MARGINAL NOTES

PHYSIOGRAPHY AND DRAINAGE
The Onion Creek map area straddles the north slope of the Nisling Range to the south and the south slope of the Dawson Range to the north. Nisling River separates the two ranges and crosses the map area from east to west. Onion Creek is a major tributary to the Nisling River on the west side of the map area. The highest summits in the map area are located in the Nisling Range around Mount Erickson and reach 1700 m elevation (Fig. 1). Ridges and summits in the Dawson Range rarely exceed 1200 m elevation in the map area.

SURFICIAL GEOLOGY
The Onion Creek map area is predominantly unglaciated. The unglaciated surficial deposits consist of weathered bedrock colluvium, fluvial deposits, aeolian deposits, and organic material. At the highest elevations, on summits and ridge tops, the surficial deposits consist of locally weathered bedrock that has undergone minimal gravitational transport. Eroded bedrock landforms, such as tors, are more common in the Nisling Range particularly east of Mount Erickson. Slope deposits consist of colluviated weathered bedrock veneers and blankets that have textural properties reflecting the local bedrock lithologies. Aeolian additions into the soil profiles may be significant, especially near the Nisling River or Onion Creek valleys (Fig. 2).
The Onion Creek map area lies at the northern limit of glaciation by the Cordilleran Ice Sheet. Ice from the St. Elias lobe advanced through the Nisling Range and flowed down Onion Creek. At least three Quaternary advances are evident in Onion Creek and these are assumed to correlate (oldest to youngest) with the Illinoian Reid glaciation, early Wisconsin Gladstone glaciation and late Wisconsin McConnell glaciation.
Glacial deposits in the map area include large glaciofluvial deposits in Onion Creek and in isolated margins along the Nisling River (Fig. 3). Thick moraine accumulations are present in the southwest corner of the map area where ice in the Onion Creek valley diverted a stream into the Nisling River (Fig. 4). Deposits from the Gladstone glaciation were mapped near the diversion which suggests the drainage rearrangement likely occurred prior to the late Wisconsin. Terminal moraine deposits from the Gladstone and Reid glaciation were mapped in the Nisling River valley. These advances likely dammed the Nisling River temporarily. Alpine glacial deposits of potentially Gladstone age (60 Ka) were mapped on the Mount Erickson upland. Weathered cirques with no associated glacial deposits were also observed on Mount Erickson. These cirques may have formed prior to the Reid glaciation.

PERMAFROST
Evidence of permafrost was found at all elevations in the map area. Thermokarst lakes are particularly common, likely due to the abundance of loess that has accumulated in the valleys (Figs. 2 and 5). Inactive areas of the Nisling River floodplain are also underlain by permafrost. This is particularly obvious by the lack of tree growth on large areas on large of the floodplain. Periglacial features such as solifluction and nivation terraces are common near the higher uplands in the Nisling Range (Fig. 6).

DATA SOURCES
This surficial geology map was interpreted from high resolution digital stereo imagery (2.5 m panchromatic CartoSat-1 satellite data captured in 2007) and hard copy 1:40 000 scale aerial photographs flown in 1987 and 1989. Selective field checking was performed in June 2007 and July 2008.

Site Number	Location (UTM Zone 7, NAD 83)	Type	Results
08JB010	612519 E / 6885475 N	sluice (7.5 gallons)	No gold
08JB011	612477 E / 6887167 N	sluice	1 gold grain (small)
08JB012	611406 E / 6882280 N	sluice	No gold

Figure 1. A view to the southwest of Mount Erickson. Multiple cirques that pre-date the last glaciation are found on the upland (near 07JB004).

Figure 2. Nivation terraces provide evidence of periglacial activity on the west side of Mt. Erikson (07PL004). Terraces are approximately 5 m high.

Figure 3. Rounded pebble cobble gravel exposed in a glaciofluvial terrace at the mouth of Onion Creek (08PL044).

