

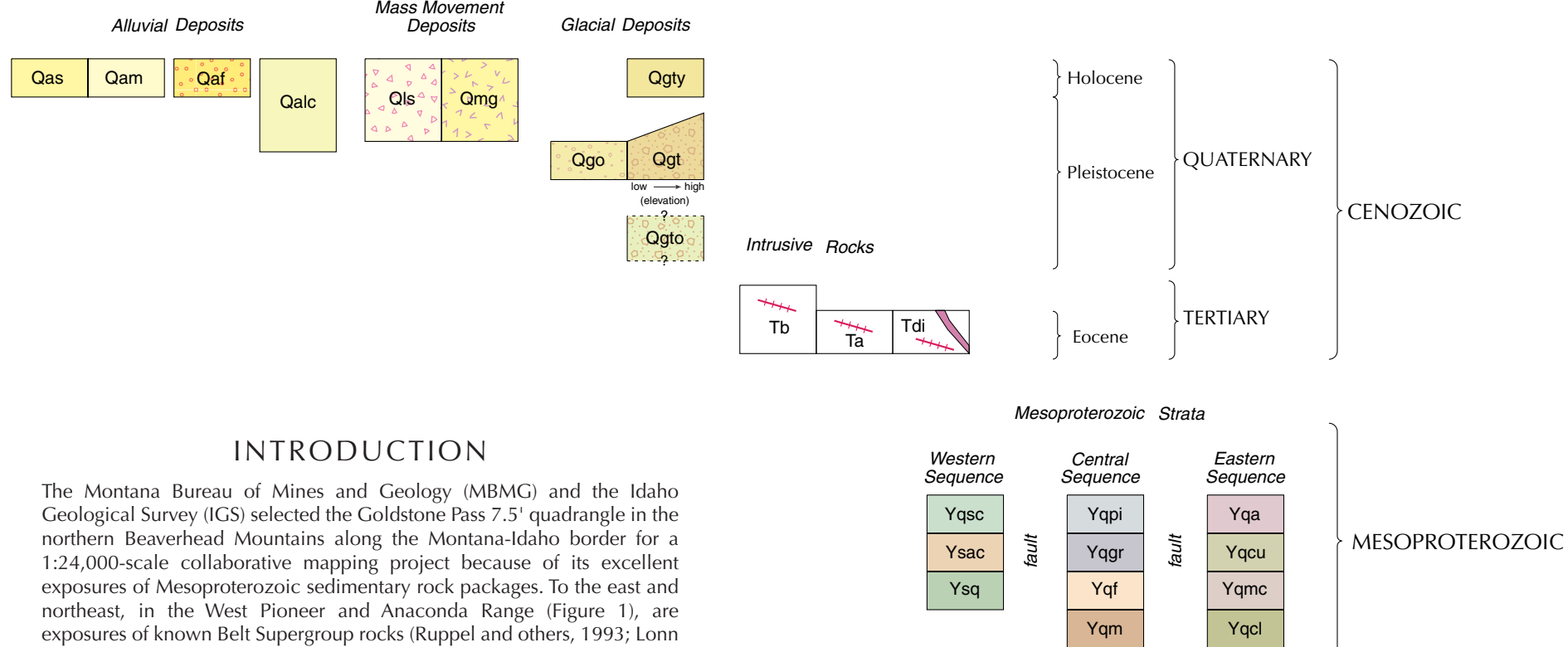
GEOLOGIC MAP OF THE GOLDSTONE PASS QUADRANGLE, LEMHI COUNTY, IDAHO, AND BEAVERHEAD COUNTY, MONTANA

