

Introduction

Victoria Island (part of Western Canada's High Arctic island archipelago) is Canada's third-largest island, divided by an administrative line between the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

The Kuujjua River ("big river" in Inuktitut) originates in the center of Victoria Island and flows about 350 km into Minto Inlet on the island's west side. Beginning as a shallow stream, the river flows smoothly across rolling tundra, gaining speed and volume as it drops through rugged landscape, cutting canyons through basalt cliffs.

Words of Caution

These maps were created based on notes taken during our canoe trip in July 2012 (our trip report is available at <http://sites.google.com/site/landltrip/Trips/kuujjua2012>). We marked our maps according to what we saw at that time, in order to provide information to any future visitors, however, by no means do I take any responsibility for how this information will be used. I do not guarantee that it does not contain errors, whether made by me personally or by bugs in the software used. Rapid classification is subjective. Our subjective evaluation of the class level of these rapids does NOT take into account the remoteness of the region (i.e. distance and time from help etc.), the water temperature (cold kills) and the size and power of this river (any swim could be a very long swim). Moreover, the class of rapids depends on the water level and that can change immensely through the season. Use the information provided here with caution. YOU are the only one responsible for your own decisions and for your own safety. Rivers described here are wild and very remote. Weather can be also very tough. DO YOUR OWN scouting and reconnaissance. I am not taking any responsibility for the information provided here or for your safety.

An Important Word from our lawyer

The information conveyed here, on our maps, on our website and in our trip reports is the sole opinion and perspective of Lynette and/or Laco alone and should not be taken as a basis in fact. Many of L&L's observations during the period reported were made after only a very brief period, in very specific weather and water level conditions and often in a fatigued state. All readers are strongly encouraged and advised to do their own independent research (scouting) and form their own independent conclusions before deciding on any facts or actions in relation to any of L&L's freely published information.

It is a well known fact that rivers can and do change completely, depending on multiple factors such as water levels, ice conditions, flood and/or drought conditions, continual erosion and altering seasonal and weather patterns. Each person who undertakes to travel any of these routes is responsible for their own judgments and safety.

Route Description

This river was mapped during our trip July 14 - August 1, 2012. We started at Lake Hope on the East branch of the river, still in Nunavut. For completeness, I provide also unmarked maps of the Northern branch, which should have slightly more water, but was beyond the range of the chartered Beaver we used for access. There is also a Southern branch of the river, which has been "paddled" once before (as far as we know), but it is reported to be extremely shallow and difficult to access.

All of our rapid markings and ratings are subject to the water levels we had at that time. High water marks were evident all along the river, alerting us to the fact that this river would be extremely different and dangerous in high water. Some shore debris was on such high ground that we suspect the possibility of ice jams creating sudden, massive flash floods. This is treeless country & campsites abound, so there was no need to mark them on the maps. The River (and the whole area) is much shallower and there is much less precipitation and water drainage in general (than in Northern Quebec, where we are used to wetter conditions). We experienced a lot of walking and dragging - especially during the first 3 days, but also towards the end of the journey, where aerial photographs were a huge help in navigating the shallow lakes successfully.

Wildlife is abundant on the Kuujjua. With every turn of the river, you are likely to see muskox, arctic wolves, arctic foxes, snowy owls, arctic hares, and caribou. Dozens of bird species nest, from the tiny Lapland longspur to sandhill cranes, arctic loons, Sabine's gulls, white-fronted geese and tundra swans. Fishing is very good.

The sun never sets during the arctic summer, but be careful to avoid paddling directly into the low sun late in the day (the Kuujjua flows generally west) - the reflection on the water's surface will impair your vision and make rapid-reading quite difficult. Hiking is excellent. There are also many Palaeoeskimo and Copper Inuit historic sites along the river.

We did not paddle from the outlet of the Kuujjua at Minto Inlet to Ulukhaktok so our maps do not cover this section. Being short of time, we pre-arranged the safer, speedier option of being picked up by motorboat by Pat Ekpakohak (867-396-4541). It is possible to paddle the arctic ocean, however ideal wind and weather conditions would be essential to a safe passage, as the shoreline, especially for the 1st day or two, consists of steep cliffs where safe landing spots are infrequent.

To contact the author of these maps, see the bottom of the page at <http://sites.google.com/site/landltrip/>

Credits

Author

Lester Kovac, 2011

Base Topographic Maps

Copyright Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada,
Department of Natural Resources. All rights reserved.

Map work/Text

Lester Kovac, 2011

Contributors

Lynette Chubb, member of expedition

Charles Leduc, integration

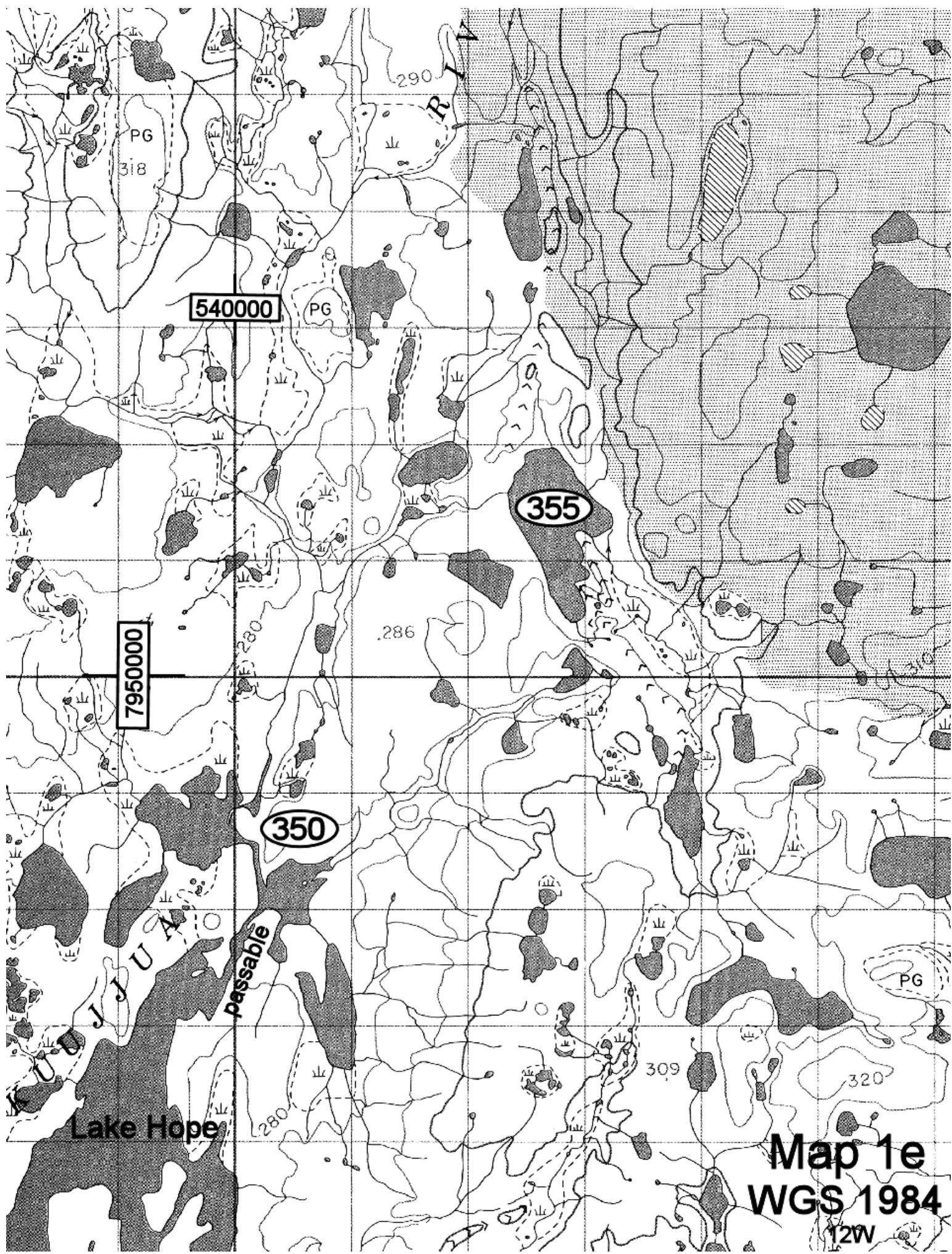
Distribution

Authorized, provided the content remains unchanged and the distribution is done free of charge. Available from www.cartespleinair.org.

