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**SURFICIAL GEOLOGY OF THE PORT JERVIS SOUTH QUADRANGLE  
SUSSEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY AND  
PIKE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**

by

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Cover photo: Northwest vista from High Point, New Jersey, looking at the Delaware River between Port Jervis, New York (right) and Matamoras, Pennsylvania (left). Photograph by Ron W. Witte.

# SURFICIAL GEOLOGY OF THE PORT JERVIS SOUTH QUADRANGLE, SUSSEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY AND PIKE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

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## INTRODUCTION

The Port Jervis South quadrangle is located in the glaciated part of the Appalachian Valley and Ridge physiographic province in Sussex County, New Jersey; Pike County, Pennsylvania; and Orange County, New York. The area is largely rural, its land covered by large tracts of forest in Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area (DEWA), Stokes State Forest, and High Point State Park, New Jersey. Patchwork woodlands and cultivated fields lie in the fertile Minisink and Mill Brook Valleys. Port Jervis, New York, built along the banks of the Delaware and Neversink Rivers; and Matamoras, Pennsylvania, just across the Delaware River, are the two largest towns. Port Jervis started as a colonial settlement in the late 1600's. After the completion of the Delaware and Hudson Canal in 1828, it became a major hub in the transport of Pennsylvania anthracite to New York City and the many nearby cities and towns. During the mid-1800's Port Jervis became an important railroad town along a route linking Piermont, New York with Lake Erie.

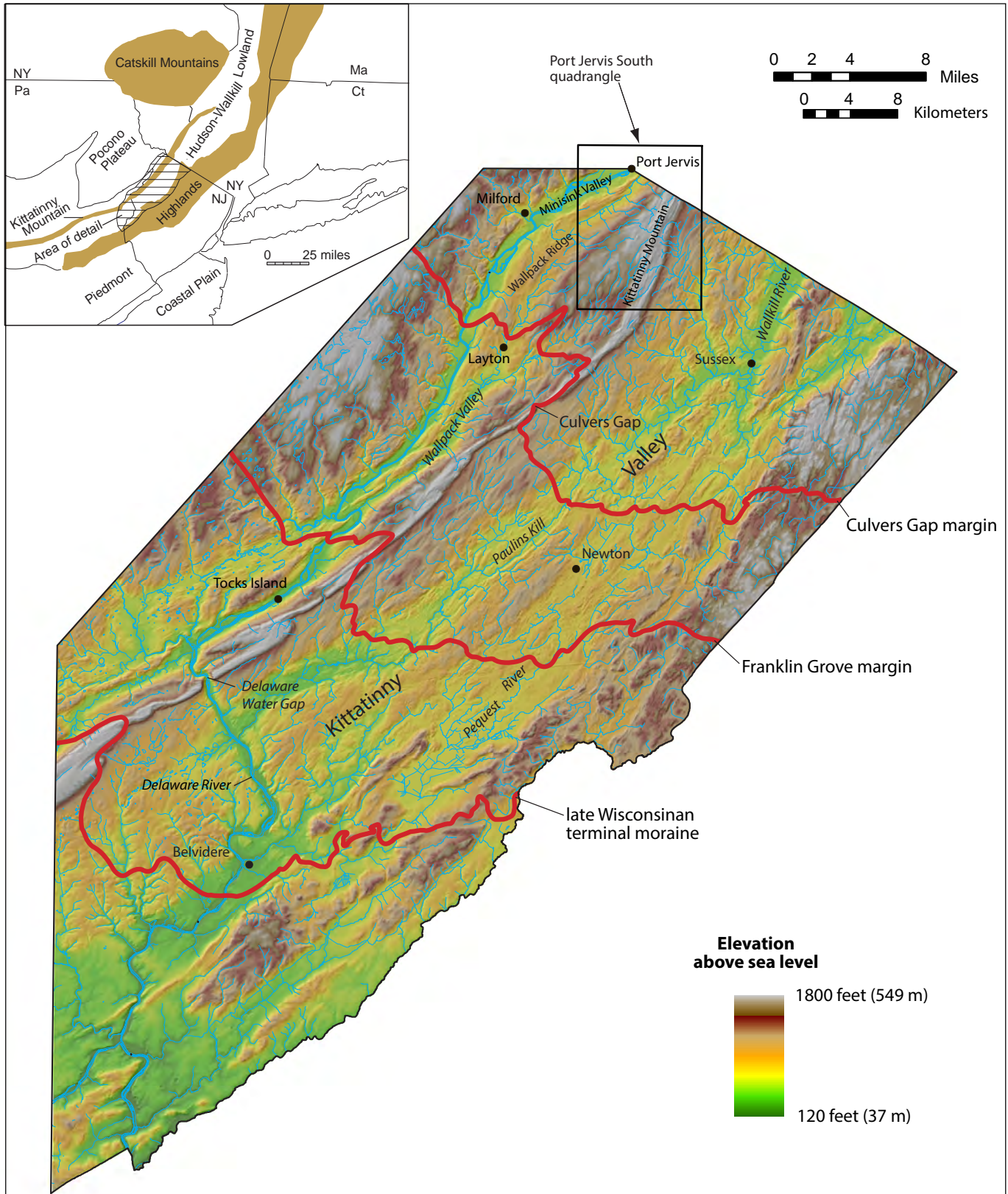
The main geographic features are Minisink and Kittatinny Valleys, Wallpack Ridge, and Kittatinny Mountain (fig. 1). The Delaware River descends southeast from the Pocono Plateau to Port Jervis, where it makes a sweeping turn, flowing southwest through Minisink Valley. Directly downstream from Port Jervis it is joined by the Neversink River. In Kittatinny Valley Clove Brook flows southward to Papakating Creek, a tributary of the Wallkill River. The highest point in the quadrangle is on Kittatinny Mountain, 1803 feet (550 m) above sea level at High Point, New Jersey. The lowest point lies in the Delaware River where it flows south out of the quadrangle, approximately 390 feet (119 m) above sea level.

Surficial materials in the quadrangle consist of till and meltwater sediment deposited during the late Wisconsinan glaciation about 22,000 to 17,000 radiocarbon years ago (yr BP), and postglacial stream sediment, hillslope deposits, wind-blown sand, and swamp and bog deposits laid down in late glacial and postglacial time. These materials may be as much as 250 feet (76 m) thick, lie on bedrock, and form