Figure 4. A view to the south up an unnamed tributary to the Nisling River that was diverted by glaciers occupying Onion Creek (08JB012). The diversion canyon is visible in the background. The glaciofluvial terrace visible on the right side of the creek is approximately 15 m high.

Figure 5. A view to the southeast of a tributary to the Nisling River in the north part of the map area. Abundant loess sedimentation in this valley has contributed to the presence of permafrost feature like the collapsed open-system pingo in the foreground and the thermokarst lakes

Figure 6. . Nivation terraces provide evidence of periglacial activity on the west side of Mount Erickson (07PL004). Terraces are approximately 5 m high.

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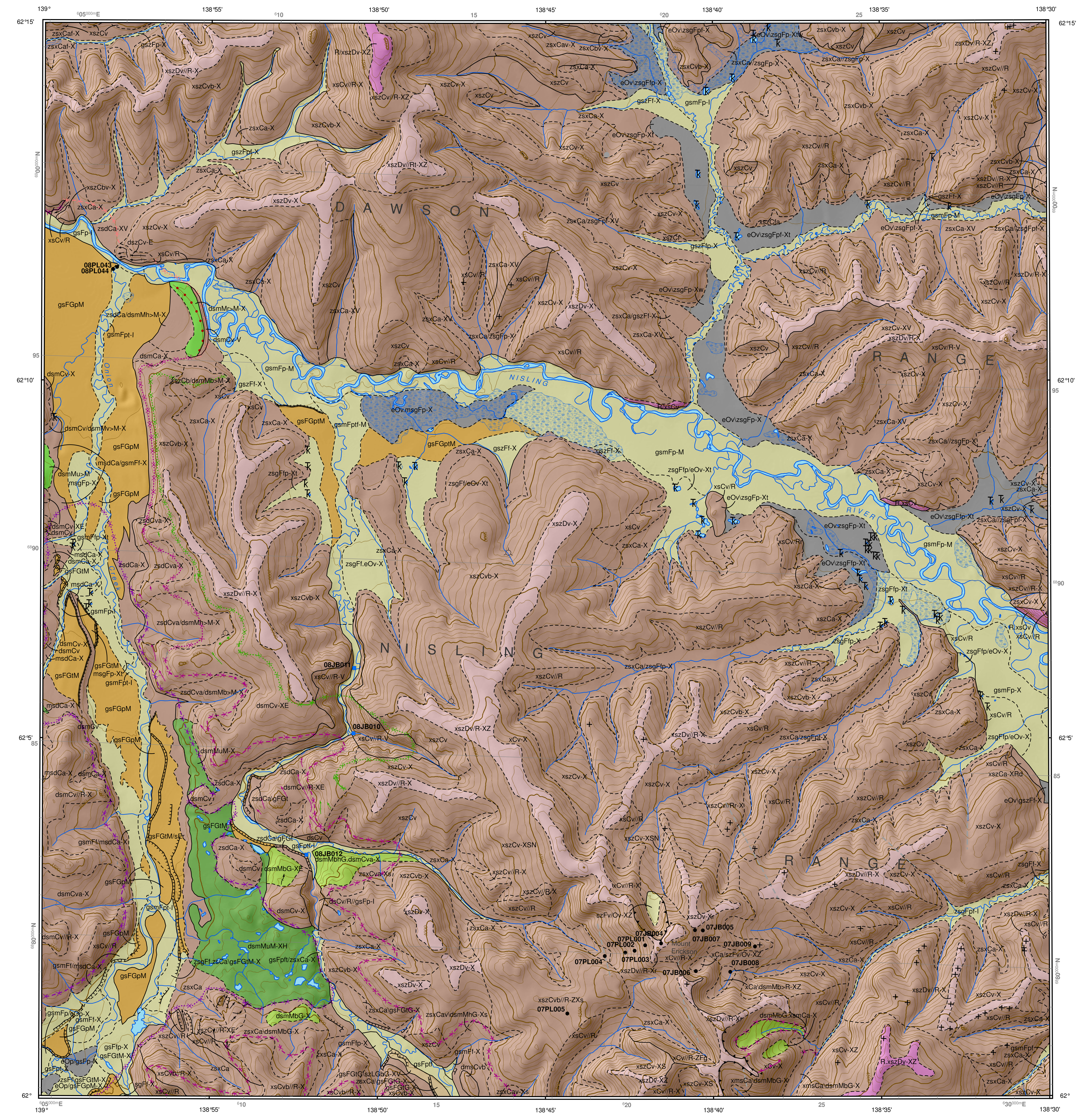
Howes, D.E. and Kenk, E., 1997. Terrain classification system for British Columbia, Version 2. B.C. Ministry of Environment and B.C. Ministry of Crown Lands, Victoria, B.C.