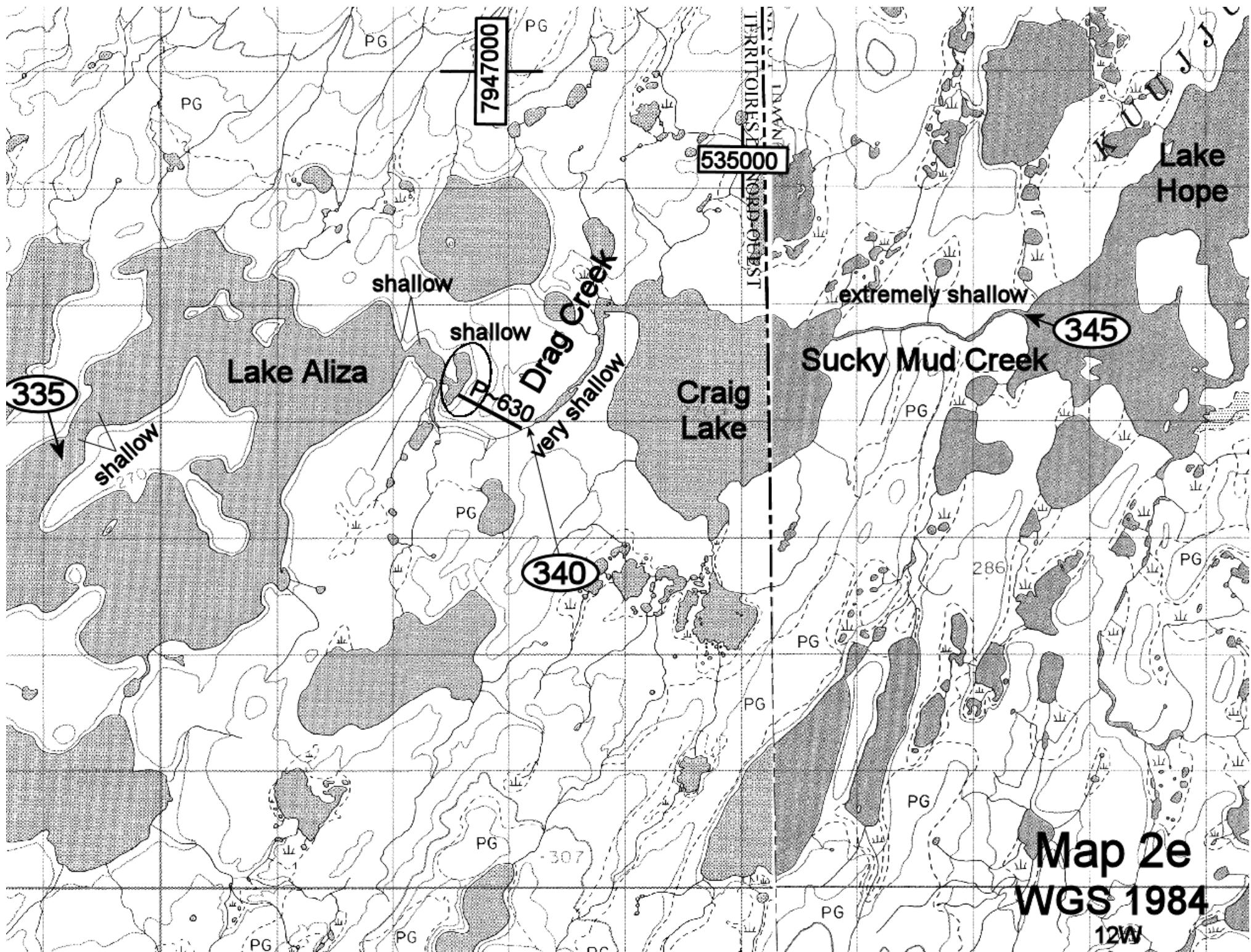
Contact

To contact the author of these maps, see bottom of the page

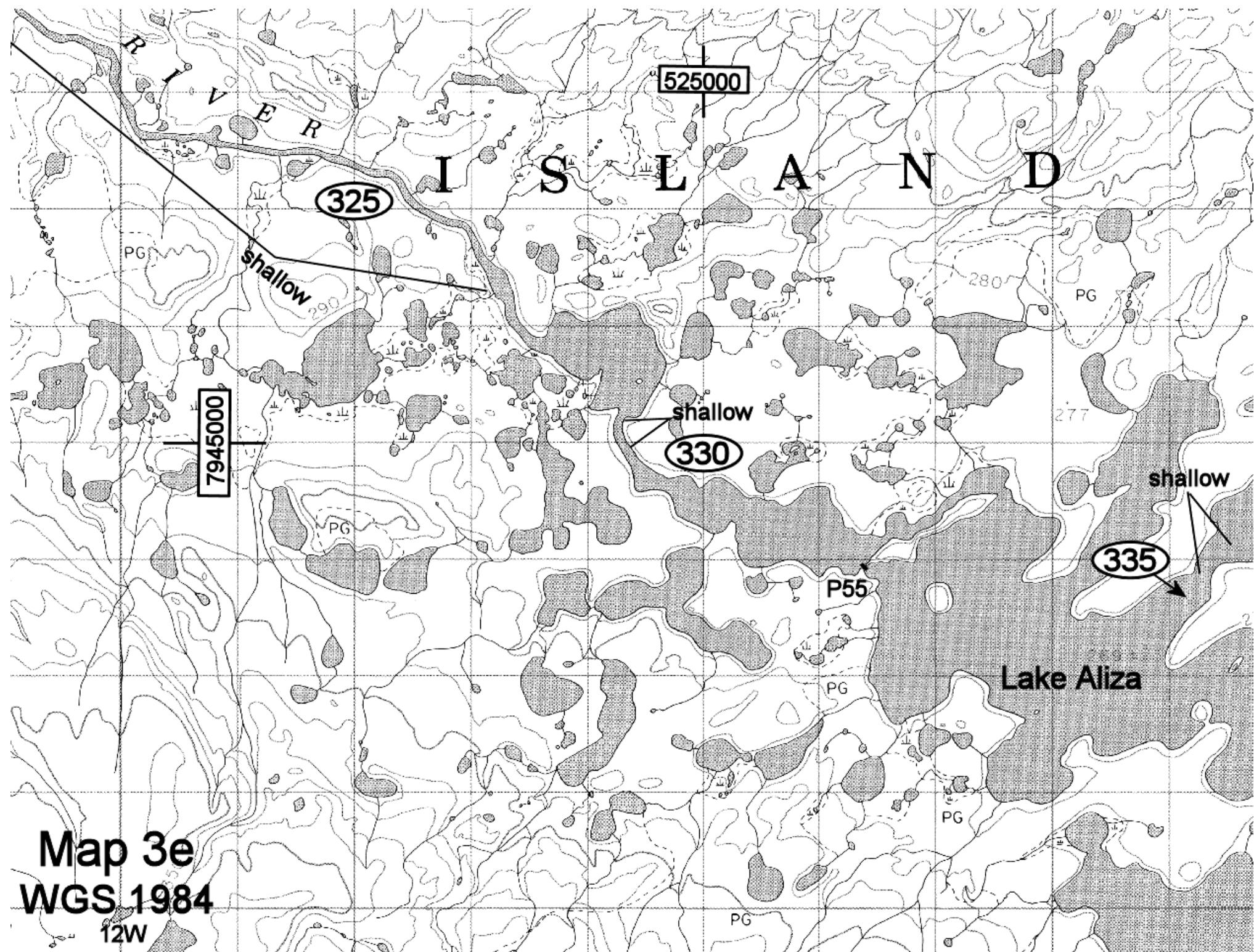
<http://sites.google.com/site/landtrips/>