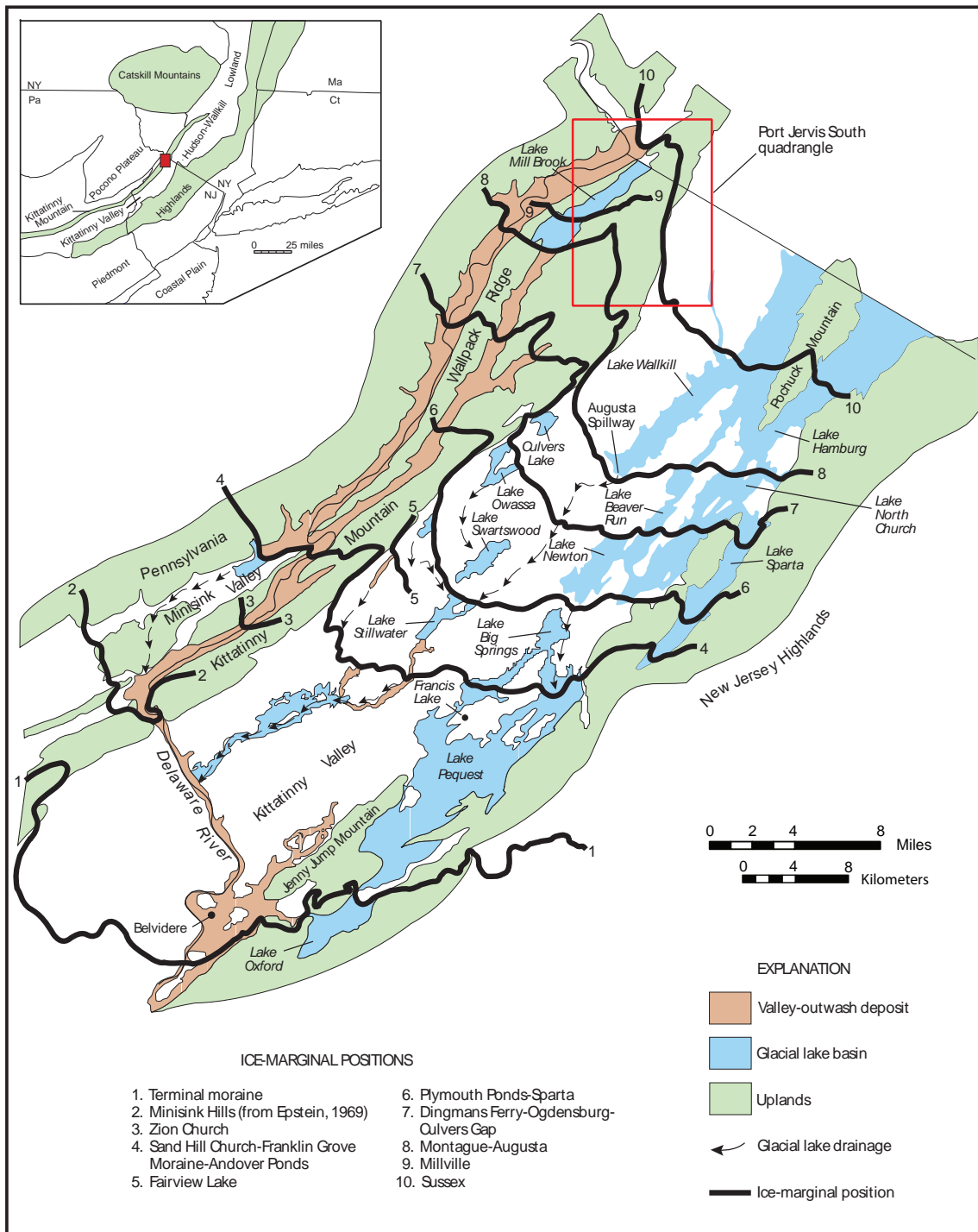
the parent material on which soils form. The glacial deposits correlate with the Olean Drift of northeastern Pennsylvania (Crowl and Sevon, 1980). Till typically lies on bedrock and in many places it is interspersed with numerous glacially-eroded bedrock outcrops. Thicker till forms drumlins, ground moraine, recessional moraine and aprons on north-facing hillslopes. Meltwater deposits were laid down at and beyond the glacier's margin in Minisink and Mill Brook Valleys and in glacial Lake Wallkill. The heads of outwash of these deposits and recessional moraines record retreat positions of the Minisink Valley and Kittatinny Valley ice lobes (fig. 2). The most extensive postglacial deposits lie in Minisink Valley and consist of alluvium deposited by the Delaware River. Elsewhere, organic soil, largely humus and peat, lies in the many bogs and swamps that dot the landscape.

## PREVIOUS INVESTIGATIONS

The geology of surficial deposits in Sussex County, New Jersey was first discussed by Cook (1877, 1878, 1880) in a series of Annual Reports of the State Geologist. He included detailed observations on recessional moraines, age of drift, distribution and types of drift, and evidence of glacial lakes. Shortly thereafter, White (1882) described the glacial geology of Pike County, Pennsylvania, and a voluminous report by Salisbury (1902) detailed the glacial geology of New Jersey, region by region. The terminal moraine (fig. 2) and all glacial deposits north of it were interpreted to be products of a single glaciation of Wisconsinan age. Salisbury also noted that "in the northwestern part of the state, several halting places of ice can be distinguished by the study of successive aggradation plains in the valleys." Crowl and Sevon (1980), and Cotter and others (1986) indicated that the youngest glacial deposits in New Jersey and Pennsylvania are late Wisconsinan age. Crowl (1971) produced surficial geologic maps of Minisink Valley and included detailed observations on its glacial history, and Sevon and others (1989) reported on the surficial geology of Pike County, Pennsylvania.



**Figure 1.** Physiography of northwestern New Jersey and northeastern Pennsylvania and location of the Port Jervis South quadrangle. Minisink Valley is a local geographic name for the Delaware River Valley from Delaware Water Gap to Port Jervis, New York.

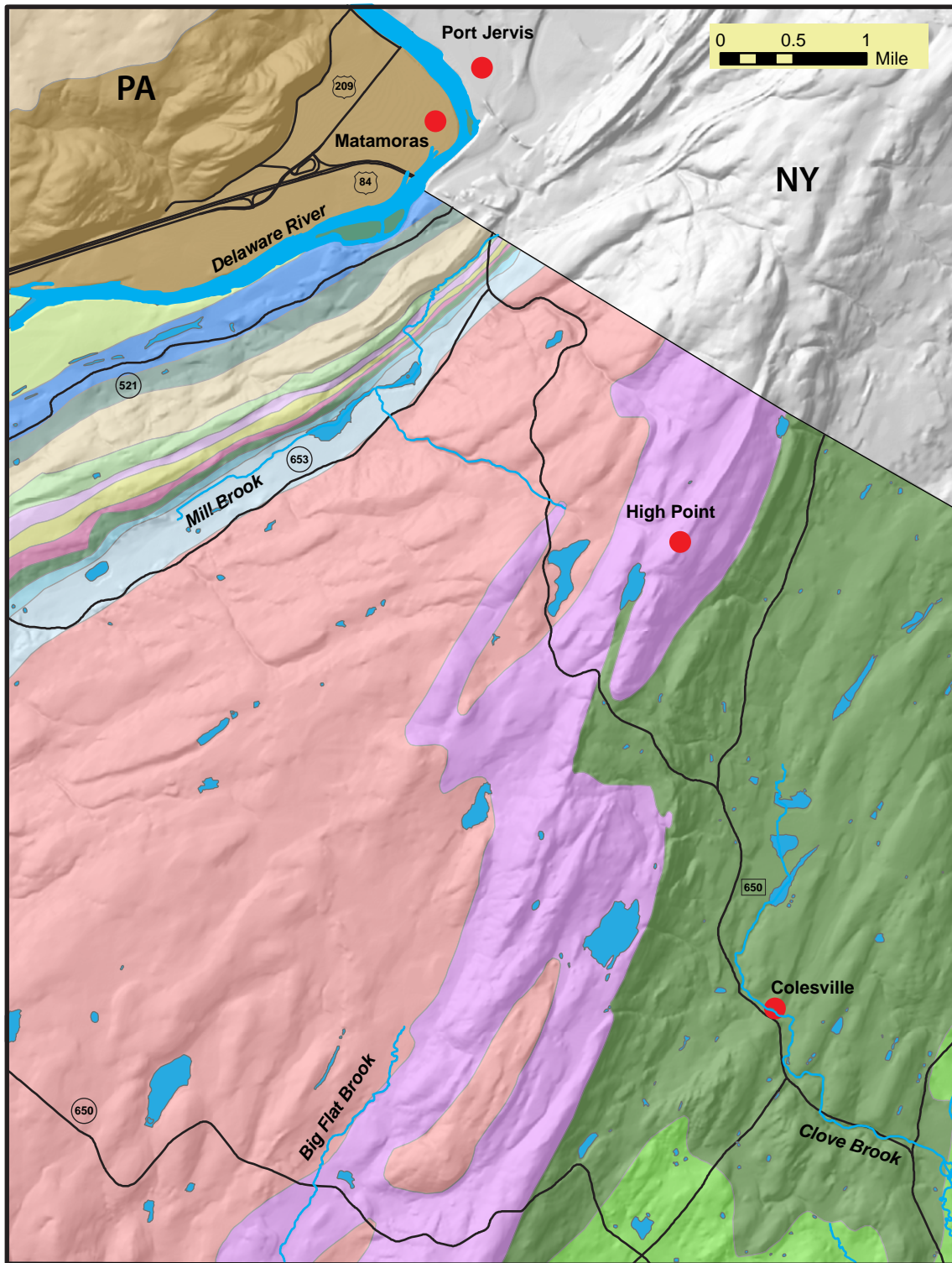


**Figure 2.** Late Wisconsinan ice margins of the Kittatinny and Minisink Valley ice lobes, and location of large glacial lakes, extensive valley-outwash deposits, and Port Jervis South 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle. Modified from data by Crowl (1971), Epstein (1969), Minard (1961), Ridge (1983), and Witte (1997).


















