

In 2004 and 2005, Sander Geophysics Limited completed four multi-sensor airborne geophysical surveys in the Nahanni River area of the Northwest Territories for Parks Canada (Prairie Creek, Caribou River and Flat River) and the Government of the Northwest Territories (Selkwi Range). The Geological Survey of Canada provided survey supervision and quality control. The purpose of the survey was to obtain quantitative geophysical data for mineral exploration and environmental monitoring. The surveys were conducted in two phases, the first phase from June 13 to August 20, 2004 using the SGALstar 350+3 helicopter; C-GSGH.

**Gamma-ray Spectrometric Data**  
The airborne gamma-ray measurements were made with an Eigermax CS-256 gamma-ray spectrometer using three 1024x1024x4096 pixel NaI (Tl) crystals. The detector array consisted of eight crystals (total volume 3.16 liters). One crystal (total volume 4.2 liters) situated in the main array, was used to detect variations in background radiation caused by atmospheric radon. The system constantly monitors the natural thorium peak for each crystal, and uses a Gaussian least squares algorithm to adjust the gain for each crystal.

Potassium is measured directly from the 1460 keV gamma-ray photons emitted by  $^{40}\text{K}$ , whereas uranium and thorium are measured indirectly from gamma-ray photons emitted by daughter products ( $^{232}\text{Th}$  for uranium and  $^{238}\text{U}$  for thorium). Although these isotopes are far down their respective decay chains, they are still useful for mapping because the gamma-ray energy emitted from the decay chain of potassium, uranium and thorium are referred to as equivalent uranium and equivalent thorium, i.e. eU and eTh. The energy windows used to measure potassium, uranium and thorium are:

Potassium ( $^{40}\text{K}$ )	1360 - 1560 keV
Uranium ( $^{232}\text{Th}$ )	1660 - 1860 keV
Thorium ( $^{238}\text{U}$ )	2100 - 2300 keV

Gamma-ray spectra were recorded at one-second intervals at a planned terrain clearance of 1.55 m and an air speed of 120 km/h. Noise Adjusted Singular Value Decomposition (NASVD) analysis was carried out on the full 256 channel data to reduce statistical noise in the windowed data. During processing, the spectra were energy calibrated, and counts accumulated into the windows described above. Counts from the detector array were removed in a window centered on the background radiation energy spectrum. The background radiation energy spectrum was used to correct for dead time, and for background activity due to atmospheric radon. Corrections for deviations of altitude from the planned terrain clearance and for variation of temperature and pressure were made prior to conversion to ground concentrations of potassium, uranium and thorium, using factors determined from flights over a calibration range near Ottawa.

Potassium ( $^{40}\text{K}$ )	56.5 cps/100m² (2004) 50.0 cps/100m² (2005)
Uranium ( $^{232}\text{Th}$ )	9.0 cps/100m² (2004) 6.3 cps/100m² (2005)
Thorium ( $^{238}\text{U}$ )	3.7 cps/100m² (2004) 2.9 cps/100m² (2005)

Corrected data were filtered to a 100m grid for both the 1:60,000 scale and 1:250,000 scale maps. The results of an airborne gamma-ray spectrometer survey represent the average surface concentrations that are influenced by varying amounts of outcrop, overburden, vegetation cover, soil moisture and surface water. As a result the measured concentrations are usually lower than the actual bedrock concentration. The total air-borne dose rate in nanograys per hour was produced from measured counts between 400 and 2000 keV.

