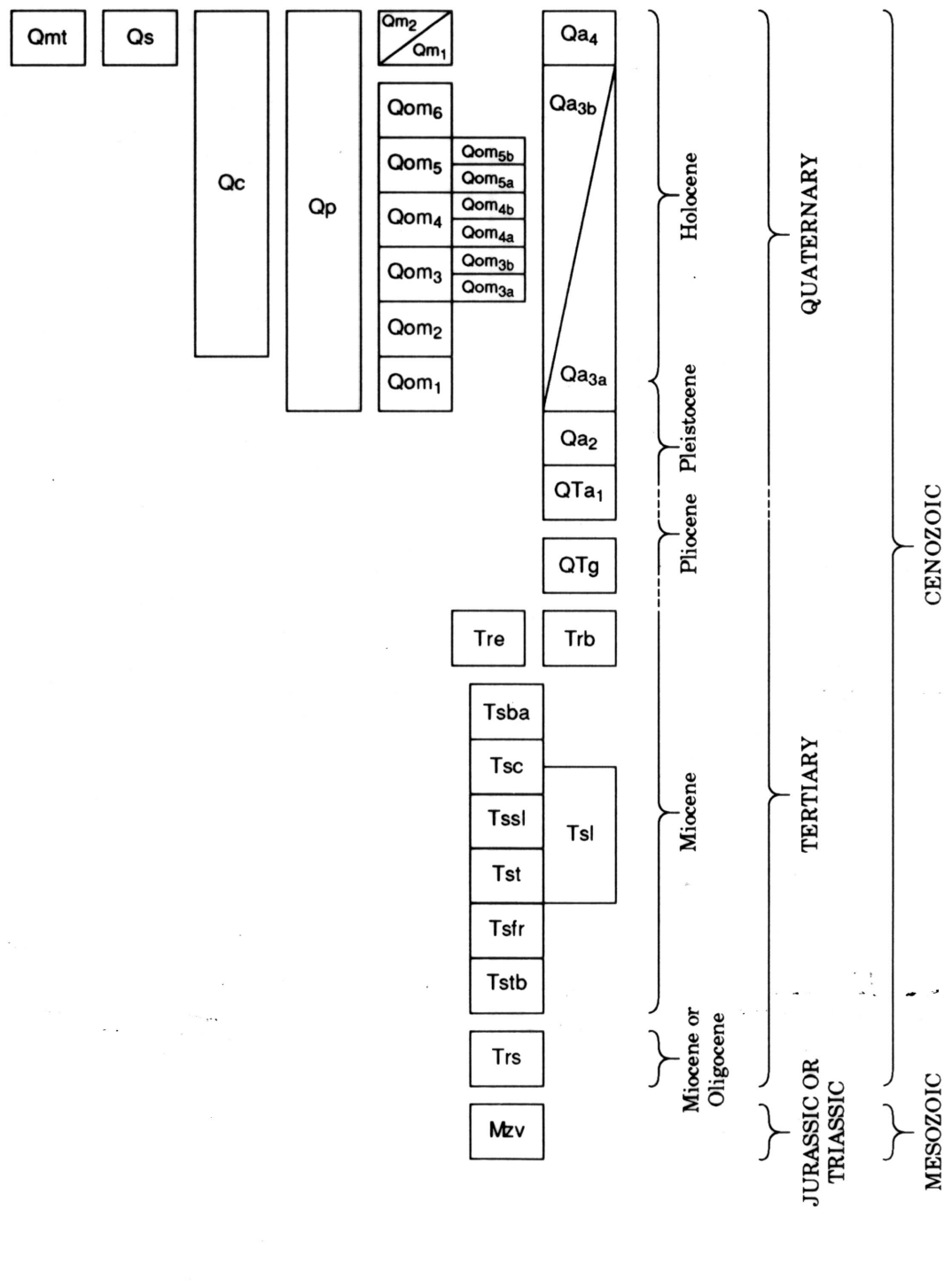


CORRELATION OF MAP UNITS



DESCRIPTION OF MAP UNITS

- Qm1** **Mine tailings (Holocene)**—Laminated reddish-brown to orange-pink silt and sand deposited as a byproduct of past silver processing operations. Also includes small areas of artificial fill and disturbed ground near foundations of abandoned mills. The tailings are found in two areas located northwest of Daggett and at the south end of Elephant Mountain.
- Qs** **Sand dunes (Holocene)**—Wind-deposited sand and silt forming low dunes and sand sheets within and adjacent to active channel of the Mojave River. Unit also includes climbing dunes around a low hill at north end of Elephant Mountain.
- Qc** **Colluvium (Holocene)**—Sand, silt, and gravel deposited at the base of erosional scarps by rainwash, gully, and slumping.
- Qp** **Playa deposits (Holocene)**—Light-gray to pinkish-gray sand, silt, and clay. Forms floor of large plays at north edge of map area. Also includes thin deposits of small ephemeral ponds on poorly-drained surfaces of units Qm1 and Qm2.
- Qm2** **Younger alluvium of the Mojave River (Holocene)**—Unconsolidated yellowish-gray fluvial sand and pebbles locally indurated within and adjacent to active wash of the Mojave River. Sand is arkosic, coarse to very coarse grained, moderately to well sorted, angular to subangular. Gravel contains subrounded to rounded clasts of granite and quartzite, and subangular to angular clasts of volcanic and metavolcanic rocks. Unit locally is covered by unmappped thin deposits of windblown sand. Divided into:
- Unit 1**—Alluvium with little or no plant cover, forming main floor of active channel.
- Unit 1a**—Alluvium with moderate plant cover, forming sand bars and low stream terraces that lie less than 1 m above floor of active channel.
- Older alluvium of the Mojave River (Holocene to Pleistocene)**—Unconsolidated to weakly indurated sand, silt, and pebbles covered by desert pavement. Detrital composition and texture are the same as described for younger alluvium of the Mojave River. Comprises thick unit of valley fill (unit 1) and thinner deposits that drape stream terraces adjacent to Mojave River (units 2-6). Locally covered by unmappped thin deposits of windblown sand. Divided into:
- Unit 6 (Holocene)**—Unconsolidated yellowish-gray to grayish-orange sand and gravel. Unit drapes stream terraces lying about 1 m above active channel of Mojave River.
- Unit 5 (Holocene)**—Unconsolidated yellowish-gray to grayish-orange sand and gravel. Unit drapes stream terraces lying about 1.2 m above active channel of Mojave River. Locally subdivided into deposits of higher (5a) and lower (5b) terrace levels.
- Unit 4 (Holocene)**—Unconsolidated yellowish-gray to grayish-orange sand and gravel. Unit drapes stream terraces lying about 2.3 m above active channel of Mojave River. Locally subdivided into deposits of higher (4a) and lower (4b) terrace levels.
- Unit 3 (Holocene)**—Unconsolidated yellowish-gray to grayish-orange sand and gravel. Unit drapes stream terraces lying about 3.5 m above active channel of Mojave River. Deposits locally are capped by spotty, loosely packed pavement of thinly varnished pebbles. Locally subdivided into deposits of higher (3a) and lower (3b) terrace levels.