Recessional moraines in Kittatinny Valley were originally identified by Salisbury (1902), and later remapped by Herpers (1961), Ridge (1983), and Witte (1997). The Ogdensburg-Culvers Gap and Augusta moraines (fig. 2) were traced on Kittatinny Mountain by Herpers (1961), and Minard (1961), and later remapped by Witte (1997), and Stone and others (2002). In Minisink and Wallpack Valleys, the Dingmans Ferry and Montague moraines (fig. 2) were

identified by Salisbury (1902), Minard (1961), and Crowl (1971), and later remapped and correlated to the Ogdensburg-Culvers Gap and Augusta moraines by Witte (1997). The Millville and Steeny Kill Lake moraines were identified by Witte (1997).

See Witte (1997, 2001a, 2001b, 2008) and Witte and Epstein (2004, 2012) for detailed discussions on the glacial and postglacial history of northwestern New Jersey.



**Figure 3.** Simplified bedrock geologic map of the Port Jervis South quadrangle in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Correlation to bedrock formations discussed in text. Bedrock map for New Jersey modified from Drake and others (1996), and for Pennsylvania modified from Sevon and others (1989).

<b>Explanation</b>		
	Trimmers Rock Formation	 Esopus Formation
	Mahantango Formation	 Oriskany Group
	Marcellus Shale	 Port Ewen Shale
	Onondaga Limestone	 Minisink Limestone and New Scotland Formation
	Schoharie Formation	 Kalkberg Limestone, Coeymans Limestone, and Manlius Limestone
		 Rondout and Decker Formations
		 Bossardville Limestone
		 Poxono Island Formation
		 Bloomsburg Red Beds
		 Shawangunk Formation
		 Martinsburg Formation High Point Member
		 Martinsburg Formation Ramseyburg Member

## PHYSIOGRAPHY AND BEDROCK GEOLOGY

The Port Jervis South quadrangle lies mostly in the Delaware River watershed (fig. 1). Downstream from Port Jervis, New York, the Delaware flows southwestward through Minisink Valley following the readily eroded Onondaga Limestone and Marcellus Shale. The western side of the valley is bordered by a 300-foot-high escarpment consisting of the Mahantango Shale. Tributaries typically flow at right angles to the Delaware and are deeply incised, flowing over rock before entering the trunk valley. Waterfalls are common, mostly the products of knickpoint retreat due to glacial widening and deepening of Minisink Valley. Multiple knickpoints, and abandoned and notched falls along the creek's lower course hint of multiple glaciations (Witte, 2001c, Witte, 2012).

In New Jersey, Mill Brook flows northeastward in a small strike valley and joins the Neversink River at Tristates, New York. It is separated from Minisink Valley by Walpack Ridge, a narrow, 300-foot-high interfluvium mostly underlain by siltstone and fine-grained sandstone.

Kittatinny Mountain is underlain by the Shawangunk Formation, which consists of quartz-pebble conglomerate, and quartzite, and the Bloomsburg Red Beds, which consists of red sandstone, and red shale (fig. 3). The mountain forms a very long ridge that extends southwestward from the Shawangunk Mountains in New York through New Jersey into Pennsylvania. In many places its steep southeast face forms a nearly continuous escarpment. In a few places the continuity of the mountain is broken by wind gaps. The largest of these is Culvers Gap (fig. 1) and it marks the former site of a large river that abandoned its course some time during the Late Tertiary (Witte and Epstein, 2004). The mountain is rugged, chiefly consisting of uneven, narrow- to broad-crested, strike-parallel ridges. Rock outcrops are very abundant, exhibiting extensive glacial scour and plucking. The high ridge area of the mountain is underlain by the Shawangunk Formation, whereas the hills and slopes to the west are underlain by Bloomsburg Red Beds, covered in most places by thick glacial drift. Relief here may be as much as 300 feet (91 m), and the surface is marked by rolling topography of gentle to moderate slopes chiefly formed on drumlins and ground moraine. Big Flat Brook and its many tributaries flow southwestward toward Wallpack Valley.

Kittatinny Valley is a broad northeast-to-southwest-trending lowland underlain by dolomite, limestone,

slate, siltstone, and sandstone; all Cambrian to Ordovician in age (fig. 3). In the quadrangle the valley is underlain only by shale, siltstone, and sandstone of the Martinsburg Formation. Outcrops are abundant and the landscape typically consists of rolling hills of moderate to steep slopes, and strike-parallel ridges streamlined by glacial erosion. Kittatinny Valley and the east-facing slope of Kittatinny Mountain are in the Wallkill River drainage basin.

## PREGLACIAL DRAINAGE

The overall drainage pattern of the study area probably has not significantly changed from the middle Pleistocene to the present. A discussion of Culvers Gap and the river that formerly flowed through it is in Witte and Epstein (2004), and a discussion of waterfalls and multiple glaciations in Minisink Valley is in Witte (2001c, 2012). In Kittatinny Valley, Clove Brook, a tributary of the north-flowing Wallkill River, follows a barbed drainage course suggesting that it may have been a tributary of the Paulins Kill. During the late Wisconsinan glaciation, outwash in the upper part of the Papakating Valley (a tributary to the Wallkill River) blocked drainage southward to Paulins Kill (Witte, 2008). After deglaciation, these streams, which were originally in the Paulins Kill watershed, rerouted and became part of the Wallkill River watershed.

## GLACIAL EROSION

Erosional features of the late Wisconsinan glaciation include polished, striated, and plucked bedrock outcrops, and streamlined bedrock forms called *roche moutonnées*. The many unweathered and lightly weathered bedrock outcrops show that most of the preglacial soil and weathered rock have been removed by glacial erosion. Talus and shale-chip colluvium, products of mass wasting (chiefly by frost shattering) are postglacial age (younger than 17,000 yr BP). Direct evidence of erosion by earlier glaciations (Illinoian, pre-Illinoian) has been removed by weathering during interglacial times and late Wisconsinan glacial erosion. Erosion during at least three glaciations has deeply scoured the floor of Minisink Valley and cut back its walls, especially on its western side where the Marcellus and Mahantango Formations were readily eroded. Because ice flow was generally southward down the Minisink's axis, erosion here was much greater than it was in its tributaries, which were oriented obliquely to glacial flow. Witte



and Stanford (1995) have estimated as much as 150 feet of valley-bottom scour in the Minisink during the last two glaciations (late Wisconsinan, and Illinoian) and Braun (1989) has suggested that as much as 450 feet (150 m) of land may have been removed in eastern Pennsylvania by glacial erosion.

## GLACIAL DEPOSITS

### *Till*

Till typically covers the bedrock surface and it is distributed widely throughout the quadrangle. It is generally less than 20 feet (6 m) thick, and its surface expression is mostly controlled by the shape of the bedrock surface. Extending through this cover are numerous bedrock outcrops that show evidence of glacial erosion. Thicker, more continuous till smooths bedrock irregularities and may completely mask them. Very thick till forms drumlins, aprons on north facing hillslopes, recessional moraine, and ground moraine. It also fills narrow preglacial valleys, especially those oriented transverse to glacier flow.

