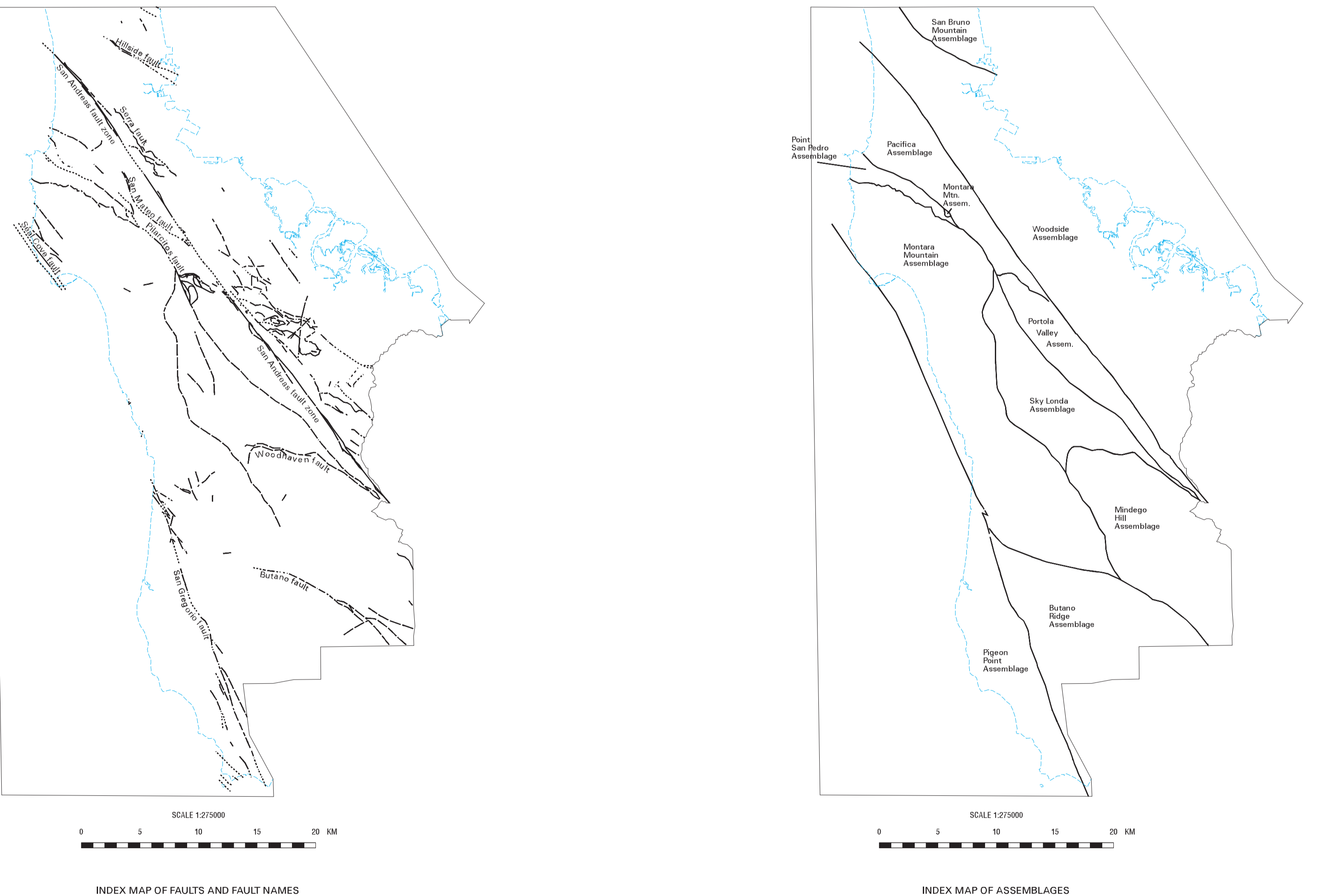
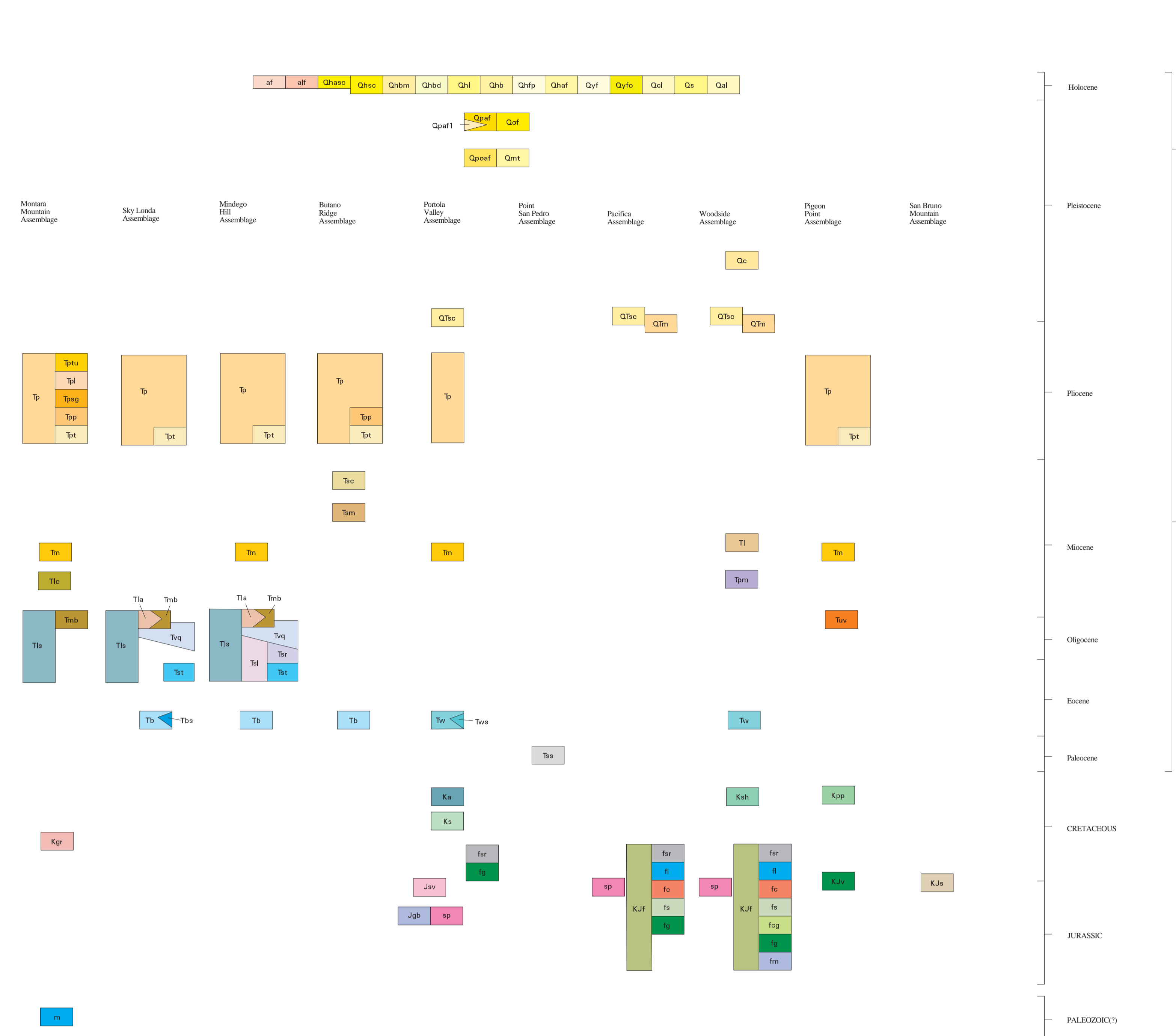


CORRELATION OF MAP UNITS

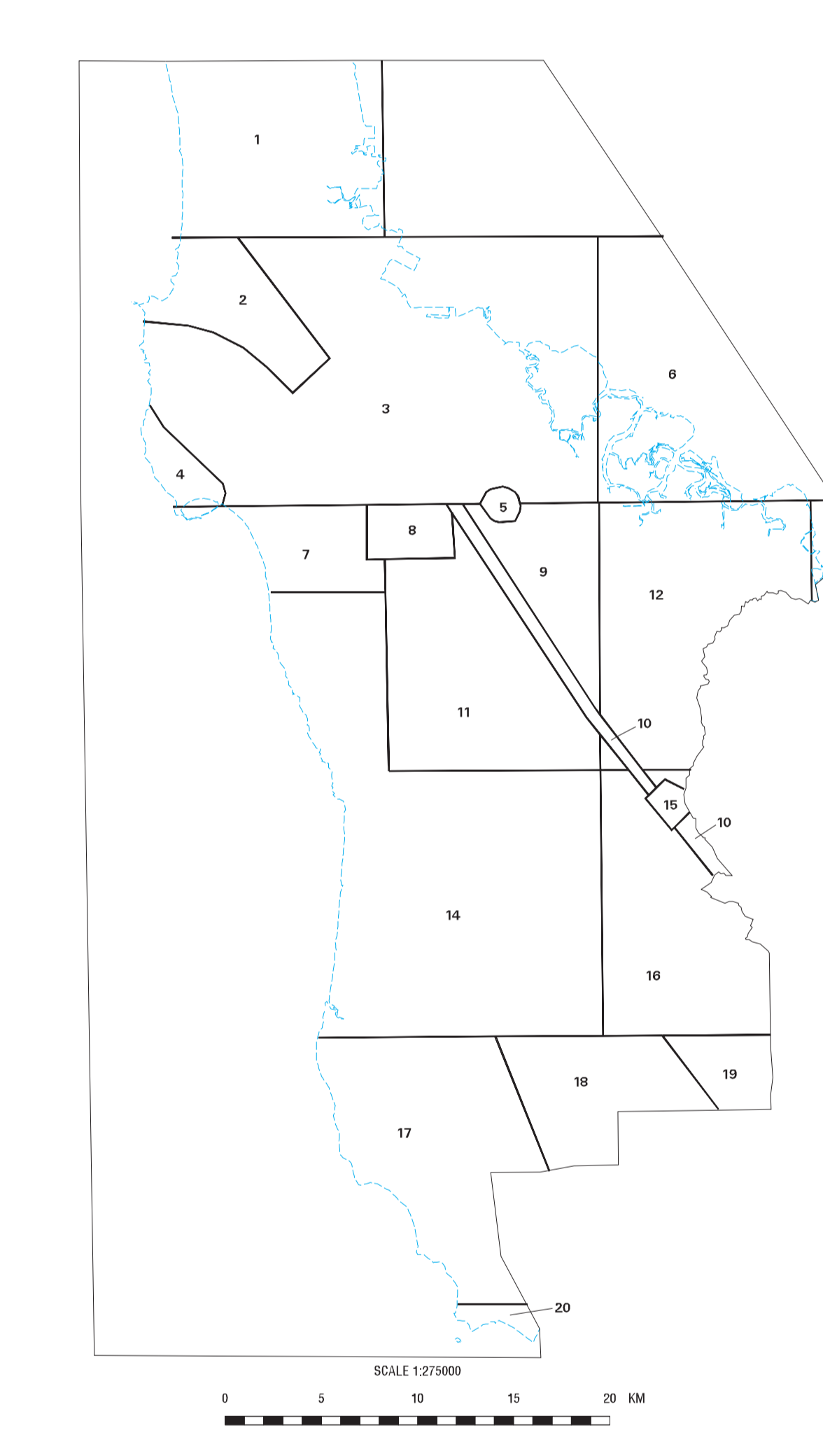


DESCRIPTION OF MAP UNITS

- af** Artificial fill (Holocene)—Loose to very well consolidated gravel, sand, silt, clay, rock fragments, organic matter, and man-made debris in various combinations. Thickness is variable and may exceed 30 m in places. Some is compacted and quite firm, but fill made before 1965 is nearly everywhere not compacted and consists simply of dumped materials.
