











# SURFICIAL GEOLOGY HOTCHKISS-PAONIA RESERVOIR AREA DELTA AND GUNNISON COUNTIES, COLORADO

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#### GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Hotchkiss-Paonia Reservoir area includes the North Fork Gunnison River valley and its tributary areas in northwestern Gunnison and eastern Delta Counties. Six contiguous 7.5-minute quadrangles are in the study area. They are the Gray Reservoir, Bowie, Somerset, Paonia Reservoir, Hotchkiss, and Paonia quadrangles. The surficial geology of each quadrangle, mapped at 1:24,000, represents the distribution of geologic materials formed during the latest period of geologic time, which is known as the Quaternary Period. These maps of surficial geology show young geologic deposits with common characteristics and identify potentially hazardous geologic conditions. Older bedrock is shown on these maps where surficial deposits are very thin or lacking. A brief general description of hazards associated with the surficial deposits or bedrock is included in the Explanation of Map Units; however, the companion geologic-hazards maps in C.G.S. open-file report 78-12 should be consulted for a more detailed description.

The surficial and bedrock geology maps should be used to determine the general geological setting of any proposed land-use change or development activity. These maps are not intended to be a thorough analysis of all geologic aspects and are not intended to replace detailed field investigations.

The geologic setting of the study area is relatively simple: flat-lying Cretaceous and Tertiary sedimentary rocks are locally intruded by younger igneous rocks. These sedimentary and igneous rocks were sculpted during the late Tertiary and Quaternary by erosional processes that formed the present mesa and mountain landscape. Various thin surficial deposits, probably related to glacial stages, suggest that fluvial and mass-wasting activities were the dominate geomorphic processes in the formation of the present landscape.

Glacial, colluvial, and alluvial deposits are shown on the maps and described in the <u>Explanation of Map Units</u>. The relative age and correlation of these deposits is shown on the chart titled <u>Correlation</u> of <u>Map Units</u>. Glacial deposits include those surficial units that were transported and deposited by ice movement or by glacial meltwaters. Most of these deposits probably are latest Pleistocene in age, although older deposits may be present locally. Alluvial deposits are clay to boulder-size material transported and deposited by running water (fluvial processes). The absolute age of these deposits is unknown; however, the map units are placed in a general time framework based upon available geomorphic evidence. This evidence includes soil development, in-place weathering of igneous-rock fragments, and the position of the deposits above modern streams. Diverse lithology of the deposits, caused by extreme variations in local source areas, makes the age and correlation determinations difficult across the entire mapped area. The age and correlation of these alluvial deposits should be considered only approximate. Colluvial deposits generally are unconsolidated soil and/or rock detritus deposited chiefly by mass-wasting processes. Relative age of these deposits is noted by subscripts that range from 1 to 3 after the map symbol. Deposits with subscript 1 formed during the Holocene; whereas 2 and 3 in part represent late Pleistocene deposits.

### EXPLANATION OF MAP UNITS

GLACIAL DEPOSITS

Younger glacial deposits (late Pleistocene?): unsorted to poorly sorted, subangular, unconsolidated, pebble to boulder-size detritus in a fine-grained matrix. These deposits form a hummocky topography generally only found above 7500 ft, may be modified by mass-wasting processes, and are potentially unstable especially when underlain by the Wasatch Formation.

Middle glacial deposits (middle Pleistocene?): unsorted, subangular, poorly consolidated, bouldery detritus. These deposits usually have a greater amount of weathered igneous-rock fragments and form a more subdued topography than the younger glacial deposits.

Qgdo

Older glacial deposits (middle Pleistocene?): unsorted, subangular, poorly consolidated, pebble to boulders size detritus. These deposits are exposed only in the northern part of the Bowie Quadrangle.

#### ALLUVIAL DEPOSITS

- Flood-plain alluvium (Holocene): Mixtures of silt, sand, pebbles, and cobbles recently deposited and/ or reworked by fluvial processes. These deposits form the physiographic flood plains of the modern drainage system and are a potential source of sand, gravel, and crushed-rock aggregate.
- Qat

  Stream-terrace alluvium (Holocene): poorly sorted deposits of silt, sand, pebbles and cobbles. These deposits form small terraces that are adjacent to the streams and are less than 10 ft (3 m) above them.
- Valley-fill deposits (Holocene to late Pleistocene):

  fine-grained materials usually deposited by sheet-flow or mudflow processes. These deposits, including alluvial fan landforms, generally form gently sloping surfaces which are incised by the modern streams.

  Largely derived from Mancos Shale, these deposits may be subject to expansion or hydrocompaction upon wetting, may contain corrosive water, and are prone to sheetflood erosion and mudflow deposition.
- Qas

  Slope-wash debris (Holocene to late Pleistocene):
  generally fine-grained soil and rock detritus
  transported and deposited by running water that is
  not confined to channels. These deposits form a
  relatively thin veneer over older surficial deposits
  or bedrock, may include some wind-blown (eolian)
  material, and may be easily eroded if protective
  vegetation is removed.
- Qagy

