLE**  
By  
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**INTRODUCTION**

This geologic map of the Umiat quadrangle is a compilation of USGS geologic maps previously published by Dettermann and others (1963) and Brose and Whittington (1966), and unpublished mapping by Pessel and Mull (1964) for the Richfield Oil Corporation. Geologic mapping from these three primary sources was augmented with additional geologic mapping from the National Petroleum Company (Martin, 1968). This report incorporates recent revisions in stratigraphic nomenclature by Mull and others (2003). Stratigraphic and structural interpretations were revised with the aid of modern high-resolution color infrared aerial photographs, which were checked in the field during the summers of 2001 and 2002.

The geologic map units of this report are condensed from those in Mull and others (2003), who give detailed information on thickness, regional distributions, age determinations, and depositional environments. Details of many specific units on the map area were corrected by Dettermann and others (1963) and Brose and Whittington (1966). Additional important aspects of the

**REGIONAL STRUCTURE**

The succession of relatively resistant Albian to Eocene clastic rocks in the Umiat and adjacent quadrangles is regionally deformed into a series of long, linear, relatively broad, open synclines and tightly folded and faulted anticlines. These structures are underlain by a Devonian and older, deformed and weakly metamorphosed basement underlying Torok Formation (Aptian to Cenomanian) and Kinikuk Formation (Jurassic to Lower Cretaceous), which form the cores of the anticlines but are either poorly or not exposed in the Umiat quadrangle. Many of the anticlines mapped in the foothills of the Brooks Range are characterized by north-vergent thrust faults. However, south-vergent back thrusts also are evident in some areas, particularly in areas in which the anticlines are defined at the surface by resistant beds of the Nanushuk Formation. A thrust fault along the axis of Umiat anticline is here reinterpreted as a south-vergent back thrust. The area of Little Umiat anticline, in the southwestern corner of the Umiat quadrangle, is marked by two south-vergent back thrusts.

Regional structural and stratigraphic relationships and aptite facies tectonic data suggest that the deformation of this part of the foothills fold belt probably occurred during the early Tertiary in response to a late stage of uplift of the Brooks Range orogenic belt to the south and Mull and others, 1997; O'Sullivan and others, 1997; Mull and others, in press).

Two northeast-southwest-trending regional faults not mapped by earlier workers are inferred to underlie the linear northeast-trending reaches of the associated valleys of the Colville and Tuluga Rivers. These faults, the Colville and Tuluga faults, are inferred on the basis of (1) the anomalous linear character of the two river valleys, and (2) the presence of apparent structural anomalies flanking both valleys in the Umiat quadrangle and in the adjacent Chandler Lake, Ilipegiuk River, and Kinikuk River quadrangles. Although detailed structural control is sparse adjacent to some parts of the Colville and Tuluga Rivers, anomalous bends in the axes of some anticlines are compatible with left-lateral strike-slip movement along wrench fault zones. The axes of the Umiat anticline is particularly anomalous; its regional northwest-southeast trend changes to an east-west trend adjacent to the inferred Colville fault zone, which trends N 65° E. In addition, the axial zone of the anticline near the Colville River is markedly more complicated than elsewhere, and contains a south-vergent back thrust that is not evident along the anticline northeast of Umiat. In a similar fashion, on the south side of the Colville River, the Fossil Creek anticline is inflexured and, near the river, has a significant normal fault along the southern arm of the axis. This anticline trend seems to have no comparable expression on the north side of the river. In contrast to the Umiat anticline, the axes of the relatively small Gukuk anticline, northeast of Umiat, seems to extend uninterrupted across the trace of the inferred Colville fault. The trends of some of the other structural axes near the Colville River are poorly constrained. However, in general the Colville River seems to separate an area of northwest-southeast-trending fold axes north of the river from an area of generally east-west-trending fold axes south of the river. East of the Anaktuvuk River, uncorrelated northeast-trending linear features expressed in the tundra-covered coastal plain are parallel to the northwestern extension of the inferred Colville fault zone.

Similar structural anomalies are present across the Tuluga fault, which is inferred to underlie the Kinikuk and Tuluga river valleys. Outcrop Mountain, on the west side of the Tuluga River, displays a gently east-plunging open syncline. In Upper Cretaceous rocks, whereas the coal veins at Schrader Bluff, on the east side of the Tuluga and Anaktuvuk Rivers, dip steeply southwest, South of Outpost Mountain, the Big Bend anticline trends east-west on the west side of the Tuluga River, but has no expression on the east side of the river, where poor exposures of the Nanushuk Formation are present. In the Umiat area, a gently east-plunging open syncline, the Chandler-Chandler anticline, displays a gently east-plunging open syncline compatible with left-lateral strike-slip movement are present along the trace of the inferred Tuluga fault.

