

# **Influence of Provenance and Sediment Supply on Sandstone Composition and Depositional Styles: Pennsylvanian Upper Morrowan and Cherokee, Oklahoma: Why Are These Sandstones so Different?\***

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## **Abstract**

Pennsylvanian (Cherokee) fluvio-deltaic complexes prograded southward toward the Arkoma and Anadarko basins and contain channel-fill, delta-fringe and delta-plain deposits. During lowstand, sediment was transported across the exposed shelf and deposited on the basin slope or floor, or redistributed as shallow-marine bars. In contrast, upper Morrowan sandstones form linear trends interpreted as valley fills and contain evidence of increased marine influence toward the top. It is proposed that drainage-basin size and paleoclimate influenced sediment supply. Cherokee fluvio-deltaic complexes were well supplied with sand derived from an extensive drainage basin with shield areas that provided a distinct metamorphic detrital compositional signature. In contrast, upper Morrow valleys were undersupplied with sand. Lowstand deposits are thin clay-clast-rich channel-lag conglomerates. The incomplete filling of valleys with sand reflects a smaller drainage basin predominantly on sedimentary rocks that weathered mostly to mud, but provided chert as an important detrital grain. Sand transported across the shelf was diluted with mud in the Morrowan sea. During transgression, sand was trapped in the valleys, but the limited volume was insufficient to fill valleys and estuarine and marine deposits dominate the upper portions of valley fills. Wetter climate and the Wichita-Arbuckle orogenic belt possibly heightened seasonal storm intensity, facilitating Cherokee sediment transport.

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# Influence of Provenance and Sediment Supply on Sandstone Composition and Depositional Styles: Pennsylvanian Upper Morrowan and Cherokee, Oklahoma

Why are these sandstones so different?

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Boone Pickens School of Geology  
Oklahoma State University



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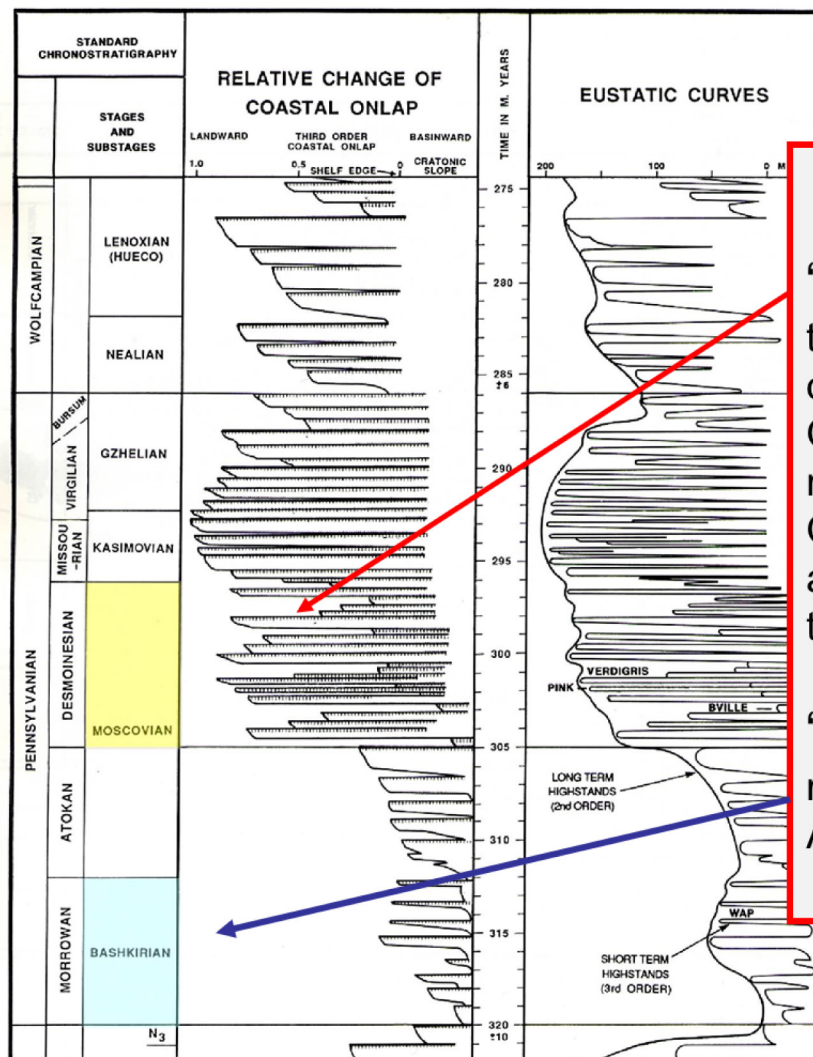
# Objectives

Examine the depositional style and composition of Morrowan and Desmoinesian sediment dispersal systems

Consider factors that influence depositional style and composition to determine if there is a fundamental difference between the Morrowan and Desmoinesian dispersal systems



## Stratigraphy



Cyclic chart (coastal onlap and eustasy) for the Pennsylvanian (Ross and Ross, 1987).