  Younger alluvial gravels (late Pleistocene?): poorly
  sorted, rounded to subrounded, unconsolidated pebbles
  and cobbles in a matrix of sand and silt. These
  gravels vary greatly in composition because of local
  conditions and they cap the first well-defined terrace
  above modern streams. Sheet flooding, erosion, and local
  swelling soils are important geologic conditions
  associated with these gravels.
- Middle alluvial gravels (middle Pleistocene?): poorly sorted, rounded to subrounded, poorly consolidated gravels in a fine-grained matrix. These gravels have a better developed soil profile and a greater amount of weathered igneous-rock fragments than the younger alluvial gravels. Middle gravels, including alluvial-fan and river-terrace materials, form nearly planar surfaces situated at two or more levels and are subject to sheet flooding and erosion.
- Older alluvial gravels (middle Pleistocene?): poorly sorted, rounded to subrounded, poorly consolidated gravels in a fine-grained matrix. These older gravels have a slight increase in consolidation, slightly greater weathering of igneous detritus, and a greater accumulation of calcium carbonate in the C horizon than the younger gravels. The deposits are subject to sheet flooding and erosion.
- Pediment gravels (early Pleistocene): poorly sorted alluvial gravels deposited on a nearby planar, high-level bedrock surface. These deposits have abundant carbonate accumulation in the C horizon and a higher percentage of weathered igneous-rock fragments than the younger gravels. These gravels are subject to sheet flooding and erosion.
- Pigh-level alluvium (Quaternary/Tertiary): bouldery, poorly sorted, alluvial deposits that form nearly planar, gently sloping surfaces high above modern streams. Similarity to deposits previously mapped by Tweto and others (1976) suggest formation during the Tertiary or early Quaternary. These deposits are subject to sheet flooding and erosion.

## COLLUVIAL DEPOSITS

- Mudflow deposits (Holocene): dominantly fine-grained material with associated rock fragments formed by the downslope movement of wet, viscous masses of soil and rock material. These deposits have a gently undulating topography with an incised, braided drainage network. With decreasing viscosity during movement the deposits grade to fluvial sediments and with increasing viscosity grade to slow-moving earthflows.

Qdf1
Qdf2

Debris flow deposits (Holocene to late Pleistocene):
unsorted, unconsolidated debris of soil, rock, and
displaced vegetation deposited where the stream gradient
decreases. This gradient decrease most commonly occurs
near the confluence of a tributary stream with a larger
drainage. These deposits result from the rapid movement
and deposition of solid material during intense rainfall
or snowmelt runoff. Qdf deposits probably formed
during the Holocene; Qdf deposits may have been

Qsc Soil-creep deposits (Holocene): mixtures of sand, silt, and clay with some larger rock fragments formed by slow, down-slope movements of near-surface materials. These deposits, characterized by a series of small swales and ridges perpendicular to the direction of movement, generally are active and indicate areas with unstable slope conditions.

deposited during the late Pleistocene.

Oda

Debris-avalanche deposits (Holocene): unsorted mixtures of soil and rock material formed by the generally sudden and rapid downslope movement of the debris mass. Usually formed during periods of the intense rainfall, these deposits produce a relatively small, elongate rise that may extend to gently sloping areas below the steep slopes from which the materials originate.

Qsfc1
Qsfc2
Qsfc3
Slope-failure-complex deposits (Holocene to late
Pleistocene: unsorted mixtures of soil and rock
material formed by various mass-wasting processes
including landslides, earthflows, soil creep, and
debris avalanches. Not all of these processes form
a specific deposit and the age of movement may vary
within a particular area. The general age of the unit
is noted by subscripts (1 is youngest).

Talus/Scree deposits (Holocene to late Pleistocene):

angular, unsorted, pebble to boulder-size fragments
that mantle mountain slopes or accumulate at the base
of a barren-rock mass. These deposits usually form
steep, concave slopes and include talus cones and
lobate or tongue-shaped rock glaciers. Mass-wasting
processes usually are currently active in the formation of these deposits.

Qcw Colluvial-wedge deposits (Holocene to late Pleistocene):
unconsolidated, heterogeneous soil material and rock
fragments found near the base of the slope. Formed by
gravity-dominated processes, the deposits may be subject to continued mass-wasting.

#### BEDROCK UNITS

Basaltic intrusive rocks (Miocene): dark gray to black porphyritic intrusive rocks that contain fine-grained phenocrysts of olivine and pyroxene.

Porphyritic intrusive rocks (Miocene and Oligocene):

light-gray porphyritic intrusive rocks that vary in composition from quartz monzonite to granodiorite.

Tgr Green River Formation (Eocene): primarily calcareous siltstone and shaley marlstone (Hail, 1972). The formation, obscured by surficial material, is prone to mass-wasting processes.

Tow

Ohio Creek-Wasatch Formations (Eocene and Paleocene):
variegated (usually red, purple, green, yellow, and gray) mudstone and siltstone with interbedded mediumgray, lenticular sandstone, which is locally conglomeratic. These formations generally are obscured by surficial deposits and are prone to mass-wasting.

Kmv Mesaverde Formation (Upper Cretaceous): brown, gray, and light gray to white sandstone interbedded with dark gray shale. These sedimentary rocks generally form very steep slopes which may be subject to rockfalls and other mass-wasting processes. Commercially important coal beds occur in the lower part of the formation.

Km

Mancos Shale (Upper Cretaceous): dark brown to gray,
laminated silty shale which is susceptible to erosion
and mass-wasting. The shale locally contains swelling
clays (montmorillonite) and water corrosive to concrete. Drainages that traverse the Mancos Shale are
prone to flash floods and mudflows.

Mdb

Dakota-Burro Canyon Formations (Upper to Lower Cretaceous): light gray to brown sandstone, siltstone, and conglomerate with some dark gray shale. The unit forms steep slopes that generally are stable.

## MAP SYMBOLS

— — — ..... Contact: dashed where approximately \* located; dotted where concealed.

Strike and dip of beds

Fault: bar and ball on downthrown side.

Area of prominent morainal topography

Debris avalanche (Qda)

Recent landslide scarp: hachures point in the direction of the landslide movement.

Qsfc<sub>1</sub> [Km] Surficial deposits indicated by first symbol.
Underlying bedrock indicated by symbol in parentheses.

## REFERENCES

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