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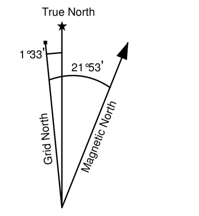
FIVE THOUSAND METRE GRID
Universal Transverse Mercator Projection
North American Datum 1983
Zone 7

CONTOUR INTERVAL 100 FEET
Elevations in feet above Mean Sea Level

SURFICIAL GEOLOGY
ONION CREEK
YUKON 115J/02

SCALE 1:50 000

0 1 2 3 4 5
kilometres



Use diagram only to obtain numerical values
APPROXIMATE MEAN DECLINATION NOVEMBER 2011
FOR CENTRE OF MAP

115J/06 open file 2013-10	115J/07 MOUNT PATTISON open file 2013-11	115J/08 APEX MOUNTAIN open file 2013-12
115J/03	115J/02 ONION CREEK open file 2013-8 MAP LOCATION	115J/01 KLAZA RIVER open file 2013-7
115G/14 TOSHINGERMANN LAKES open file 2009-45	115G/15 KIYERA LAKE open file 2009-46	115G/16 RHYOLITE CREEK open file 2009-47

TERRAIN CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

This surficial geology map was classified using the Terrain Classification System for British Columbia (Howes and Kenk, 1997), with minor modification to meet standards set by the Yukon Geological Survey. For example, we have added some permafrost process subclasses to accomodate the wider variety of permafrost features found in Yukon. We have also added an age classification to distinguish materials deposited during different Pleistocene glaciations.

A sample map unit label is shown below to illustrate the terrain classification system. Surficial materials form the core of the polygon map unit labels and are symbolized with a single upper case letter. Lower case textures are written to the left of the surficial material, and lower case surface expressions are written to the right. An upper case activity qualifier (A = active; I = inactive) may be shown immediately following the surficial material designator. The glacial qualifier "G" may alternatively be written immediately following the surficial material to indicate glacially modified materials. Age is indicated by a capital letter that follows the surface expression but precedes the process modifiers. Geomorphological processes (capital letters) and subclasses (lower case letters) always follow a dash symbol ("-").

sgFGptM-Xs
GEOMORPHOLOGICAL PROCESS(ES) (-X = permafrost)
SUBCLASS(ES) (s = sheetflow)
AGE (M = McConnell)
SURFACE EXPRESSION (pt = plain, terrace)
QUALIFIER (G = glacial; A = active; or I = inactive)
SURFICIAL MATERIAL (F = fluvial)
TEXTURE (sg = sand, gravel)

COMPOSITE SYMBOL DELIMITERS:

Due to scale limitations, up to 4 terrain units may be included in a single map unit label (e.g. sgFGptM.dsmMbM/xsCv/zcLGpM-XsV). Each component is separated by a delimiter that indicates relative proportions between the components (".", "/", "//") or a stratigraphic relationship ("\").