Till is typically a compact sandy-silt to silty-sand containing as much as 20 percent pebbles, cobbles, and boulders. Clasts are subangular to subrounded, faceted, and striated, and clast fabrics indicate a preferred long-axis orientation that is generally parallel to the regional direction of glacier flow. Presumably this material is lodgement till. Overlying this lower compact till is a thin, discontinuous, noncompact, poorly sorted silty-sand to sand containing as much as 35 percent pebbles, cobbles, boulders, and interlayered with lenses of sorted sand, gravel, and silt. Overall, clasts are more angular, and clast fabrics lack a preferred orientation or have a weak orientation that is oblique to the regional direction of glacier flow. This material appears to be ablation till and flowtill, but it has not been mapped separately due to its scant distribution and poor exposure. Also, cryoturbation and bioturbation have altered the upper few feet of till, making it less compact, reorienting stone fabrics, and sorting clasts.

Till has been divided into two types. They are informally named lowland (Qtk) and upland (Qtq) till; their lithology based largely on the direction of ice flow over different suites of local source rocks. Lowland till (Qtk) is chiefly derived from slate, graywacke, dolostone, and limestone underlying Kittatinny Valley; and limestone, shale, limey shale, and sandstone underlying the Minisink and Wallpack Valleys, and Wallpack Ridge. Upland till (Qtq) is chiefly made up of materials derived from quartzite, quartz-pebble

conglomerate, and red sandstone and shale underlying Kittatinny Mountain. On Kittatinny Mountain a reddish-colored till, derived primarily from the red sandstone and shale of the Bloomsburg Red Beds, is locally visible underlying a yellowish-brown till chiefly derived from the quartzite and quartz-pebble conglomerate of the Shawangunk Formation (fig. C on map). This relationship results from changes in the direction of ice flow during deglaciation (Witte, 1997).

### *Drumlins*

Drumlins occur throughout the study area in two different settings. The first one consists of multiple drumlins on Kittatinny Mountain in an area of very thick and widespread till. Well records and seismic refraction data (unpublished data on file at the N.J. Geological and Water Survey, Trenton New Jersey) indicate that the overburden here is typically thicker than 100 feet (30 m), and most of the drumlins lack a bedrock core. The second setting consists of single drumlins or small sets in areas of thin till. These drumlins are in Kittatinny Valley, and well records and rock outcrops near them suggest that many have a bedrock core. Pre-Wisconsinan glacial deposits have not been observed in the study area. However, Stanford and Harper (1985) indicated that some drumlins in Kittatinny Valley, southeast of the Port Jervis South quadrangle, have cores that consist of weathered, older till.

### *Moraines*

Morainal deposits include the Montague (Qmm), Augusta (Qam), Steeny Kill Lake (Qskm), Libertyville (Qlm), and Colesville (Qcm) moraines. The Montague and Augusta moraines mark a major recessional position of the Kittatinny Valley and Minisink Valley lobes (fig. 2, position 8). Following a similarly parallel course to the Ogdensburg-Culvers Gap moraine (fig. 2), the Augusta moraine follows a continuous northwest course to where it abuts the Montague moraine one mile west of Sawmill Pond, High Point State Park. From here the Montague moraine traces a nearly continuous course from the quadrangle into Wallpack Valley where it splits into two distinct ridges abruptly ending near the village of Montague (Witte, 2012). The moraine does not continue across Minisink Valley, and it has not been observed in Pennsylvania. However, it may be correlative with ice-contact outwash in the Sawkill Creek drainage basin in Pennsylvania (Witte, 2012).

The Steenykill Lake moraine is correlative with the Millville moraine (Witte, 2012), both delineating a minor recessional position of the Minisink Valley sublobe (fig. 2, position 9). The Colesville moraine represents a minor recessional position of the Kittatinny Valley ice lobe.

The Libertyville moraine, which is located near the village of Libertyville in Kittatinny Valley, has been correlated eastward to a large ice-contact delta near the town of Sussex, and westward to the head of a valley-train deposit in Minisink Valley, near the village of Tristates, New York. Collectively they delineate the Sussex margin (fig. 2, position 10).

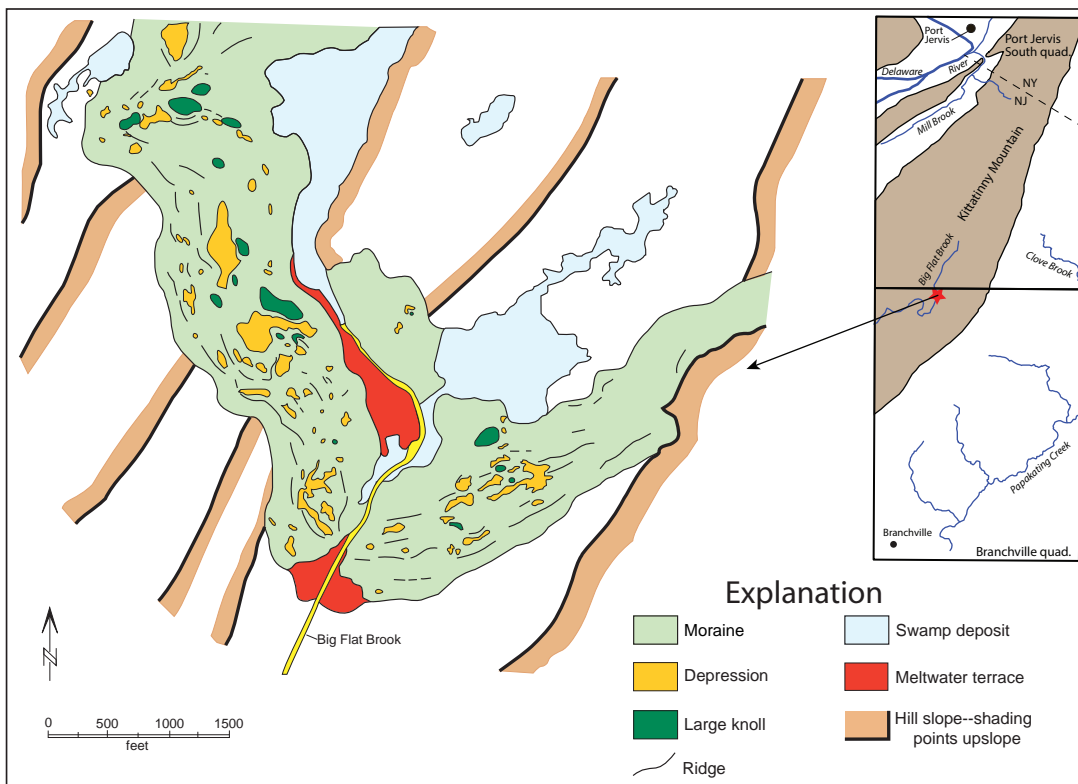
The recessional moraines are as much as 65 feet (20 m) thick and 2500 feet (762 m) wide, although most morainal segments are less than 1000 feet (305 m) wide. Their surfaces are bouldery, and they consist of poorly compacted stony till and minor beds of stratified sand, gravel, and silt. The moraines generally have asymmetrical cross sections and their distal slopes are the steepest. Their distal margins are sharp, whereas the innermost margins are indistinct. The outermost parts of the moraines are generally marked by single or parallel sets of ridges that are as much as 25 feet (8 m) high, 150 feet (46 m) wide, and 2000 feet (610 m) long (fig. 4). Most

are less than 500 feet (152 m) long. Many may have been formerly continuous, but were disconnected when buried ice melted and the ridge collapsed. Sets of ridges are separated by elongated depressions that are as much as 20 feet (6 m) deep below their rim, 100 feet (30 m) wide, and 300 feet (91 m) long. The depressions parallel the ridges, and many contain organic deposits. Irregularly-shaped depressions also occur; these are as much as 40 feet (12 m) deep, as much as 500 feet (152 m) wide, and probably were caused by melting of ice blocks. The innermost parts of the morainal segments have fewer ridges, fewer elongated depressions, and are marked by knob-and-kettle rather than ridge-and-kettle topography. In areas where segments abut thick and widespread till, the moraines are generally larger, more continuous, and have more fully developed moraine-parallel ridges than those abutting thin patchy drift.

