

CORRELATION OF MAP UNITS

SEDIMENTARY ROCKS

- Quaternary: Qa (Alluvial deposits), Qp (Glacial deposits), Qv (Rhyolite volcanic group)
- Tertiary: Tc (Challis Volcanic Group)
- Middle Proterozoic: Yb (Yellowjacket Formation), Yc (Unnamed argillaceous quartzite unit), Yd (Unnamed argillaceous quartzite unit), Ye (Unnamed argillaceous quartzite unit), Yf (Unnamed argillaceous quartzite unit), Yg (Unnamed argillaceous quartzite unit), Yh (Hoodoo Quartzite)

DESCRIPTION OF MAP UNITS

Alluvial deposits (Holocene)—Overbank deposits and unconsolidated clay, silt, sand, and gravel along modern stream courses; includes some collation and glacial deposits.

Glacial deposits, undivided (Holocene and Pleistocene)—Glacial till, lateral and locally terminal moraine deposits. Includes alluvium locally. Shown only where extensive areas of bedrock concealed.

Rhyolite volcanic group and related intrusive rocks (Eocene)

Rhyolite intrusions—At Red Rock Peak (southern edge of quadrangle), consists of light-gray to pink, columnar-jointed rhyolite that contains 9 percent phenocrysts composed mostly of euhedral alkali feldspar (5–6 mm), minor quartz (1–2 mm), and sparse altered mafic minerals. Unit includes vesicular brown latite that crops out near the triangulation station and hilltop. Alkali feldspar yielded a K/Ar date of 44.1 ± 3 Ma (Evens, 1988). Near Quartzite Mountain fault, medium-gray to greenish-gray rhyolite plugs contain less than 10 percent phenocrysts of alkali feldspar (1–3 mm), alkali feldspar (1–3 mm), and plagioclase (1–2 mm) in an aphanitic groundmass. Locally, rhyolite is propylitically altered and silicified.

Porphyry intrusions—Pink porphyry that typically contains smoky quartz phenocrysts as large as 3–4 mm, tabular alkali feldspar and sparse plagioclase as large as 6–8 mm, and sparse ilmenite or biotite as large as 3 mm. Groundmass of quartz and alkali feldspar is dense and microgranitic; microgranular and cryptocrystalline (Evens, 1988).

Volcanic rocks, undivided—Consists mainly of tuff of Ellis Creek intercalated with potassium-rich basalt flows; at base, locally hosts phenocryst-rich dacite flows that contain abundant plagioclase, biotite, and hornblende (Evens, 1988).

Granite of Big Horn Crags pluton (Eocene)—Pink to pinkish-gray hornblende-biotite syenogranite. Within exposed deeper part of pluton, on west side of map area, rocks are medium- to coarse-grained equigranular, contain about 10 percent mafic minerals, and display a potassium feldspar to plagioclase ratio of about 2:1. In cross section, the granite is recrystallized and recrystallized and new minerals formed. A bleached and silicified zone extends 10–15 cm outward from contact. Minor narrow, 1- to 3-cm-wide zones of brecciation of country rocks also formed during emplacement. The ductile deformation in country rocks near eastern contact in the Yellowjacket Creek drainage suggests that the main fault is younger than the granite. Granite is exposed along gently east dipping eastern roof zone of the Big Horn Crags pluton. On the basis of roof geometry and the presence of Eocene dikes, it is inferred that the granite intruded prior to the Yellowjacket Creek fault. In eastern part of quadrangle, granites probably underlie the sedimentary rocks of much of map area.