- Unit 2 (Holocene)**—Unconsolidated to weakly indurated, grayish-orange to yellowish-brown sand and gravel. Unit drapes stream terraces lying about 5.7 m above active channel of Mojave River. Deposits locally are capped by spotty, loosely packed pavement of thinly varnished pebbles.
- Unit 1 (Holocene to Pleistocene)**—Unconsolidated to weakly indurated grayish-orange to yellowish-brown sand and gravel, locally containing interbedded gray silt. Constitutes main alluvial fill of western Mojave Valley. The broad, slightly dissected upper surface of the deposits has about 1.2 m of local erosional relief and lies about 6.8 m above active channel of Mojave River. Deposits locally are capped by spotty, loosely packed pavement of thinly varnished pebbles.
- Aluvial-fan deposits (Holocene to Pliocene)**—Fluvial and debris-flow deposits consisting mainly of poorly sorted silty sand and pebbles or cobble gravel; unconsolidated to weakly indurated. Clasts typically angular and composed predominantly of volcanic and metavolcanic rocks. Divided into:
- Unit 4 (Holocene)**—Unconsolidated, unweathered, light-gray to grayish-orange alluvium of active stream channels; lacks significant soil development, desert pavement, or varnish on exposed clasts.
- Unit 3 (Holocene to Pleistocene)**—Undissected to slightly dissected, grayish-orange to yellowish-brown alluvium, mostly elevated no more than 1.2 m above floors of active channels. Covered by moderate amounts of shrubby vegetation. Coarse bars and ovals texture is developed where coarse alluvium is available. Includes alluvium of unit 3a where active channels are too small to map separately. Divided into:
- Subunit 3b**—Relatively undissected deposits subject to sporadic flooding. Lacks conspicuous soil development or varnish on exposed clasts.
- Subunit 3a**—Slightly dissected deposits that are rarely flooded. Slight to moderate soil development and varnish on exposed clasts.
- Unit 2 (Pleistocene)**—Moderately dissected, grayish-orange to yellowish-brown alluvium lying about 1.4 m above floors of active channels. Sparsely covered with shrubs. Locally includes colluvial aprons at margin of alluvial sediment. A tributary stream that breached the inactive alluvial dam at the north edge of the valley, re-establishing drainage across the floor of the plays. The bed of the subchannel stream is marked by young Holocene alluvium (unit Qm4) at the northeast corner of the map area.
- Unit 1 (Pleistocene and Pliocene?)**—Strongly dissected, grayish-orange to yellowish-brown alluvium lying about 5.15 m above floors of active channels. Soils, pavements, and varnish strongly preserved, largely stripped off by erosion. Forms thin deposits capping planar-bedded ridges on flanks of Elephant Mountain.
- Gravel and conglomerate (Pleistocene to Miocene?)**—Thick fluvial and debris-flow deposits of old alluvial fans, consisting mainly of poorly sorted silty sand and pebbles or cobble gravel; pale yellowish-brown to grayish-orange and grayish-orange-pink; slightly to moderately indurated. Clasts typically angular and composed predominantly of volcanic and metavolcanic rocks. Locally contains buried soils with thick petrocalcic horizons. Strongly eroded, forming ridges with rounded crests.

