



## Geologic Map of the White Rock Quadrangle, Santa Fe, Sandoval, and Los Alamos Counties, New Mexico

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by  
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### COMMENTS TO MAP USERS

A geologic map displays information on the distribution, nature, orientation, and age relationships of rock and deposits and the occurrence of structural features. Geologic and fault contacts are irregular surfaces that form boundaries between different types or ages of units. Data depicted on this geologic quadrangle map may be based on any of the following reconnaissance field geologic mapping, compilation of published and unpublished work, and photogeologic interpretation. Locations of contacts are not surveyed, but are plotted by interpretation of the position of a given contact onto a topographic base map; therefore, the accuracy of contact locations depends on the scale of mapping and the interpretation of the geologists. Any enlargement of this map could misrepresent the data of mapping and may result in misinterpretations. Site-specific conditions should be verified by detailed surface mapping or subsurface exploration. Topographic and cultural changes associated with recent development may not be shown.

Cross sections are constructed based upon the interpretations of the author made from geologic mapping, and available geophysical, and non-subsurface data. They are not intended to be used as an aid to understanding the general geologic framework of the map area, and not be the sole source of information for use in locating or designing wells, buildings, roads, or other man-made structures. The map has not been reviewed according to New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources standards. The contents of the report and map should not be considered final and complete until reviewed and published by the New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources. The views and conclusions contained in this document are those of the authors and should not be interpreted as necessarily representing the official policies, either expressed or implied, of the State of New Mexico, or the U.S. Government.

### Description of Map Units

- 04-10-00-00-00—unit—Tb1—Basalt of the Cerros del Rio volcanic field (Pliocene)—Tholeiitic olivine basalt flows, pillow basalt, and palagonitic breccia exposed west of the Rio Grande north of Chapuquai Canyon. Flows thin (10 to <35 ft) with ripple to rubble-rich textures. Substantial thicknesses 50 to <100 ft; maximum thicknesses 80 to >200 ft in Montanada Canyon (Section D of Dethier, 1997). The unit overlies lacustrine or sandy fluvial sediment (Ta) north of White Rock and older basaltic flows to the south (Section J of Dethier, 1997). Thin (<5 m) thin bedded and lacustrine deposits separate the basalt from underlying lower Basaldrill Tuff at some localities (e.g., for instance). Flow directions measured on forest deposits of pillow basalt in Los Alamos, Sandoval, and Montanada Canyons, into cable grade of the Puye Formation, Totavi Lenti (Griggs, 1964). Exposed beneath quartzite-rich cobble gravel (Totavi Lenti) or phonotomitic deposits at most locations. Paleocurrent directions measured on channels, gravelly crossbeds, and imbricated cobbles range from about 90° to 100° and average about 100°, slightly south of the trend of present canyons. Faulted locally near the mouth of Ancho Canyon; otherwise undeformed. Pumiceous Puye Group 6 km (10 m) north-northwest of Otero Bridge gave a fission-track age of 2.9 Ma (Table 1 of Dethier, 1997). Tuberville et al. (1989) report that the upper part of the Puye Formation may be as young as 1.6–1.8 Ma northwestern of the White Rock quadrangle.
- 03-03-00-00-00—unit—Tf1—Puye Formation, ancestral Rio Grande facies (Pliocene; Totavi Lenti, Griggs, 1964)—Slightly lithified, massive to blocky gravel-rich clasts of Pliocene sand, and thin beds of silty sand and gravel (10 to 100 ft) above the Rio Grande. Contact relations best exposed near the mouth of Canada Ancho, where 15 m (50 ft) of gravelly deposits fill channels cut into the Santa Fe Group (Section E of Dethier, 1997). Limited to thick sandstone sediment 15–20 m (50–60 ft) thick lies over the gravel. Thickness mainly 10–30 m (30–100 ft). Overlies and truncates Santa Fe Group and landslide deposits. One surface west of China Mesa is overlain by El Cajete tephra (50–40 ka; Renne et al., 1996). Soil at that locality is 0.1–1.3 m (2.5–4 ft) thick and contains weak stage IV carbonaceous soils; on other remnants are thinner, and carbonate development is stage III.
