A survey of Puget Sound is in progress. The scale of the published maps is 1:30,000.

The features shown on topographic maps may be arranged in three groups: (1) natural, including soil, rocks, streams, and other bodies of water; (2) relief, including mountains, hills, valleys, and other features of the land surface; (3) political (names of towns), such as towns, cities, roads, railroads, and boundaries. The symbols used to represent these features are shown and explained below. Variations appear in some older maps, and additional features are represented on some special maps.

All the water features are represented in blue, the smaller streams and creeks by single blue lines and the larger streams by double lines. The larger streams, lakes, and the sea are represented by blue water coloring or blue tint. Isolated water features—those close back one or two miles from the coast—are shown by lines of blue dots and dashes.

Relief is shown by contour lines in brown, which in a few maps are supplemented by shading showing the effect of light from the northwest. The lines are represented for the purpose of giving the impression of relief and thus aiding the interpretation of the contour lines. Contour lines represent an imaginary line on the ground in a series every 20 or 10 feet, which in the same altitude above sea level. Such lines could be drawn at any latitude, but in paleogeography only the contours or contour regular contours of the sea are shown. The definition of the sea level of the topographic surveys is shown for the 20-foot interval above the sea level. Contour lines show the shape of the hills, mountains, and valleys, as well as their altitudes. rectangles contour lines that are at an altitude on the map indicate a gentle slope, lines that are close together indicate a steep slope, and lines that run together indicate a cliff.

The manner in which contour lines express altitude, form, and grade is shown in the figure below.

The sketch represents a river valley that lies between two hills. In the foreground is the sea, with a bay that is partly filled by a broad sand bar. On each side of the valley is a terrace into which small ravines have cut narrow gulches. The bill of the right side is a rounded mound and gently sloping plains separated by ravines. The plains are traversed at their lower ends by a sea cliff. The bill at the left terminates abruptly as the valley is a steep slope which is sharply grassed and forms a hillside that is traversed by a few shallow gullies. On the map each of these features is represented, directly brought to the position in the sketch by contours.

The contour interval, or the vertical distance in feet between two contours, is 20 feet above the sea level. The height of any point—such as road intersections, afraid, surface of bodies of water, etc.—is determined by an assistant to the basin of the valley. Map symbols are shown in the margin at the right.