- Tre** **Rhyodacite of Elephant Mountain (Miocene)**—Pale-red to gray porphyritic rhyodacite, containing small phenocrysts of plagioclase, biotite, and hornblende in a glassy to microcrystalline groundmass. Forms extensive and shallow-intrusive bodies (dikes and plugs) at Elephant Mountain; also includes an outlying small body near the west entrance to Yermo Annex.
- Trb** **Rhyodacite breccia and sandstone (Miocene)**—Structurally to well-bedded breccia and pebbly sandstones containing clasts of porphyritic rhyodacite identical to rhyodacite of Elephant Mountain. Includes structureless autobreccia along margins of plugs and dikes. Well-bedded fluvial deposits apparently consist of reworked pyroclastic materials.
- Sedimentary and volcanic rocks (Miocene)**—Diverse assemblage of fluvial and lacustrine sedimentary rocks interlayered with extrusive volcanic rocks. Correlated with Pickhandle Formation of neighboring areas. Divided into:
- Basalt**—Fine-grained vesicular olivine basalt; dark gray to brownish-gray; vesicles partly filled with zeolite minerals and calcite. May include shallow-intrusive bodies as well as flows.
- Conglomerate and sandstone**—Reddish-brown to pinkish-gray conglomerate, breccia, and sandstone, and minor siltstone and claystone. Consists mostly of fluvial and debris-flow deposits, locally interbedded with landslide or avalanche breccia. The deposits are mainly composed of granitic detritus, mixed with lesser amounts of metavolcanic debris.
- Limestone**—Thin-bedded to thick-bedded cherty micritic limestone, locally grading into calcareous sandstone and silty marlstone. Fresh surfaces are yellowish brown or brownish gray; weathered surfaces are yellowish gray or grayish orange. Resistant, forming prominent ridges.
- Sandstone and limestone**—Yellowish-gray, fine- to coarse-grained sandstone, interbedded with micritic limestone.
- Tuff**—White to yellowish-gray ash tuff, locally interbedded with tuff breccia and tuffaceous sandstone. Bottle flakes commonly present in minor amounts. Includes air-fall tuff and reworked stream-deposited tuff.
- Red felsite**—Reddish-purple aphanitic silicic extrusive rock; typically flow-laminated and autocreted. Contains sparse small phenocrysts of plagioclase and biotite. Locally interlayered with ash tuff.
- Tuff breccia and felsite flows**—Light-gray to pale-purple tuff breccia and autocreted felsite flows, interbedded with minor amounts of ash tuff and debris-flow breccia.
- Red sandstone (Miocene or Oligocene)**—Variegated reddish-brown and pale-greenish-gray volcanic sandstone; medium- to coarse-grained; locally silty. Correlated with Jackhammer Formation of neighboring areas.
- Metavolcanic rocks (Mesozoic)**—Extrusive rocks, including abundant silicic flow and ash-flow tuff, interlayered with sparse flows or siltstone and/or basalt. Indurated sandstone, sandstone, and conglomerate locally present in minor amounts. Locally grading into steeply dipping tectonic cleavage that generally is nearly parallel to steeply dipping foliation layering. Some rocks are sericitized; many others may contain metamorphic garnet and chlorite, judging from their greenish color, sparse veins of white quartz as much as 5 cm thick are present locally. Unit cut by abundant faults and fractures and contains numerous irregular zones of argillite and limonite alteration.