The course of the end moraines delineates the lobate margins of the Kittatinny and Minisink Valley ice lobes, and shows the strong influence of regional and local topography (fig. 2). Lines drawn perpendicular to their courses typically parallel nearby striations and indicate that ice was active at or very near the glacier margin. Also, well logs show that the Augusta moraine overlies ice-contact deltaic outwash, where it crosses

the Papakating Creek Valley (Witte, 1997 and 2008). This suggests the moraine was laid down following a readvance. Although, the extent of the readvance is unknown, it was probably only a minor one based on the pattern of ice recession defined for Kittatinny Valley by Ridge (1983), and Witte (1988, 1991, and 1997).

The lobate course of the end moraines, their morphology, and evidence of glacial readvance suggests they were formed by 1) the pushing or transport of debris and debris-rich ice by the glacier at its margin, and 2) penecontemporaneous and postdepositional



**Figure 4.** Morphology of the Augusta moraine (Qam); a Late Wisconsinan recessional moraine on Kittatinny Mountain, High Point State Park, Sussex County, New Jersey. This part of the moraine lies just south of the Port Jervis South quadrangle (Witte, 2008). It is used to illustrate morainal topography common to recessional moraine in the study area.

sorting and mixing of material by mass movement, chiefly resulting from slope failure caused by melting ice, and saturation and collapse of sediment. The source and mechanism of sediment transport to the glacier's margin is unclear. Most of the morainal material is of local origin, possibly transported to the margin in basal debris bands or shear planes (Koteff and Pessl, 1981).

### *Deposits of glacial meltwater streams*

Sediment carried by glacial meltwater streams was chiefly laid down at and beyond the glacier margin in valley-train deposits (Qv), outwash-fan deposits (Qf), and ice-contact deltas (Qod). Smaller quantities of sediment were deposited in meltwater-terrace deposits (Qmt), and a few kames (Qk). Most of this material was transported by meltwater through glacial tunnels to the glacier margin, and by meltwater streams draining deglaciated upland areas adjacent to the valley (Witte, 1988; Witte and Evenson, 1989). Sources of sediment include till and debris from beneath the glacier and in the basal dirty-ice zone, and till and reworked outwash in upland areas. Debris carried to the margin of the ice sheet by direct glacial action was minor.

Glaciofluvial sediments were laid down by meltwater streams in valley-train (Qv), outwash-fan (Qf), meltwater-terrace deposits (Qmt), and delta topset beds (Qod). These sediments include cobbles, pebbles, sand, and minor boulders laid down in stream channels; and sand, silt, and pebbly sand in minor overbank deposits. Sediment laid down near the glacier margin in valley-train deposits, and delta topset beds typically includes thick, planar-bedded, and imbricated coarse gravel and sand, and minor channel-fill deposits that consist largely of cross-stratified pebbly sand and sand. Downstream, the overall grain size typically decreases, sand is more abundant, and crossbedded and graded beds are more common. Outwash-fan deposits consist of gently inclined beds of planar to cross-bedded sand and gravel that form large fan-shaped deposits (similar to alluvial fans), at the mouth of tributary valleys. These deposits were laid down beyond the glacier margin, and are graded to the surface of the valley-outwash deposits that lie in the trunk valley.

Glaciolacustrine sediments were laid down by meltwater streams in ice-contact and non-ice-contact deltas (Qod), and lake-bottom deposits (Qlb); all deposited in proglacial lakes. Deltas consist of topset beds of coarse gravel and sand overlying foreset beds

of fine gravel and sand. Near the meltwater feeder stream, foreset beds are generally steeply inclined (25° to 35°) and consist of thick-to-thin, rhythmically-bedded fine gravel and sand. Farther out in the lake basin these sediments grade into less-steeply-dipping foreset beds of graded, ripple cross-laminated, parallel-laminated sand and fine gravel with minor silt drapes. These in turn grade into gently dipping bottomset beds of ripple cross-laminated, parallel-laminated sand and silt with clay drapes.

Lake-bottom deposits consist of laminated, rhythmically-bedded silt, clay, and fine sand that has progressively settled out from suspension; and coarse sand and silt that has been carried by turbidity currents in the lake basin. These deposits grade laterally into bottomset beds of deltas and lacustrine-fan deposits.

Kames (Qk) consist of a varied mixture of stratified sand, gravel, and silt interlayered with flowtill. In many places they lie above local base-level controls indicating they were probably laid down in an ice crevasse, ice-walled sink, or moulin within the stagnant glacier margin. In other places they may include small, extensively collapsed ice-contact deltas.

## **POSTGLACIAL DEPOSITS**

### *Wind-blown sediment*

In a few places, thin deposits of very fine sand (not shown on map due to their scant distribution) lie at the base of Wallpack Ridge's northwest-facing slope. They extend up the hillslope a short distance as a very thin wedge-shaped sheet, generally concealing the contact between glacial outwash in the valley and till on the adjacent hillslope. No other wind-blown deposits have been recognized in the quadrangle, and wind-blown silt (loess) if present has been incorporated in the upper part of the soil.

### *Hillslope-sediment*

Thin deposits of shale-chip colluvium (Qsc) lie at the base of cliffs formed by the Mahantango Shale in Minisink Valley. This material includes shale-chip gravel with very little matrix material, and sandy-silty shale chip diamicton that consists of a mixture of weathered rock, till, and soil.

Thick deposits of talus (Qta), chiefly made up of blocks of conglomerate and quartzite, form an extensive apron of rock debris on the southeast face of Kittatinny Mountain, and at the base of a few cliffs higher on the mountain.

### *Organic deposits*

Swamp and bog deposits (Qs) are numerous in the quadrangle. They formed in glacially-scoured bedrock basins and kettles in outwash and moraine that previously contained shallow lakes, in glacial lakes that persisted into the Holocene, in abandoned stream channels on alluvial plains, and in poorly-drained areas in ground moraine. These deposits typically consist of peat, underlain by silty peat and minor mineral detritus, which in turn is underlain by organic-rich clay and silt. In some places the basal section consists of postglacial deposits of lacustrine silt and clay. In Kittatinny Valley, peat is largely of the reed and sedge type, and peat deposits on Kittatinny Mountain and in Minisink Valley are typically of woody origin, or consist of mixed wood and sedge peat (Waksman and others, 1943).