Apple Creek Formation (Middle Proterozoic)—Divided into four informal units in descending order: banded siltite (Yab), coarse siltite (Ya), dense siltite, and fine siltite. Only upper two units are present within quadrangle, each of which is shown separately on map and described separately below. In the Salmon River Mountains, Connor and Evens (1986), Connor (1990), and Evens and Connor (1992) assigned strata correlative with the banded siltite unit and the conformably underlying coarse siltite unit to their middle and lower subunits, respectively, of the Yellowjacket Formation. Connor (1990) correlated the lower subunit with strata in the Lemhi Range. Tysdal (2000) determined that the lower subunit was not part of the Yellowjacket as defined originally by Ross (1934) and was assigned the strata to the coarse siltite unit of the Apple Creek Formation. Mapping of Tysdal (1996a, b) and Tysdal and Mose (1996) in the Lemhi Range previously had defined the coarse siltite unit, and the successively underlying dense and fine siltite units, and correlated them with the Apple Creek Formation. The Apple Creek originally was named and mapped by Anderson (1961) near Hayden Creek (see "Index map"). In northern part of Lemhi Range, the Apple Creek is a fault zone. Conformable above the coarse siltite unit is the banded siltite unit. Both of light-gray, coarse-grained siltite that grade upward into dark-gray to black siltite and argillite; siltite has a banded appearance; metamorphosed to biotite-grade greenschist facies. Light-gray siltite beds are planar to ripple cross-laminated; they typically are sharply bedded and locally enclose underlying strata, produce slight angular truncation of underlying laminae. Beds commonly are 2–10 cm thick, although graded beds as thick as 0.75 m occur locally. Some sequences as thick as 10 m are composed of repeated graded siltite layers 0.5–1 m thick. Unit is characterized by abundant lead casts 0.5–1 cm across, and by "dilatite" (examined by Connor and Evens, 1986) which is a lobe-shaped feature that projects downward from a siltite bed of the same composition. In cross section, "dilatite" typically are 0.5–2 cm high and 1–5 mm wide at the top; the thin direction generally is subvertical, but ranges from at least 10 to 5 cm. "Dilatite" are widely distributed within unit and occur in several-meter-thick zones of beds. Conformable above the coarse siltite unit on the east (Connor and Evens, 1986), where the base is exposed. Thickness east of quadrangle estimated at 2,000 m by Evens and Connor (1992).

Coarse siltite unit—Gray-green, medium- to coarse-grained siltite and fine-grained sandstone; metamorphosed to biotite-grade greenschist facies. Five-grained siltite and argillite are uncommon. Graded bedding characteristics unit, with many beds composed of repeated graded layers 0.5–1 cm thick. Distinctive erosional based graded beds, as thick as 50 cm, occur intermittently throughout unit and are composed of light-gray, quartz-rich, coarse-grained siltite to fine-grained sandstone that grades upward into dark-gray siltite; beds are structurally in lower part and ripple to plane-bedded in upper part. Zones of conchoidal lamination occur sporadically within unit. Clinging ripples are present locally, and in some beds grade upward into siltite that displays water-escape structures. Current ripples and syn-sedimentary cracks common. Base not exposed in quadrangle. Thickness to east estimated at 3,500 m by Connor and Evens (1986). Stratigraphic relationship to the unnamed argillaceous quartzite unit (Yad) is uncertain; contact is a fault (see "Structure" section).

Unnamed argillaceous quartzite unit (Middle Proterozoic)—Medium-gray to gray-green biotite siltite, and interbeds of fine-grained quartzite and quartzite-metasediments; metamorphosed to biotite-grade greenschist facies. Siltite is thin bedded, planar laminated to ripple cross-laminated; quartzite and quartzite-metasediments beds are most abundant in lower strata of unit. Flaser and lenticular bedding are common, particularly in lower part. Lower 100-m of unit is transitional with the underlying Hoodoo Quartzite (Yh). Upper strata of unit eroded; no thickness has been measured, but we estimate preserved thickness of more than 400 m.

Hoodoo Quartzite (Middle Proterozoic)—Light-gray to white, locally brownish gray to medium gray quartzite and orthoquartzite; contains minor feldspar, biotite, and sericite; metamorphosed to biotite-grade greenschist facies. Bedding commonly is indistinct. Internal features include a well defined, steeply inclined cross-lamination of dunes (meagripples) is common. Oscillatory, current, and locally irregular ripples are present. Beds generally are tightly cemented, hence the unit forms ledges and cliffs. South of quadrangle, Evens (1988) reported lower exposed strata contain local thin units of marble interbedded with calcareous metasediments; quartzite beds a few centimeters thick, with little or no calcite, alternate with strata that contain more calcite and calc-silicate minerals than quartz. At McHenry Mountain, about 6 km directly west of southwest corner of quadrangle, lower strata of the Hoodoo contain calcareous metasediments interbedded with quartzite. The Hoodoo conformably overlies the Yellowjacket Formation. However, the contact is locally sheared in areas of intense deformation because of the high ductility contrast between the resistant orthoquartzite of the Hoodoo and the readily deformed siltite of the Yellowjacket. Ross (1934) reported 1,085 m (3,560 ft) of Hoodoo in a measured section that extended into southern part of quadrangle, along Yellowjacket and Shoel Creeks.