"." - terrain units on either side of the symbol are of approximately equal proportion
"/" - terrain unit(s) before the symbol is more extensive than the one(s) following
"//" - terrain unit(s) before the symbol is considerably more extensive than the one(s) following
"\" - terrain unit(s) before the "\" symbol stratigraphically overlies the one(s) following

1st terrain unit (>50% of map unit) / 2nd terrain unit (30-49% of map unit) // 3rd terrain unit (10-29% of map unit) \ Underlying terrain unit

SURFICIAL MATERIALS

Surficial materials are non-lithified, unconsolidated sediments. They are produced by weathering, sediment deposition, biological accumulation, human and volcanic activity. In general, surficial materials are of relatively young geological age and they constitute the parent material of most (pedological) soils. Note that a single polygon will be coloured only by the dominant surficial material, but other materials may exist in that unit.

HOLOCENE

O — Organic: Organic deposits are accumulations of vegetative matter thicker than 1 m. They are commonly found in floodplains, areas of near-surface permafrost such as north-facing slopes, and locations where there is poor drainage. Thin veneers of organic material are widespread and generally unmapped. Organic material in the map area commonly consists of peat with fibric to mesic decomposition.

E — Eolian: Sediment transported and deposited by wind. The dominant eolian sediment in the map area is loess, which is predominantly silty in texture with a smaller fraction of fine sand. Loess veneers and blankets were deposited over the landscape during the last (McConnell) glaciation. On stable sites, the loess is intact, whereas in cryoturbated or colluviated areas, the loess is reworked into the soil profile and its presence is indicated by the "z" textural symbol. Resedimented loess is a major component of colluvial aprons in the area. Ice-rich permafrost is common within low-lying eolian sediments.

C — Colluvium: Material transported and deposited by down-slope, gravity-driven processes such as creep, solifluction, landslides and snow avalanches. Colluvium is the dominant surficial material in the region as most of the area escaped Pleistocene glaciation. It commonly has a stratified structure with a highly variable texture and composition controlled by the parent material, transport mechanism and travel distance. Colluvium on uplands and slopes is generally derived from weathered bedrock and loess, resulting in a silt-rich diamicton containing angular, local bedrock clasts. On steeper slopes colluvium is generally coarser grained, as it has been deposited by rapid mass wasting processes such as rock fall, debris flows and avalanches. Slower processes such as sheetwash, solifluction and creep occur on gentler slopes and produce finer grained colluvium. Colluvial aprons found on lower slopes are commonly ice-rich and are primarily composed of resedimented loess and peat.

F, FA — Fluvial: Sediments transported and deposited by modern streams and rivers, found in floodplains, fans and terraces. Fluvial deposits typically consist of well-sorted stratified sand and gravel comprising sub-angular to rounded clasts. In unglaciated regions, low order streams are confined to very narrow V-shaped valleys and their fluvial deposits are generally not mapped due to scale limitations; their sediments, however, are more coarse grained and more locally derived than in higher order streams. Active fluvial (FA) materials are subject to regular flooding.

Glaciofluvial: Sediments transported and deposited by glacial meltwater above, in, below, or adjacent to a glacier. Glaciofluvial materials are deposited in meltwater channels, eskers, plains, terraces, kames and deltas. Sediments consist of moderately to well-sorted, rounded, stratified sand and gravel, although the nature and texture may vary locally depending on transport distance. Near surface ground ice is generally absent in glaciofluvial deposits unless there is a poorly drained underlying unit present.

FG^M — LATE WISCONSIN - MCCONNELL (M)
$FG^{>M}$ — PRE-LATE WISCONSIN - MCCONNELL (>M)
FG^R — ILLINOIAN - REID (R)
$FG^{>R}$ — EARLY PLEISTOCENE - PRE-REID (>R)

Morainal: Morainal (till) materials are diamicts deposited by either: primary glacial processes such as lodgement, deformation and melt-out (ablation); or secondary glacial processes caused by gravity and water. Therefore, this term applies to all types of till including flow tills, which are not directly deposited by glacial ice. Ablation tills are relatively coarse grained and tend to have a hummocky or rolling surface expression; lodgement tills typically have a finer grained matrix with fewer clasts and a smoother surface expression. Tills are generally colluviated when found on slopes. Permafrost is widespread within morainal deposits. As most of the region is unglaciated, morainal sediments are rare in the map area. Even in upland areas that show evidence of alpine glaciation, no morainal sediments remain as they have likely been buried in colluvium and/or modified by intense periglacial and colluvial processes.