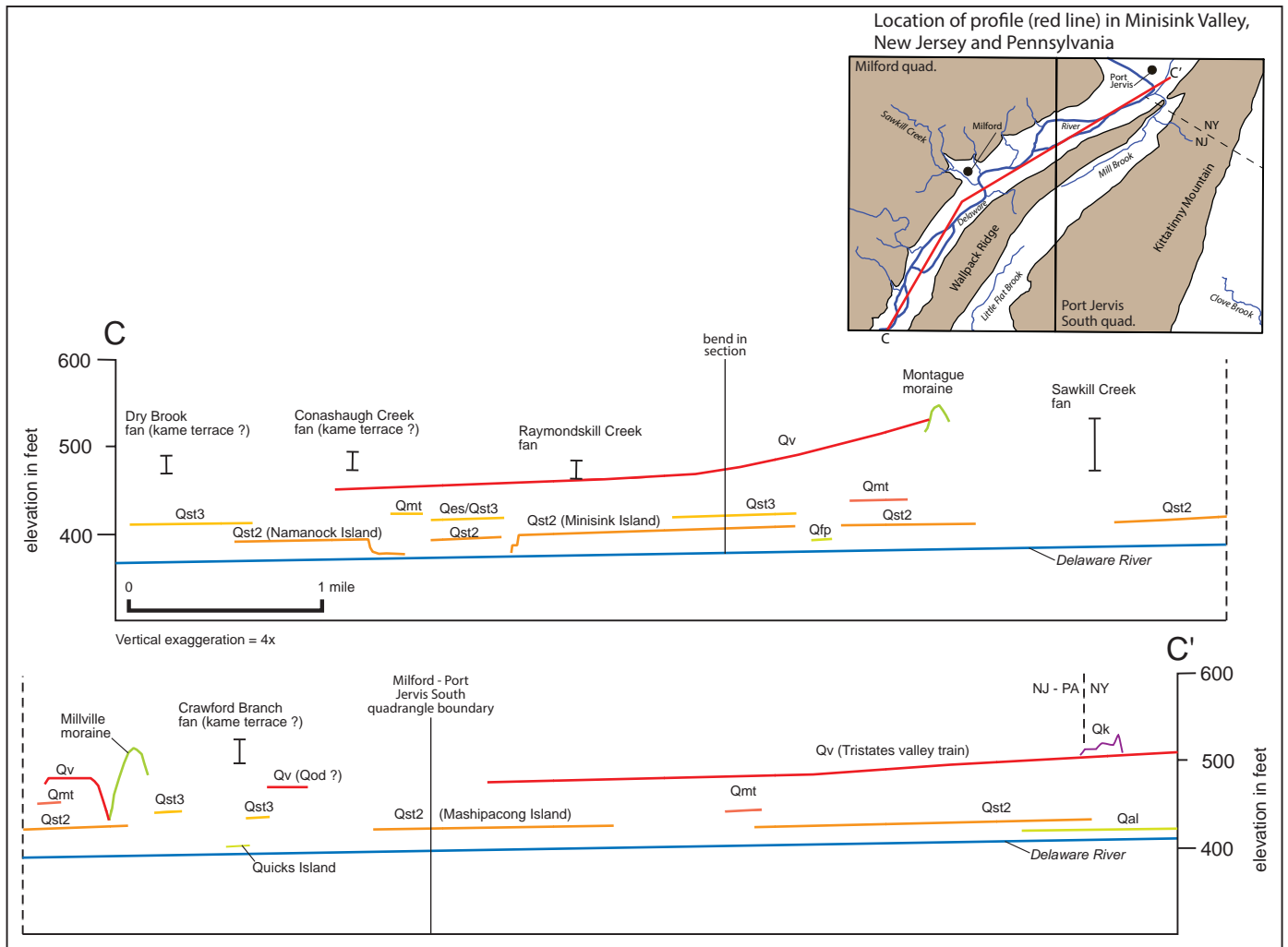
### *Stream deposits (modern alluvium, stream-terrace deposits, and alluvial-fan deposits)*

Alluvium (Qal) is chiefly late Holocene in age and includes both channel (sand and gravel), and overbank (sand and silt) deposits laid down by streams that form narrow, sheet-like deposits on the floors of modern valleys. Channels, channel scarps and levees are commonly preserved on flood plains along the larger rivers. In Minisink Valley the modern flood plain is marked by a terrace that lies as much as 12 feet (4 m) above the mean-annual elevation of the Delaware River. This terrace forms all or parts of the lower islands in the river and it also forms narrow terraces that flank its present course. Stream-terrace deposits (Qst) include both channel and flood-plain sediment. They lie 5 to 35 feet (2 to 11 m) above the modern flood plain and below the level of meltwater-terrace deposits. In Minisink Valley they may be grouped into two distinct sets (fig. 5, profile C-C'). The youngest (Qst2) lies between 20 to 35 feet (6 to 11 m) above the mean-annual elevation of the river and consists of as much as 15 feet (4m) of overbank fine sand and silt overlying cobble-pebble gravel and sand. The underlying gravel and sand are channel-bar and point-bar deposits, and in places strath terraces of a postglacial river. The Qst2 deposits typically form broad terraces that flank the present course of the river. The highest parts of a terrace lie next to the Delaware River and typically form a levee. In a few places the levee is well developed and forms a low ridge that is as much as 8 feet (2 m) high. More commonly; however, the levee is the highest

point on a gently inclined surface that slopes away from the river to the valley wall. At the base of the valley wall, the terrace is marked by a back-channel, which in some places contains swamp deposits. In many places, multiple levees, and channel scrolls are preserved, especially where the terrace lies on a large inside bend of the river. The 15 foot (5 m) range in elevation of the terrace throughout the valley is due in part to as much as 8 feet (2 m) of relief on the terrace, and parts of the terrace have been lowered by erosion as the river cut down to its modern level. It is also possible that the Qst2 terrace may consist of several levels as shown by Wagner (1994). However, without better elevation control, it is difficult to correlate these terrace subsets on a regional scale. The differing levels may also be related to local riparian conditions and channel morphology of the postglacial Delaware River. Archaeological investigations in the Delaware River valley upstream from Delaware Water Gap (Stewart, 1989) indicate that the base of the Qst2 terrace may be as old as 11,000 yr BP, and the upper 1 foot (< 1 m) has been dated to historic times. This indicates that the Qst2 terrace is Holocene age and has been largely built up over time by vertical accretion. However, in a few places, channel scrolls preserved on some of the deposits, and the course of the Delaware River indicate the terrace has also been built by lateral accretion.

The oldest stream-terrace deposits in Minisink Valley (Qst3) lie 40 to 48 feet (12 to 15 m) above the mean annual elevation of the river and typically consist of as much as 10 feet (3 m) of overbank fine and medium sand overlying glacial outwash. In places this material has been eroded, revealing the underlying outwash. The Qst3 terraces are typically smaller than, and flank, the younger Qst2 deposits. In some places they lie completely surrounded by Qst2 deposits. No dates are available for the Qst3 terrace, but based on the age of the Qst2 terrace, it is late Wisconsinan age and it may represent a transition between glaciofluvial and postglacial fluvial environments.

Alluvial fan deposits (Qaf) are scattered throughout the quadrangle. They form fan-shaped deposits that lie at the base of hillslopes at the mouths of gullies, ravines, and tributary valleys. Sediment is highly varied and is derived chiefly from local surficial sediment eroded and laid down by, streams draining adjacent uplands. Most alluvial fans are entrenched by modern streams. This suggests that most are



**Figure 5.** Longitudinal profiles of glacial outwash and postglacial alluvial terraces in Minisink Valley, Milford and Port Jervis South quadrangles. Profiles constructed by projecting elevation and contacts to a center line drawn up Minisink Valley. Additional elevation data determined from 1:4800 (5-foot contour interval) topographic maps constructed for the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, and measurements using a hand level. List of units: Qv - valley-train deposit, Qmt - meltwater-terrace deposit, Qk - kame, Qst3 - abandoned Pleistocene flood plain, Qst2 - abandoned Holocene floodplains, Qal - modern flood plain. The range in elevation shown for the outwash fans represents the distal and proximal parts of their plains projected perpendicular to the section. Figure modified from Witte (2001b).

probably of late Wisconsinan and early Holocene age when climate, sediment supply, and amount and type of hillslope vegetation were more favorable for their deposition.