- 01-04-00-00-00—unit—Q1—Alluvial fan deposit (Holocene and late Pleistocene)—Cross-bedded, poorly sorted cobble to boulder gravel deposited mainly along White Rock Canyon. High gradient, ephemeral channels. Includes debris flows along channels that drain underdrift Tuff. Most small fan deposits west of the Rio Grande are mapped as Q1 or Q2. Thicknesses 4–8 m (13–26 ft). Generally overlies landslide deposits. Interspersed with and merges laterally with alluvial deposits. Soils are thin to absent on active fans and 0.2 to 0.5 m (2.5 to 1.5 ft) thick with stage II weak stage III carbonate elsewhere.
- 01-04-00-00-00—unit—Q2—Alluvial fan deposit (late to middle Pleistocene)—Cross-bedded, poorly sorted cobble to boulder gravel and poorly sorted, matrix-rich debris flow deposits that form terraces 5–15 m (16–50 ft) above adjacent Q2 deposits. Thicknesses 4–15 m (13–50 ft), but most contacts obscured by channel. Overlies landslide deposits and Santa Fe Group. Overlain by El Cajete tephra (50–40 ka; Renne et al., 1996) along White Canyon. Soils poorly exposed but thicker than 1.0 m (3 ft), exposing stage III or weak stage IV carbonate.
- 01-04-00-00-00—unit—Q3—Cullavilla deposit (Holocene to middle Pleistocene)—Rockfall, debris-flow, and poorly sorted alluvial deposits at the bases of cliffs, particularly along White Rock Canyon. Texture and clast lithology are variable. Includes thin (<2 m; <5 ft) alluvial deposits west of the Rio Grande, and, in places, El Cajete tephra (50–40 ka; Renne et al., 1996). These generally 4–10 m (13–33 ft) but locally along White Rock exceeds 25 m (82 ft). Overlies Basaldrill Tuff west of China Mesa; elsewhere overlie basaltic flows, phonotomitic deposits, and landslides. Silt thin (<0.5 m) thick and weakly developed at most locations, but lenses of El Cajete tephra, strong R1 (over Rio Grande) or K horizon (White Rock Canyon and east), and banded soils (Birkeland, 1999) demonstrate that deposits are polygenetic and locally older than late Pleistocene.
- 01-04-00-00-00—unit—Q4—Thin sheetflood and debris flow (Holocene to late Pleistocene)—Light yellowish-brown to pale brown to brownish-silt, and very fine- to medium-grained sand with varying amounts of coarse sand and silt. Thin unit caps high-level surfaces. The underlying unit is also shown. Weakly to moderately consolidated. Q4 is less than 4 m thick.
- 01-04-00-00-00—unit—Q5—Landslide deposit (Holocene to late Pleistocene)—Massive slumps and debris flows rich in basaltic-boulder gravel mainly exposed along White Rock Canyon, north of Chapuquai Canyon, and along Canada Ancho. Most slides are massive. Deposits consist of massive slump blocks with coherent internal stratigraphy near canyon rim and progressively deformed slumps and debris flows closer to the Rio Grande. Dips to massive slump blocks range from 9° to 30° toward lower slopes. Failures occurred along (1) steeply dipping planes rooted in the Santa Fe Group, (2) subhorizontal planes in clayey silt layers found at several levels of Pliocene fluvial and lacustrine deposits (Ta), and (3) steep walls of talus. Limited areas of autoclastic breccias are included in areas mapped as Q5. Slide material overlies rocks of the Santa Fe Group at most sites. At several locations undisturbed late Pliocene deposits lie stratigraphically above landslide deposits (Section H of Dethier, 1997). Morphology of most talus and sections of Basaldrill Tuff in some suggest that slides were active in early to middle Pleistocene time but that many became stable in the middle to late Pleistocene. El Cajete tephra (50–40 ka; Renne et al., 1996) lies on landslide deposits south of the White Rock area. Soils are generally 0.8–1.4 m (2.5–4.5 ft) thick. Carbonate morphology (Birkeland, 1999) at stage IVa sites, but stage IIb carbonates is present in most exposures. Carbon ratios in rock varnish (Dethier et al., 1988) at two sites suggest that these landslides stabilized 520 ka.