M^M — LATE WISCONSIN - MCCONNELL (M)
$M^{>M}$ — PRE-LATE WISCONSIN - MCCONNELL (>M)
M^G — EARLY WISCONSIN - GLADSTONE (G)
M^R — ILLINOIAN - REID (R)
$M^{>R}$ — EARLY PLEISTOCENE - PRE-REID (>R)

LG — Glaciolacustrine: Stratified sand, silt and clay deposited in a lake that formed on, in, under or beside a glacier; may contain dropstones (ice-rafted clasts). Ice-rich permafrost and thermokarst erosion is widespread in these deposits as they are generally poorly drained with high *in situ* moisture contents that promote the growth of massive ice lenses. Glaciolacustrine sediments are rarely exposed in the region.

PRE-QUATERNARY

R — Bedrock: Bedrock in this map area is dominated by mid-Cretaceous Whitehorse Suite granodiorites, including the Dawson Range Batholith in the northeastern corner of the map area, and the Nisling Range Batholith which lies south of the Nisling River and east of Onion Creek. Early Tertiary granites (Nisling Range Suite) also occur south of Nisling River. These batholiths intrude Paleozoic and older Yukon Tanana terrane metamorphic lithologies (schist, quartzite, orthogneiss, amphibolite and/or gneiss) that occur north of the Nisling River and west of Onion Creek. Lower Eocene Skukum volcanics occur in the northwestern portion of the map sheet (Gordey and Makepeace, 2003).

D — Weathered bedrock: bedrock decomposed or disintegrated *in situ* by processes of chemical and/or mechanical weathering, such as freeze-thaw. Weathered bedrock is common on unglaciated uplands, especially along ridge tops and near tors. The material texture is coarse grained and sandy where derived from plutonic bedrock, although a silty component may be present due to incorporation of loess by cryoturbation.

SYMBOLS

GEOLOGICAL BOUNDARIES:
defined
approximate
assumed

AGE OF GLACIAL FEATURES:
McConnell (M) - late Wisconsin
Gladstone (G) - early Wisconsin
Reid (R) - Illinoian
Pre-Reid (>R) - early to middle Pleistocene
age unspecified

GLACIAL FEATURES:
moraine ridge
meltwater channel
cirque
arete

GLACIAL LIMITS:
defined
approximate
assumed

OTHER LINEAR FEATURES:
escarpment
lineation (fault, joint, tension crack)
sand dunes
strandline

TOPOGRAPHIC FEATURES:
contours
streams
trails
wetlands

GROUND OBSERVATION SITES:
(labelled with site number, e.g. 10JB004)
field station
stratigraphic section
radiocarbon sample
cosmogenic sample
heavy mineral sample
erratic, unspecified age
erratic, Gladstone
erratic, Reid
no erratics found

OTHER SURFACE FEATURES:
open system pingo; uncollapsed, collapsed
tor
drumlin (coloured by glacial age)
cryoplanation terrace
kettle
landslide, active layer detachment
palsa
thermokarst pond
placer mine
Yukon mineral occurrence

TEXTURE

Texture refers to the size, shape and sorting of particles in clastic sediments, and the proportion and degree of decomposition of plant fibre in organic sediments. Texture is indicated by up to three lower case letters, placed immediately before the surficial material designator, listed in order of decreasing abundance.