Map 1e
WGS 1984
12W



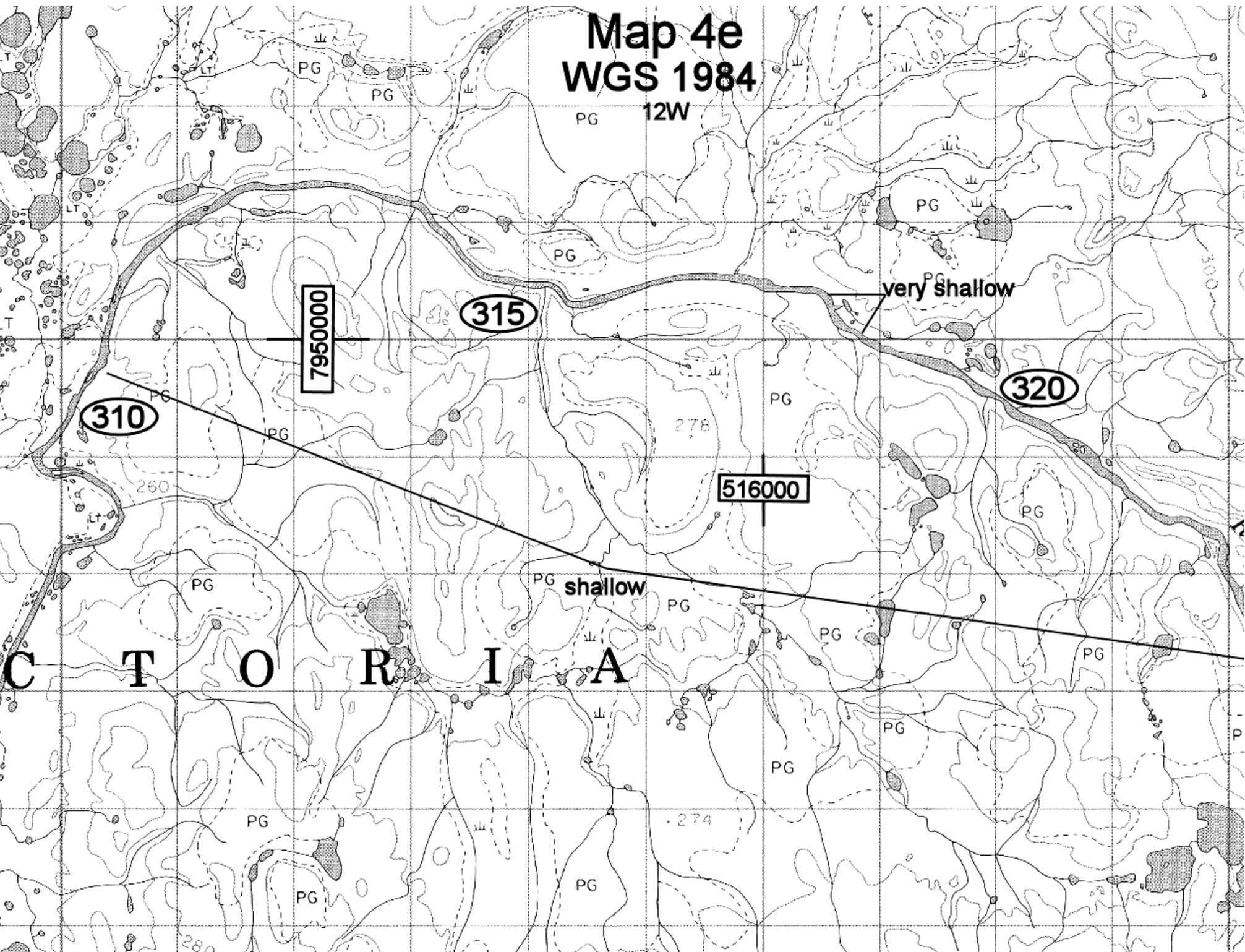
Map 2e
WGS 1984
12W

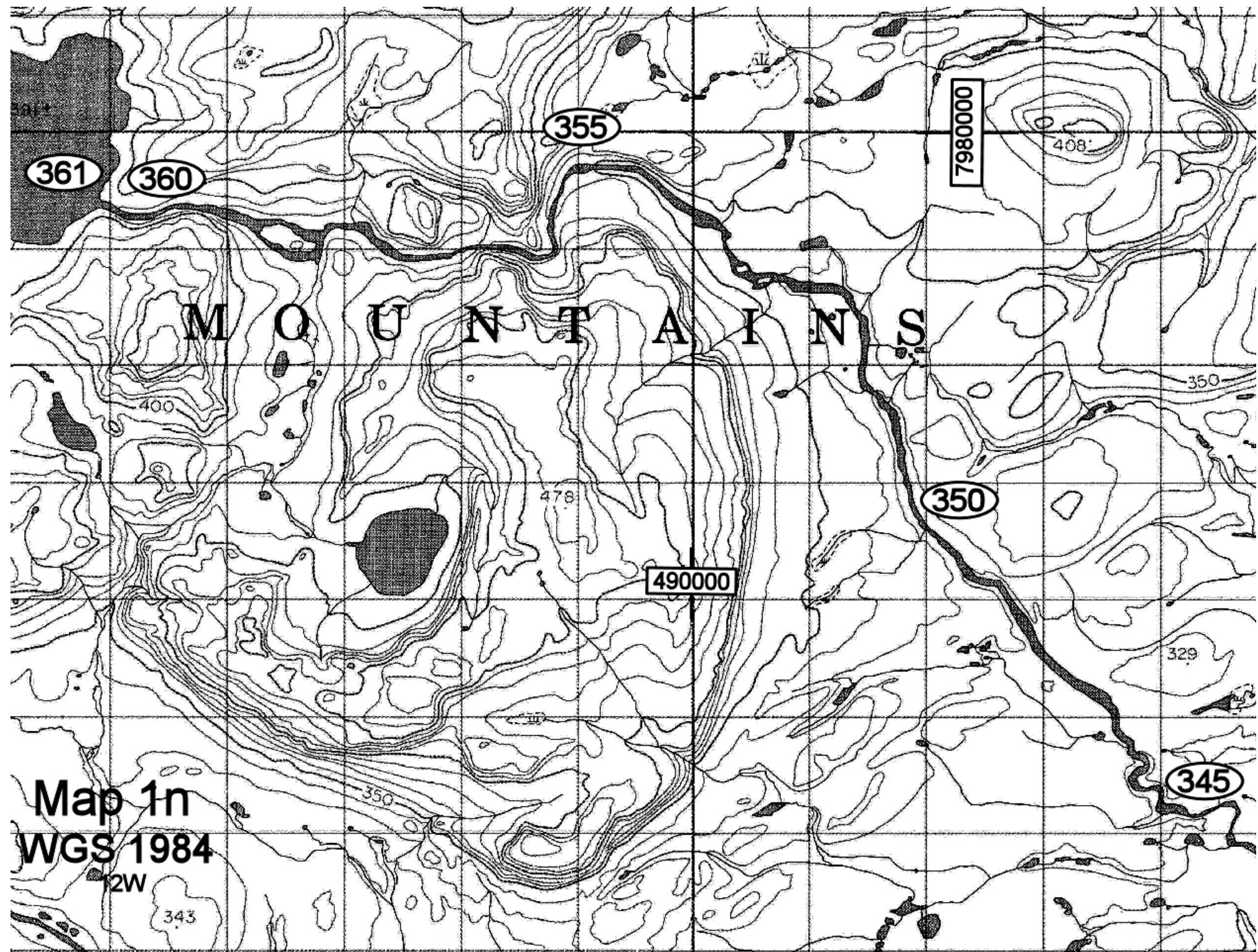


Map 3e WGS 1984

Map 4e WGS 1984

12W





Map 1n
WGS 1984

12W

343

Map 2n
WGS 1984

12W

345

N D

328

340

7970000

495000

335

474

450

300

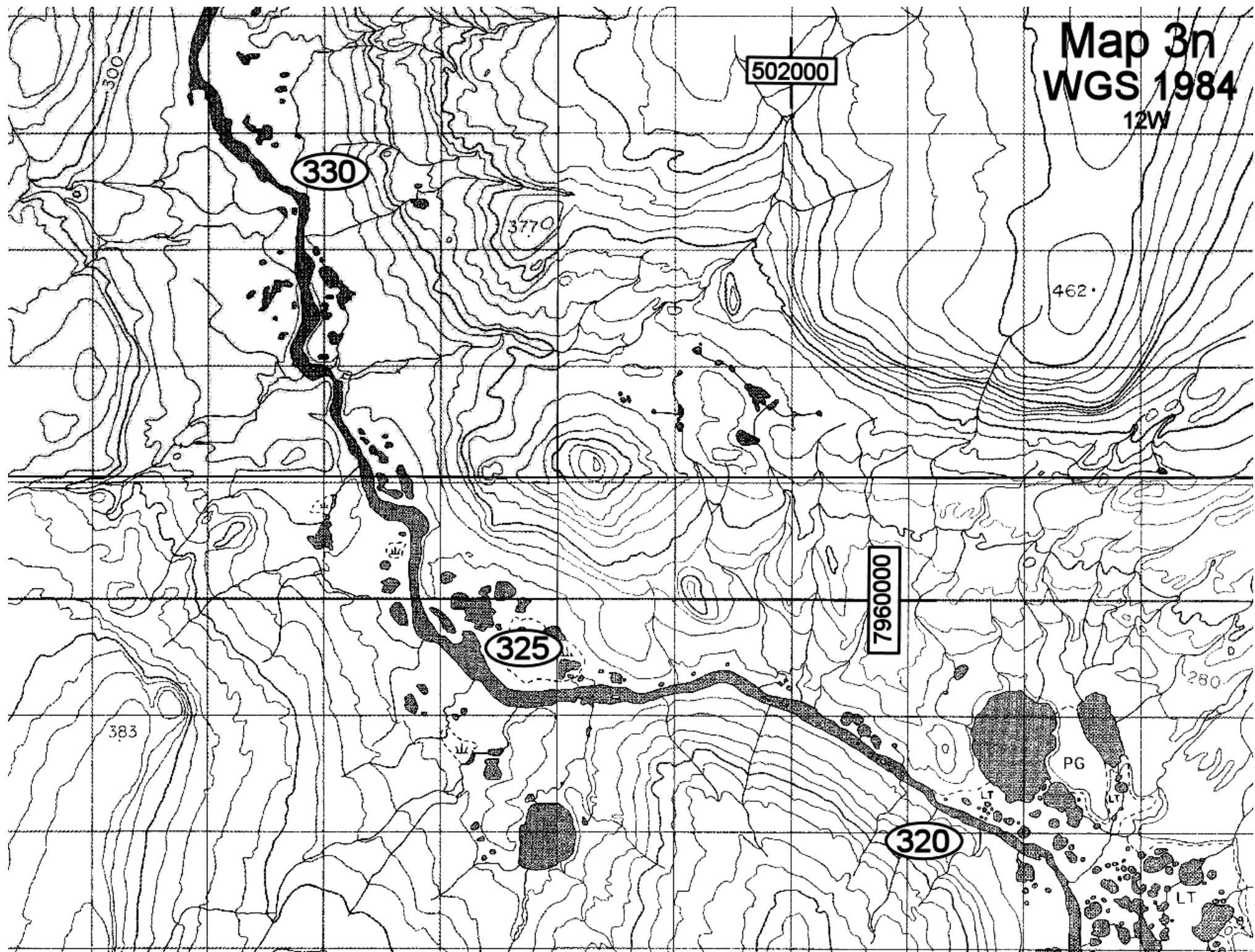
328

328

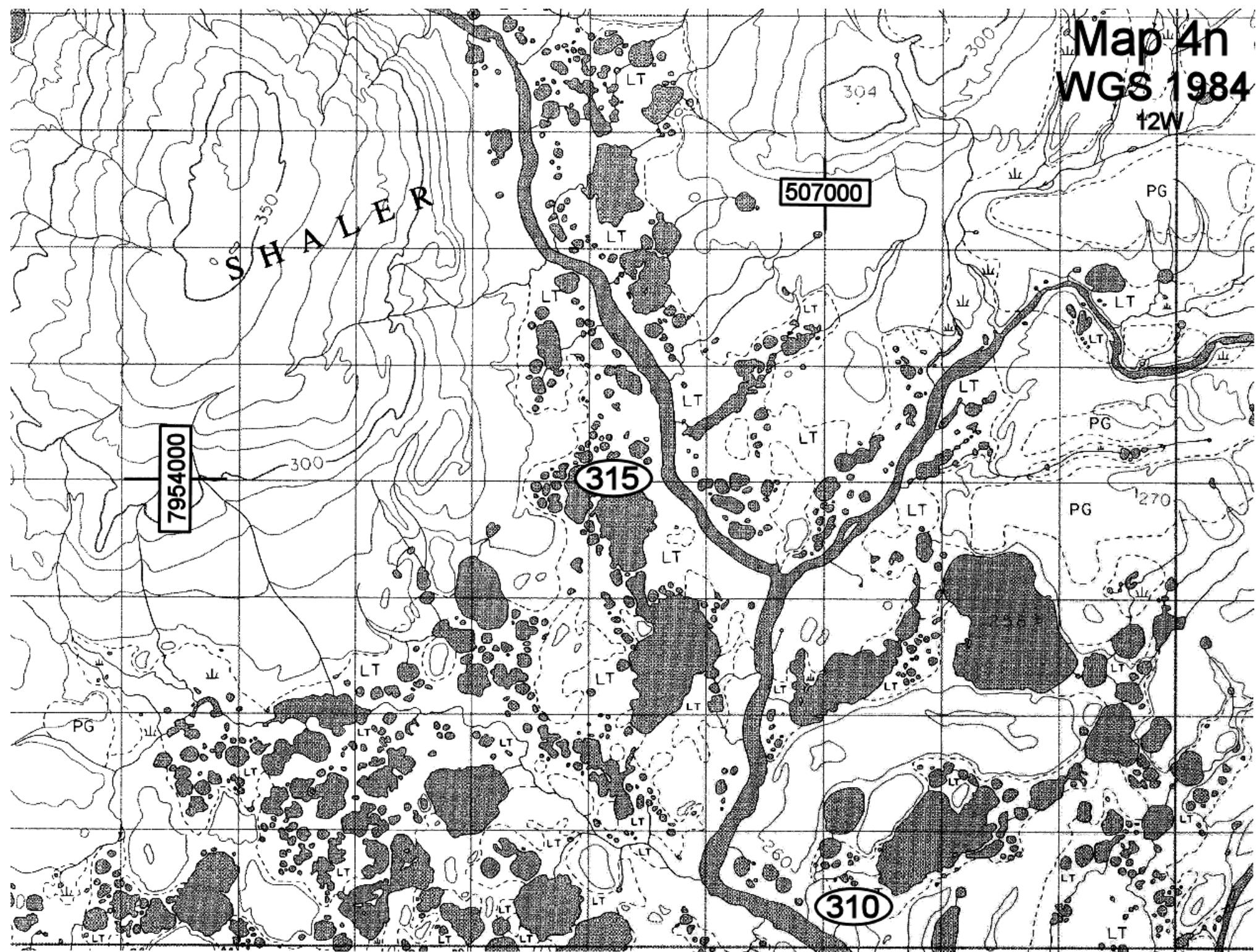
364