- 01-04-00-00-00—unit—Q6a—Alluvium, eolian deposits, and colluvium on the upper surfaces of landslides (Holocene to upper Pleistocene)—Thin to gently sloping areas on the upper surfaces of slumps that are sites of active fluvial and colluvial processes (near Spring Springs and southwest of Otero Bridge, for example). These areas are covered with 3–4 m (10 ft) of fluvial, eolian, and colluvial deposits.
- 03-01-00-00-00—unit—Ta—Ancient Formation (upper Pliocene)—Brownish-yellow to light-yellowish-brown sand and gravel under the Cerros del Rio volcanic flows (units Tb1 and Tb2) and Phonotomitic deposits (Tm) unit is also interbedded with these volcanic flows. Overlies the Puye Formation (Tp) and local basaltic flows near the Rio Grande to the east, the Ancho Formation unconformably overlies Micaceous Member deposits of the Tesuque Formation (Koning and Maldonado, 2001; Koning et al., 2002). At a description site near the eastern quadrangle boundary (UTM coordinates: 3304,500N, 268,125E, 20 m; zone 13, NAD 27), the sediment is gravelly sand with silt to thin, plane to lenticular beds. The gravel lens is generally poorly sorted pebbles with 5–20% cobbles, clast composition is 1–5% quartzite, trace amphibolite, locally trace basalt or andesite clasts, and 95–99% granite. Cobbles and coarse to very coarse pebbles are commonly rounded to subrounded, and very fine to medium pebbles are subangular. Sand is generally coarse to very coarse, and coarse to subangular, poorly to moderately sorted, and arkosic with 15% fines (that include 5–5% volcanic and olivine grains). At a description site near Cajal del Rio Canyon (UTM coordinates: 3362,350 N, 397,150 E, 20 m; zone 13, NAD 27), the sediment has 15–25% thin to medium-grained sand of sandy pebbles to pebbly sand, and the gravel consists of clast-supported, granitic pebbles; the rock matrix is comprised primarily of slightly silty very fine- to very coarse-grained sand in thin to thick, tabular beds, or otherwise massive. Sediment is weakly to moderately consolidated, and generally non-cemented except for the base of some channels. Unit locally includes silty and clayey lacustrine sediment near the Rio Grande. The unit also includes thin-bedded silt and silty sand, and beds of phonotomitic deposits and debris flows exposed along Canada Ancho and north of Water Canyon, west of the Rio Grande. Paleocurrent directions measured on channels and gravelly crossbeds range from 180° to 200° and average about 200°. The unit is correlated with the Ancho Formation in the Santa Fe member (Koning et al., 2002; Koning and Maldonado, 2001) because those units are also interbedded with lapilli and phonotomitic deposits of the Cerros del Rio volcanic field, and thus occupy the same stratigraphic position. Also correlates with other alluvium of Griggs (1964). The unit contains lacustrine facies along Canada Ancho. Manley (1979) reported an age of 2.7 Ma for one of these 8 m (26 ft) east of Cajal del Rio Canyon. Age elsewhere is likely phonotomitic considering stratigraphic relations with Pliocene-Cerro del Rio volcanic flows and phonotomitic deposits. The thicknesses of 1–3 m (commonly less than 5 m, although generally not mapped where it is thin).
