B.C. Coastal Reconnaissance

Summary

Through the week of June 18-23, 1987, Louise Klatzel Mudry and Greg Cave searched the area between Port Hardy and Powell River for sediments packaged within the pervasive Mesozoic, volcanic and intrusive igneous complexes characteristic of the Insular Belt. The coal bearing Cretaceous strata are preserved as isolated, fault bounded blocks, juxtaposed against the Triassic Karmutsen Frankand Jurassic Bonanza Frankastes. Within the Cretaceous strata locally economical coal deposits have been exploited since the mid 1800 s.

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The purpose of the reconnaissance exploration along the coastline was to search for fault bounded blocks similar to those occurrences previously explored. Due to the heavy forest cover many of the areas were inaccessible and therefore limited exploration to shoreline, creeks and logging roads. Access into the outlined areas was achieved by the use of a helicopter and 4X4 truck.

No Cretaceous sediments were located other than those already delineated in the Suquash Basin, Comox Basin and Powell River areas. The past geological mapping of Alert Bay (92-L), Bute Inlet (92-K) and Alberni (92-F) was found to be quite accurate. The low lying regions mapped as Quaternary are dominated by glacially derived cobbles, sands, silts and commercially exploitable gravels. The thickness of Quaternary sediments is underterminable and was reported to be as thick as 500' (152.4 m) by Greg Ockert. The areas covered by Quaternary sediment are of interest due to their close proximity to the Comox Basin and their absence of the pervasive high relief volcanic sequences.

The only means of evaluating the bedrock would be to initiate a drilling program which can be considered as a high risk prospect. Surfical exploration is prohibited by the dense forest cover and inhabitation. Should a new reserve be defined, exploration and development would likely be met with little opposition because of the acceptance of the existing mining activity. This region is a favorable exploration target due to the very low transportation costs associated with a mine near tidewater.

During our preliminary reconnaissance we were unable to discover any new sedimentary strata and found the present geological maps to be detailed and accurate.

It can be deemed unlikely that new Cretaceous outliers will be discovered as the area has been actively explored since the mid 1800's.

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Port Hardy - Powell River

Suquash Creek 92-L-11

A brief stop was made here to examine the coal measures of the Upper Cretaceous Suquash Fm. This site marks the first discovery and mining of coal on Vancouver Island. Here several of the nine coal measure outcrop in the intertidal region. From this location the coal measures can be seen striking directly toward Malcolm Island.

Malcolm Island 92-L-10, 11

Only one outcrop of cobble conglomerate is exposed on the island and it is mapped as being Tertiary in age. However, there is a striking similarity between this conglomerate and the one exposed on Hornby Island in the Comox area mapped as Upper Cretaceous. The remainder of the island is blanketed by Quaternary gravels. The question still remains as to whether or not the Suquash Fm. extends to Malcolm Island. The only means of testing this hypothesis is to drill a hole to determine bedrock.

Cormorant Island 92-L-10

No bedrock was seen exposed due to Quaternary gravel cover. Topographically the island is very similar to Malcolm Island.

<u>Pearse Islands - Hanson Island</u> 92-L-10

These islands as previously mapped are composed of the Karmutsen Fm. basalt and hold no potential for continued exploration.

Harbledown Island 92-L-10, 9

The dark lustrous outcrop observed in Parsons Bay was confirmed to be interbedded limestones and greywackes as previously mapped by the G.S.C. The outcrop is discontinuous in nature resulting from the feldspar porphyry (fp) intrusion. The partially recrystallized limestones are very competent. Depositional features include scouring and cross-bedding preserved in the coarse grained greywacke and differential compaction is exhibited in the limestones. Tight isoclinal folding at the hand specimen scale is assumed to be syntectonic. The preserved sediments likely represent a submarine fan or channel system where there is an intimate relationship between upslope debris flows and basinal limestones. No sediments younger than the above mentioned Upper Triassic Parsons Bay Fm. were found.

Turnour Island 92-L-9

Mesozoic tonalites and quartzdiorite comprise all of the exposed outcrop along the shoreline as mapped by the G.S.C. No sediments are expected on the island.