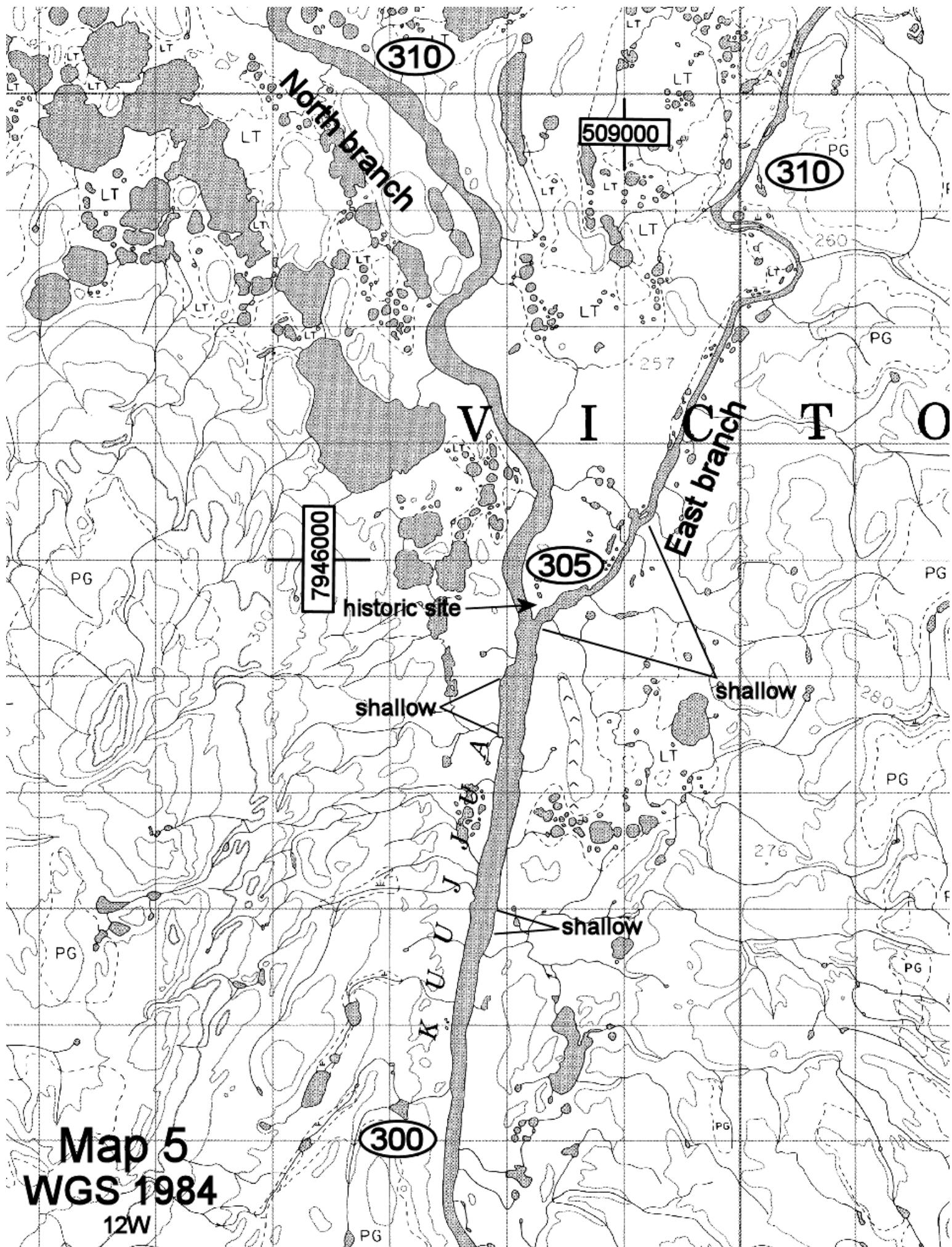
300

Map 3n
WGS 1984
12W



Map 4n WGS 1984 12W

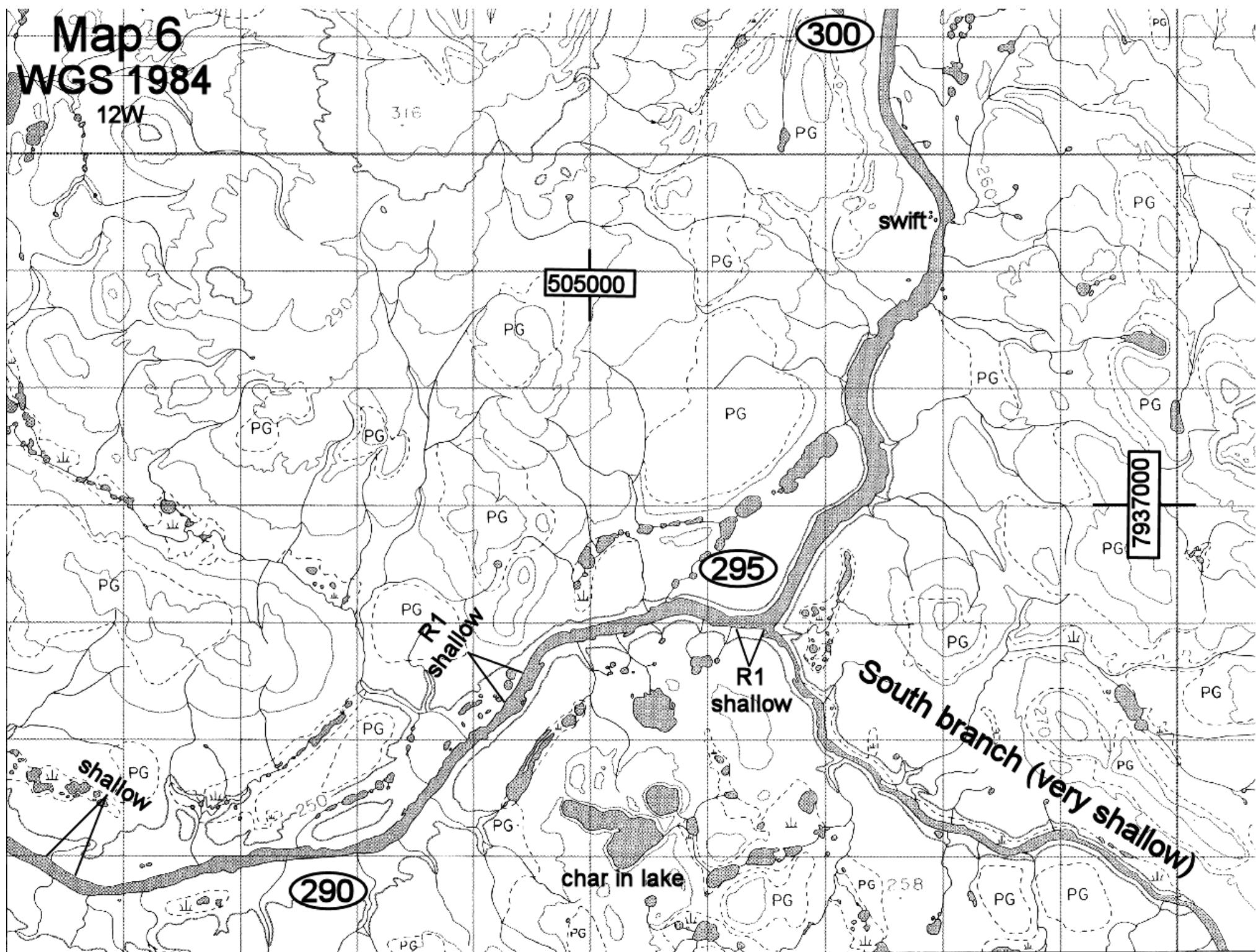




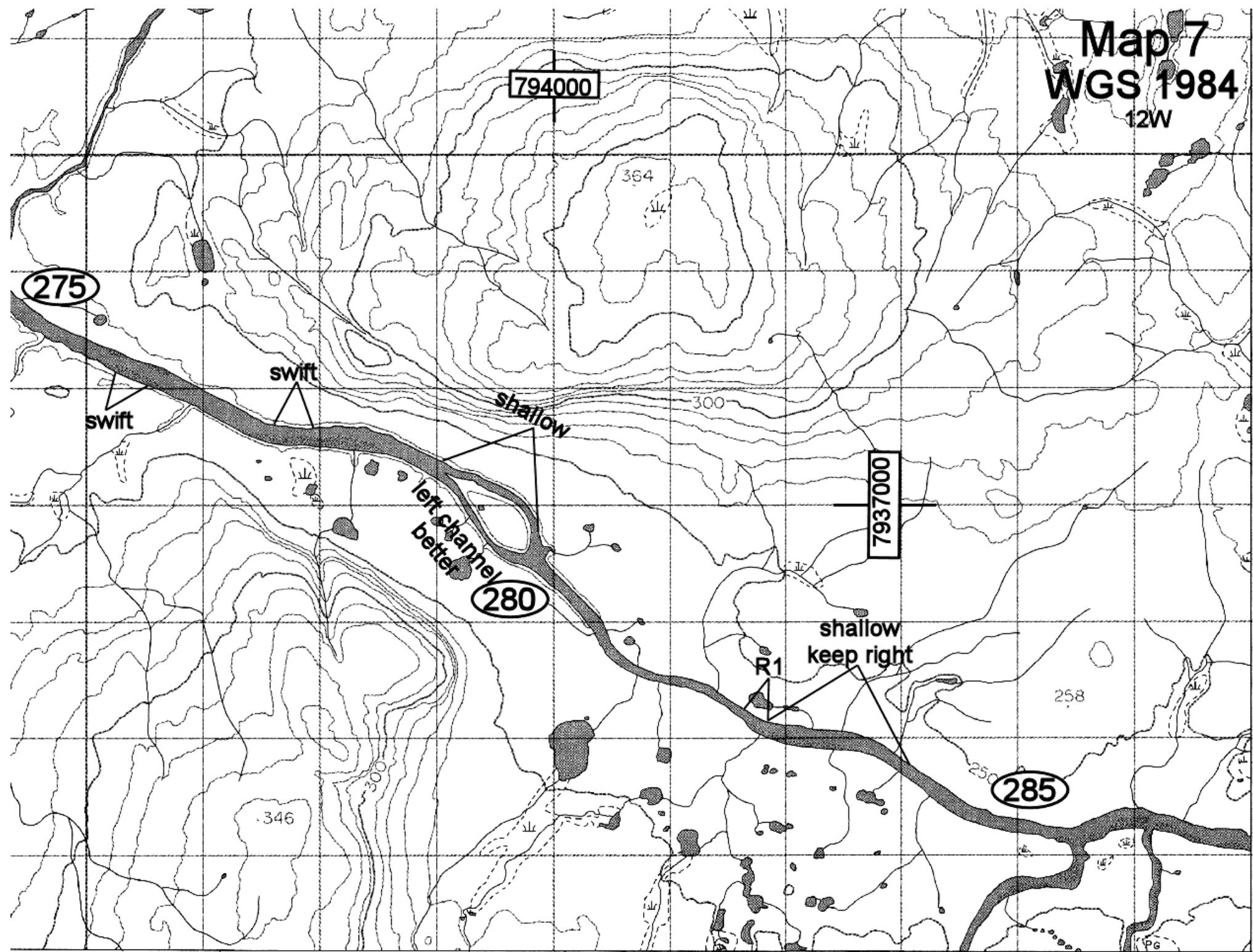
Map 6

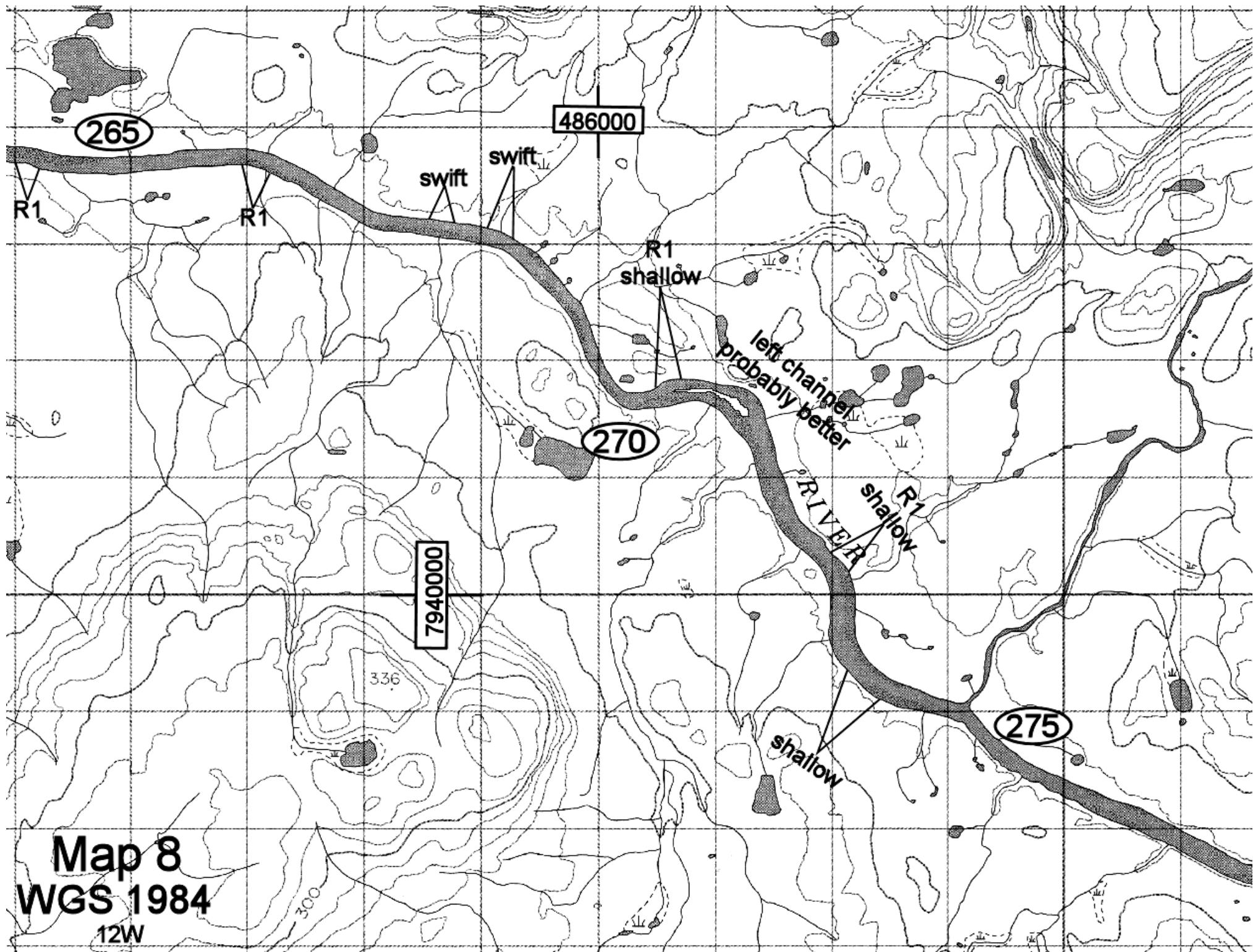
WGS 1984

12W



Map 7
WGS 1984
12W





Map 8
WGS 1984
12W

Map 9
WGS 1984

12W

VICTORIA

Messa

R1

swift

KUUJJUAQ

250 swift

255

R1

swift

260

swift

swift