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CORRELATION OF MAP UNITS



INTRODUCTION

The Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology (BBMG) and the Idaho Geological Survey (IGS) selected the Goldstone Pass 7.5' quadrangle in the northern Beaverhead Mountains along the Montana-Idaho border for a 1:24,000-scale collaborative mapping project because of its excellent exposures of Mesoproterozoic sedimentary rock packages. To the east and northeast, in the West Pioneer and Anacoda Range (Figure 1), are exposures of known Belt Supergroup rocks (Ruppel and others, 1993; Lonn and McDonald, 2004a, 2004b), whereas to the southwest in the Lemhi Range and Salmon River Mountains are the reference sections of the Lemhi Group, Swager Formation, and Yellowstone Formation (Ross, 1934; Ruppel, 1975). In the intervening Beaverhead Mountains, both the stratigraphic and structural interpretations have been controversial among previous workers (Mackenzie, 1949; Tucker, 1975; Ruppel and others, 1993; Winston and others, 1999; Evans and Green, 2003; O'Neill, 2005; Tysdal and others, 2005; Lopez and others, 2006). The BBMG and IGS mapped the Homer Youngs Peak quadrangle to the north in 2007 (Lonn and others, 2008) and our collaborative team plans to continue 1:24,000-scale mapping southward to Lemhi Pass in an attempt to resolve some of the long-standing controversies.

Bedrock mapping in 2008 and 2009 by Lonn, Burmester, Lewis, and McFadden was supplemented by earlier reconnaissance work by Lonn in 2004. Quaternary deposits were mapped in 2008 by Stanford. Altitudes from previous mapping by Anderson (1957 and unpublished mapping), Tucker (1975), and Lopez and others (2006) were used to supplement the data collected by the authors.

DESCRIPTION OF MAP UNITS

Grain size classification of unconsolidated and consolidated sediment is based on the Wentworth scale (Lane, 1947). Bedding thicknesses and lamination type are after McKee and West (1953), and Winston (1986). Distances and bed thicknesses are given in abbreviation of metric units (e.g., dm=decimeter). Formation thickness and elevation is listed in both meters and feet. Multiple lithologies within a rock unit description are listed in order of decreasing abundance.

ALLUVIAL DEPOSITS

- Qas** Side-stream alluvium (Holocene)—Rounded to subrounded cobble to boulder gravel and sand. Mostly derived from re-worked till and outwash gravels. Thickness 1-3 m (3-10 ft).
- Qam** Main-stream alluvium (Holocene)—Rounded to subrounded cobble to boulder gravel and sand. Mostly derived from re-worked till and outwash gravels. Thickness 1-3 m (3-10 ft).
- Qalc** Fine-grained deposits in glaciated uplands (Holocene-Pleistocene)—Silt and sand deposited behind end moraines and in glacially scoured depressions. Thickness 1-4 m (3-12 ft).
- Qat** Alluvial and debris-flow fan gravels (Holocene)—Angular to subangular poorly sorted boulder gravels and sand. Found on steep valley walls. Thickness 1-10 m (3-30 ft).

MASS MOVEMENT DEPOSITS

- Qls** Landslide deposits (Holocene)—Angular unsorted sandy boulder gravel. Thickness less than 12 m (40 ft).
- Qmg** Mass movement and glacial deposits undifferentiated (Holocene)—Angular unsorted to poorly sorted boulder to large boulder gravel, mostly on steep slopes and slumps derived from moraine remnants and frost-wedged gravels. Found high on glaciated valley walls. Includes some alluvial-fan gravel and young glacial and periglacial deposits. Thickness less than 16 m (60 ft).