Yellowjacket Formation (Middle Proterozoic)—Formation as defined originally by Ross (1934), consisting only of strata that lie beneath the Hoodoo Quartzite. Interbedded dark-gray and gray-green siltite and abundant dark-gray to locally light gray fine-grained quartz-rich biotite sandstone; interbedded sequences of siltite are locally interlayered with 2- to 10-mm-thick layers of argillite. Strata are metamorphosed to biotite-grade greenschist facies. The most characteristic feature is ripple cross-lamination. Other common features include: climbing ripples, mudcracks, and syn-sedimentary cracks. Lead casts 0.5–1 cm thick also present. Calcareous metasediments, marble (metasediments), calc-silicate beds, and scapolite-rich beds are present in western part of quadrangle, along ridge that extends south from Remondia Saddle to the west (see "Index map"). Similar strata occur in lower strata of principal reference ("Type") section of Ross (1934), along Yellowjacket Creek south of quadrangle, where they are interbedded with metasediments (Ross, 1934; Evens, 1988). Some of the calcareous rocks there form discrete lenses (Carter, 1981). Scapolite rocks there and in quadrangle are rich in sodium and are interpreted as metapelite. The Yellowjacket Formation is not exposed in the Yellowjacket and Desborough (1977). Base of formation is not exposed in quadrangle and has not been observed in central Idaho. A thickness of about 2,743 m (9,000 ft) was reported by Ross (1934) along Yellowjacket and Shoel Creeks, in the principal measured section, which extended into southern part of quadrangle.

INTRODUCTION

The Blackbird Mountain quadrangle lies in the western part of the Salmon National Forest and is important to the study of the Forest for the following reasons. (1) The quadrangle contains the western part of the cobalt-bearing Blackbird mining district. The steeply dipping Quartzite Mountain fault, a major fault that transects the quadrangle, defines the western extent of the mining district and the western extent of the stratabound cobalt-bearing rocks of the Apple Creek Formation. These observations are important to the mineral and environmental assessment of the Salmon National Forest. (2) The map area is critical to determination of the spatial and relative timing relationships of structure, stratigraphy, and intrusive and volcanic rocks in this and other areas of the Forest. (3) Some areas of the quadrangle were mapped by Tysdal (2000) to aid reconciliation of conflicting interpretations of Middle Proterozoic stratigraphy in the Lemhi Range and the Salmon River Mountains. The Quartzite Mountain fault forms the western limit to north-south trending faults—the Shoel Creek, Iron Lake, and Porphyry Ridge faults or at least the Quartzite Mountain fault (see "Generalized geologic map"). Northwest-trending stratigraphic units are truncated by the Yellowjacket and the Iron Lake faults. The Quartzite Mountain fault may form the western limit of the Trans-Challis fault system in this area. Bennett (1984) and Kilgus and others (1986) defined the system as a 30-km-wide assemblage of northeast-trending, high-angle normal faults that cross central Idaho. The fault system is interpreted as a major zone of Eocene rifting and crustal extension. The western edge of the Panther Creek graben previously was shown (Fig. 1 of Kilgus and others, 1986) to mark the western edge of the Trans-Challis fault system in the Yellowjacket Mountain quadrangle. Our mapping suggests the western limit should be extended to include the Quartzite Mountain fault. The apparent change in sense of displacement on opposite sides of the fault north and south of Quartzite Mountain is discussed in the last paragraph of this report.