- af** Artificial levee fill (Holocene)—Main-made deposit of various materials and ages. Former artificial levees as much as 6.5 m high. Some are compacted and quite firm, but fills made before 1965 are almost everywhere not compacted and consist simply of dumped materials. The distribution of levee fill conforms to levees shown on the most recent U.S. Geological Survey 7.5-minute quadrangle maps.
- Qhaec** Artificial stream channels (Holocene)—Modified stream channels, in most places where streams have been straightened and realigned.
- Qhac** Stream channel deposits (Holocene)—Poorly to well-sorted sand, silt, silty sand, or sandy gravel with minor cobbles. Cobbles are more common in the mountainous valleys. Many stream channels are presently lined with concrete or rip rap. Engineering works such as diversion dams, drop structures, energy dissipaters and percolation ponds also modify the original channel. Many stream channels have been straightened, and these are labeled Qhac. This straightening is especially prevalent in the lower reaches of streams entering the estuary. The mapped distribution of stream channel deposits is controlled by the depiction of major creeks on the most recent U.S. Geological Survey 7.5-minute quadrangles. Only those deposits related to major creeks are mapped. In some places these deposits are under shallow water for some or all of the year, as a result of reservoir release and annual variation in rainfall.
- Qhbc** Beach deposits (Holocene)—Loose clastic deposits composed of sand- to cobble-sized fragments in the tidal zone. Moderately well-sorted by wave action. Near Little Coyote Point, deposits are composed mostly of oyster shell fragments; west of Coyote Point deposits are composed mostly of rock debris derived from artificial fill (af).
- Qhbm** Bay mud (Holocene)—Water-saturated estuarine mud, predominantly gray, green and blue clay and silty clay underlying marshlands and tidal mud flats of San Francisco Bay, Pescadero, and Sausalito. The upper surface is covered with condriads (*Spartina* sp.) and pickled seaweed (*Salkoaria* sp.). The mud also contains a few lenses of well-sorted, fine sand and silt, a few shallow layers (systems), and silt. The mud interfingers with and grades into fine-grained deposits at the distal edge of Holocene fans, and was deposited during the post-Wisconsin rise in sea level, about 12 ka to present (Imbrie and others, 1984). Mud varies in thickness from zero, at landward edge, to as much as 40 m near north County line.
- Qhb** Basin deposits (Holocene)—Very fine silty clay to clay deposits occupying flat-floored basins at the distal edge of alluvial fans adjacent to the bay mud (Qhbm). Also contains unconsolidated, locally organic, plastic silt and silty clay deposited in very flat valley floors.
- Qhpf** Floodplain deposits (Holocene)—Medium to dark gray, dense, sandy to silty clay. Lenses of coarser material (silt, sand, and pebbles) may be locally present. Flood plain deposits usually occur between levee deposits (Qh) and basin deposits (Qhb).
- Qhu** Natural levee deposits (Holocene)—Loose, moderately to well-sorted sandy or clayey silt grading to sandy or silty clay. These deposits are porous and permeable and provide conduits for transport of ground water. Levee deposits border stream channels, usually both banks, and slope away to flatter floodplains and basins. Abandoned levee systems, no longer bordering stream channels, have also been mapped.
- Qhaf** Alluvial fan and fluvial deposits (Holocene)—Alluvial fan deposits are brown or tan, medium dense to dense, gravelly sand or sandy gravel that generally grades upward to sandy or silty clay. Near the distal fan edges, the fluvial deposits are typically brown, never reddish, medium dense sand that fines upward to sandy or silty clay.
- Qyf** Younger (inner) alluvial fan deposits (Holocene)—Unconsolidated fine- to coarse-grained sand, silt, and gravel, coarser grained at heads of fans and in narrow canyons.
- Qyfo** Younger (outer) alluvial fan deposits (Holocene)—Unconsolidated fine sand, silt, and clayey silt.
- Qcl** Colluvium (Holocene)—Loose to firm, friable, unsorted sand, silt, clay, gravel, rock debris, and organic material in varying proportions.