## GLACIAL HISTORY

### *Glacial Advance and Changes in the Direction of Regional Ice Flow*

The late Wisconsinan advance of ice into Minisink Valley and the upper part of Kittatinny Valley is obscure because glacial drift and striae that record this history have been eroded or were buried. If the ice sheet advanced in lobes as suggested by the lobate course of the Terminal Moraine (fig. 2); then its initial advance was marked by lobes of ice moving down these valleys. Sevon and others

(1975) suggested that ice from the Ontario basin first advanced southward into northeastern Pennsylvania and northwestern New Jersey. Later, ice from the Hudson Wallkill lowland, which initially had lagged behind, overrode Ontario ice, and ice flow turned to the southwest. In this scenario the course of the Terminal Moraine in Minisink and Kittatinny Valleys was controlled by ice flowing from the Hudson Wallkill lowland. Connally and Sirkin (1986) suggested that the Ogdensburg-Culvers Gap moraine represents or nearly represents the terminal late Wisconsinan position of the Hudson-Champlain lobe based on changes in ice flow noted by Salisbury (1902) in the vicinity of the moraine. Ridge (1983) proposed that a sublobe of ice from the Ontario basin overrode Kittatinny Mountain and flowed southward into

Kittatinny Valley. Southwestward flow occurred only near the glacier margin where ice was thinner, and its flow was constrained by the southwesterly trend of the valley. Analyses of striae, drumlins, and the distribution of erratics in the upper part of Kittatinny Valley and adjacent Kittatinny Mountain support Ridge's view (Witte, 1997). These data further indicate that by the time the Ogdensburg-Culvers Gap moraine was formed, ice flow in Kittatinny Valley had turned completely to the southwest with extensive lobation at the margin.

Radiocarbon dating of basal organic material cored from Budd Lake by Harmon (1968) yielded a date of 22,890 +/- 720 yr BP (I 2845), and a concretion sampled from sediments of Lake Passaic by Reimer (1984) that yielded a date of 20,180 +/- 500 yr BP (QC 1304) suggests that the age of the late Wisconsinan terminal moraine is about 22,000 to 20,000 yr BP. Basal organic material cored from a bog located on the side of Jenny Jump Mountain approximately 3 miles (4.8 km) north of the terminal moraine by D. H. Cadwell (written commun., 1996) indicates a minimum age of deglaciation at about 19,340 +/- 695 yr BP (GX-4279). Similarly, basal-organic material from Francis Lake in Kittatinny Valley, which lies approximately 8 miles (12.9 km) north of the terminal moraine indicates a minimum age of deglaciation at about 18,570 +/- 250 yr BP (SI 5273) (Cotter, 1983). Because the lake lies approximately 3 miles southeast of the Franklin Grove moraine, this age is also probably a minimum date for that feature. Exactly when the ice margin retreated out of the New Jersey part of Kittatinny Valley is also uncertain. A concretion date of 17,950 +/- 620 yr BP (I 4935) from sediments of Lake Hudson (cited in Stone and Borns, 1986) and estimated ages of 18,000 yr B.P. for the Ogdensburg-Culvers Gap moraine, and 17,210 yr BP for the Wallkill moraine by Connally and Sirkin (1973) suggest ice had retreated from New Jersey by about 17,500 yr BP.

#### *Style and Timing of Deglaciation: Regional Overview*

The recessional history of the Laurentide ice sheet is well documented for northwestern New Jersey and parts of eastern Pennsylvania. Epstein (1969), Ridge (1983), Cotter and others (1986), and Witte (1988, 1991, 1997) showed that the margins of the Kittatinny and Minisink Valley lobes retreated systematically with minimal stagnation.

Based on the morphosequence concept of (Jahns, 1941), which was modified by Koteff and Pessl (1981) as a framework to describe deglaciation in New England, many ice-recessional positions have been delineated in Kittatinny Valley by mapping glacial heads-of-outwash (Ridge, 1983; Witte, 1988, 1997). In addition, moraines, and interpretation of glacial lake histories, based on correlative relationships between elevations of delta topset-foreset contacts, former glacial-lake-water plains, and lake spillways, provide a firm basis for reconstruction of the ice-recessional history of the Kittatinny and Minisink Valley ice lobes. Recessional deposits are discussed in reference to deposition at the margin of the Kittatinny Valley lobe or the Minisink Valley lobe. Locally, the two lobes wasted back synchronously, although regionally the Minisink lobe retreated more rapidly (Witte, 1997).

#### *Kittatinny Valley*

Retreat of the Kittatinny Valley lobe from the Augusta margin resulted in the initial formation of Lake Wallkill in Papakating Creek Valley (fig. 2). Initially, Lake Wallkill's spillway was over the Augusta Moraine. Eventually the sluiceway was lowered by fluvial erosion into the underlying gravel and sand of an ice-contact delta that had previously filled in the Paulins Kill Valley south of the position now marked by the moraine. Erosion continued until bedrock was reached, and the level of the lake stabilized. The present elevation of this threshold (fig. 5), located south of the moraine and called here the Augusta spillway, is estimated to be 495 feet (151 m) above sea level. The interval antedating the formation of the Augusta stage is here called the Frankford Plains phase of Lake Wallkill. Based on the elevation of topset foreset contacts of deltas built into the lake, this phase lasted until the Kittatinny Valley lobe retreated from the Sussex margin (Witte, 2008).

The next major ice retreatal position in the upper part of Kittatinny Valley was the Sussex margin (fig. 2), and it is delineated by a large ice-contact delta near Sussex, a small end moraine near Libertyville, and smaller ice-contact deltas in Lake Hamburg (Stanford and Harper, 1985). Glacial Lake Wallkill deposits in the quadrangle consist of small ice-contact deltas laid down after the glacier margin had retreated from the Sussex margin. They lie in the Clove Brook Valley, which at the time of deglaciation contained an arm of Lake Wallkill (fig. 2). Deltaic deposits typically

reach an elevation of 545 feet above sea level, which is similar to the Sussex delta.

Lake Wallkill continued to expand northward until ice uncovered the northern end of the Skunnemunk Mountains, and a lower outlet, that now lies at an elevation of 365 feet (111 m) above sea level, was uncovered on a drainage divide between the Wallkill River and Moodna Creek (Adams, 1934; Connally and others, 1989). At this time the Augusta spillway was abandoned, and in the upper part of the Wallkill River valley thin stream-terrace deposits were laid down on the newly exposed floor of Lake Wallkill. Subsequently, the former lake basin became tilted due to isostatic rebound (Koteff and Larsen 1989), and a shallow lake flooded the upper part of the valley in postglacial time. Elsewhere in Kittatinny Valley, a few small, collapsed meltwater deposits are mapped as kames (Qk). Most of these appear to have been laid down in crevasses or ice-walled ponds within the stagnant glacier margin. Because of their small size and unknown origin most are not correlated with an ice-retreatal position.

### *Kittatinny Mountain*

Outwash deposits are absent in this area, largely because the floor of most valleys here have steep gradients. Valley floors are typically covered by boulder and cobble lags, left after meltwater eroded matrix material from till. In many places meltwater channels are cut deeply into thick till, and a few, such as those northwest of the Steeny Kill Lake moraine, may mark the former lobate edge of the glacier margin. Others are in front of the recessional moraines. Most of the material eroded from these upland channels was transported to Mill Brook Valley and deposited in glacial deltas.

### *Mill Brook Valley*

Meltwater deposits in Mill Brook Valley consist of ice-contact deltas and lake-bottom deposits laid down in Lake Mill Brook. This lake expanded northeastward following the retreating Minisink Valley lobe. Several meltwater channels cut down in the Shimers Brook deposits mark places where Lake Mill Brook discharged southwestward, generally following a line of small ice-block depressions. Deltaic deposits generally border the valley walls and are collapsed. The main axis of the valley contains a few lacustrine-fan deposits, lake-bottom deposits, and till. The elevation of the non-collapsed part of the deltas rises from 665 feet

(203 m) above sea level at the southern end of the lake basin to 685 feet (209 m) at its northern end. Based on the distribution of the deposits, the small size of the lake's basin, and evidence for minimal postglacial erosion, stagnant ice may have occupied a large part of the lake basin. However, the elevation of the deltas indicates they were laid down in a lake whose elevation was controlled by a spillway over the Shimers Brook deposits.

Lake Mill Brook lasted until the margin of the Minisink Valley lobe retreated northward from Duttonville, uncovering a gap in the northernmost part of Wallpack Ridge, and the lake drained into Minisink Valley.

