DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

This map is part of a four-map series of Browns Bank, located at the southwestern end of the Scotian Shelf at the entrance to the Gulf of Maine on the Atlantic continental shelf off Nova Scotia. The maps are the products of a 1996–1997 survey that used a multibeam sonar system to map 3056 km² of the seafloor. Previous and subsequent surveys collected geological and biological data for scientific interpretation. This map shows the seafloor topography of Browns Bank in shaded relief view and seafloor depth (coded by colour) at a scale of 1:100 000. Topographic contours generated from the multibeam data are shown (in white) on the colour-coded multibeam topography at a depth interval of 10 m. Bathymetric contours (in blue) outside the multibeam survey area, also presented at a depth interval of 10 m, are from the Natural Resource Map Series (Canadian Hydrographic Service, 1972a, b). Map 2085A (Todd et al., 2006) shows coloured backscatter strength in shaded-relief view. Map 2093A (Todd et al., in press a) shows seafloor topography in shaded-relief view with colour-coded surficial geological units. Map 2092A (Todd et al., in

press b) shows seafloor topography in shaded-relief view with colour-coded benthic habitat zonation.

Multibeam bathymetric data were collected by the Canadian Hydrographic Service using the Canadian Coast Guard Ship *Frederick G. Creed*, a SWATH (small waterplane area twin hull) vessel. The ship was equipped with a Simrad Subsea EM1000 multibeam bathymetric survey system (95 kHz) with the transducer mounted in the starboard pontoon. This system produces 60 beams arrayed over an arc of 150° and operates by ensonifying a narrow strip of seafloor across track and detecting the seafloor echo. The width of seafloor imaged on each survey line was five to six times the water depth. Line spacing was about three to four times water depth to provide ensonification overlap between adjacent lines. The Differential Global Positioning System was used for navigation, providing positional accuracy of ±3 m. Survey speeds averaged 14 knots resulting in an average data collection rate of about 5.0 km²/h in water depths of 35–70 m. The sound velocity in the ocean was measured during multibeam data collection and used to correct the effect of sonar beam refraction. During the survey, water-depth values were inspected and erroneous values were removed. The data were adjusted for tidal variation using tidal predictions from the Canadian Hydrographic Service.

MULTIBEAM BATHYMETRIC DATA DISPLAY The multibeam bathymetric data are presented at 10 m/pixel horizontal resolution. The shaded-relief image was created by vertically exaggerating the topography 13 times and then artificially illuminating the relief by a virtual light source positioned 40° above the horizon at an azimuth of 35°. In the resulting image, topographic features are enhanced by strong illumination on the northeast-facing slopes and by shadows cast on the southwest-facing slopes. Small topographic features are accentuated that could not be effectively shown by contours at this scale. (On maps 2085A, 2093A, and 2092A (Todd et al., 2006, in press a, b) the shaded-relief image also serves as the map background with colours superimposed.) Superimposed on the shaded-relief image are colours assigned to water depth, ranging from red (shallow) to violet (deep). In order to apply the widest colour range to the most frequently occurring water depths, hypsometric analysis was used to calculate the cumulative frequency of water depth. The resulting colour ramp highlights subtle variations in water depth that would otherwise be obscured. The colours for water depth allow the topography to be viewed in three dimensions through the use of ChromaDepth™ 3-D glasses. These lenses create a stereo image by shifting colours in different directions for each eye. Red appears in the foreground, green in the middle ground, and violet in the background. The other colours fall in between according to the colours of the rainbow. Some features in the multibeam data are artifacts of data collection and environmental conditions during the survey periods. The orientation of the survey track lines can, in some instances, be identified by faint parallel stripes in the image (for example near 42° 37' N, 66° 14' W). Because these artifacts are usually regular and geometric in appearance on the map, the human eye can disregard them and

The Scotian Shelf is a glaciated continental shelf characterized by a series of large, shallow banks on the outer shelf, of which Browns Bank is one example. The banks are separated by intervening saddles or troughs. These landforms are interpreted as cuestas and juxtaposed lowlands developed on the bedrock surface and are typical of a coastal plain environment affected by subaerial erosion in the Late Tertiary period (King and MacLean, 1976). Outcropping bedrock in the deep channel with rugged topography north of Browns Bank (informally named Browns Channel, Todd et al. (1999)) is interpreted as the farthest seaward exposure of deformed Lower Paleozoic (Cambro-Ordovician) metasedimentary rocks of the Meguma Group (Drapeau and King, 1972; Pe-Piper and Loncarevic, 1989). Overlying the Paleozoic bedrock beneath Browns Bank (but not outcropping) is Upper Cretaceous shale overlain unconformably by Tertiary mudstone and sandstone (King and MacLean, 1976; Fader et al., 1977). Both units are separated from the overlying unconsolidated Quaternary sediments by a rugged erosional surface. The

Tertiary section contains no strong regional seismic reflectors, but weak reflectors dipping 2° to the south have been identified (Geonautics Limited, 1982). The coastal plain off Nova Scotia was modified by the advance and retreat of North American continental ice sheets during the late Quaternary period (the last advance culminating in the Browns Bank region at about 20 000 BP) (King and Fader, 1986). Late Wisconsinan Laurentide ice terminated on Browns Bank and an outlet glacier reached the open sea through Northeast Channel south of Browns Bank (Mayewski et al., 1981; Hughes et al., 1985; Schnitker et al., 2001). Material deposited on Browns Bank during glacial time is discussed on Map 2093A, surficial geology (Todd et al., in press a). Further erosional modification of the glacial deposits on Browns Bank took place during the low stand of Late Wisconsinan sea level (about 18 000 BP) and the subsequent transgression across the shelf of rising sea level (Drapeau and King, 1972; Fader et al., 1977; Fader, 1989). The regional geomorphology of Browns Bank forms two flat plateaus, with depths ranging from less

than 50 m on the western part of the bank to almost 100 m on the eastern part. The southern and western edges of Browns Bank slope between 0.3° and 3° to the Northeast Channel (greater than 200 m depth). This major physiographic feature separates Browns Bank from Georges Bank (to the southwest) and is the principal hydrodynamic connection between continental slope water and the Gulf of Maine. Browns Bank is bounded to the north by Browns Channel, a west-east oriented trough where water depths reach 170 m. The plateaus forming Browns Bank exhibit geomorphological features formed during the Quaternary glaciation of the bank; these features are discussed on Map 2093A, surficial geology (Todd et al., in press a). Prominent on the bathymetric map and on cross-section A-B are two moraines on northwestern Browns Bank, the Fundian Moraine and the Browns Bank Moraine (Fig. 4). The northeast flank of the Browns Bank Moraine joins with the Fundian Moraine near 42° 49' N, 66° 13' W. The glacial geomorphology on Browns Bank has been modified and overprinted by sediment erosion and by deposition and formation of bedforms in the form of sand-wave fields and discrete sand dunes (Fig. 1, 2). These two sets of bedforms are geological evidence of the anticyclonic (clockwise) ocean circulation gyre on Browns Bank, with current strength up to 20 cm/s (Hannah et al., 2001).

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