**“Cherokee”** – Operational term for the Desmoinesian Cherokee Group on Oklahoma Platform, northeastern Oklahoma. “Cherokee” operational nomenclature extended to western Oklahoma and includes Prue, Skinner and Red Fork sandstone intervals in the Anadarko Basin

**“Morrow”** – Operational term for rocks of Morrowan Series (North America), Pennsylvanian



## Data used in this study

Observations based on examination of over 50 cores, thousands of wireline logs from oil and gas wells and key outcrops

“Cherokee” depositional style: distribution of sand bodies, geometry and sandstone/shale ratios

“Cherokee” composition: detrital grains identified using thin-section petrography

Upper Morrow depositional style: distribution of sand bodies, geometry and sandstone shale/ratios  
Composition: detrital grains



# Des Moinesian “Cherokee” central and western Oklahoma

Prue

Upper Skinner

Lower Skinner

Red Fork

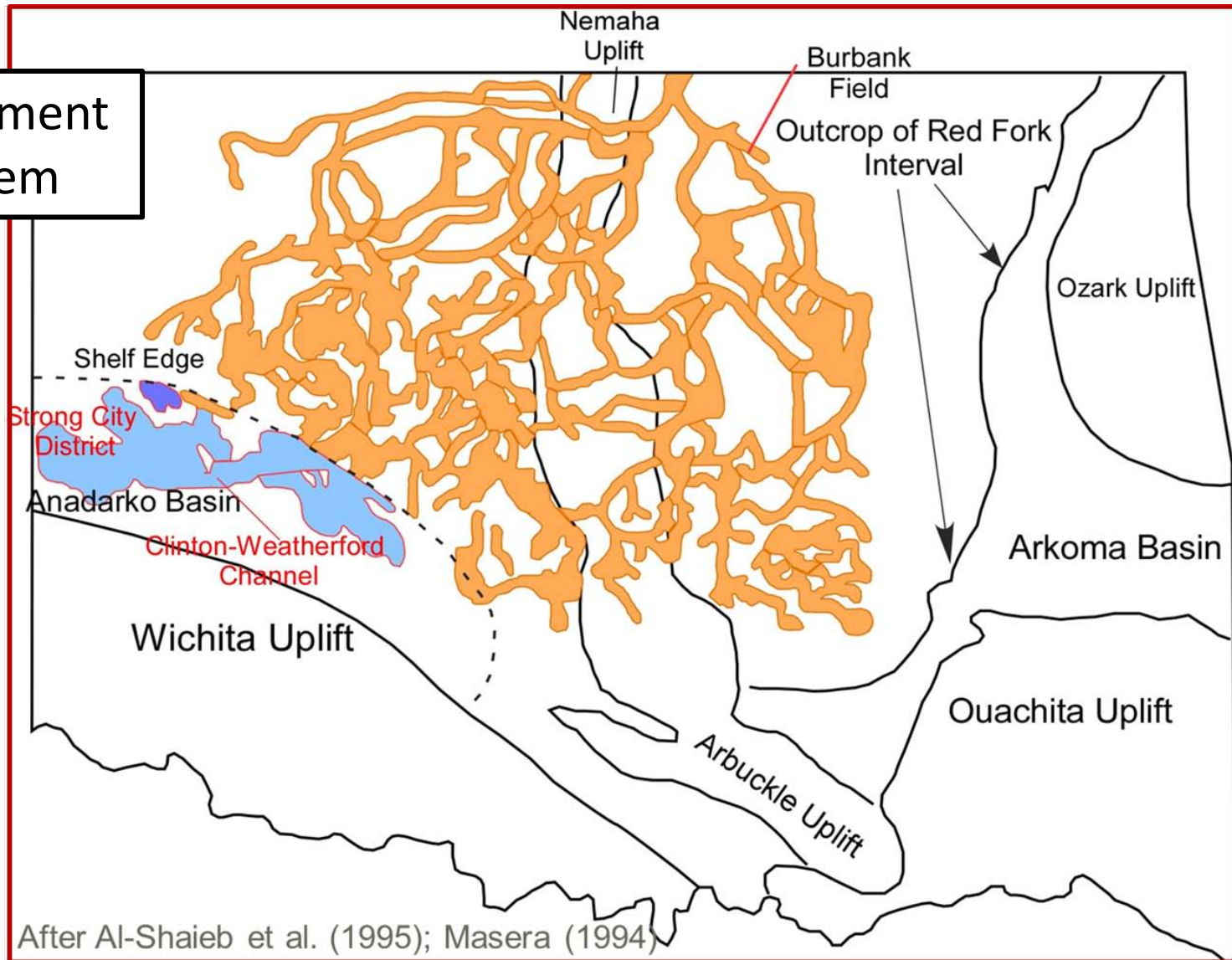
Bartlesville

Fluvio-deltaic complexes with channel, delta-plain and delta-fringe environments, as well as shallow-marine bars, slope channels and submarine fans