### *Minisink Valley*

Glacial outwash in Minisink Valley consists of valley train (Qv), outwash fan (Qf), and meltwater terrace deposits (Qmt). Valley-train deposits are remnants of an extensive valley train that rises from approximately 460 feet (140 m) near the village of Millville to 510 feet (155 m) at its head near the village of Tristates. These outwash remnants form discontinuous, narrow terraces that are typically attached to the valley wall. They have flat surfaces that slope gently downvalley, and have steep sided erosional escarpments that lie against the younger meltwater terrace, stream terrace, and alluvial deposits that cover the lower parts of the valley floor. Based on projected longitudinal profiles of terraces in the valley and an increase in grain size upstream, the outwash appears to have been laid down from an ice recessional position just upstream from the New Jersey border (fig. 2, ice margin 10).

On the Pennsylvania side of Minisink Valley, a small outwash fan (Qf) lies at the mouth of an unnamed tributary of the Delaware River. This deposit reaches an elevation of 610 feet (186 m) above sea level and it was laid down by a meltwater stream draining the upper reaches of the tributary, and it is graded to the surface of the valley-train deposits in Minisink Valley. Meltwater terraces (Qmt) in Minisink Valley are chiefly strath terraces that were cut down in valley-train deposits by meltwater streams emanating from sources upstream from the Tristates margin. These deposits are as much as 15 feet (5 m) thick and they largely consist of material eroded and reworked from the adjacent and upstream parts of valley-outwash deposits, and till that covers the lower part of valley slopes. These terraces generally have flat surfaces,

which in places are cut by later meltwater channels, and they range in elevation from 440 feet (134 m) near the moraine to 410 feet (125 m) downvalley (fig. 5).

Records of wells in Minisink Valley (table 1) indicate that in places silt, very fine sand, and clay underlie the coarse gravel and sand of the valley-train deposits, as has been indicated for other parts of Minisink Valley (Witte and Epstein, 2012). Although outcrops have not been observed of this material, it seems that this sediment consists of distal-deltaic and lake-bottom deposits laid down in short-lived proglacial lakes that formed between heads-of-outwash downvalley and the retreating glacier margin.

### *Summary of deglaciation*

The ice-retreatal positions marked by end moraines, the heads-of-outwash of ice-contact deltas, and valley-train deposits indicate that the margins of the Kittatinny Valley and Minisink Valley lobes retreated in a systematic manner, chiefly by stagnation-zone retreat, to the northeast. Two ice-marginal positions, the Augusta and Sussex margins (Witte, 1997), mark major recessional positions of the ice lobes, and a third, the Millville margin marks a minor recessional position (fig. 1). Meltwater deposits consist chiefly of ice-contact deltas laid down in Lake Wallkill, Lake Mill Brook, and several other smaller, unnamed glacial lakes. In Minisink Valley and part of Wallpack Valley valley-train deposits extended many miles downstream from heads-of-outwash deposited at the Augusta and Sussex margins. Subsurface data indicate that these coarse-grained glaciofluvial deposits overlie sand and silt presumably of glaciolacustrine origin. This suggests that proglacial lakes may have formed in the narrow south-draining valleys when meltwater became ponded behind heads-of-outwash and recessional moraine. Meltwater-terrace deposits also show that many parts of older valley-train deposits were eroded as the meltwater stream adjusted itself to a longer course.

## **POSTGLACIAL HISTORY**

Northwestern New Jersey is estimated to have been deglaciated by 17,500 yr BP, based on the oldest Francis Lake radiocarbon date (Cotter, 1983). Meltwater continued to flow down Minisink Valley until the glacier margin retreated out of the Delaware River drainage basin and into the Susquehanna drainage basin about 14,000 yr BP (estimated from Ozvath and Coates, 1986).

The postglacial landscape immediately following deglaciation was cold, wet, and windswept. This harsh climate and sparse vegetation enhanced erosion of the land by streams, and by mass wasting of material on slopes. Mechanical disintegration of exposed bedrock by frost shattering was extensive. On Kittatinny Mountain, frost-rived blocks of conglomerate and quartzite as large as 20 feet form an apron of thick talus below cliffs. In Minisink Valley, deposits of shale-chip colluvium mantle the lower part of cliffs and steep hillslopes along the Delaware River. In areas of lower relief, boulder fields formed at the base of slopes where rocks were transported by soil creep. Other fields were formed where meltwater left a lag deposit consisting of the heavier rocks, and a few others may have been concentrated and deposited by the glacier. In places boulders moved by frost heave form crudely-shaped circles and larger areas of polygonal-patterned ground.

The many swamps and poorly drained areas in the quadrangle are typical of glaciated landscapes. Upon deglaciation, surface water, which had in preglacial time flowed in a well-defined network of streams, became trapped in the many depressions, glacial lakes and ponds, and other poorly drained areas created during the last glaciation. Several studies of bogs and swamps in northwestern New Jersey and northeastern Pennsylvania have established a dated pollen stratigraphy that nearly extends to the onset of deglaciation (Cotter, 1983). Paleoenvironments, interpreted from pollen analysis, show a transition from tundra with sparse vegetal cover, to open parkland of sedge and grass with scattered arboreal stands that consisted largely of spruce. From about 14,000 to 11,000 yr BP, the regional pollen sequence records the transition to a dense, closed boreal forest that consisted largely of spruce and fir blanketing the uplands. This was followed by a period (11,000 to 9,700 yr BP) in which pine dominated. These changes in pollen spectra and percentages record the continued warming during the late Pleistocene and transition to a temperate climate. About 9,400 yr BP, oak and other hardwoods began to populate the landscape, eventually displacing the conifers and marking the transition from a boreal to a mixed-hardwoods temperate forest. Throughout the Holocene the many shallow lakes and ponds remaining from the ice age slowly filled with decayed vegetation, subsequently forming bogs and swamps. These organic-rich deposits principally consist of peat, muck, and minor



rock and mineral fragments. Mastodon remains, excavated from Shotwell Pond in nearby Stokes State Forest (Jepsen, 1959), show the presence of these large mammals on Kittatinny Mountain during the close of ice age.

Late Wisconsinan glacial and postglacial fluvial history is well preserved in Minisink Valley where events unfolded in 4 phases (Witte, 2001b). Phase 1 was a period of valley filling when glacial stream deposits were laid down at the margin of the Minisink Valley lobe. At times the glacier's margin remained stationary and outwash built up in front of it and extended many miles downstream. Phase 2 marks the later stages of deglaciation when ice had retreated into the upper part of the Delaware Valley. It is a period of erosion in the valley and further development of meltwater-terrace deposits as the meltwater stream lowered into the valley fill. Phase 3 marks the onset of stream-terrace deposition and presumably started when the ice sheet retreated from the Delaware River drainage basin, and stream discharge diminished substantially. An interval of extensive lateral erosion and deposition on the valley floor followed as the main channel of the river began to meander. The Qst3 terrace is a relic of this phase and it represents the oldest flood-plain deposits preserved in the valley. Phase 4 marks renewed downcutting and extensive vertical and lateral accretion of overbank deposits. During the Holocene these flood-plain deposits built up to as much as 35 feet (11 m) above the modern river. This interval appears to have been initiated by 1) rebound of the Earth's crust, which commenced around 14,000 yr BP (Koteff and Larsen, 1989), and 2) the onset of warmer climate, such that deeper rooted and more extensive vegetation reduced sediment load in the drainage basin.

### **SURFICIAL ECONOMIC RESOURCES**

The most important natural resource in the quadrangle, other than ground water, is stratified sand and gravel. Most of it is in valley train deposits (Qv), and ice-contact deltas (Qod). Sediment is also used as aggregate, subgrade fill, select fill, surface coverings, and decorative stone. Shale chip colluvium (Qcs) and weathered slate makes excellent subgrade material. The location of sand and gravel pits and quarries is shown on the geologic map. All are currently inactive except for occasional use by the land owner. Till may be screened and used for

fill and subgrade material, and large cobbles and small boulders have been used for building stone. Peat and muck from swamp deposits may be used as a soil conditioner.

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