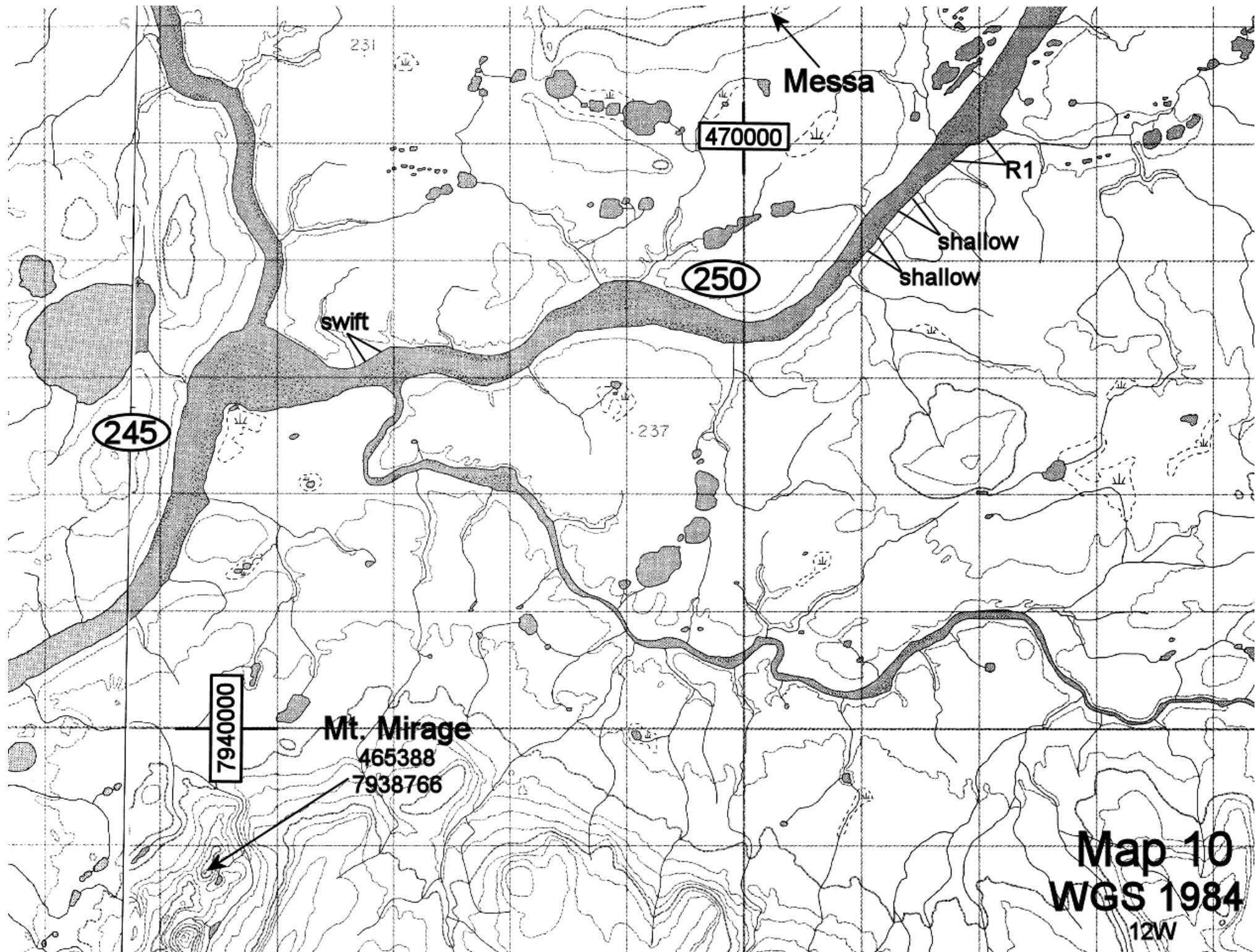
R1

265

7947000

476000

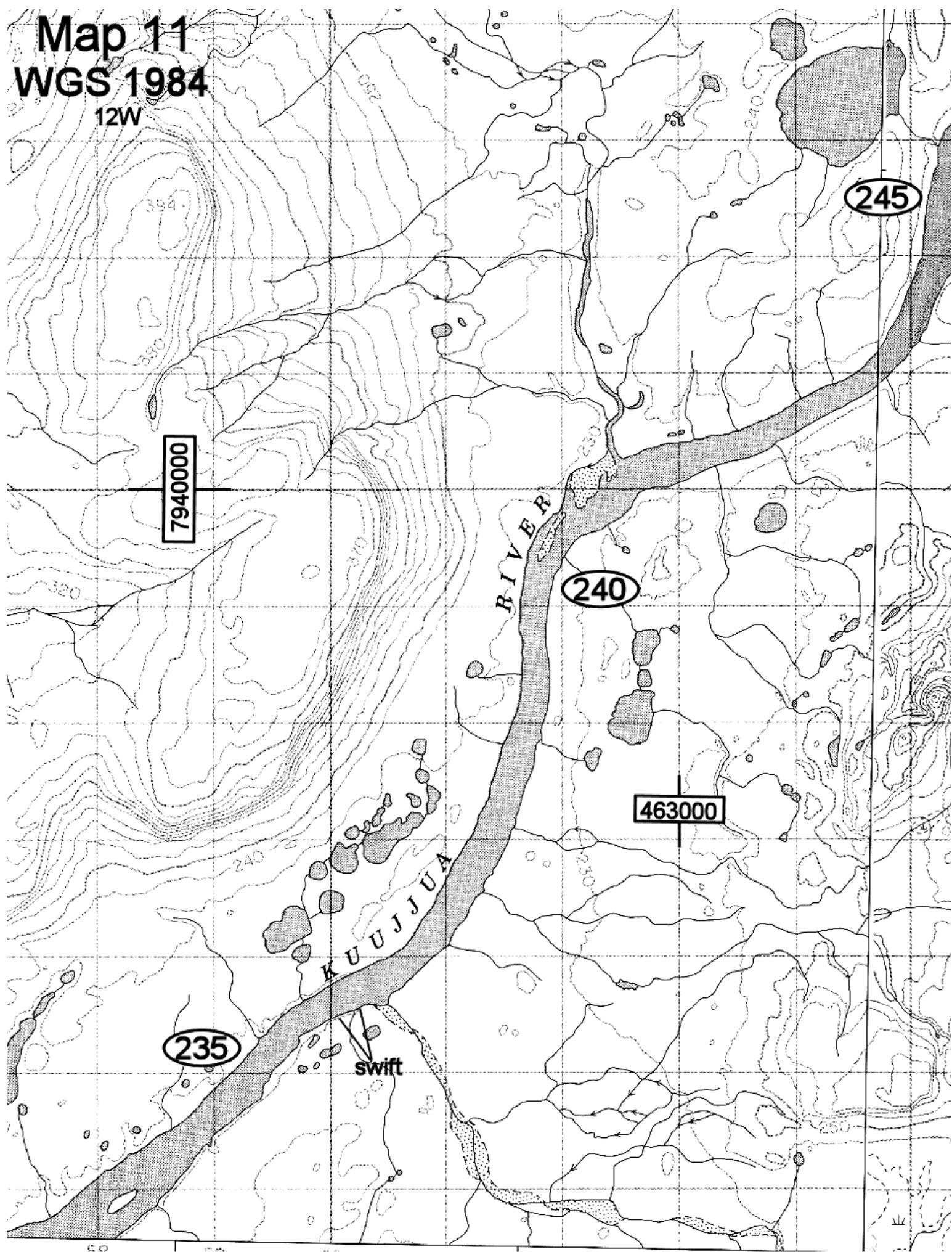
349



Map 11

WGS 1984

12W



Map 12

WGS 1984

12W

White Mountain

LAKE MOUNTAINS

swift

225

swift

historic
site

454922
7933208

230

RIVER

swift

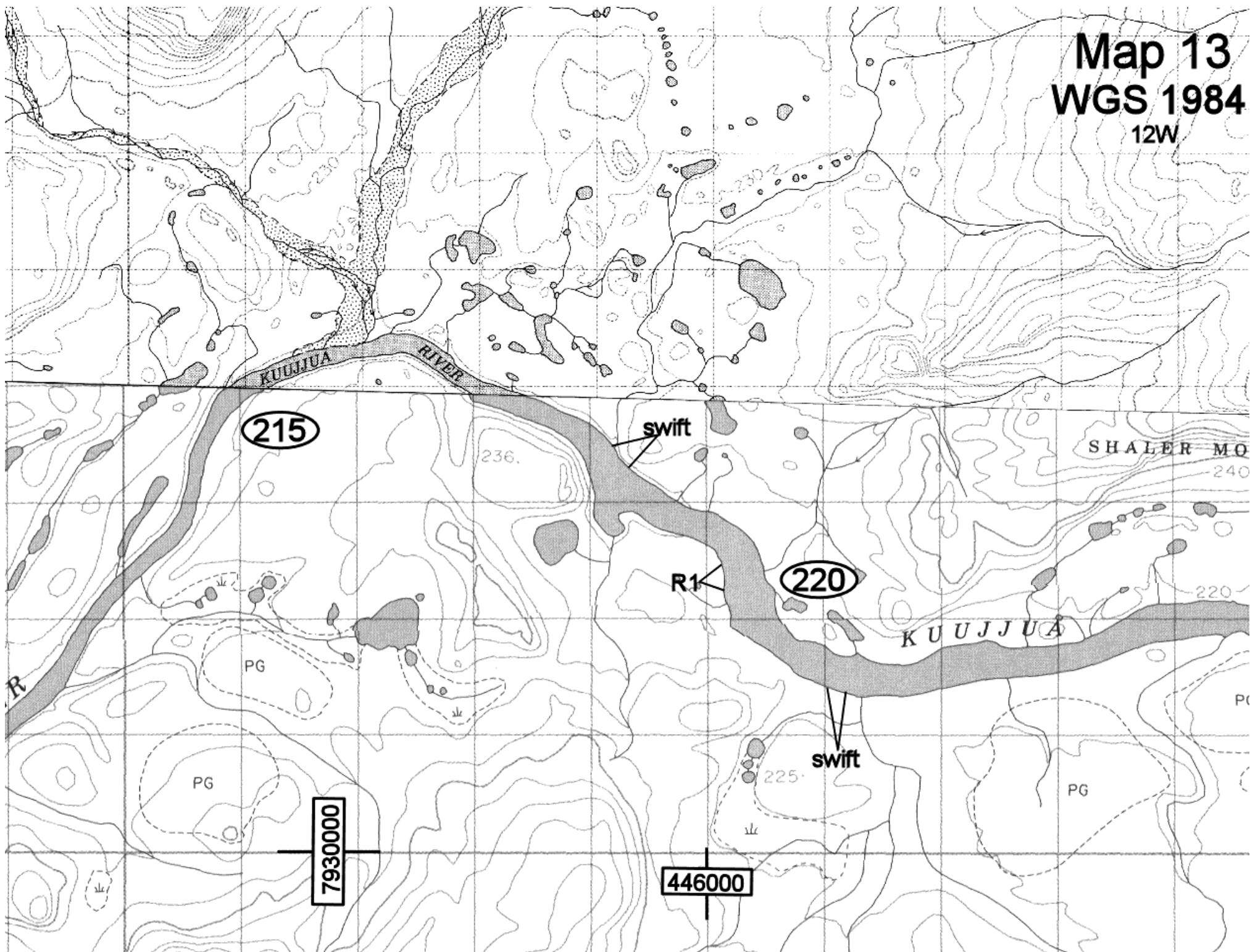
455000

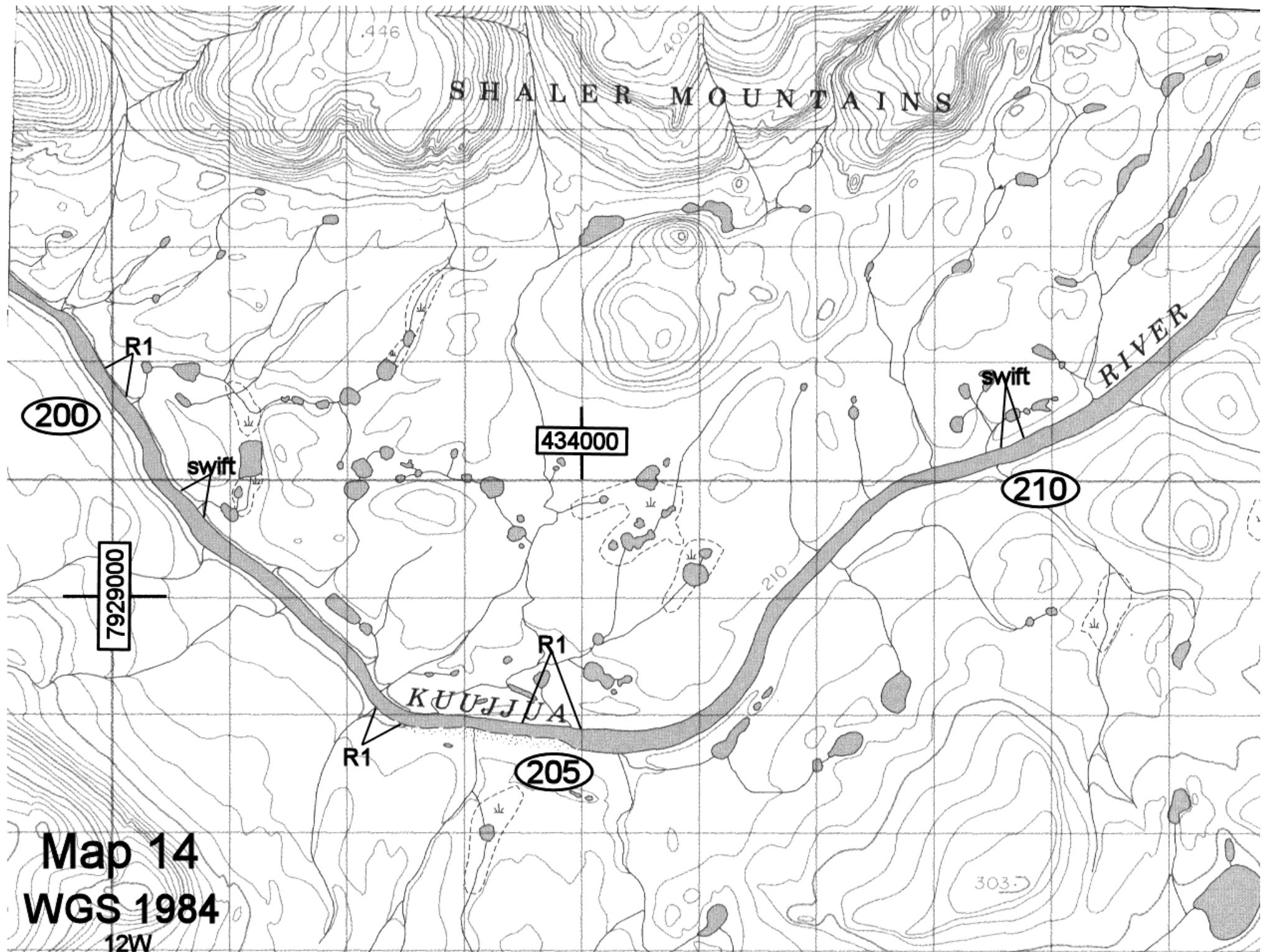
PG

7930000

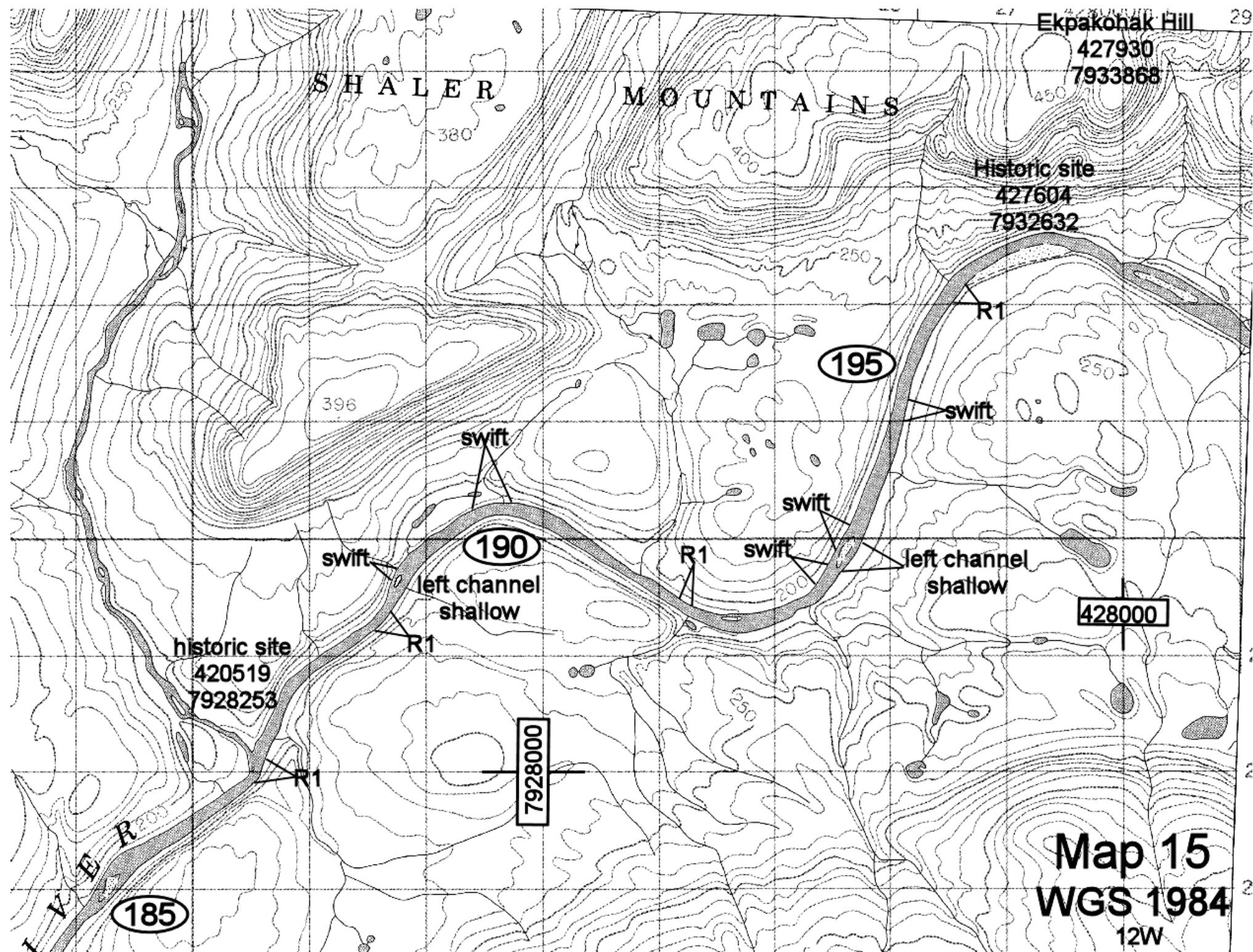