- 03-03-00-00-00—unit—Tp1—Puye Formation fanglomerate (Pliocene; Griggs, 1964)—Weakly lithified pebble to boulder gravel, boulder-rich debris flows, massive to planar-bedded sand, thin (<3 ft) beds of diatryptic and pumiceous alluvium, and beds of fine sand and silt. Exposed west of the Rio Grande except for an isolated outcrop south of the mouth of Canada Ancho (Section D of Dethier, 1997). Gravel beds generally 0.5–3.0 m (1.5–10 ft) thick. Debris flows range from 0.3 m (1 ft) to about 5.0 m (16 ft) thick. Clast and matrix lithology mainly dacite derived from the Tachibana Formation of the Jemez Mountains, but Pliocene material composes >30% of some fluvial units. Thicknesses 5.3 m (16–10 ft). Fills channels cut by the undivided Santa Fe Group and, along with Los Alamos Canyon, into cable grade of the Puye Formation, Totavi Lenti (Griggs, 1964). Exposed beneath quartzite-rich cobble gravel (Totavi Lenti) or phonotomitic deposits at most locations. Paleocurrent directions measured on channels, gravelly crossbeds, and imbricated cobbles range from about 90° to 100° and average about 100°, slightly south of the trend of present canyons. Faulted locally near the mouth of Ancho Canyon; otherwise undeformed. Pumiceous Puye Group 6 km (10 m) north-northwest of Otero Bridge gave a fission-track age of 2.9 Ma (Table 1 of Dethier, 1997). Tuberville et al. (1989) report that the upper part of the Puye Formation may be as young as 1.6–1.8 Ma northwestern of the White Rock quadrangle.
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- 01-04-00-00-00—unit—Q2—Alluvial fan deposit (late to middle Pleistocene)—Cross-bedded, poorly sorted cobble to boulder gravel and poorly sorted, matrix-rich debris flow deposits that form terraces 5–15 m (16–50 ft) above adjacent Q2 deposits. Thicknesses 4–15 m (13–50 ft), but most contacts obscured by channel. Overlies landslide deposits and Santa Fe Group. Overlain by El Cajete tephra (50–40 ka; Renne et al., 1996) along White Canyon. Soils poorly exposed but thicker than 1.0 m (3 ft), exposing stage III or weak stage IV carbonate.
- 01-04-00-00-00—unit—Q3—Cullavilla deposit (Holocene to middle Pleistocene)—Rockfall, debris-flow, and poorly sorted alluvial deposits at the bases of cliffs, particularly along White Rock Canyon. Texture and clast lithology are variable. Includes thin (<2 m; <5 ft) alluvial deposits west of the Rio Grande, and, in places, El Cajete tephra (50–40 ka; Renne et al., 1996). These generally 4–10 m (13–33 ft) but locally along White Rock exceeds 25 m (82 ft). Overlies Basaldrill Tuff west of China Mesa; elsewhere overlie basaltic flows, phonotomitic deposits, and landslides. Silt thin (<0.5 m) thick and weakly developed at most locations, but lenses of El Cajete tephra, strong R1 (over Rio Grande) or K horizon (White Rock Canyon and east), and banded soils (Birkeland, 1999) demonstrate that deposits are polygenetic and locally older than late Pleistocene.
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- 03-01-00-00-00—unit—Ta—Ancient Formation (upper Pliocene)—Brownish-yellow to light-yellowish-brown sand and gravel under the Cerros del Rio volcanic flows (units Tb1 and Tb2) and Phonotomitic deposits (Tm) unit is also interbedded with these volcanic flows. Overlies the Puye Formation (Tp) and local basaltic flows near the Rio Grande to the east, the Ancho Formation unconformably overlies Micaceous Member deposits of the Tesuque Formation (Koning and Maldonado, 2001; Koning et al., 2002). At a description site near the eastern quadrangle boundary (UTM coordinates: 3304,500N, 268,125E, 20 m; zone 13, NAD 27), the sediment is gravelly sand with silt to thin, plane to lenticular beds. The gravel lens is generally poorly sorted pebbles with 5–20% cobbles, clast composition is 1–5% quartzite, trace amphibolite, locally trace basalt or andesite clasts, and 95–99% granite. Cobbles and coarse to very coarse pebbles are commonly rounded to subrounded, and very fine to medium pebbles are subangular. Sand is generally coarse to very coarse, and coarse to subangular, poorly to moderately