- Qs** Sand dune and beach deposits (Holocene)—Poorly to moderately sorted, medium- to coarse-grained, well-sorted sand but also includes pebbles, cobbles, and silt. Thickness less than 6 m in most places, but in other places may exceed 30 m.
- Qal** Alluvium (Holocene)—Unconsolidated gravel, sand, silt, and clay along streams. Less than a few meters thick in most places.
- Qp1** Alluvial terrace deposits (Pleistocene)—Deposits consist of crudely bedded, clast-supported, gravels, cobbles, and boulders with a sandy matrix. Clasts are as much as 35 cm in intermediate diameter. Coarse sand lenses may be locally present. Pleistocene terrace deposits are cut into Pleistocene alluvial fan deposits (Qpaf) a few meters and lie up to several meters above Holocene deposits.
- Qp2** Older alluvial fan deposits (Pleistocene)—Brown dense gravelly and clayey sand or clayey gravel that fines upward to sandy clay. These deposits display variable sorting and are located along most stream channels in the county. All Qp2 deposits can be related to modern stream courses. They are distinguished from younger alluvial fans and fluvial deposits by higher topographic position, greater degree of dissection, and stronger profile development. They are less permeable than Holocene deposits, and locally contain fresh water mollusks and extinct late Pleistocene vertebrate fossils. They are overlain by Holocene deposits on lower parts of the alluvial plain, and incised by channels that are partly filled with Holocene alluvium on higher parts of the alluvial plain. Maximum thickness is unknown but at least 50 m.
- Qp3** Alluvial terrace deposits (Pleistocene)—Deposits consist of crudely bedded, clast-supported, gravels, cobbles, and boulders with a sandy matrix. Clasts are as much as 35 cm in intermediate diameter. Coarse sand lenses may be locally present. Pleistocene terrace deposits are cut into Pleistocene alluvial fan deposits (Qpaf) a few meters and lie up to several meters above Holocene deposits.
- Qp4** Older alluvial fan deposits (Pleistocene)—Brown dense gravelly and clayey sand or clayey gravel that fines upward to sandy clay. These deposits display various sorting qualities. All Qp4 deposits can be related to modern stream courses. They are distinguished from younger alluvial fans and fluvial deposits by higher topographic position, greater degree of dissection, and stronger profile development. They are less permeable than younger deposits, and locally contain fresh-water mollusks and extinct Pleistocene vertebrate fossils.
- Qp5** Course-grained older alluvial fan and stream terrace deposits (Pleistocene)—Poorly consolidated gravel, sand, and silt, coarser grained at heads of old fans and in narrow canyons.
- Qp6** Marine terrace deposits (Pleistocene)—Poorly consolidated and poorly indurated well-sorted poorly sorted sand and gravel. Thickness variable but probably less than 30 m.
- Qc** Colma Formation (Pleistocene)—Yellowish-gray and gray to yellowish-orange and red-brown, friable to loose, fine- to medium-grained arkosic sand with subordinate amounts of gravel, silt, and clay. Total thickness unknown, but may be as great as 60 m.
- Qfco** Santa Clara Formation (lower Pleistocene and upper Pliocene)—Gray to red-brown poorly indurated conglomerate, sandstone, and mudstone in irregular and lenticular beds. Conglomerate consists mainly of subangular to subrounded cobbles in a sandy matrix but locally includes pebbles and boulders. Cobbles and pebbles are mainly chert, gneiss, and granite. Conglomerate contains angular boulders of chert, gneiss, and granite, and may be as large as 60 cm in diameter. Included in Santa Clara Formation are similar coarse-grained clastic deposits near Burlingame. Sara Wojcicki (1976) found a 1-ft bed in Santa Clara Formation near Woodside, and correlated it with a similar unit in Merced Formation. Thickness of Santa Clara Formation is variable but reaches a maximum of about 500 m along Coal Mine Ridge.