STRUCTURAL SYMBOLS

- Contact**
- Fault**—Dashed where approximately located; dotted where contact is single arrow indicates dip. Painted arrows indicate sense of slip on strike-slip faults. U, upthrown side; D, downthrown side.
- Strike and dip of beds**
- Inclined**
- Vertical**
- Strike and dip of tectonic cleavage**

INTRODUCTION

The Yermo Annex of the Marine Corps Logistics Base (MCLB) lies between Interstate Highways 15 and 40 about 15 km east of Barstow, California (see index map). This map presents the results of a new geologic survey of the annex and surrounding areas, and it is intended to serve as a spatial geologic framework for geotechnical and hydrologic operations at the MCLB. The study was funded jointly by the National Geologic Mapping Program of the U.S. Geological Survey and by the Department of the Navy, represented by the Southwest Division, Naval Facilities Engineering Command.

METHODS

Data for the map were obtained from aerial photography and field observations. Three sets of aerial photographs were used: a recent color aerial (1:25,000-scale) and two black-and-white surveys from the early to middle 1940s (1:25,000- and 1:100,000-scale). The older photographs were controlled because agriculture and construction projects during the past 50 years have obscured surface geologic features across much of the study area. Data were transferred from the aerial photographs to a 1:12,000-scale topographic base map using a Kern PG-2 stereo plotter. Field studies of the mapped area were conducted during 1992-1994.

PREVIOUS STUDIES

There have been no previous detailed geologic surveys of the Yermo Annex. The general geologic setting of the area is shown by maps of the Daggett 15-minute quadrangle (Dibble, 1970) and of the Nemo and Yermo 7.5-minute quadrangles (McCall, 1965). Hills west of the Yermo Annex (Elephant Mountain and southern Mitchell Range) were mapped by Lambert (1987). Alluvial deposits similar to those that underlie the Yermo Annex have been dated by paleontologic and isotopic studies in this area summarized in Reynolds and Reynolds (1985, 1991). The present map of the Yermo Annex is an extension of a geologic map of the area around MCLB Nemo Annex (Cox and Wilshire, 1993). The areas covered by the two maps overlap for about 2 km in the vicinity of Elephant Mountain. Substantial revisions within the area of overlap have been incorporated into the present map.

GEOLOGIC SUMMARY

GENERAL SETTING

The Yermo Annex lies at the west end of Mojave Valley, a large intermontane plain in the central Mojave Desert (see index map). This geologic map covers the valley floor around the annex and extends into neighboring uplands south and west of the valley. Mojave Valley is filled with Quaternary-age alluvium deposited by the Mojave River, a regional intermittent stream with distant mountain headwaters south of the Mojave Desert. The river deposits are important because they contain the main ground-water resources in the region. Minor deposits of alluvium, silt, and clay play a role in the valley floor. The valley is bordered to the south by piedmont alluvial fans of the Newberry Mountains, and to the west by alluvial fans and volcanic buttes of the Michel Range.