GLACIAL DEPOSITS

- Qgtv** Young glacial and periglacial deposits (Holocene)—Poorly sorted angular to subangular boulder gravel and till. Sandy boulder till on some ramps and moraines. Includes pro-talus ramps, inactive rock glaciers, and moraines of the Little Ice Age and older(?) deposits in cirques and northeast-facing protected areas above 2500 m (8200 ft). Includes all but young (est. uppermost) deposits. Mackenzie (1949) classified the larger deposits as rock glaciers, but well-developed lateral moraines of some deposits indicate a glacial component to their origin. Lateral moraines found in the largest deposits are tree covered on distal slopes. Today, deposits appear inactive debris-covered ice is found only in protected areas above young ramp or moraines at or above 2800 m (9200 ft). Thickness up to 25 m (80 ft).
- Qgt** Glacial till of last local glacial maximum (Pinedale) (Pleistocene)—Poorly sorted sandy to clayey boulder till. Clasts subangular to subrounded. Also includes young peat till deposited near or just below cirque floors up to 2600 m (8600 ft). Includes end moraine, recessional moraine, and some outwash from terminal moraine deposits of Qgt in the Bloody Dick Creek and Big Hole River drainages. Thickness highly varied, up to 50 m (160 ft).
- Qgo** Older till deposits of the last glacial maximum (Pinedale) (Pleistocene)—Poorly sorted boulder till. Mostly subangular to subrounded clasts. Remnant till present on interfluve surfaces 80-180 m (260-600 ft) above more recently glaciated valley floors in the Berry Creek and Pioneer Creek drainages. Also found down stream from terminal moraine deposits of Qgt in the Bloody Dick Creek and Big Hole River drainages. Thickness highly varied, up to 50 m (160 ft).

INTRUSIVE ROCKS

- Tb** Basalt dike (Tertiary)—Single fine-grained mafic dike that appears to be less altered and thus younger than the Td unit. Exposed on the ridge southeast of Cowhorne Lake where it both cuts bedding and locally branches parallel to it.
- Ta** Andesite dikes (Eocene)—Four north-northwest striking mafic dikes near the western map boundary. Euhedral plagioclase and hornblende 1 mm and less in length and similarly small stubby pyroxene(?) crystals compose the bulk of the rock.
- Td** Diorite dikes and sills (Eocene)—Medium- to fine-grained hornblende diorite. Similar rocks to the northeast described by Mackenzie (1949) as meladiorite composed of altered hornblende, albite, biotite, chlorite, and clinozoisite, with andesine and orthoclase in some of the less altered rocks. Locally contains abundant magnetite. Occurs both along the western strand of the Beaverhead Divide fault, where it is typically foliated or has sheared margins and chloritized fractures, and within the country rock near that fault, where it is less deformed. Sample 08R057 has a U-Pb age of 46 ± 2 Ma (Richard Gaschick, written communication, 2009).

MESOPROTEROZOIC STRATA

Low metamorphic grade metasedimentary rocks of Mesoproterozoic age underlie most of the Goldstone Pass quadrangle. These rocks have been variously assigned by previous workers to the Belt Supergroup, the Lemhi Group, and (or) the Yellowstone Formation. We describe three main metasedimentary rock packages in the quadrangle: 1) poorly sorted, medium- to coarse-grained quartzite northeast of the eastern strand of the Beaverhead Divide fault (eastern sequence); 2) quartzite and siltite found between the eastern and western strands of the Beaverhead Divide fault (central sequence); and 3) siltite, argillite, and fine-grained quartzite southwest of the western strand of the Beaverhead Divide fault (western sequence).

Eastern sequence

Northeast of the eastern strand of the Beaverhead Divide fault is an east-facing stratigraphic sequence of poorly sorted, feldspathic, medium- to coarse-grained quartzite. This sequence is tentatively correlated with the Missoula Group of the Belt Supergroup because of similarities to known upper Missoula Group rocks east and northeast of the map area in the western Anacoda Range (Lonn and McDonald, 2004a) and West Pioneer Mountains (Ruppel and others, 1993; Lonn and McDonald, 2004b). This correlation is in agreement with Evans and Green (2003), but conflicts with Tysdal and others (2005) assignment of it to the Gunsight Formation of the Lemhi Group. In the Homer Youngs Peak quadrangle, northeast of the Goldstone Pass quadrangle, we divided this thick (6000 m, 19,000 ft) sequence into four informal units based on grain size and sedimentary structures (Lonn and others, 2008). All four of those units are exposed in the Goldstone Pass quadrangle.