- Qfmc** Merced Formation (lower Pleistocene and upper Pliocene)—Medium gray to yellowish gray and yellowish orange, medium- to very fine-grained, poorly indurated to friable sandstone, siltstone, and claystone, with some conglomerate lenses and a few friable beds of white volcanic ash. In many places sandstone is silty, clayey, or conglomeratic. Some of the conglomerate, especially where fossiliferous, is well cemented. Volcanic ash is in beds as much as 2 m thick and consists largely of glass shards. In type section of Merced Formation, the ash has been reported by Sara Wojcicki (1976) to be 1.5-0.8 m old, but more recent work by Sara Wojcicki and others (1991) indicates that the formation contains ash both about 435,000 and 740,000 years old. Merced Formation is about 1825 m thick in the sea cliffs north of Merced River.
- Qp7** Purisima Formation (Pliocene and upper Miocene)—Predominantly gray and greenish-gray to buff fine-grained sandstone, siltstone, and mudstone, but also includes some porcelaneous shale and mudstone, chert, silty mudstone, and volcanic ash. West of Portola Valley, this unit consists of fine- to medium-grained silty sandstone. Locally divided into:
- Qp7a** Tunitas Sandstone Member (Pliocene)—Greenish-gray to light-gray, pale-orange, or greenish-brown, very fine- to medium-grained sandstone with clay matrix. Concretions generally less than 30 cm across are present locally. Tunitas ranges in thickness from 76 m at type section to 122 m elsewhere.
- Qp7b** Lobitos Mudstone Member (Pliocene)—Dark gray to light gray and shades of brown, unbedded, silty mudstone. Lobitos has a maximum thickness of 140 m.
- Qp7c** San Gregorio Sandstone Member (Pliocene)—Greenish gray to light-brown fine- to coarse-grained sandstone containing calcareous concretions less than 30 cm across. San Gregorio Member ranges in thickness from 45 m in type section to about 140 m elsewhere.
- Qp7d** Pomponio Mudstone Member (Pliocene)—Gray to white porcelaneous shale and mudstone, in places rhythmically bedded with alternating layers of noncalcareous mudstone. This unit resembles Monterey Shale, Santa Cruz Mudstone, and Lambert Shale. In type section in Pomponio Creek the member is 700 m thick.
- Qp7e** Tahama Member (Pliocene and upper Miocene)—Greenish-gray to white or buff, medium- to very fine-grained sandstone and siltstone, with some silty mudstone. Locally, such as at San Gregorio State Beach, sandstone is tuffaceous and weathers white. Near Memorial Park, this member includes dark gray porcelaneous mudstone. Pebble conglomerate occurs near base of Memorial Park eastward. Maximum thickness is 655 m.
- Qp7f** Santa Cruz Mudstone (upper Miocene)—Brown and gray to light-gray, buff, and light-yellow silty sandstone with noncalcareous mudstone and siltstone and minor amounts of sandstone. Santa Cruz Mudstone is more than 1000 m thick.
- Qp7g** Santa Margarita Sandstone (upper Miocene)—Light-gray to grayish-orange to white, friable, very fine- to very coarse-grained arkosic sandstone. Fine-grained sandstone commonly contains glauconite. A quartz and feldspar pebble conglomerate crops out locally at the base of section. Santa Margarita Sandstone is as thick as 60 m.

- fm** Metamorphic rocks—Dusky-blue to brownish-gray blocks of metamorphic rock, commonly glaucophane schist, but some quartz-mica granitic. These rocks are finely to coarsely crystalline and commonly foliated. They almost always crop out as tectonic inclusions in sheared Franciscan rocks (fs) and serpentinite (sp), and they reach maximum dimensions of several tens of meters though many are too small to show on map.
- fgc** Conglomerate—Greenish-gray to buff colored conglomerate composed of well-rounded pebbles and cobbles in a graywacke matrix, cropping out as layers and lenses in graywacke (fg). Pebbles and cobbles are composed of quartz diorite, arkose, quartzite, chert, graywacke, and minor amounts of shale, serpentinite, and glaucophane schist. Conglomerate bodies range from 0.3 to 200 m in thickness; thinner bodies are not shown on map.