WHITE LEDGE SHEAR ZONE

The White Ledge shear zone was the name applied by Sheron and others (1956) to a fault zone originally mapped by Vhay (1948) northeast of the Blackbird Mountain quadrangle (see "Generalized geologic map"). The shear zone was reported to be as much as 245 m (800 ft) wide. Vhay's (1948) map shows the shear zone to extend southwest from the vicinity of the Sunrise mine to Magwood Creek within the Blackbird Mountain quadrangle. Sheron and others (1956) and Bennett (1977, p. 1) followed Vhay (1948) in showing the shear zone to extend southwest of the Sunrise mine. Few data points are shown between these two localities on the map of Vhay (1948); however, Evens and Connor (1992) could not trace the shear zone much farther south than the Sunrise mine, and do not show its trace eastward beyond the mine. The Magwood location is along the Quartzite Mountain fault, to which we attribute the shearing. Bennett (1977) speculated that the White Ledge shear zone may connect with the Iron Lake fault (the Porphyry Creek fault), but our mapping shows this is not the case.

PORPHYRY RIDGE FAULT

The Porphyry Ridge fault trends southward between the Quartzite Mountain fault and the Iron Lake fault. The Porphyry Ridge fault is not to be confused with the "Porphyry Creek fault" of Bennett (1977), which on a map is named the Iron Lake fault, a segment of a larger fault shown on the "Generalized geologic map". The Porphyry Ridge fault is newly verified and downdrops the banded siltite unit of the Apple Creek Formation on the east against the coarse siltite unit on the west. The southern end of the fault, within about 1 km of its junction with the Iron Lake fault, is flanked by a zone of brecciation as much as 100 m wide and an iron-sulfide alteration zone as much as 0.5 km wide. The fault may have developed as an adjustment to movement on the Quartzite Mountain and Iron Lake faults.

IRON LAKE FAULT

The Iron Lake fault was mapped originally in its southeastern extent within the quadrangle by Bennett (1977), who interpreted it as a thrust with displacement to the northeast. Its eastern limit, east of the area of the "Generalized geologic map", was interpreted as a reverse fault (Evens, 1988) and a thrust fault (Bennett and Bennett, 1979; Tysdal (2000) and Tysdal and Desborough (1997) reinterpreted the fault, most of which lies southeast of the quadrangle, as a thrust that later underwent normal displacement. Another possibility is that the Iron Lake fault is a normal fault that dropped a major thrust plate to the southwest against its original footwall of Apple Creek Formation. Within the map area, the fault displays characteristics of a normal fault. The actual fault itself is not exposed, but the rocks on opposite sides of the 100–200 m wide zone in which the fault must exist are of two formations—the Yellowjacket Formation on the southwest and the coarse siltite unit of the Apple Creek Formation on the northeast. The zone is covered, but pools of white halite quartz are present locally within it.

SHOVEL CREEK FAULT

The area of Hoodoo Quartzite east of the Quartzite Mountain fault, from Yellowjacket Creek on the southeast to the Iron Lake fault on the northeast, was depicted as a syncline on the map of Evens (1988). Our mapping revealed that the Hoodoo actually is deformed into two synclines, on opposite sides of the Shoel Creek normal fault. The upper contact of down-dropped Hoodoo southwest of the Shoel Creek fault is nearly juxtaposed against the lower contact of the formation northeast of the fault. The fault, which is actually a zone more than 200 m wide, has a vertical displacement of about 1,000 m. Relationships across the fault suggest increasing thrust to the southeast.

TORMALINE, SILICA, HYDROCALCITE BRECCIA AND HYDROTHERMAL ALTERATION

Microcrystalline tormaline forms local masses within the Hoodoo Quartzite throughout the quadrangle. It forms veins that include quartz within the Yellowjacket Formation north and east of the South Fork of Porphyry Creek, west of its junction with Porphyry Creek. In this area, tormaline and quartz veins also occur within silicified rock, as do hydrocalcite breccia and iron-oxide alteration. The alteration is considerably more extensive than the area of silicification shown on the map; hornfelsed and hydrothermally altered siltite occur as far as 1 km northeast of the area of silicification. Silicification, hydrocalcite brecciation, and hydrothermal alteration occur in both the Yellowjacket and Apple Creek Formations. The pattern of silicification is elongate northwest-southeast. This suggests that the Iron Lake fault may have served as the conduit for granitic intrusion and related silicification and hydrothermal alteration. Precise placement of the Iron Lake fault is difficult in this area. Kilgus and Fisher (1995) reported that hydrothermally altered rocks, including silicification, are common along faults of the Trans-Challis fault system and are genetically related to Eocene granitic and volcanic rocks that intrude the faults.