- Yqac** Quartzite and argillite (Mesoproterozoic)—Pink to white, medium- to coarse-grained, tough, and planar-crossbedded quartzite in beds 15 to 1 m thick, interbedded with 15 cm to 1 m-thick intervals of purple to green siltite and argillite in planar beds 0.5 to 5 cm thick. Top of unit not exposed, but thickness at least 450 m (1500 ft). Very fine- to fine-grained feldspathic quartzite with rare red mud chips exposed in three small road cut west of the Big Hole River tentatively included in this unit.
- Yqat** Upper coarse-grained quartzite (Mesoproterozoic)—White to light gray, poorly sorted, coarse-grained, tough and planar-crossbedded feldspathic quartzite. Beds are 30-180 cm thick, separated by black argillite interbeds as much as 1 cm thick. Contains abundant granule-sized grains and sparse floating pebbles. Large black mud rip-up clasts are common. Thickness approximately 1500 m (5000 ft).
- Yqmc** Multi-colored quartzite (Mesoproterozoic)—White, purple, dark gray, and green, fine- to coarse-grained quartzite and siltite. Characterized by intervals of white to dark gray biotite-bearing, flat-laminated, fine- to medium-grained quartzite in beds 30-60 cm thick alternating with intervals of thin-bedded quartzite, purple siltite, and black and green argillite in beds 1-3 cm thick. Ripple marks are common. Some bedding planes contain small pebbles. Finer grained intervals contain some green calc-silicate minerals and scapolite. Outcrops have a tabular-bedded appearance. Thickness approximately 2100 m (7000 feet).

STRUCTURE

The most prominent structure in the map, the Beaverhead Divide fault, was first described by Mackenzie (1949), who referred to the structure as the Silver Lakes fault. Anderson (1959) mapped an extension northwest and Tucker (1975) extended it southeast. Ruppel and others (1993) interpreted it as a major structure separating the Missoula Group to the northeast from the Mesoproterozoic Yellowstone Formation and Lemhi Group to the southwest. Evans and Green (2003) mapped it as a thrust reactivated as a normal fault, separating Missoula Group from Lemhi Group. More recently, O'Neill (2005) interpreted it as a low-angle normal fault that has been rotated to vertical, with unmetamorphosed upper plate rocks now to the northeast and metamorphosed lower plate rocks now to the southwest.

Our mapping suggests that the Beaverhead Divide fault is a southwest-dipping zone of both ductile and brittle deformation whose activity may span a long time (Proterozoic to Eocene). On the Homer Youngs Peak quadrangle (Lonn and others, 2008), two closely spaced strands of the Beaverhead Divide fault were mapped. The eastern and western strands trace southward into the Goldstone Pass quadrangle, where they diverge and separate the map area into three major structural domains, each containing a distinct stratigraphic package, here termed the eastern, central, and western sequences. The eastern domain is a thick east-facing panel of overturned to moderately east-dipping strata (Yqac, Yqat, Yqmc, Yqtc), tentatively assigned to the Missoula Group. Lonn and others (2008) interpreted this panel as the west limb of a huge east-verging syncline similar to the gigantic folds mapped by Tysdal (2002) in the Lemhi Range southwest of the map area. Cleavage in this domain is weakly developed, but roughly parallels the strong northwest-striking, steeply southwest-dipping cleavage of the central domain. The eastern strand of the Beaverhead Divide fault separates weakly foliated, east-facing vertical strata on the northeast (Yqmc and Yqtc) from strongly foliated east facing rocks on the southwest (Yqac and Yqat). The fault zone strikes northwest to west, dips southwest to south, and is characterized by chloritic breccia containing a mixture of strongly foliated and non-foliated clasts. The portions of the fault

Figure 1. Location of Goldstone Pass 7.5' quadrangle with respect to known Belt Supergroup rocks and the reference and type sections of the Lemhi Group and Yellowstone Formation. Shaded areas represent mountain ranges containing Mesoproterozoic sedimentary rocks.

that are more northwesterly are interpreted as having moved as thrust faults during Cretaceous compressional deformation, and the more easterly trending portions are likely to have had a large component of left-lateral motion during that time. Brittle deformation probably post-dates thrusting, and may represent reactivation of the thrust as a normal fault.