RIVER AND PLAYA DEPOSITS OF MOJAVE VALLEY

The landforms and sedimentary deposits of Mojave Valley reflect the dynamic alluvial history of the Mojave River. During Pleistocene and early Holocene time, the river filled the west end of the valley with a large fan-shaped lobe of sand, silt, and pebble gravel that is represented by our map unit Qm1. This unit forms a broad, north- and northeast-sloping surface that underlies the buildings and storage lots of the Yermo Annex. The same alluvial unit also crops out discontinuously south of the Mojave River. The north edge of the lobe blocked a tributary alluvial-fan drainage between the Michel Range and the Calico Mountains, causing a plays to form at the north edge of the map area. Alluvium in the uppermost several meters of the lobe is about 2,500-12,000 years old, as determined by four radiocarbon ages measured on detrital charcoal (Reynolds and Reynolds, 1985, 1991; sites 17E-19, 17E-20, 17E-24, and 17E-25). Data from water wells indicate that the river deposits are as much as 110-140 m thick in western Mojave Valley near the Yermo Annex (Peters Martin, written communication, 1994). The deep alluvium penetrated by the wells is undisturbed, but it may include deposits as old as middle Pleistocene.

The alluvial filling of western Mojave Valley ended in early or middle Holocene time, when the Mojave River and its tributaries began incising their channels. A nested series of Holocene stream terraces draped by alluvium (map units Qm2-Qm6) records progressive erosion that cut the modern 8-m-deep channel of the Mojave River at the south side of the Yermo Annex. Once incision began, the broad floor of Mojave Valley was cut from its main source of alluvial sediment. A tributary stream then breached the inactive alluvial dam at the north edge of the valley, re-establishing drainage across the floor of the plays. The bed of the subchannel stream is marked by young Holocene alluvium (unit Qm4) at the northeast corner of the map area.

ALLUVIAL-FAN DEPOSITS

Alluvial fans flank the Michel Range and Newberry Mountains at the west and south sides of the valley. The fans consist of ramp-like accumulations of sand, silt, and gravel, deposited by ephemeral streams and debris flows. Some elevated, desert-grassed alluvial fans deposits may be as old as Pliocene or even late Miocene units (Qm1 and Qm2). However, the more widespread, relatively undissected, younger alluvial-fan deposits (units Qm3-Qm6) are late Pleistocene and Holocene in age, broadly correlative with the valley-fill and terrace deposits of the Mojave River. The young alluvial fans have gradually advanced into Mojave Valley since the Mojave River incised its channel. This is most evident along the south side of the valley, where the fans have expanded northward at least several hundred meters, partly burying low hills and ridges composed of old river deposits (unit Qm1).

CONTRASTS BETWEEN FAN AND RIVER DEPOSITS

Previous geologic maps of western Mojave Valley (McCall, 1965; Dibble, 1970; Borgogne and Spittler, 1980) do not consistently distinguish between deposits of the Mojave River and those of adjacent alluvial fans, probably because both cover the same general mixtures of sand, silt, and gravel. We have differentiated the river and fan deposits on this map only because they have different origins, but also because they have distinct physical characteristics that may affect their engineering properties and their potential value as sources of ground water and construction materials. This differentiation is readily made in the field on the basis of sediment color, texture, and composition.

The alluvial-fan deposits are composed of poorly sorted mixtures of angular rock debris derived from nearby mountains, including abundant fragments of volcanic and metavolcanic rocks. By contrast, the river deposits are moderately to well sorted and contain abundant relatively light-colored granitic detritus and common clasts of quartzite. Pebbles of granite and quartzite are conspicuously abundant, indicating long-distance transport by the river. Much of the material probably originated in the headwaters of the Mojave River, which lie in the western San Bernardino Mountains more than 100 km upstream from Mojave Valley.

ROCKS WEST OF THE YERMO ANNEX

Beyond its narrow fringe of alluvial-fan deposits, the Michel Range directly west of the Yermo Annex consists of Mesozoic-age metavolcanic rocks overlain by a Tertiary-age sequence of continental sedimentary and volcanic rocks. These rocks were described in detail in a previous report (Cox and Wilshire, 1993). The youthful nature of this system was demonstrated by an extensively west of Elephant Mountain. They consist of silicic lava flows and pyroclastic rocks, with rare interbeds of sandstone and conglomerate, and sparse flows or sills of andesitic or basaltic rocks. These rocks have been correlated with similar metavolcanic rocks of Late Triassic to Early Jurassic age that are found in neighboring mountains south of the Yermo Annex (Cox and Wilshire, 1993).