Knight Inlet 92-L-9 - 92-K-12

Through Knight inlet to the head of call inlet the high relief fjord like coastline is dominated seemingly entirely of diorites, granodiorites and quartzdiorites belonging to the Mesozoic hypabyssal suites. Judging from the characteristic topography there appears to be no reprieve suggesting a possible outlier of sediments.

Fulmore Lake - Tom Browne Lake - Jackson Bay 92-K-12

The attraction to this area is the anomalously low relief surrounded by the steep, high relief, ridges of granodiorite and quartzdiorite. The rare outcrop in the low lands, due to thick stands of reforrestation after logging, consists entirely of glacial tills. The area is underlain either by easily erodable sedimentary subcrop or intense glaciation is responsible for the resulting low lands. The later conclusion is deemed favorable because of a small rounded (glaciated) granodiorite hill found near Seabird Lake. The valley also appears "U" shaped suggesting a glacial origin.

Hardwicke Island 92-K-5

Upon flying over the south shore of Hardwicke Island a black well bedded lustrous outcrop was spotted. The outcrop consisted of crystalline limestone mapped as Upper Palaeozoic in age. The strata are intruded by feldspar porphyry dikes, metamorphosed, and very competent. No other sediments were located as the remainder of the island consists of granodiorites and Upper Triassic Karmutsen Fm. basalts.

<u>Johnstone Straight - Pye Lake</u> 92-K-5

This region is again dominated by Karmutsen Fm. basalt flows which are discordantly contacted by the plutonic granodiorites and quartzdiorites. Inland toward Pye Lake there is a low lying area mapped as quaternary. Some tills were found but there is no indication of the underlying bedrock.

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Discovery Passage 92-K-6, 3

Both the east and west shores of Discovery Passage, Quadra Island and Vancouver Island respectively, are composed of the massive Karmutsen Fm. basalt flows. Only small isolated deposits of till are present near Elk Bay and Deepwater Bay which likely represent intense glaciation. A large area covered by till south of the town of Bloedel exists, although, it is likely underlain at some depth (?) by Cretaceous Comox Basin strata. Due to the regions proximity to the town of Campbell River and Highway 19 numerous cottages exist along the coastline.

Quadra Island - Cortes Island - Marina Island 92-K-3

Plutonic quartzdiorite, granodiorite and Karmutsen Fm. basalts form the prominent ridges on north Quadra and Cortes. However, on the southern regions and on Marina Island the topography becomes very subdued and no bedrock is exposed through the cover of till. An exposure was visited at the extreme south end of Quadra Island where greater than 100' (30 m) of glacially derived sediments are preserved. The sediment is dominated by a fine grained, loess like, matrix with minor (<1%) large cobbles and boulders, and nearly 5% small pebbles. The massive nature of the partially consolidated sediment suggest quiescent depositional conditions. It is possible that this represents a portion of the Comox Basin but, the only means of determining subcrop and/or till thickness is to drill an exploratory drill hole. Much of the three islands is privately owned and inhabited. Outcrop inland is rare to absent.

Hernando and Savary Islands 92-F-15

These two islands were not visited due to their dense population. Due to the flat nature of the islands it is speculated that a similar till covers the entire island. As a consequence to their dense population exploration and/or development would likely be met with a great deal of opposition.

Harwood Island

The island consists mostly of unconsolidated fine grained mica rich (10%) Quaternary sands that reach thicknesses greater than 60' (18 m). At the southern tip of the island granodiorite is exposed. The island is sparsely populated, but it is an Indian Reservation.

<u>Texada Island</u> 92-F-9, 10, 15

Gillies Bay and Cook Bay areas have been previously mapped as Cedar District and Extension-Protection formations. Access into Cook Bay was not attained due to poor road and vehicle condition. However, the Gillies Bay area was covered by logging road access and bisected by Movat Creek. The majority of the island is composed of Karmutsen Fm. basalt and it is possible that the Cretaceous outliers were interpreted from air photos as no sedimentary outcrop was found. Should a mineable coal deposit be delineated Texada Island would be a favorable location as there are presently eight mines; 4 gold, 4 limestone.