Specific clastic textures
a - blocks: angular particles >256 mm in size
b - boulders: rounded particles >256 mm in size
k - cobbles: rounded particles >64 - 256 mm in size
p - pebbles: rounded particles >2 - 64 mm in size
s - sand: particles between >0.0625 - 2 mm in size
z - silt: particles 2 µm - 0.0625 mm in size
c - clay: particles ≤2 µm in size

Common clastic textural groupings
d - mixed fragments: a mixture of rounded and angular particles >2 mm in size
x - angular fragments: a mixture of angular fragments >2 mm in size (*i.e.*, a mixture of blocks and rubble)
g - gravel: a mixture of two or more size ranges of rounded particles >2 mm in size (*e.g.*, a mixture of boulders, cobbles and pebbles); may include interstitial sand
r - rubble: angular particles between 2 and 256 mm; may include interstitial sand
m - mud: a mixture of silt and clay; may also contain a minor fraction of fine sand
y - shells: a sediment consisting dominantly of shells and/or shell fragments

Organic terms
o - organic: general organic materials
e - fibric: the least decomposed of all organic materials; it contains amounts of well-preserved fibre (40% or more) that can be identified as to botanical origin upon rubbing
u - mesic: organic material at a stage of decomposition intermediate between fibric and humic
h - humic: organic material at an advanced stage of decomposition; it has the lowest amount of fibre, the highest bulk density, and the lowest saturated water-holding capacity of the organic materials; fibres that remain after rubbing constitute less than 10% of the volume of the material

SURFACE EXPRESSION

Surface expression refers to the form (assemblage of slopes) and pattern of forms expressed by a surficial material at the land surface. This three-dimensional shape of the material is equivalent to 'landform' used in a non-genetic sense (*e.g.*, ridges, plain). Surface expression symbols also describe the manner in which unconsolidated surficial materials relate to the underlying substrate (*e.g.*, veneer). Surface expression is indicated by up to three lower case letters, placed immediately following the surficial material designator, listed in order of decreasing extent.

a - apron: a wedge-like slope-toe complex of laterally coalescent colluvial fans and blankets. Longitudinal slopes are generally less than 15° (26%) from apex to toe with flat or gently convex/concave profiles

b - blanket: a layer of unconsolidated material thick enough (>1 m) to mask minor irregularities of the surface of the underlying material, but still conforms to the general underlying topography; outcrops of the underlying unit are rare

c - cone: a cone or sector of a cone, mostly steeper than 15° (26%); longitudinal profile is smooth and straight, or slightly concave/convex; typically applied to talus cones

f - fan: sector of a cone with a slope gradient less than 15° (26%) from apex to toe; longitudinal profile is smooth and straight, or slightly concave/convex

h - hummock: steep sided hillock(s) and hollow(s) with multidirectional slopes dominantly between 15-35° (26-70%) if composed of unconsolidated materials, whereas bedrock slopes may be steeper; local relief >1 m; in plan, an assemblage of non-linear, generally chaotic forms that are rounded or irregular in cross-profile; commonly applied to knob-and-kettle glaciofluvial terrain

l - delta: landform created at the mouth of a river or stream where it flows into a body of water; gently sloping surfaces between 0-3° (0-5%), and moderate to steeply sloping fronts between 16-35° (27-70%); glaciofluvial deltas in the map area are typically coarse-grained with steep sides and gently inclined kettled or channeled surfaces

m - rolling: elongate hillock(s); slopes dominantly between 3-15° (5-26%); local relief >1 m; in plan, an assemblage of parallel or sub-parallel linear forms with subdued relief (commonly applied to bedrock ridges and fluted or streamlined till plains)

p - plain: a level or very gently sloping, unidirectional (planar) surface with slopes 0-3° (0-5%); relief of local surface irregularities generally <1 m; applied to (glacio)fluvial floodplains, organic deposits, lacustrine deposits and till plains

r - ridge: elongate hillock(s) with slopes dominantly 15-35° (26-70%) if composed of unconsolidated materials; bedrock slopes may be steeper; local relief is >1 m; in plan, an assemblage of parallel or sub-parallel linear forms; commonly applied to drumlinized till plains, eskers, morainal ridges, crevasse fillings and ridged bedrock

t - terrace: a single or assemblage of step-like forms where each step-like form consists of a scarp face and a horizontal or gently inclined surface above it; applied to fluvial and lacustrine terraces and stepped bedrock topography

v - veneer: a layer of unconsolidated materials too thin to mask the minor irregularities of the surface of the underlying material; 10 cm - 1m thick; commonly applied to eolian/loess veneers and colluvial veneers