Tertiary sedimentary and volcanic rocks crop out on the flanks and crest of Elephant Mountain. They include a thin basal unit of reddish sandstone (unit Tr1) correlated with the Jackhammer Formation of Oligocene or early Miocene age. This unit is overlain by a thick succession of tuff and tuff breccia, felsite flows, lacustrine limestone, sandstone, conglomerate, and basalt, all correlated with the early Miocene-age Pickhandle Formation (Cox and Wilshire, 1993). The Pickhandle-equivalent strata are unconformably overlain by rhyodacite breccia and sandstone (unit Tr3) and are intruded by plugs and dikes of rhyodacite (unit Tr4) that form the scenic buttes of Elephant Mountain. The rhyodacite intrusions and sediments are inferred to be early or middle Miocene in age (Cox and Wilshire, 1993). They include a small outlier of intrusive rhyodacite that is surrounded by Quaternary alluvium near the west entrance to the Yermo Annex (S-12 sec. 3, T39N, R1E).

FAULTS

The Yermo Annex lies within an elongate structural block bounded by the northwest-trending and Camp Rock-Harper Lake fault zones (see index map). These fault zones are elements of a regional system of young right-lateral strike-slip faults in the central Mojave Desert (Borgogne, 1980). The youthful nature of this system was demonstrated by extensive ground ruptures that formed along the Camp Rock and related faults during the 1992 and 1993 earthquakes, which mainly affected more easterly parts of the desert (Hart and others, 1993). Two faults associated with the Camp Rock-Harper Lake zone cross the southwestern area of this geologic map (faults D and E). Other faults west of the Yermo Annex may also be elements of the regional strike-slip system.

Pauls D and E are the easternmost of five principal strike-slip faults that we described in our previous report (Cox and Wilshire, 1993). These faults were identified from the following lines of evidence: (1) fault planes exposed north of the Mojave River about 4.6 km west of the area covered by this map; (2) subsurface structural discontinuities northwest of Daggett, as inferred from a direct-current resistivity survey (Zohdy and Bisdorf, 1994) and an aeromagnetic survey (U.S. Geological Survey, 1987); and (3) offset topographic surfaces in old fan fragments (unit Qm1) south and southeast of the area of this map. Lateral displacement of fault D is measurable about 6.4 km southwest of Daggett (see sec. 4, T39N, R2E), where several fan fragments are offset right-laterally about 150 m (Cox and Wilshire, 1993). The cited aeromagnetic survey suggests that the southwest side of the fault has dropped relative to its northeast side in the vicinity of Daggett. Pauls E probably has moved during Pleistocene time. More recent movements are unlikely because the fault is covered by late Pleistocene and Holocene alluvium (units Qm3 and Qm4) across the southwestern half of this map.