Powell River 92-F-16

The field examination of the low relief region between Powell River and Lois Lake was undertaken in response to the coal occurrence sited by D.B. Dowling and the current coal lease holding by Fargo Oil Corp., last renewed October 24th, 1986. The purpose of this reconnaissance level exploration was to determine if the adjacent lands held any potential for follow-up coal exploration.

Access into the lease area was easily attained via Zillinsky road and power line right of way off of Highway 101 southeast of Powell River. Both old and new logging roads provided sufficient access to all the low relief region between Powell River and Lois Lake. The topography is anomalously low in relief in comparison to the steep and higher relief topography of the adjacent Coastal Mountains. Due to the past logging of the area, some 20-30 years ago, the regrowth of trees obscures the majority of the surface.

The Fargo Oil lease area is dissected by Kelly and Lang Creeks of which only Lang Creek was found to have any outcrop. At the power line crossing, south of the leases, the banks of Lang Creek exposed a very coarse grained arkosic sandstone with numerous coalified tree fragments and carbonaceous stringers. The cross-bedded arkosic sandstone likely represents the channel lag of a fluvial stream system. Below the channel scours are thinly laminated very fine grained sandstones and siltstones. The sediments dip nearly due west at less than 10°. No outcrop was found immediately within the lease boundary due to the dense forest cover. However, north of the lease area granodiorite outcrops are well exposed in Lang Creek and to the west Hammil Hill was found to be composed of Triassic basalts and granodiorites.

Should there infact be an economically viable coal deposit in this area it would be of only limited aerial extent corresponding to the leases held by Fargo Oil Corp. There is very little probability for a potential coal deposit in the outlying area due to the volcanic and intrusive rocks. A primary concern prohibiting exploration and development of any kind is the abundance of private land ownership, farms and fish hatcheries.

Denham Island - Hornby Island 92-F-10

Both islands expose all but the lower three formations within the Cretaceous Nanaimo Group. It can be speculated that exploration and/or development on either of these islands would be met with a great deal of protest due to dense populations, oyster farms and established Provincial Parks.

The remainder of the day was spent showing Greg Ockert the previous days findings.

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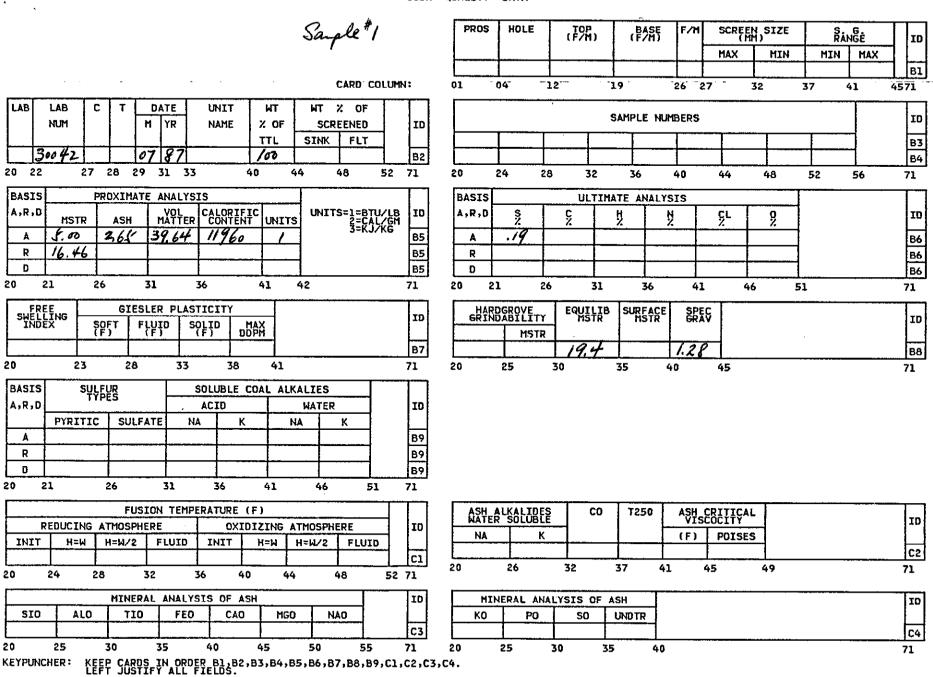
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Note on the stratified rocks of Bute Inlet map area. G.S.C. Open file no. 480