TIMING OF EVENTS AND RELATIONSHIPS OF FAULTS

Normal displacement on the Iron Lake fault is younger than thrusting. Normal faulting predates intrusion of the Eocene Big Horn Crags pluton and related small intrusions. Normal faulting also predates intrusion and related silicification, hydrocalcite brecciation, and hydrothermal alteration, shown within the area near the junction of Porphyry Creek and the South Fork of Porphyry Creek. Extensional faulting and the igneous events could be close in time, but we have no data to demonstrate this. Minor adjustment along normal faults within the quadrangle may have taken place subsequent to igneous events, as indicated by shearing of brecciation within the Hoodoo plus that intruded the Quartzite Mountain fault north of Magwood Creek.

In the east-central part of the quadrangle, a triangular-shaped block of Apple Creek Formation is delimited on the southwest by the Iron Lake fault, and on the west by the northern segment of the Quartzite Mountain fault (that is, northward from Quartzite Mountain). Rocks west and southeast of the triangular-shaped block are chiefly Yellowjacket Formation (and the locally associated conformable strata, Yag). Our map indicates that the area of Yellowjacket Formation is downthrown relative to the triangular-shaped, fault-bordered block of Apple Creek Formation. Similarly, relationships along the Iron Lake fault in the vicinity of the Panther Creek graben (see "Generalized geologic map") clearly are down on the southwest. From these observations it is reasonable to interpret displacement of the entire area of Yellowjacket in the quadrangle as downthrown relative to the Apple Creek. But such displacement does not necessarily yield the final relative age of the two formations. The entire volume of the Yellowjacket and east of the quadrangle, may have been first over the Apple Creek Formation and later downthrown along the Iron Lake and Quartzite Mountain faults (Tysdal, 2000). The Apple Creek may be the original footwall rocks of a thrust plate that contained the conformable sequence of Yellowjacket-Hoodoo-argillaceous quartzite. This interpretation indicates that the Yellowjacket is older than the Apple Creek. The structural interpretation is consistent with the reverse fault relationship apparent in Evens (1988, p. 2) and the thrust relationship apparent by Rember and Bennett (1979), Tysdal (2000), and Tysdal and Desborough (1997), to the Iron Lake fault in the vicinity of Iron Lake ("Index map"), 5 km east of boundary of "Generalized geologic map".

The relative downthrow side of the Quartzite Mountain fault changes from east-down along the southern segment of the fault (that is, southward from Quartzite Mountain) to west-side-down along the northern segment. The ball-and-bar symbol remains on the east side for the entire length of the fault, however, to reflect the last movement as contrasted along the entire fault. If the rocks east of the southern fault segment were uplifted, such that no displacement existed, the Yellowjacket southwest of the Iron Lake fault, and west of the northern segment of the Quartzite Mountain fault, would be contiguous—a single block. The amount of down-on-the-east displacement restored along the southern segment of the Quartzite Mountain fault, such that no movement took place, probably reflects late movement on the Quartzite Mountain fault and is small in magnitude. Restoration of the amount of down-on-the-east displacement along the northern segment of the fault does not change the stratigraphic relationships across this segment of the fault, relationships that appear to be consistent with earlier thrusting.