235

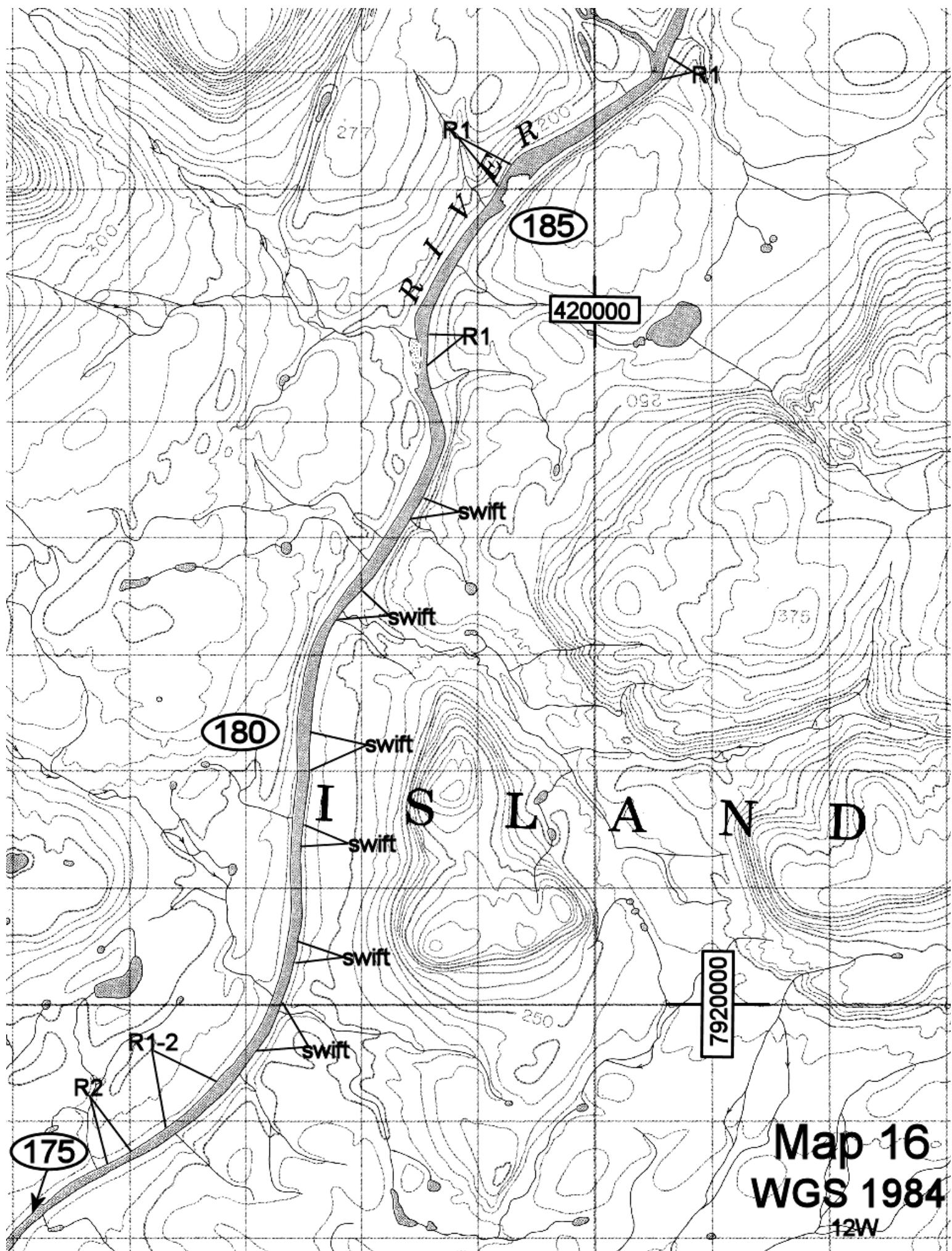
**Map 13
WGS 1984
12W**



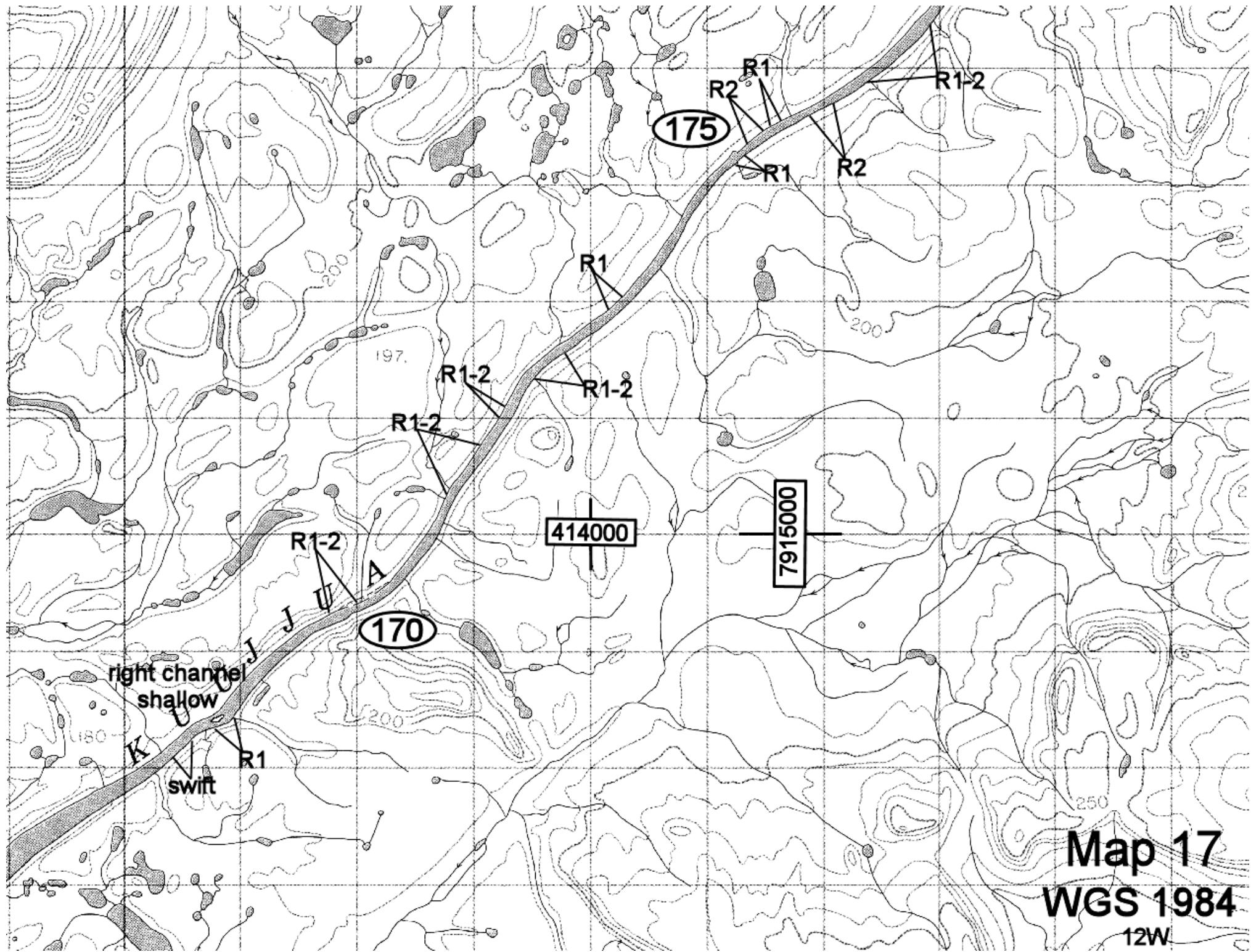


Map 14
WGS 1984

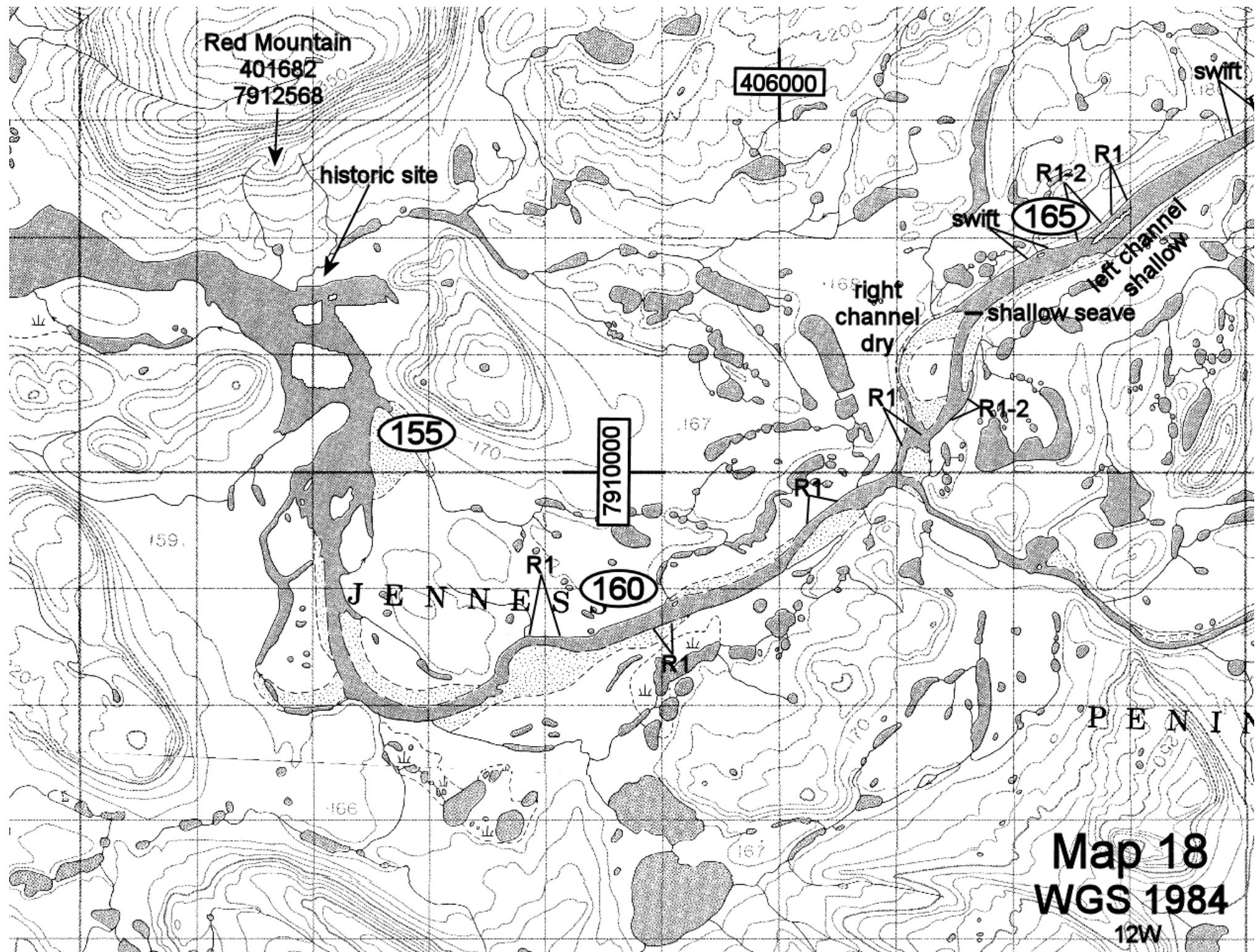


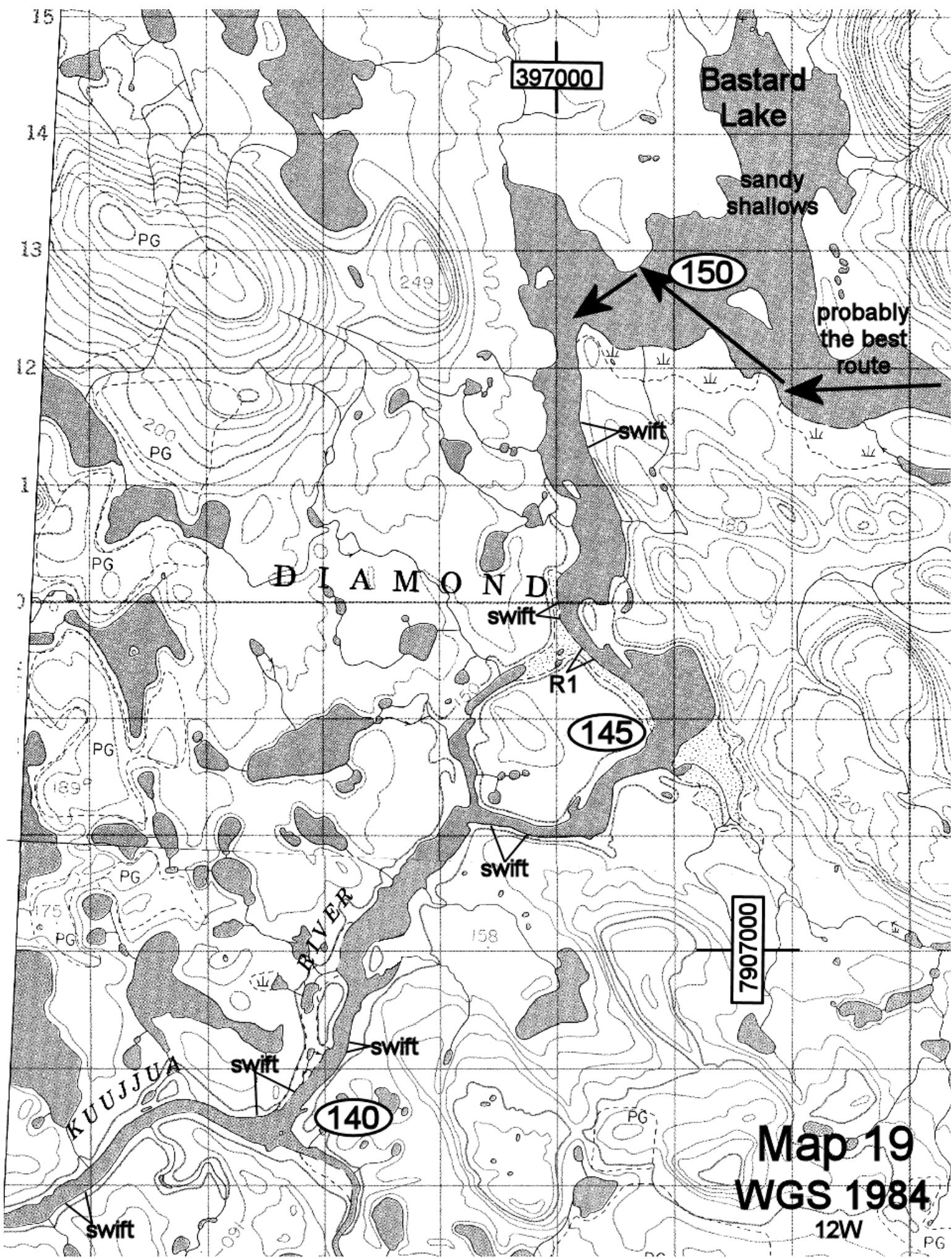


Map 16
WGS 1984
12W

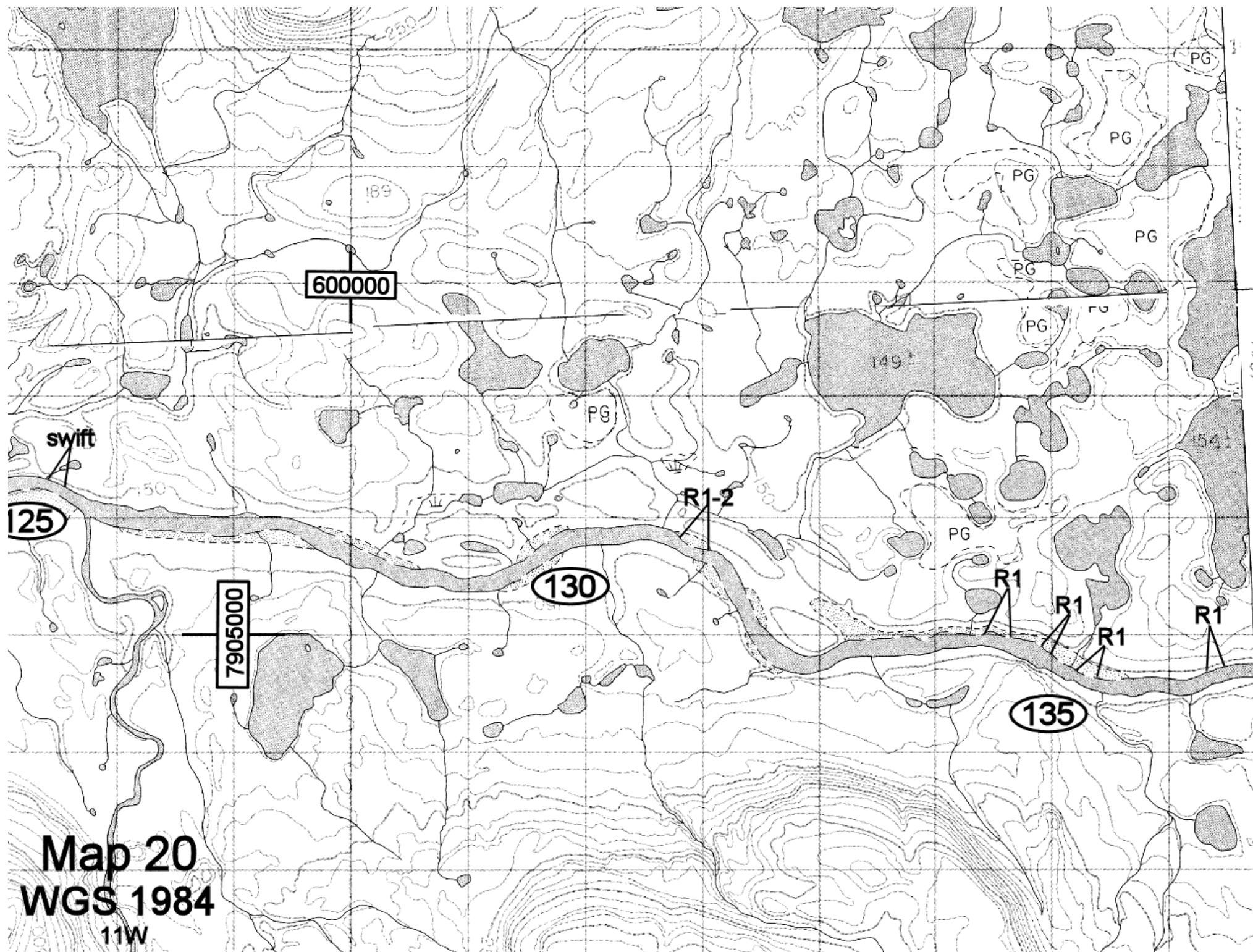


Map 17
WGS 1984
12W





Map 19 WGS 1984

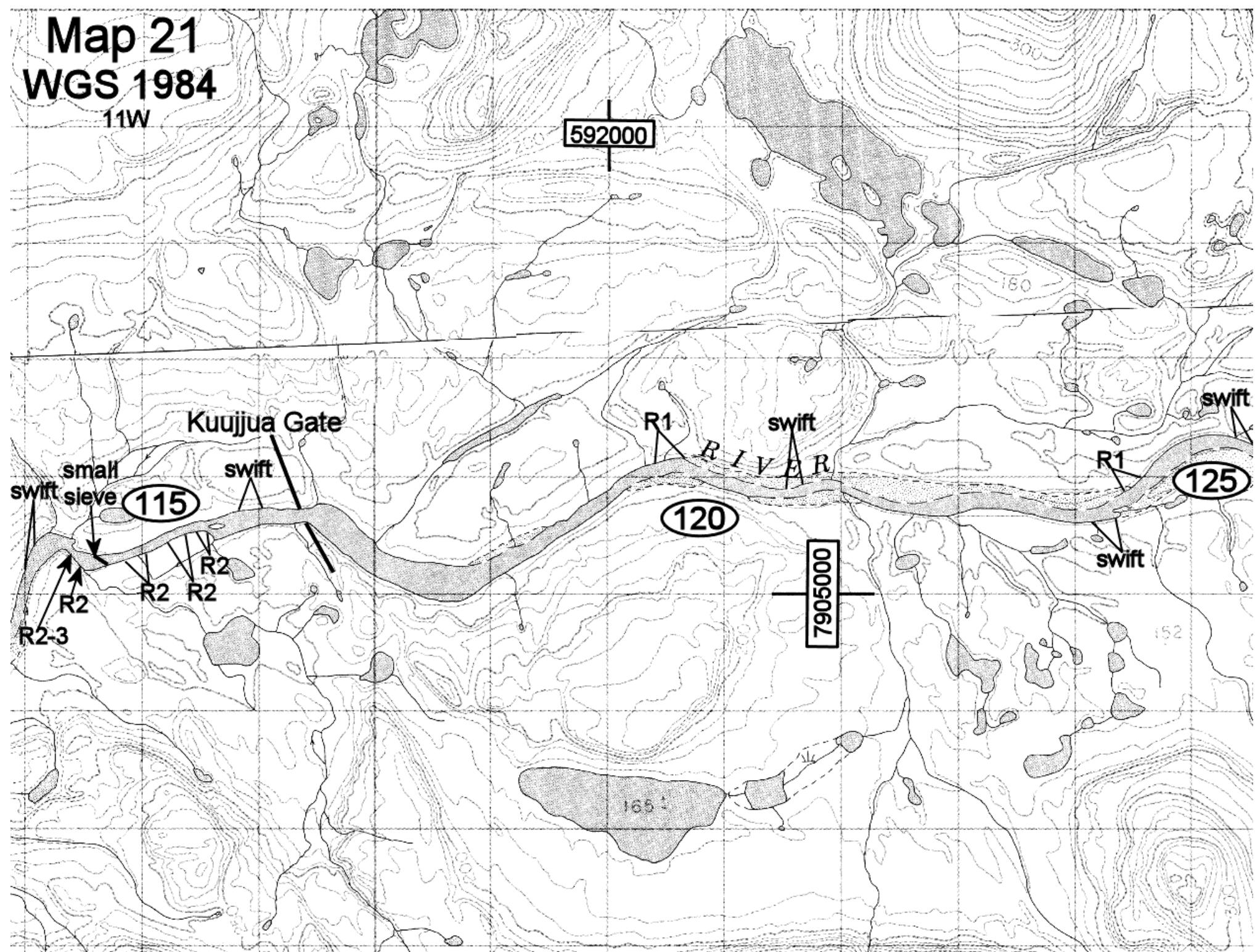