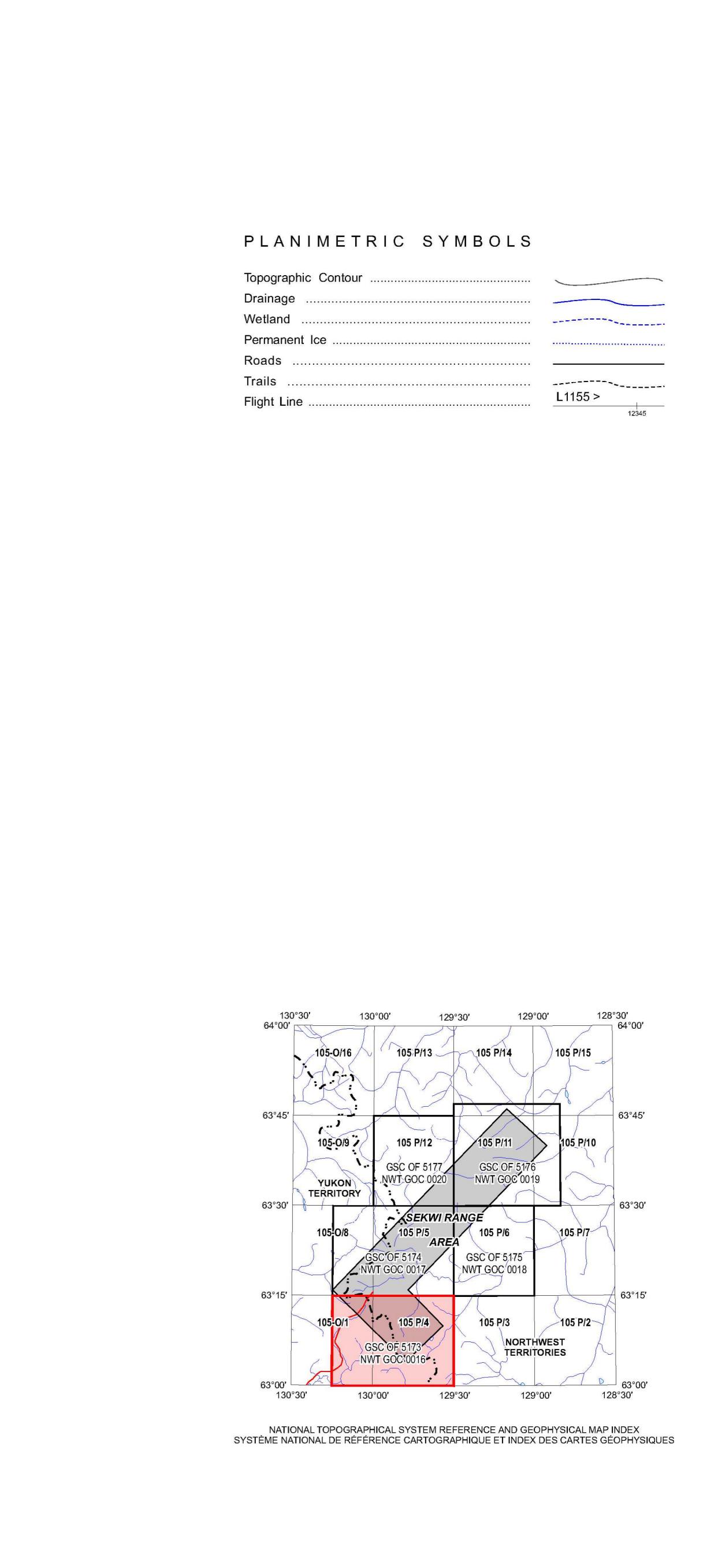
**Magnetic Data**  
The helicopter was equipped with a Scientrex CS-2 cesium vapour magnetic sensor mounted in a bird suspended 30 m below the aircraft. The system recorded readings every 0.1 seconds with a noise level of less than 0.02 nT. Magnetic interference caused by aircraft rotors was removed using a digital filter. The magnetic field fluctuations were removed using a digital filter. The survey was conducted using a Sander Geophysics Ground Station Recording System. The International Geomagnetic Reference Field was calculated daily and removed for each flight. The airborne magnetometer data was IGRF corrected, using the location, altitude and date of each point. The IGRF was calculated using the IGRF 2000 model.

The corrected magnetic data was interpolated to a 100m grid using a minimum curvature algorithm. The first vertical derivative grid was calculated from the corrected total magnetic intensity grid using FFT-based frequency domain filtering algorithm.

**Positional Data**  
Survey line spacing of 500 m and control line spacing of 4000 m was used for the Prairie Creek, Caribou River and Flat River survey blocks. Survey line spacing of 400 m and control line spacing of 2400 m was used for the Selkwi Range survey block. Survey lines were oriented N-S for the survey blocks and E-W for the survey lines. Survey and control lines were pre-planned using Sander Geophysics Limited, Smooth Draphe software. Survey clearance was monitored by radio altimeter. Positional data were recorded using a dual frequency Novatel Millenium system. GPS ground stations were combined with airborne GPS data to produce differentially corrected positional data with an accuracy of 2 to 5m.

**Data Presentation**  
Contour levels and contours were calculated for each grid and combined with map surround information to create HP RTL plot files, which were plotted using SGL HP DesignJet colour plotters.

**Project Funding**  
The Prairie Creek, Caribou River and Flat River surveys were funded by Parks Canada through the Mineral and Energy Resource Assessment Project. The Selkwi Range survey was funded by the Northwest Territories Geoscience Office. Technical expertise and contract administration were provided by the Radiation Geophysics and Regional Geophysics Sections of the Geological Survey of Canada.



### GEOPHYSICAL SERIES - NTS 105-O/1 and 105 P/4 - CHRISTIE PASS NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

#### URANIUM / THORIUM MAP

Scale 1 : 50 000 - Échelle 1 / 50 000

km 1 0 2 4  
Universal Transverse Mercator Projection  
North American Datum 1983  
© Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada 2006  
Projection transversale universelle de Mercator  
Système de référence géodésique nord-américain, 1983  
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