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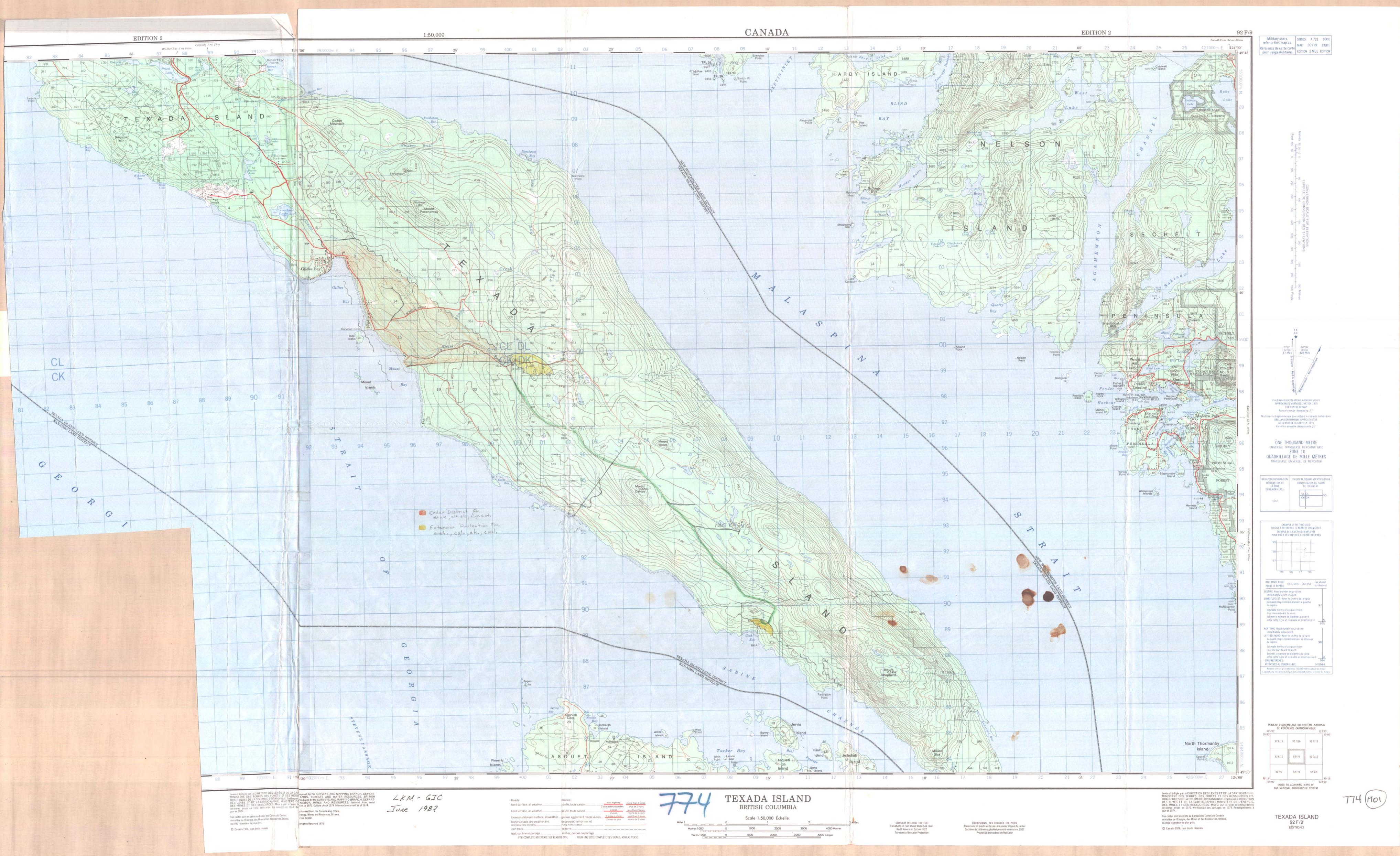