Map 20 WGS 1984 11W

Map 21

WGS 1984

11W



Map 22

WGS 1984

11W

580000

100

short portage
left

**Big Fish
Canyon**

R3R3
R2-3

R3 Ledge
run or line left

105

R4
line right

Valley of Dry Bones

swiftr
R1
R2-3
K U U J J U A

swiftr - R1

110

115

small
sieve

7899000

Saneraun Hills

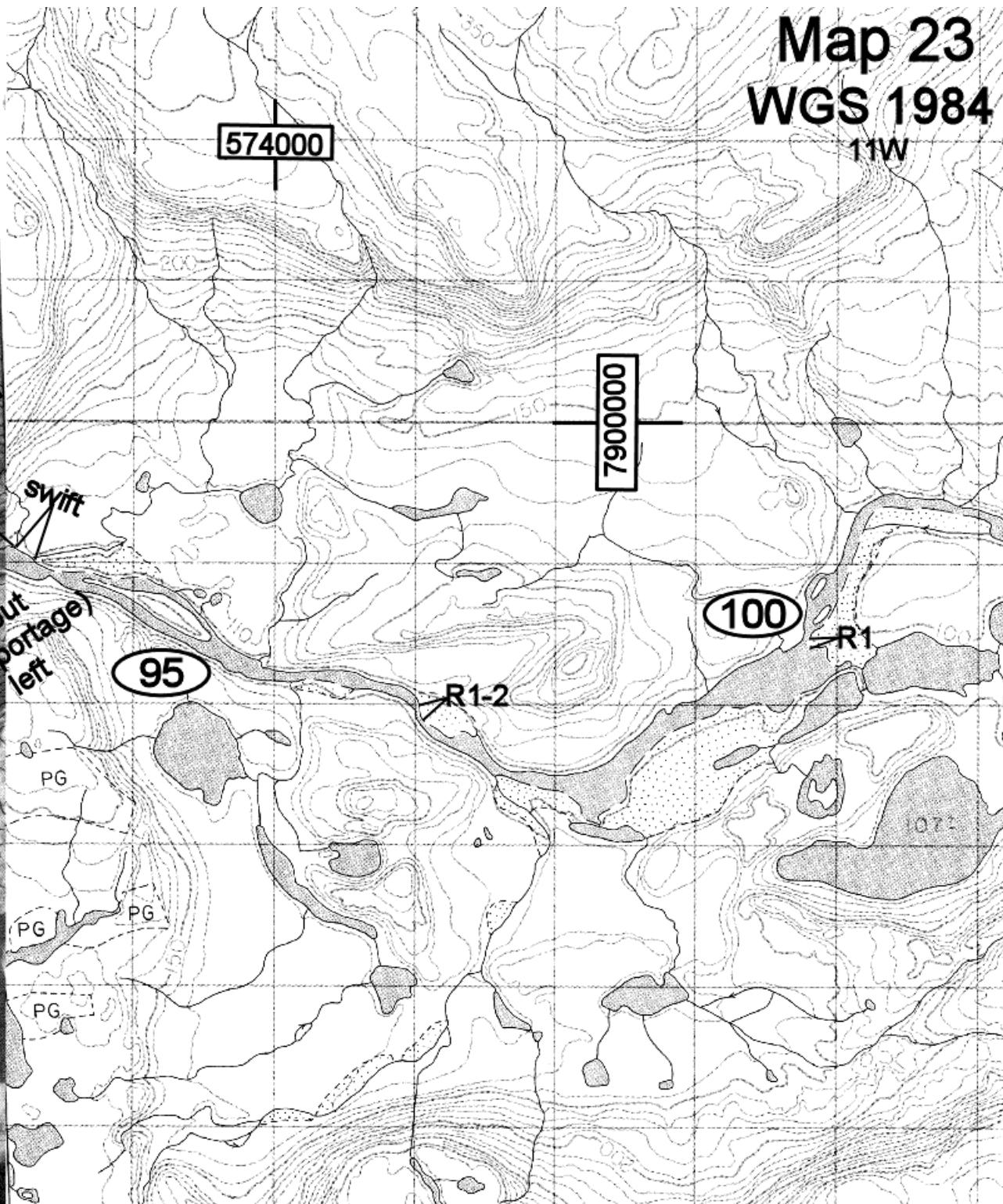
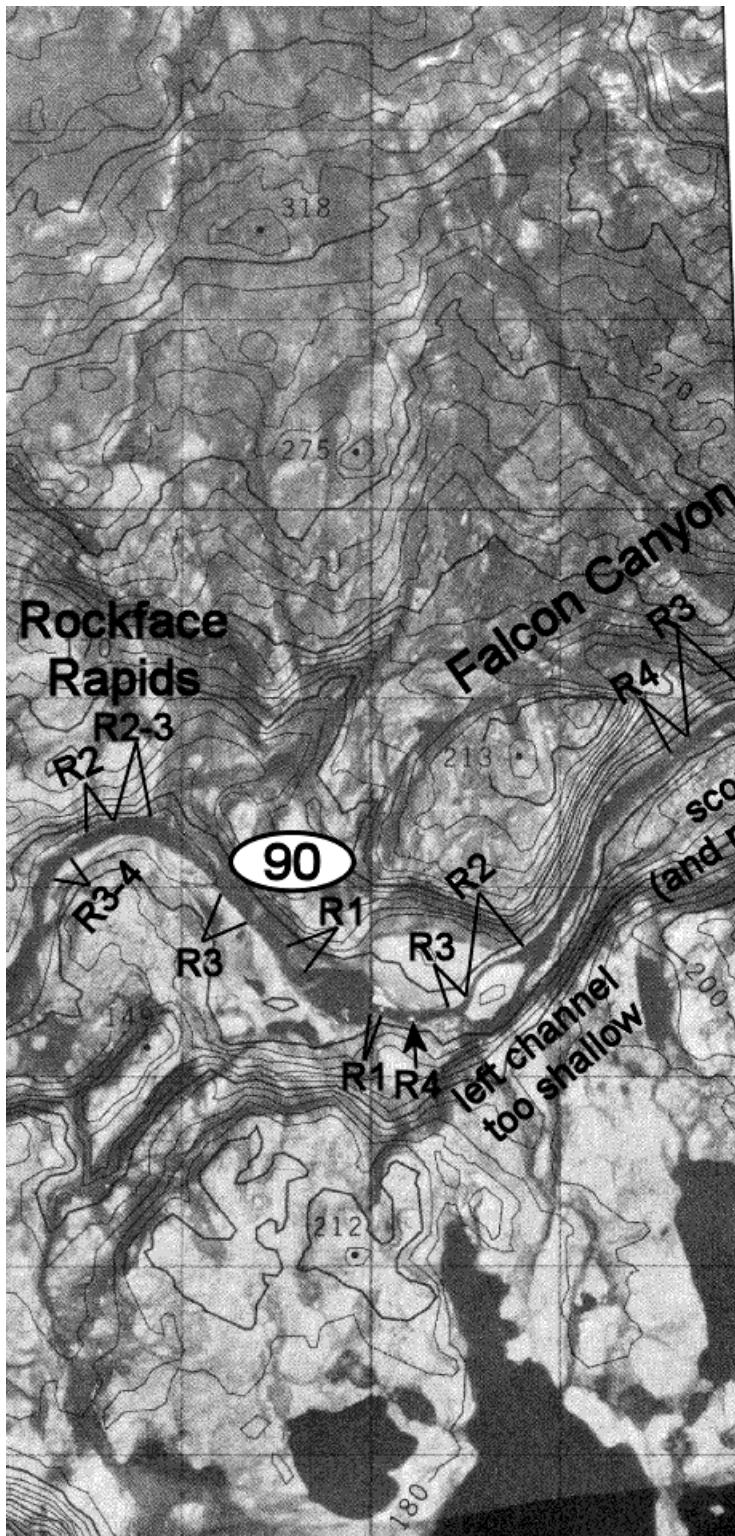
swiftr