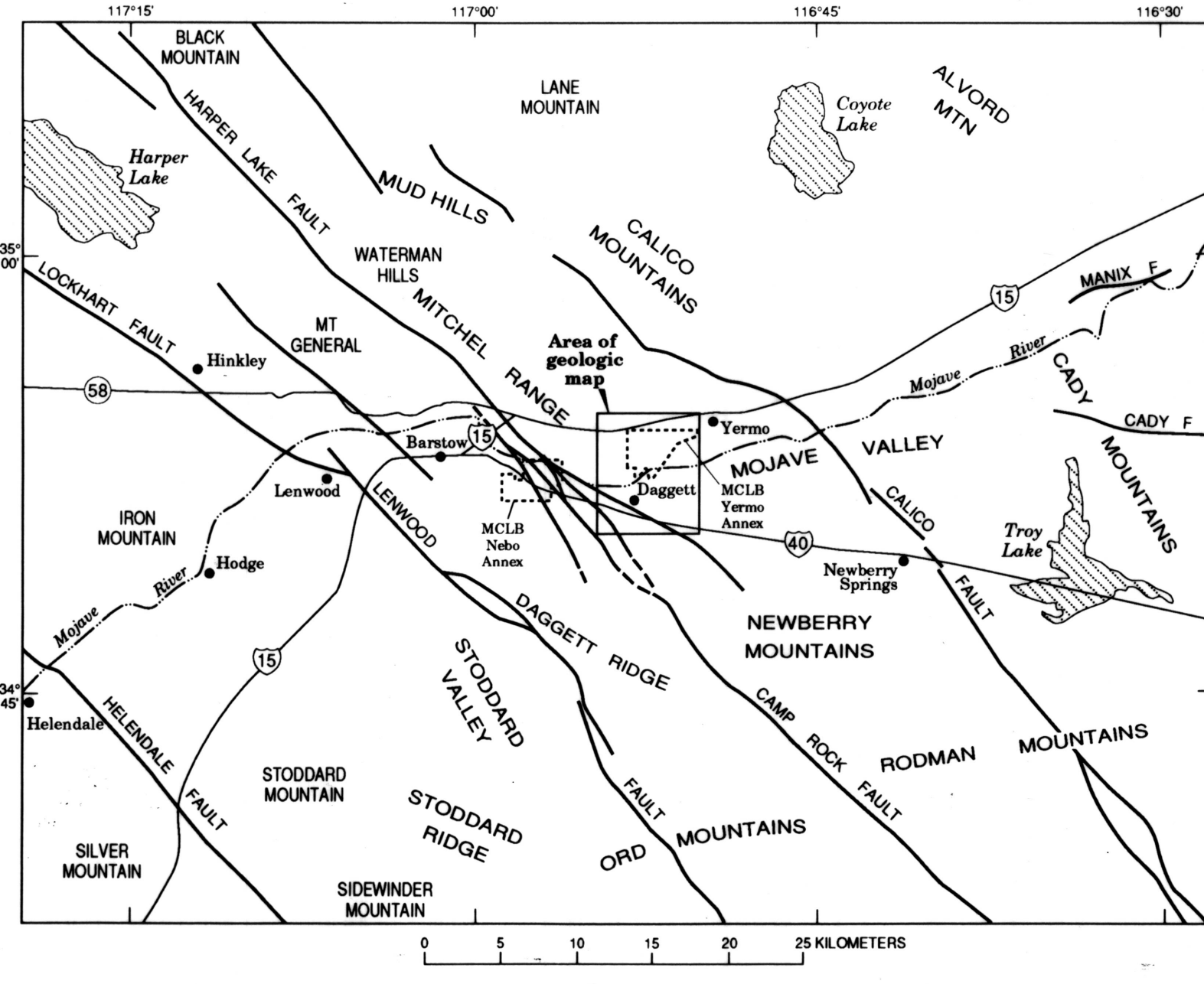
While assembling the present map, we found new information pertaining to the location and activity of fault D. Paint air photo lineaments reveal the path of this fault at the west edge of the map area and at several neighboring sites extending northeast to the Mojave River. Previously, this segment of the fault was only approximately located (Cox and Wilshire, 1993). Most of the lineaments were observed only on old aerial photographs taken before about 1950. They apparently were largely obliterated by subsequent construction projects, including the building of Interstate Highway 40. West of the map area, the lineaments cut across alluvial deposits of late Pleistocene and Holocene age (units Qm3 and Qm4), suggesting there has been Holocene displacement on fault D. This interpretation reverses our previous finding of no Holocene activity on the fault (Cox and Wilshire, 1993).

The current investigation also revealed several faults west of the Yermo Annex that were not shown on our earlier map (Cox and Wilshire, 1993). These faults are indicated by predominantly northwest-trending topographic lineaments that coincide with right-lateral jog in the crest of Elephant Mountain. We suspect that the faults are generally related to the regional strike-slip fault system, but further field work is needed to establish their age and style of displacement. Most of them seem to be inactive, inasmuch as they apparently do not disturb Holocene alluvium on the flanks of Elephant Mountain or on the adjacent floor of Mojave Valley (units Qm3 and Qm4).

One northwest-trending fault on the west side of Elephant Mountain (W-12 sec. 8, T39N, R1E) locally appears to have minor Holocene displacement, because it juxtaposes late Pleistocene alluvium (unit Qm3) on its east wall against Mesozoic and Tertiary rocks of the west wall, much larger movements than those implied by a thick Tertiary sequence on the east wall, which is dropped down against Mesozoic volcanic rocks of the west wall. The large displacement probably was produced by normal faulting during the early Miocene (Cox and Wilshire, 1993), whereas the apparent minor dislocation of Pleistocene alluvium may represent Holocene reactivation of the old fault under the modern strike-slip regime.

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INDEX MAP SHOWING LOCATION OF STUDY AREA

GEOLOGIC MAP OF THE YERMO ANNEX AND VICINITY, MARINE CORPS LOGISTICS BASE, BARSTOW, CALIFORNIA

By
Brett F. Cox and Howard G. Wilshire

1994

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