sorted, and arkosic with 15% fines (that include 5–5% volcanic and olivine grains). At a description site near Cajal del Rio Canyon (UTM coordinates: 3362,350 N, 397,150 E, 20 m; zone 13, NAD 27), the sediment has 15–25% thin to medium-grained sand of sandy pebbles to pebbly sand, and the gravel consists of clast-supported, granitic pebbles; the rock matrix is comprised primarily of slightly silty very fine- to very coarse-grained sand in thin to thick, tabular beds, or otherwise massive. Sediment is weakly to moderately consolidated, and generally non-cemented except for the base of some channels. Unit locally includes silty and clayey lacustrine sediment near the Rio Grande. The unit also includes thin-bedded silt and silty sand, and beds of phonotomitic deposits and debris flows exposed along Canada Ancho and north of Water Canyon, west of the Rio Grande. Paleocurrent directions measured on channels and gravelly crossbeds range from 180° to 200° and average about 200°. The unit is correlated with the Ancho Formation in the Santa Fe member (Koning et al., 2002; Koning and Maldonado, 2001) because those units are also interbedded with lapilli and phonotomitic deposits of the Cerros del Rio volcanic field, and thus occupy the same stratigraphic position. Also correlates with other alluvium of Griggs (1964). The unit contains lacustrine facies along Canada Ancho. Manley (1979) reported an age of 2.7 Ma for one of these 8 m (26 ft) east of Cajal del Rio Canyon. Age elsewhere is likely phonotomitic considering stratigraphic relations with Pliocene-Cerro del Rio volcanic flows and phonotomitic deposits. The thicknesses of 1–3 m (commonly less than 5 m, although generally not mapped where it is thin).
- 03-03-00-00-00—unit—Tp1—Puye Formation fanglomerate (Pliocene; Griggs, 1964)—Weakly lithified pebble to boulder gravel, boulder-rich debris flows, massive to planar-bedded sand, thin (<3 ft) beds of diatryptic and pumiceous alluvium, and beds of fine sand and silt. Exposed west of the Rio Grande except for an isolated outcrop south of the mouth of Canada Ancho (Section D of Dethier, 1997). Gravel beds generally 0.5–3.0 m (1.5–10 ft) thick. Debris flows range from 0.3 m (1 ft) to about 5.0 m (16 ft) thick. Clast and matrix lithology mainly dacite derived from the Tachibana Formation of the Jemez Mountains, but Pliocene material composes >30% of some fluvial units. Thicknesses 5.3 m (16–10 ft). Fills channels cut by the undivided Santa Fe Group and, along with Los Alamos Canyon, into cable grade of the Puye Formation, Totavi Lenti (Griggs, 1964). Exposed beneath quartzite-rich cobble gravel (Totavi Lenti) or phonotomitic deposits at most locations. Paleocurrent directions measured on channels, gravelly crossbeds, and imbricated cobbles range from about 90° to 100° and average about 100°, slightly south of the trend of present canyons. Faulted locally near the mouth of Ancho Canyon; otherwise undeformed. Pumiceous Puye Group 6 km (10 m) north-northwest of Otero Bridge gave a fission-track age of 2.9 Ma (Table 1 of Dethier, 1997). Tuberville et al. (1989) report that the upper part of the Puye Formation may be as young as 1.6–1.8 Ma northwestern of the White Rock quadrangle.
- 03-03-00-00-00—unit—Tf1—Puye Formation, ancestral Rio Grande facies (Pliocene; Totavi Lenti, Griggs, 1964)—Slightly lithified, massive to blocky gravel-rich clasts of Pliocene sand, and thin beds of silty sand and gravel (10 to 100 ft) above the Rio Grande. Contact relations best exposed near the mouth of Canada Ancho, where 15 m (50 ft) of gravelly deposits fill channels cut into the Santa Fe Group (Section E of Dethier, 1997). Limited to thick sandstone sediment 15–20 m (50–60 ft) thick lies over the gravel. Thickness mainly 10–30 m (30–100 ft). Overlies and truncates Santa Fe Group and landslide deposits. One surface west of China Mesa is overlain by El Cajete tephra (50–40 ka; Renne et al., 1996). Soil at that locality is 0.1–1.3 m (2.5–4 ft) thick and contains weak stage IV carbonaceous soils; on other remnants are thinner, and carbonate development is stage III.
