



This map has been reprinted from a scanned version of the original map...

OPEN FILE DOSSIER PUBLIC 5 0 1 JAN 1977 GEOLOGICAL SURVEY COMMISSION GÉOLOGIQUE OTTAWA

LEGEND TO ACCOMPANY BIOPHYSICAL REGIONS MAPS FOR 49G, 49H and 340B south

Geological and geomorphological compilation by D.A. Hodgson, vegetation by S.A. Edlund; based on field work in 1972-74 and airphoto interpretation.

INTRODUCTION

Biophysical maps are intended to provide the point information required for most land use activities, rather than present a broad, regional view.

In the eastern Queen Elizabeth Islands, there is too great a variety of surficial materials units (see maps and legend) for such units to be used as the key to an interpretive legend.

Variations in surficial materials were considered the most important factor in drawing up the biophysical units, and thus the materials map is used as the base map for presentation.

Users interested in a comprehensive description of this mapping system should refer to: Hodgson, D.A.

1975: The terrain mapping and evaluation system adopted for the eastern Queen Elizabeth Islands; in Report of Activities, Part C; Geol. Surv. Can., Paper 75-1C, p. 95-100.

Reprints are available from the author.

UNIT DESIGNATIONS

The system has two tiers: groups of units (regions) identified by whole numbers and described in the first entry of each legend panel; and the individual units, identified by decimal fractions after the group number.

Though assembly of units and groups of units is based on an appreciation of land attributes, these units are essentially a convenience for handling data; the regional boundaries in particular should not be thought of as enclosing 'natural' geographical areas.

Note that fluvial deposits frequently transect two or more units, and may not be separated out on the biophysical map. They can be identified on the surficial underlay.

GLOSSARY

Terms not adequately defined in, or used here in a different sense from, standard texts such as the American Geological Institute Glossary (A.G.I., 1972) or the Encyclopaedia of Geomorphology (Ed. by R.W. Rhodes; Reinhold, 1968).

Desiccation Polygons: Cracks forming polygons generally 10 cm - 1 m diameter. These can form during either summer or winter desiccation, and are most prevalent on bare, fine-grained materials. Cracks may extend below the active layer as thin (<5 cm) wedges (= 'single ice' veins).

Hummocks: Tracts of dome-shaped soil mounds, 10 cm - 1 m diameter, to 50 cm high, prevalent in fine-grained materials, vegetated or bare.

Ice-wedge Polygons: Ice wedges arranged in polygonal patterns. Polygon diameters commonly measure 5 - 30 m, with wedges to 5 m in width just below the active layer, tapering out at 2 - 10 m depth.

Seepage Lines: Linear parallel or subparallel concentrations of surface runoff or moisture, on slopes >10, in zones generally 0.25 to 2 m (occasionally >5 m) wide, generally spaced at intervals of 0.5 to 2 m (occasionally 5 m).

Winter: Temperature of surficial materials is below freezing-point. Snow cover general, though some areas may be blown clear.

Solifluction Lobes: may be evident on all types of unconsolidated material, but are most prominent on coarse materials. They may attain very large dimensions in this region, e.g., to heights to 4 m, widths to 15 m, lengths to 50 m.

Thermokarst Ponds: formed where melting of ground ice and the subsequent depression of the ground surface forms closed basins which trap water and accelerate the process.

Thermokarst Ponds: formed where melting of ground ice and the subsequent depression of the ground surface forms closed basins which trap water and accelerate the process.

COLUMN HEADINGS

- 1. UNIT: Shown on biophysical regions map. The first entry is a general description of the group of units (e.g. 1); subsequent entries describe the individual units (e.g. 1.1, 1.2).
- 2. MATERIAL DESIGNATOR: A list of the main surficial materials that occur within the biophysical group or unit. For explanation, see surficial materials legend.
- 3. TOPOGRAPHY: Each entry is headed by the range of relief in the group or unit. Values are given first in feet, as they were taken from a topographic map. Elsewhere in the legend, metric units are used.
- 4. DRAINAGE, etc.: Drainage universally poor during snowmelt period - which may extend throughout the 'summer' below perennial snowbanks (especially on north-facing slopes). Drainage descriptions (good/well drained, moderately good/fair, imperfect, poor) apply to the period following snowmelt. They are approximations of average conditions in the active layer - which is commonly desiccated at the surface, but saturated over the frost table.
- 5. SURFICIAL MATERIALS: For greater detail, see surficial materials underlay and legend.
- 6. GROUND ICE: Observations of excess ice other than ice wedges were restricted to rare natural exposures, and to 150 shallow holes, most drilled in fine grained materials to <2 m with a CRREL - type auger, a few deeper holes drilled in coarser materials with a Winkie diamond drill.

- 7. VEGETATION: Broad plant communities are generally named for the dominant vascular plants. The estimated composition and plant cover is stratified and is shown in fraction form. The upper stratum (the numerator), is composed of vascular plants: grasses, sedges, rushes, dwarf shrubs and herbs. The lower stratum (the denominator), often just a thin surface veneer, is cryptogamic. When the denominator is missing, there is an absence of a lower stratum. Examples: 105 Carex stans-Eriophorum Moss; 58 Saxifraga oppositifolia barrens.
- 8. SENSITIVITY AND TRAFFICABILITY RATINGS: Tentative ratings of each unit have been made, commonly based on field observations of disturbed areas. Three periods of the year are recognized in the ratings. Winter: Temperature of surficial materials is below freezing-point. Snow cover general, though some areas may be blown clear. Snowmelt: Period of snow ablation by melting, with air temperatures consistently above freezing-point. Generally from mid-June to mid-July for this region, but variable areally and by altitude, and may only extend over 1-2 weeks at any one location. Can extend through the summer below perennial snowbanks. The active layer is shallow, with a high moisture content, often supersaturated. Even gravels may be near a fluid state, and most mass movement takes place in this period.

- 9. SENSITIVITY: From the end of snowmelt to the onset of the winter, freeze-up in late August. Generally a period of evaporation from the active layer, especially from the upper 5 cm in unvegetated areas, and desiccation of fine-grained materials. Precipitation mainly rain; usually light or of short duration, on rare occasions heavy (ca. 5 mm in a 24-hour period). Total precipitation for June-August ca. 50 mm.
- 10. TRAFFICABILITY: Assessment of terrain in terms of performance of arctic tracked vehicles. Roughness or grade. 1. Easily traversible in all directions. 2. Traversible, but with difficulty locally or in some directions. 3. Difficult or impossible. Traction - includes assessment of ability of surface to bear the vehicle. First value for snowmelt and heavy rain periods / Second value for summer. 1. Easily traversible 2. Traversible, with slight or local difficulty 3. Difficult

Traction is not normally a problem in winter.

Table with 10 columns: UNIT, MATERIALS DESIGNATOR, TOPOGRAPHY, DRAINAGE, SURFICIAL MATERIALS, GROUND ICE, VEGETATION, SENSITIVITY, TRAFFICABILITY. Contains detailed descriptions for units 1.1 through 1.11.

OPEN FILE DOSSIER PUBLIC 5 0 1 JAN 1977 GEOLOGICAL SURVEY COMMISSION GÉOLOGIQUE OTTAWA

This map has been reprinted from a scanned version of the original map...