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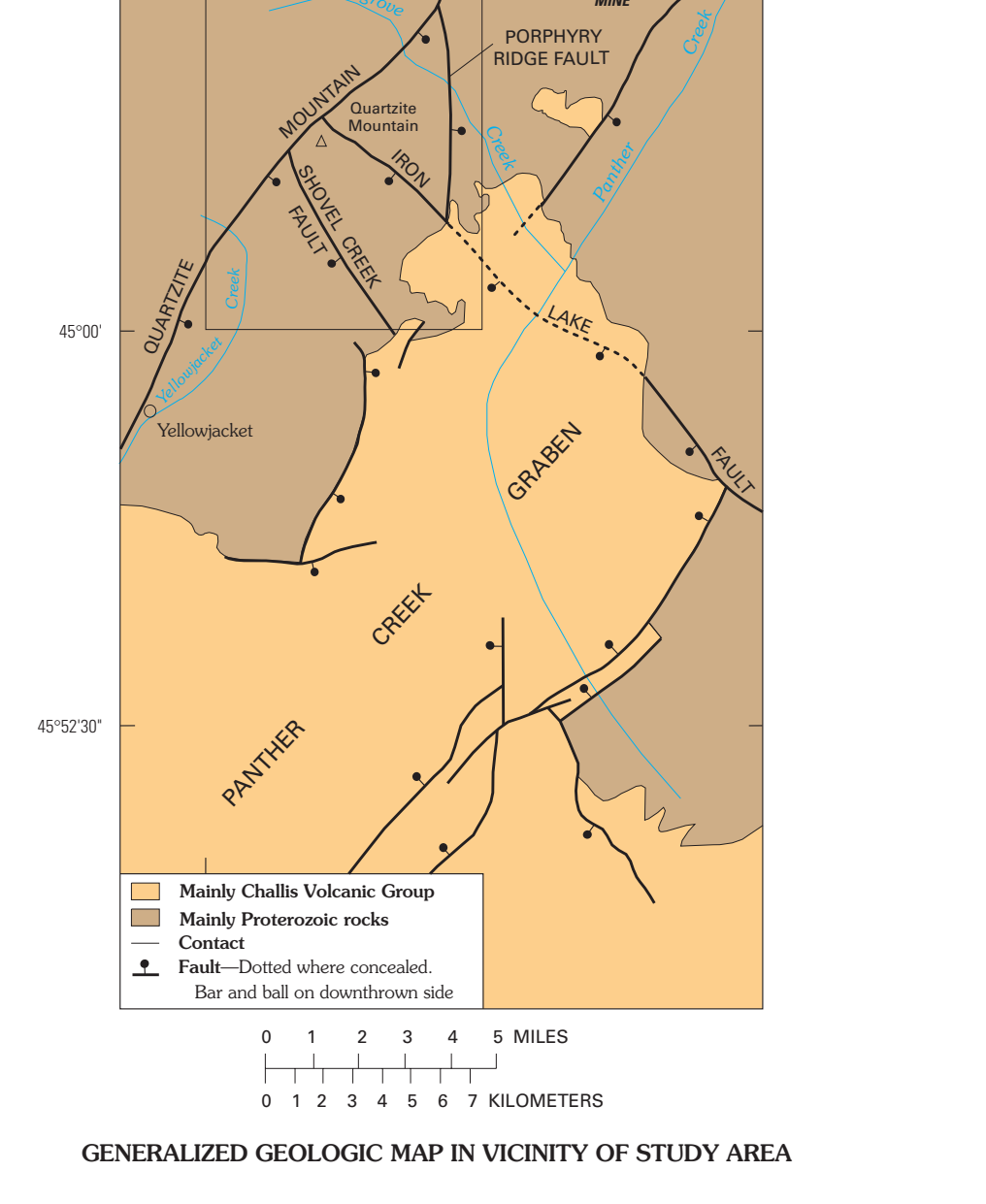
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GEOLOGIC MAP OF THE BLACKBIRD MOUNTAIN QUADRANGLE, LEMHI COUNTY, IDAHO

By
R.G. Tysdal, K.V. Evans, and K.I. Lund
2000

Base from U.S. Geological Survey, provisional edition 1988, Transverse Mercator projection, 1:62,500 National Transverse Mercator grid, zone 11, 10,000-foot State grid ticks, Idaho, central zone, 1927 North American datum.