- 01-04-00-00-00—unit—Q1—Alluvial fan deposit (Holocene and late Pleistocene)—Cross-bedded, poorly sorted cobble to boulder gravel deposited mainly along White Rock Canyon. High gradient, ephemeral channels. Includes debris flows along channels that drain underdrift Tuff. Most small fan deposits west of the Rio Grande are mapped as Q1 or Q2. Thicknesses 4–8 m (13–26 ft). Generally overlies landslide deposits. Interspersed with and merges laterally with alluvial deposits. Soils are thin to absent on active fans and 0.2 to 0.5 m (2.5 to 1.5 ft) thick with stage II weak stage III carbonate elsewhere.
- 01-04-00-00-00—unit—Q2—Alluvial fan deposit (late to middle Pleistocene)—Cross-bedded, poorly sorted cobble to boulder gravel and poorly sorted, matrix-rich debris flow deposits that form terraces 5–15 m (16–50 ft) above adjacent Q2 deposits. Thicknesses 4–15 m (13–50 ft), but most contacts obscured by channel. Overlies landslide deposits and Santa Fe Group. Overlain by El Cajete tephra (50–40 ka; Renne et al., 1996) along White Canyon. Soils poorly exposed but thicker than 1.0 m (3 ft), exposing stage III or weak stage IV carbonate.
- 01-04-00-00-00—unit—Q3—Cullavilla deposit (Holocene to middle Pleistocene)—Rockfall, debris-flow, and poorly sorted alluvial deposits at the bases of cliffs, particularly along White Rock Canyon. Texture and clast lithology are variable. Includes thin (<2 m; <5 ft) alluvial deposits west of the Rio Grande, and, in places, El Cajete tephra (50–40 ka; Renne et al., 1996). These generally 4–10 m (13–33 ft) but locally along White Rock exceeds 25 m (82 ft). Overlies Basaldrill Tuff west of China Mesa; elsewhere overlie basaltic flows, phonotomitic deposits, and landslides. Silt thin (<0.5 m) thick and weakly developed at most locations, but lenses of El Cajete tephra, strong R1 (over Rio Grande) or K horizon (White Rock Canyon and east), and banded soils (Birkeland, 1999) demonstrate that deposits are polygenetic and locally older than late Pleistocene.
- 01-04-00-00-00—unit—Q4—Thin sheetflood and debris flow (Holocene to late Pleistocene)—Light yellowish-brown to pale brown to brownish-silt, and very fine- to medium-grained sand with varying amounts of coarse sand and silt. Thin unit caps high-level surfaces. The underlying unit is also shown. Weakly to moderately consolidated. Q4 is less than 4 m thick.
- 01-04-00-00-00—unit—Q5—Landslide deposit (Holocene to late Pleistocene)—Massive slumps and debris flows rich in basaltic-boulder gravel mainly exposed along White Rock Canyon, north of Chapuquai Canyon, and along Canada Ancho. Most slides are massive. Deposits consist of massive slump blocks with coherent internal stratigraphy near canyon rim and progressively deformed slumps and debris flows closer to the Rio Grande. Dips to massive slump blocks range from 9° to 30° toward lower slopes. Failures occurred along (1) steeply dipping planes rooted in the Santa Fe Group, (2) subhorizontal planes in clayey silt layers found at several levels of Pliocene fluvial and lacustrine deposits (Ta), and (3) steep walls of talus. Limited areas of autoclastic breccias are included in areas mapped as Q5. Slide material overlies rocks of the Santa Fe Group at most sites. At several locations undisturbed late Pliocene deposits lie stratigraphically above landslide deposits (Section H of Dethier, 1997). Morphology of most talus and sections of Basaldrill Tuff in some suggest that slides were active in early to middle Pleistocene time but that many became stable in the middle to late Pleistocene. El Cajete tephra (50–40 ka; Renne et al., 1996) lies on landslide deposits south of the White Rock area. Soils are generally 0.8–1.4 m (2.5–4.5 ft) thick. Carbonate morphology (Birkeland, 1999) at stage IVa sites, but stage IIb carbonates is present in most exposures. Carbon ratios in rock varnish (Dethier et al., 1988) at two sites suggest that these landslides stabilized 520 ka.
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