The central domain consists of near vertical, east-facing strata of uncertain correlation (Yqac, Yqat, Yqtc, and Yqtc). This panel of central sequence strata roughly parallels that of the eastern domain, and it is possible that the central and eastern stratigraphic sequences are part of the same giant fold and that they were originally in stratigraphic contact. Strong northwest-striking, southwest-dipping cleavage is developed in the central domain; this cleavage is approximately parallel to the northwest-striking parts of both strands of the Beaverhead Divide fault, and is also parallel to the mylonitic foliation associated with the western strand. The western strand of the Beaverhead Divide fault is a zone of 25° to 60° southwest-dipping mylonitic foliation that approximately parallels the northwest to west strike of the zone. Because the western strand Beaverhead Divide fault and the Freeman thrust of the Homer Youngs Peak quadrangle (Lonn and others, 2008) merge just northwest of the Goldstone Pass quadrangle, the western strand here represents the combined displacement on both faults. It separates units Yqmc and Yqtc of the central sequence from Yqac of the western sequence. This ductile shear zone contains mafic sills (Tb) that exhibit foliation parallel to that of the shear zone. Lineation within these sills plunges to the southwest with s.e. lateral, indicating top to the west normal motion. Like the sub-parallel eastern strand, this northwest-striking fault jogs eastward in the Goldstone Pass quadrangle. The portions that strike northeast are interpreted as having moved as thrust faults during Cretaceous compressional deformation, while the east-west striking portions are thought to have had a large component of left-lateral motion. Both strands of the Beaverhead Divide fault appear to turn southward just east of the quadrangle and become the Bloody Dick Creek fault zone of the Kitty Creek quadrangle (Lewis and others, 2009).

The western domain is complexly folded and faulted. Two ill-defined thrust faults were mapped. The northeastern of the two that pass through Cowhorne Lake is characterized by strong foliation. Rocks in its hanging wall are tightly folded and locally overturned. The other fault southwest of Cowhorne Lake is characterized by both ductile and brittle deformation. A foliate and chloritic shears are present in the saddle south of Cowhorne Lake and mylonite is present on the ridge near the west map boundary. Northeast-facing strata in its hanging wall are overturned to steeply north-east-dipping. An asymmetric fold in its footwall indicates some top to the west motion so it is probable that it, like the western strand of the Beaverhead Divide fault, was reactivated during Eocene extension.

SYMBOLS

- Contact: dashed where approximately located.
- Oblique thrust fault: teeth on upper plate; arrows indicate direction of motion; dashed where approximate; dotted where concealed.
- Thrust fault: teeth on upper plate; ball and ball on downthrown side on reactivated fault segments; dashed where approximately located; dotted where concealed.
- Normal fault: ball and ball on downthrown side; dashed where approximately located; dotted where concealed.
- Anticline axial trace, approximately located; dotted where concealed; arrow indicates plunge direction.
- Syncline axial trace, dashed where approximately located; dotted where concealed; arrow indicates plunge direction.
- Strike and dip of bedding.
- Strike of vertical bedding.
- Strike and dip of bedding; ball indicates bedding known to be used.
- Strike and dip of bedding; strike variable.
- Strike and dip of bedding known to be overturned.
- Strike and dip of bedding interpreted to be overturned.
- Horizontal bedding.
- Strike and dip of foliation.
- Strike and dip of mylonitic foliation.
- Strike and dip of foliation where present with bedding or layering.
- Strike and dip of cleavage.
- Strike of vertical joint.
- Bearing and plunge of mylonitic lineation.
- Bearing and plunge of mineral lineation.
- Bearing and plunge of asymmetrical small fold showing counter-clockwise rotation viewed down plunge.
- Bearing and plunge of asymmetrical small fold showing clockwise rotation viewed down plunge.
- Bearing and plunge of small fold axis.
- Vein.
- Dike.
- Fault breccia.
- Date sample location and number.

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