

Twin Falls County

Twin Falls County covers a large area on the south side of the Snake River. It includes the South Hills or Cassia Mountains, made of a spectacular pile of north dipping rhyolite ash flows laid out for view in Rock Creek Canyon. Under these rhyolites are Pennsylvanian and Permian sedimentary rocks that are equivalent to the Sun Valley Group near Hailey and Ketchum.

On the southwest are the foothills of the Owyhee Plateau, also underlain by Miocene ignimbrites and rhyolite lava flows.

In the central part of Twin Falls county are extensive irrigated fields, that use Snake River water withdrawn at Milner Dam east of Murtaugh.

The Snake River, with its spectacular canyon deepened during the Lake Bonneville Flood about 15,000 years ago, forms the northern boundary of the county. Shoshone Falls cascades over Miocene rhyolite of the same age as the ash flows in the South Hills and in the Gooding City of Rocks. Twin Falls is cut in Quaternary basalt. Huge gravel bars of "melon gravel" line the Snake River Canyon west of Twin Falls near Buhl and Hagerman.

In the northwestern corner of the county are the Pliocene fossils beds of Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument. These river and lake beds contain diverse mammal, fish, reptile and other fossils that are about 3 to 4 million years old.

P.K. Link, 9/02

Tpb

Description of Geologic Units for Twin Falls County, Idaho

Qa Quaternary alluvial deposits

Qg Quaternary gravels; forming terraces above modern stream levels, mainly mapped on western Snake River Plain. Unit generally represents detrital glacio-fluvial systems.

Quaternary surficial cover, including colluvium, fluvial, alluvial fan, lake, and windblown deposits. Included fluveolian cover on Snake River Plain, (Snake River Group).

Recent basalt lava, less than 12,000 years old, lava flows are fresh, poorly vegetated, and show original flow geometry.

Pleistocene basalt lava, 2 million to 12,000 years old, flows have some vegetation and surface weathering.

Pleistocene and Pliocene stream and lake deposits; sand, gravel and mud; Lake Idaho sediments; Glenns Ferry Formation; Idaho Group.

Pleistocene and Pliocene basalt lava and associated basaltic tuff (deposited close to basaltic vent).

Pliocene and Upper Miocene felsic volcanic rocks, rhyolite flows, tuffs, ignimbrites. (in Owyhee County and Mt. Bennett Hills, this should be Tmf).

Pliocene and Upper Miocene basalt (includes parts of Starlight Formation and Salt Lake Formation) (in Owyhee County and Mt. Bennett Hills, this should be Tmb).