SCALE 1:24,000

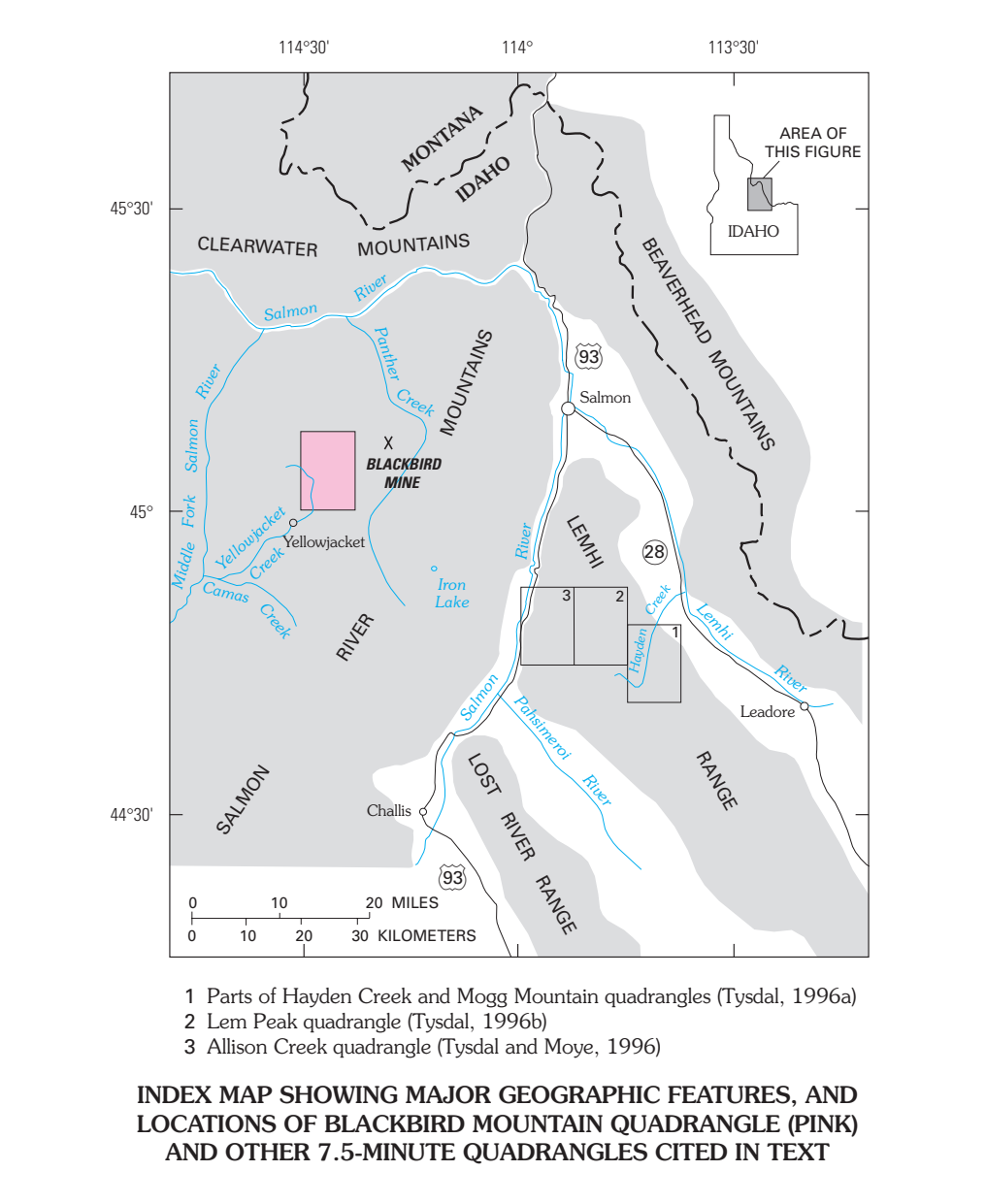
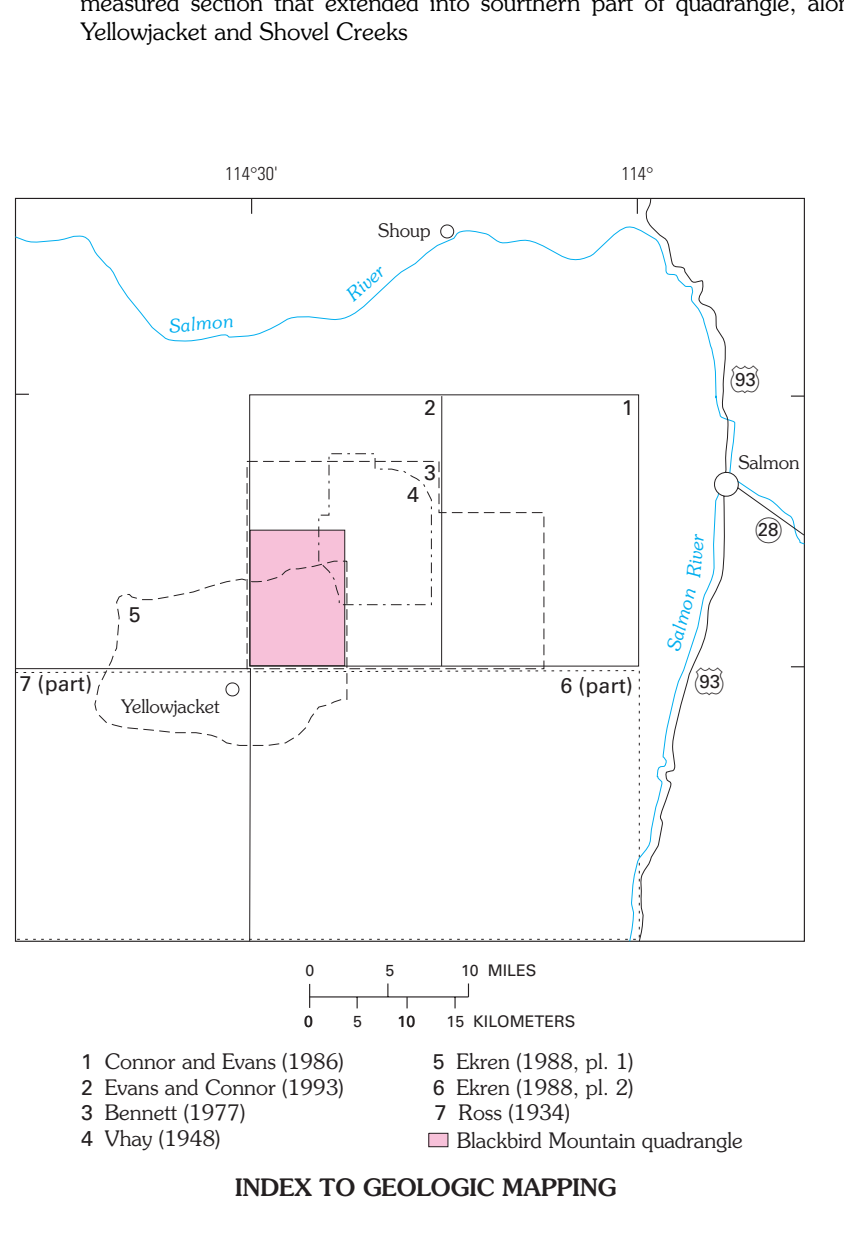
CONTOUR INTERVAL 40 FEET
DOTTED LINES REPRESENT 10-FOOT CONTOURS
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

Geology mapped by R.G. Tysdal, 1995–97; K.V. Evans, 1981–85, 1988, 1997; and K.I. Lund, 1997. Geologic map digitized by Esther Castellano. Editing and layout by Alessandro J. Donath. Manuscript approved for publication June 3, 2000.

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ISBN 0-147-74923-X
9 780147 749230

Printed on recycled paper



INDEX TO GEOLOGIC MAPPING

1 Connor and Evens (1986) 5 Evens (1988, p. 2) 11

2 Evens and Connor (1993) 6 Bennett (1977) 7

3 Bennett (1977) 7 Ross (1934) 8

4 Vhay (1948) 8 Blackbird Mountain quadrangle