The Colville and Tuluga faults are interpreted as deep-seated wrench faults above 223-202 m. They are relatively competent and incompetent Lower and Upper Cretaceous strata are deformed differentially along the underlying, more competent Torok-Nanushuk clastic wedge in the eastern Umiat quadrangle. The foothills fold belt. Slip along both faults probably does not exceed a few miles. The pattern of detailed axial traces in some areas, apparent deformation of full axes in other areas adjacent to the Colville River, and apparent en echelon folding above the fault trace in inter-arc areas are all compatible with deformation associated with small-to intermediate-displacement wrench faults (Harding and Lowell, 1979).

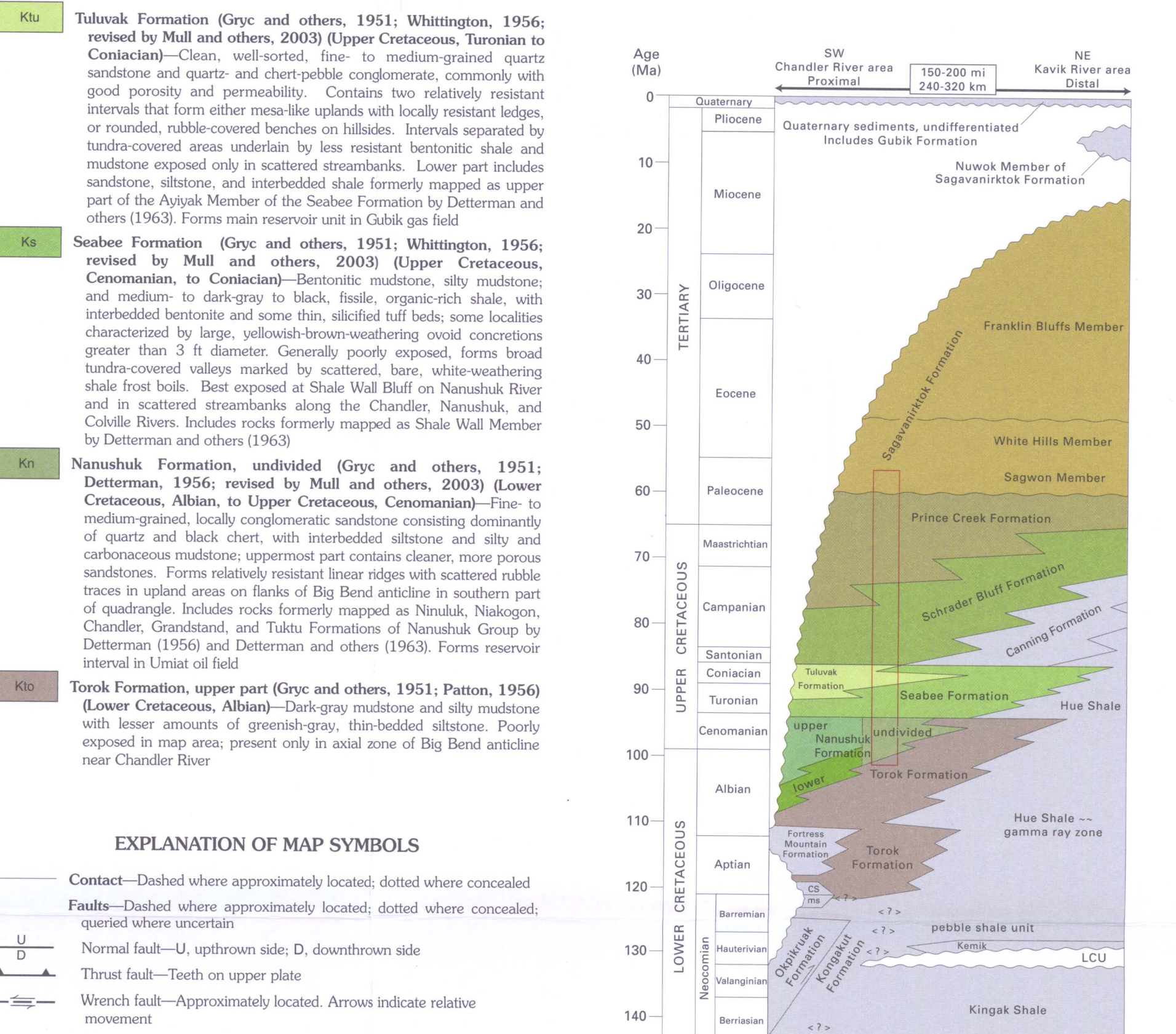


Figure 2—Chronostratigraphic column for the Colville basin, northern Alaska. Red box shows stratigraphic section in the Umiat quadrangle. Abbreviations or symbols are as follows: <math>\pm</math>, uncertain relationship; CS, carbonaceous sandstone of Fortness Mountain; NSU, Nanushuk sandstone unit; M and others, in press; ms, marneiferous shale unit (informal term); KMK, Kinikuk Sandstone formation as used by Molenaar and others (1997); LCU, Lower Cretaceous unconformity. Geologic time scale from Gradstein and Ogg (1996).