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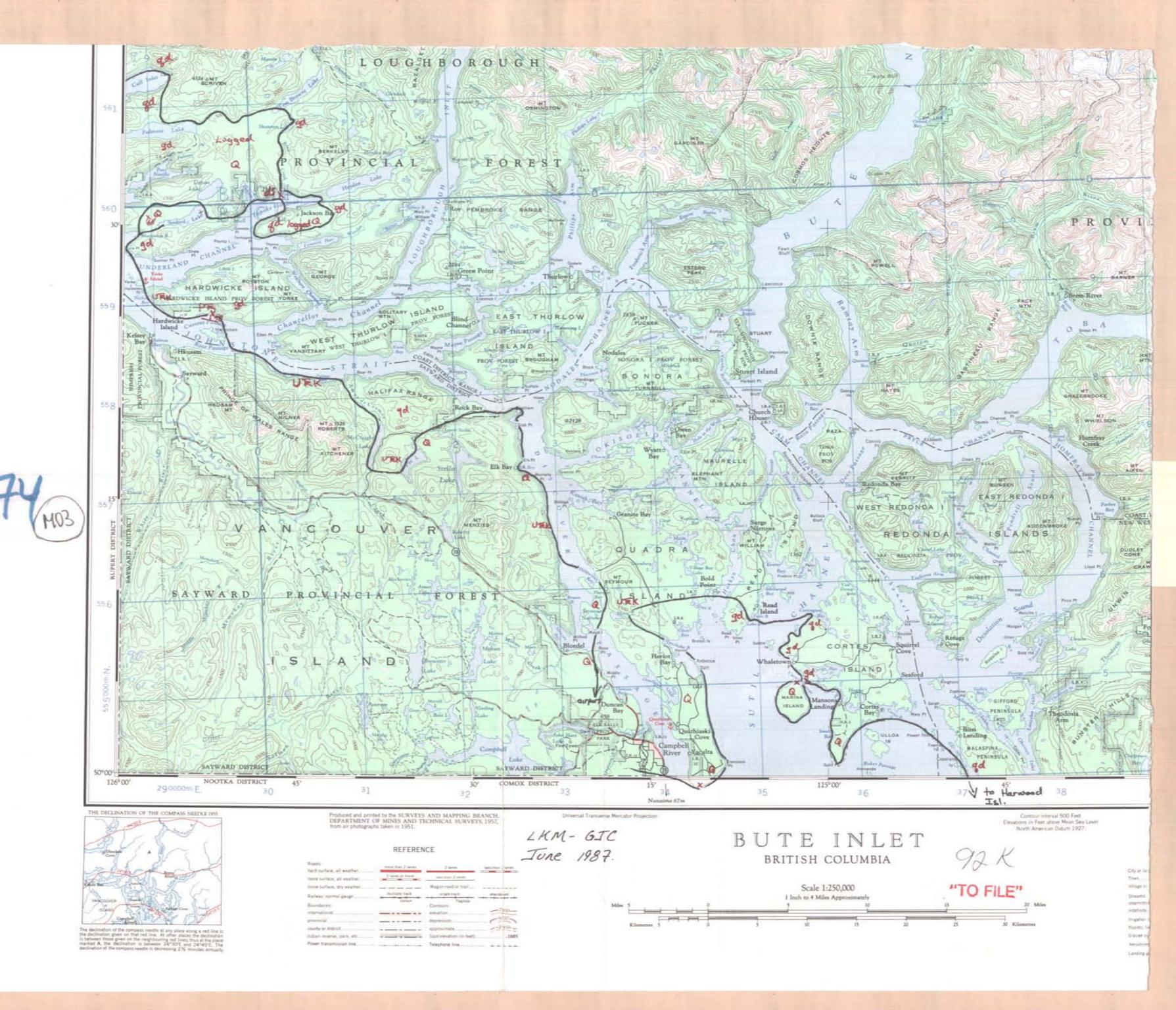
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