GEOMORPHOLOGICAL PROCESSES

Geomorphological processes are natural mechanisms of weathering, erosion and deposition that result in the modification of the surficial materials and landforms at the earth's surface. Unless a qualifier (A (active) or I (inactive)) is used, all processes are assumed to be active, except for deglacial processes. Up to three upper case letters may be used to indicate processes. These are listed in order of decreasing importance and placed after the surface expression symbol, following a dash (-) symbol.

Subclasses are used to provide more specific information about a general geomorphological process, and are represented by lower case letter(s) placed after the related process designator. Up to two subclasses can be associated with each process. Process subclasses used on this map are defined with the related process below.

EROSIONAL PROCESSES

V - gully erosion: running water, mass movement and/or snow avalanching, resulting in the formation of parallel and sub-parallel, long, narrow ravines

FLUVIAL PROCESSES

B - braiding channel: active floodplain consists of many diverging and converging channels separated by unvegetated bars

I - irregularly sinuous channel: a clearly defined main channel displaying irregular turns and bends without repetition of similar features; backchannels may be common, and minor side channels and a few bars and islands may be present, but regular and irregular meanders are absent

J - anastamosing channel: a channel zone where channels diverge and converge around many islands. The islands are vegetated and have surfaces that are far above mean maximum discharge levels

M - meandering channel: a clearly defined channel characterized by a regular and repeated pattern of bends with relatively uniform amplitude and wave length

MASS MOVEMENT PROCESSES

F - slow mass movements: slow downslope movement of masses of cohesive or non-cohesive surficial material and/or bedrock by creeping, flowing or sliding

L - mass movement with an unspecified rate

R - rapid mass movements: rapid downslope movement by falling, rolling, sliding or flowing of dry, moist or saturated debris derived from surficial material and/or bedrock

Subclasses: (b) rockfall; (d) debris flow; (g) rock creep; (s) debris slide; (u) slump in surficial material

PERIGLACIAL PROCESSES

C - cryoturbation: movement of surficial materials by heaving and/or churning due to frost action (repeated freezing and thawing)

S - solifluction: slow gravitational downslope movement of saturated non-frozen overburden across a frozen or otherwise impermeable substrate

X - permafrost processes: processes controlled by the presence of permafrost, and permafrost aggradation or degradation

Z - general periglacial processes: solifluction, cryoturbation and nivation, possibly occuring in a single polygon

Subclasses: (e) thermokarst erosion; (f) thaw flow slides; (l) segregated ice; (n) pingo; (t) thermokarst subsidence; (r) patterned ground; (s) sheetwash; (w) ice-wedge polygons

DEGLACIAL PROCESSES

E - channeled by meltwater: erosion and channel formation by meltwater alongside, beneath, or in front of a glacier

H - kettled: depressions in surficial materials resulting from the melting of buried glacier ice

T - ice contact: landforms that developed in contact with glacier ice such as kames

SURFICIAL MATERIAL AGE

GLACIATION	TIME PERIOD	APPROXIMATE GLACIAL MAXIMUM	MARINE ISOTOPE STAGE
M - McConnell	late Wisconsin	15 000 years ago	2
G - Gladstone	early Wisconsin	55 000 years ago	4
R - Reid	Illinoian	130 000 years ago	6
>R - Pre-Reid	early to Middle Pleistocene	2.6 million to 200 000 years ago	8-102

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Any revisions or additional geological information known to the user would be welcomed by the Yukon Geological Survey.

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Yukon Geological Survey
Energy, Mines and Resources
Government of Yukon

Open File 2013-8

Surficial Geology of Onion Creek
(NTS 115J/02)
Yukon
(1:50 000 scale)

by

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