R2

R2

R2-3

Map 23
WGS 1984
11W



Map 24
WGS 1984

Rockface Rapids
R2-3

7898198

E S S

11W

RIVER

80

Dave's Lost Lake
85

563931

deep channel at south shore

R2
R3
R3A
R3B

081

291

387

478

968

460

493

149

195

120

155

Map 25

WGS 1984

553931

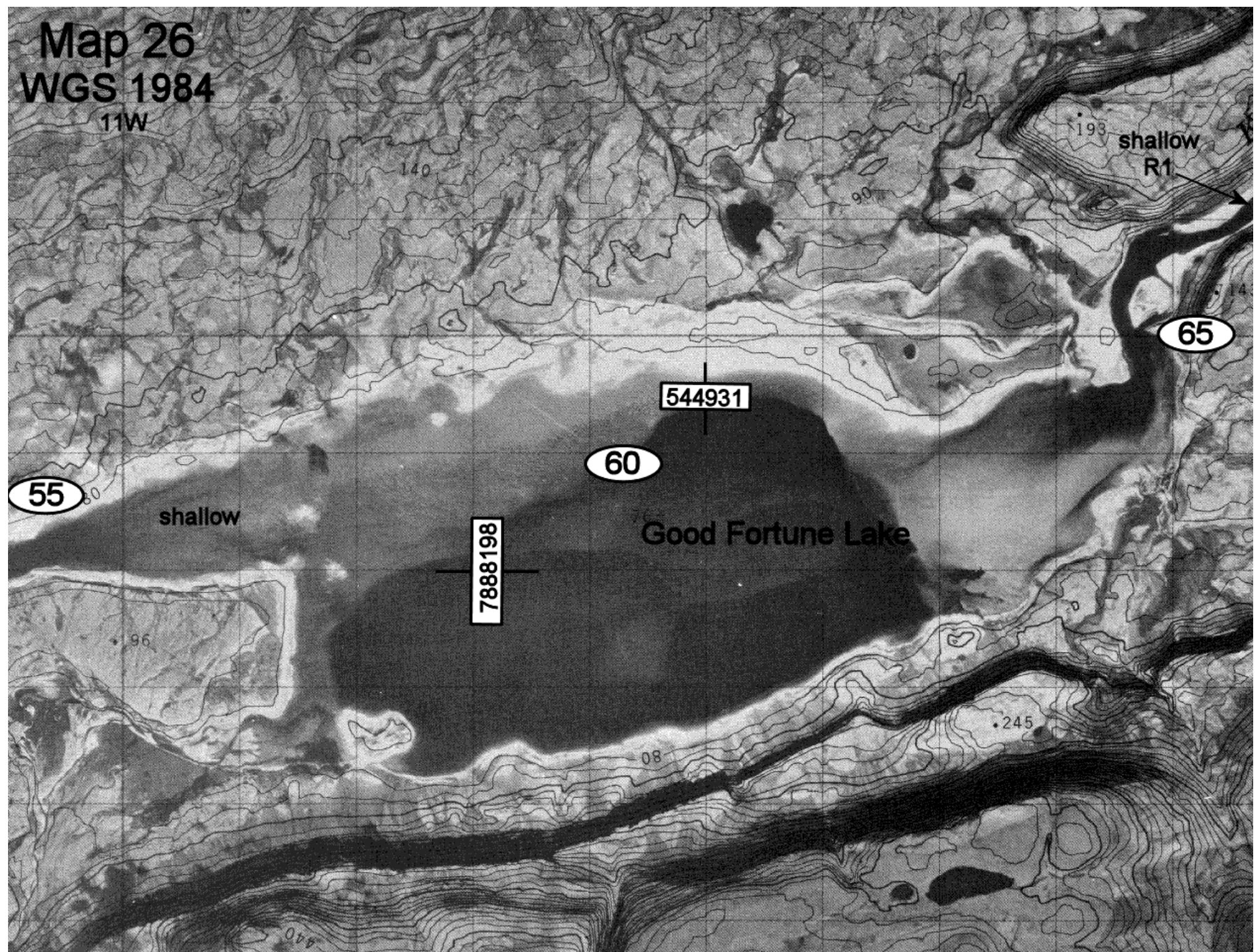
7890198



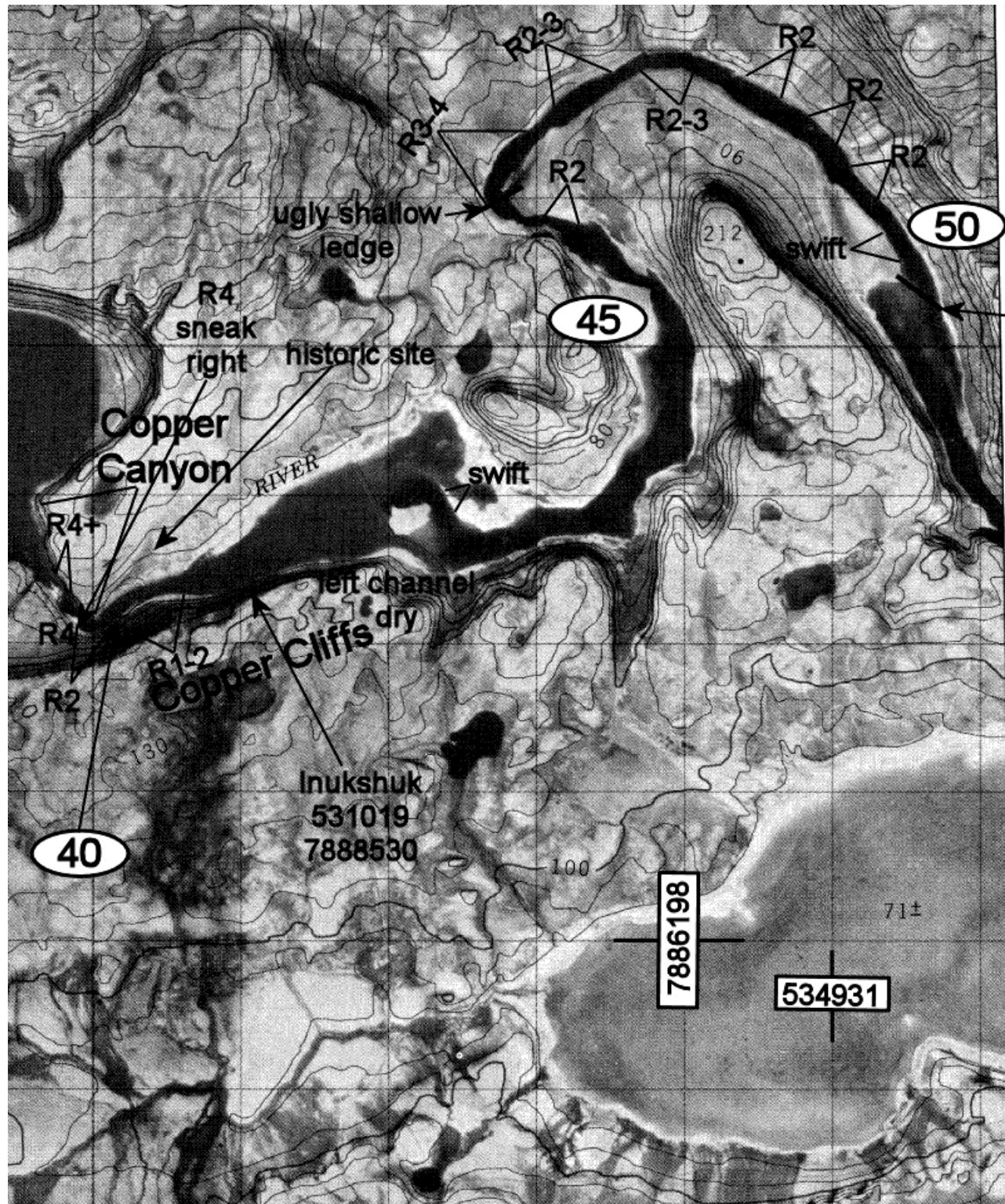
Map 26

WGS 1984

11W



Map 27
WGS 1984
11W



Map 28
WGS 1984

shallow

30

522931

Gull Lake

35

Loon
Lake

I S L A N D

178

120

R4+

R4

R2

40

7887198

11W
240

Map 29 WGS 1984

20

11W

Muskox
Lake

probably the best
route through
shallows

519931

7897198

25

E

E

S

S

P

E

R3 R2-3

R1 R2

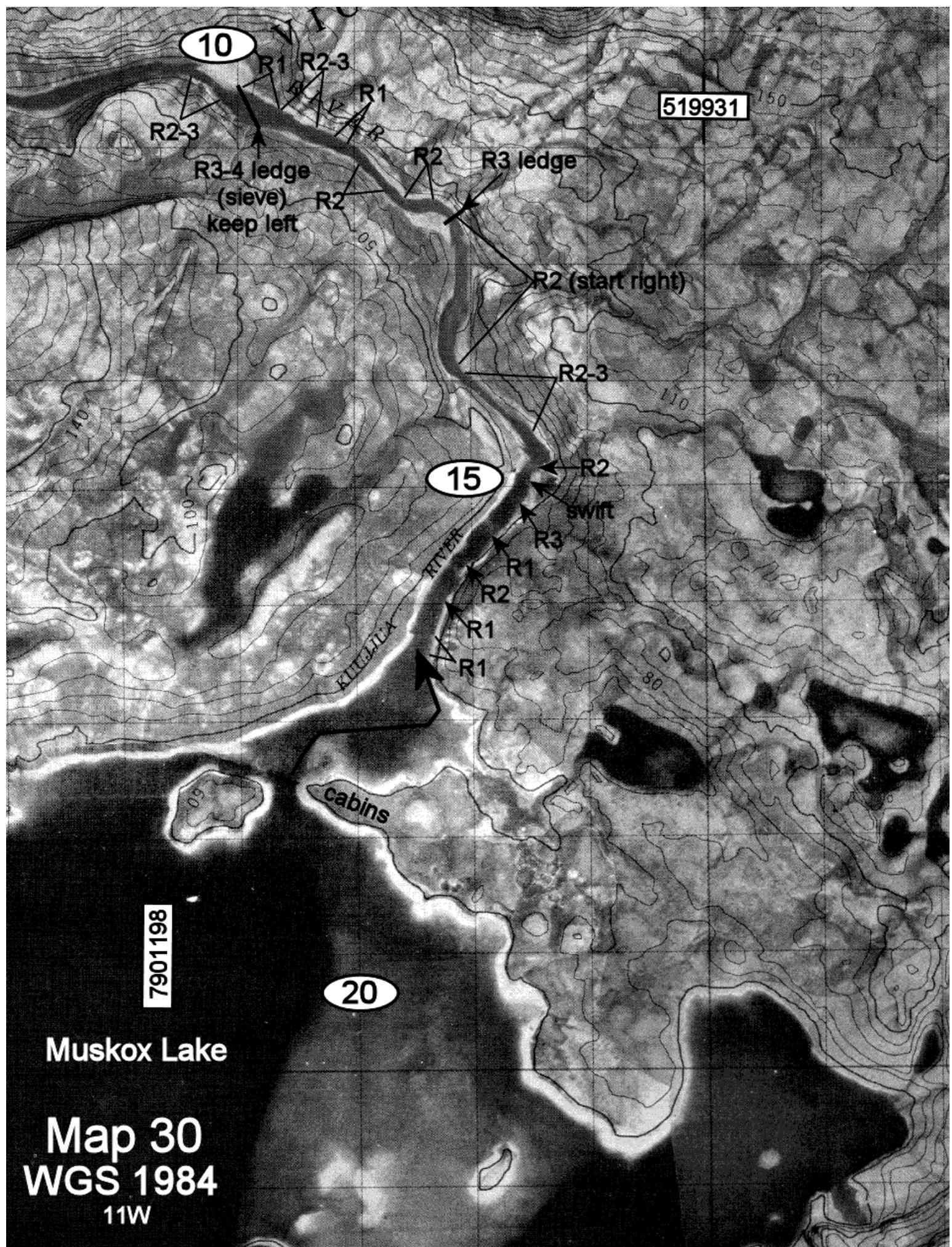
R2-3

R1 shallow

R1

R2-3

30



Map 30
WGS 1984

11W

Map 31
WGS 1984
11W

Minto Inlet

509931

7910199

old
"Goose"
cabin
506677
7907279

Mt. Goose
507265
7908600

airplane
landing

historic site

historic site

0

5

10

R2

R3

shallow

swift

R2

R2

R2-3

R2

140

20

110

051

012

091

229

80

271

20

220

Map 32

WGS 1984

13W

459914

GREINER

LAKE

MT. PELL

CAMBRIDGE

BAY

7667238

E G