- fgs** Sheared rock (metange)—Predominantly graywacke, siltstone, and shale, substantial portions of which have been sheared, but include hard blocks of all other Franciscan rock types. Total thickness of unit is unknown, but is probably at least several tens of meters.
- sp** Serpentinite (Cretaceous and/or Jurassic)—Greenish-gray to bluish-green sheared serpentinite, enclosing variably abundant blocks of unshattered rock. Blocks are commonly less than 3 m in diameter, but range in size from several centimeters to several meters; they consist of greenish-black serpentinite, enclosing variably abundant blocks of unshattered carbonate rock, nearly all of which are too small to show on the map.
- Jvu** Siliceous volcanic rocks and keratophyre (Jurassic?)—Highly altered intermediate and silicic volcanic and hypabyssal rocks. Feldspars are almost all replaced by albite. Recent biostratigraphic and isotopic analyses yielded a Jurassic age for similar rocks in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties (Jones and Curtis, 1991).
- Jgb** Gabbrs (Jurassic?)—Light green-gray, dark gray weathering, mafic intrusive rock, mostly gabbro but also includes some diabase locally. The age of this unit is unknown, but the unit is probably part of the Jurassic Coast Range Ophiolite.
- tr** Marble and hornfels (Pleistocene?)—White to gray finely crystalline marble, granitic marble, and quartz-nica hornfels, in places distinctly bedded, in places foliated. Marble and hornfels crop out as rare isolated bodies as much as 75 m long in granitic rocks of Mounta Mountain.
- Contact—Depositional or intrusive contact, dashed where approximately located, dotted where concealed.
- Fault—Dashed where approximately located, small dashes where inferred, dotted where concealed, queried where location is uncertain.
- Reverse or thrust fault—Dotted where concealed.
- Anticline—Shows fold axis, dotted where concealed.
- Syncline
- Strike and dip of bedding
- Overturned bedding
- Flat bedding
- Vertical bedding
- Strike and dip of foliation
- Strike and dip of joints in plutonic rocks
- Vertical joint

SOURCES OF DATA



- Quaternary deposits in the west half of the county are mostly from Latta and others (1974), and the rest half are modified from Latta and Curran (1977), Latta and Curran (1978), Latta and Curran (1979), Latta and Curran (1981), Latta and Curran (1982), Latta and Curran (1983), Latta and Curran (1984), Latta and Curran (1985), Latta and Curran (1986), Latta and Curran (1987), Latta and Curran (1988), Latta and Curran (1989), Latta and Curran (1990), Latta and Curran (1991), Latta and Curran (1992), Latta and Curran (1993), Latta and Curran (1994), Latta and Curran (1995), Latta and Curran (1996), Latta and Curran (1997), Latta and Curran (1998), Latta and Curran (1999), Latta and Curran (2000), Latta and Curran (2001), Latta and Curran (2002), Latta and Curran (2003), Latta and Curran (2004), Latta and Curran (2005), Latta and Curran (2006), Latta and Curran (2007), Latta and Curran (2008), Latta and Curran (2009), Latta and Curran (2010), Latta and Curran (2011), Latta and Curran (2012), Latta and Curran (2013), Latta and Curran (2014), Latta and Curran (2015), Latta and Curran (2016), Latta and Curran (2017), Latta and Curran (2018), Latta and Curran (2019), Latta and Curran (2020).

GEOLOGY OF THE ONSHORE PART OF SAN MATEO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA: DERIVED FROM THE DIGITAL DATABASE OPEN-FILE 98-137

By  
E.E. Brabb, R.W. Graymer, and D.L. Jones

This report is preliminary and has not been reviewed for conformity with U.S. Geological Survey information standards. Any use of trade, product, or firm names is for descriptive purposes only and does not imply endorsement by the U.S. Government. This database identified as "Geology of the onshore part of San Mateo County, California" has been approved for release and publication by the Director of the USGS. Although this database has been subjected to rigorous review, and is substantially complete, the USGS reserves the right to revise the data and reports to further improve the quality of the information. The database is released on condition that neither the USGS nor the United States Government may be held liable for any damages resulting from its use or unauthorized use.