# Cherokee: Red Fork sand dispersal system

## Red Fork sediment dispersal system

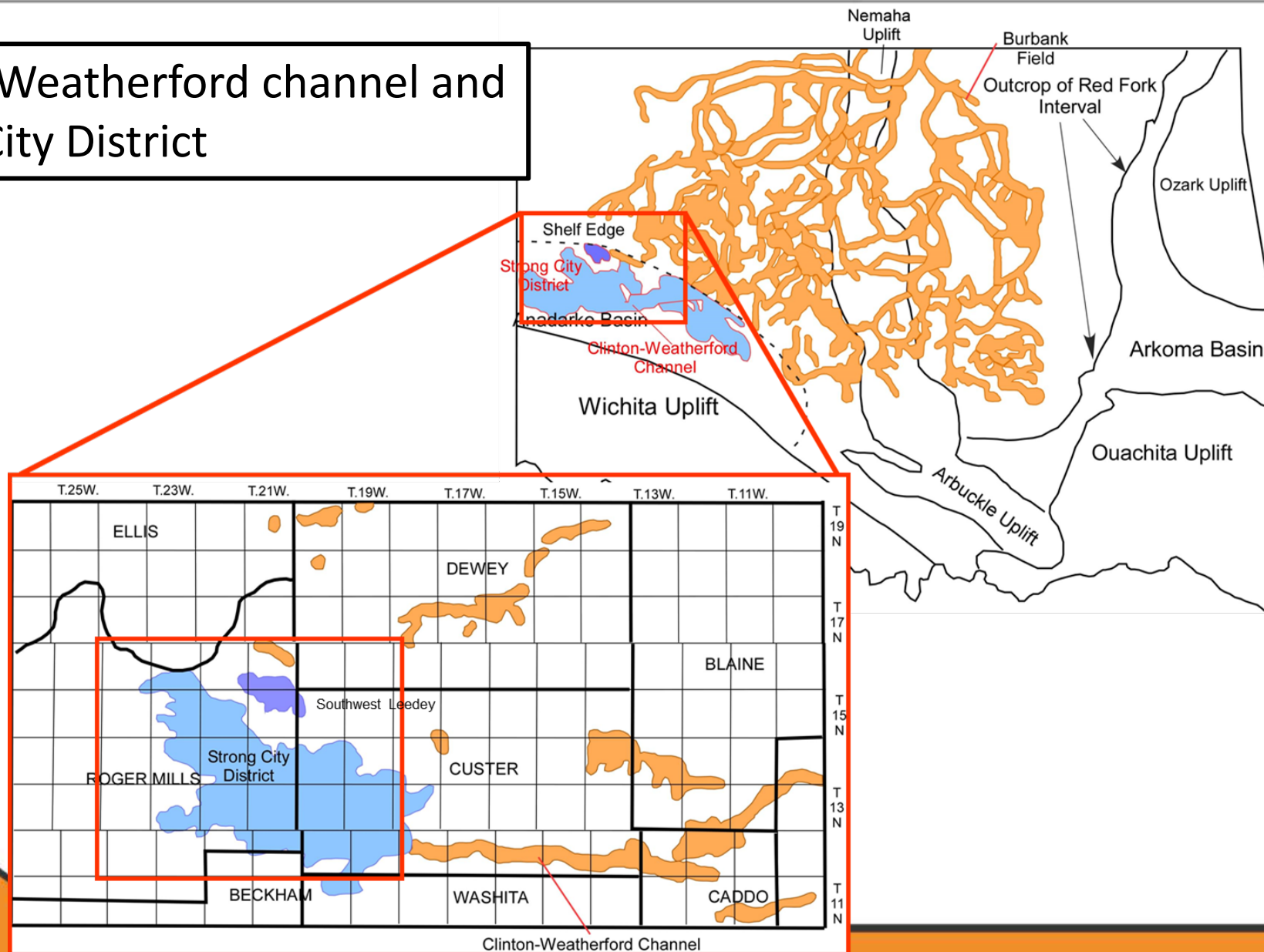






# Cherokee: Red Fork sandstone lowstand incision and deposition of basin floor fan

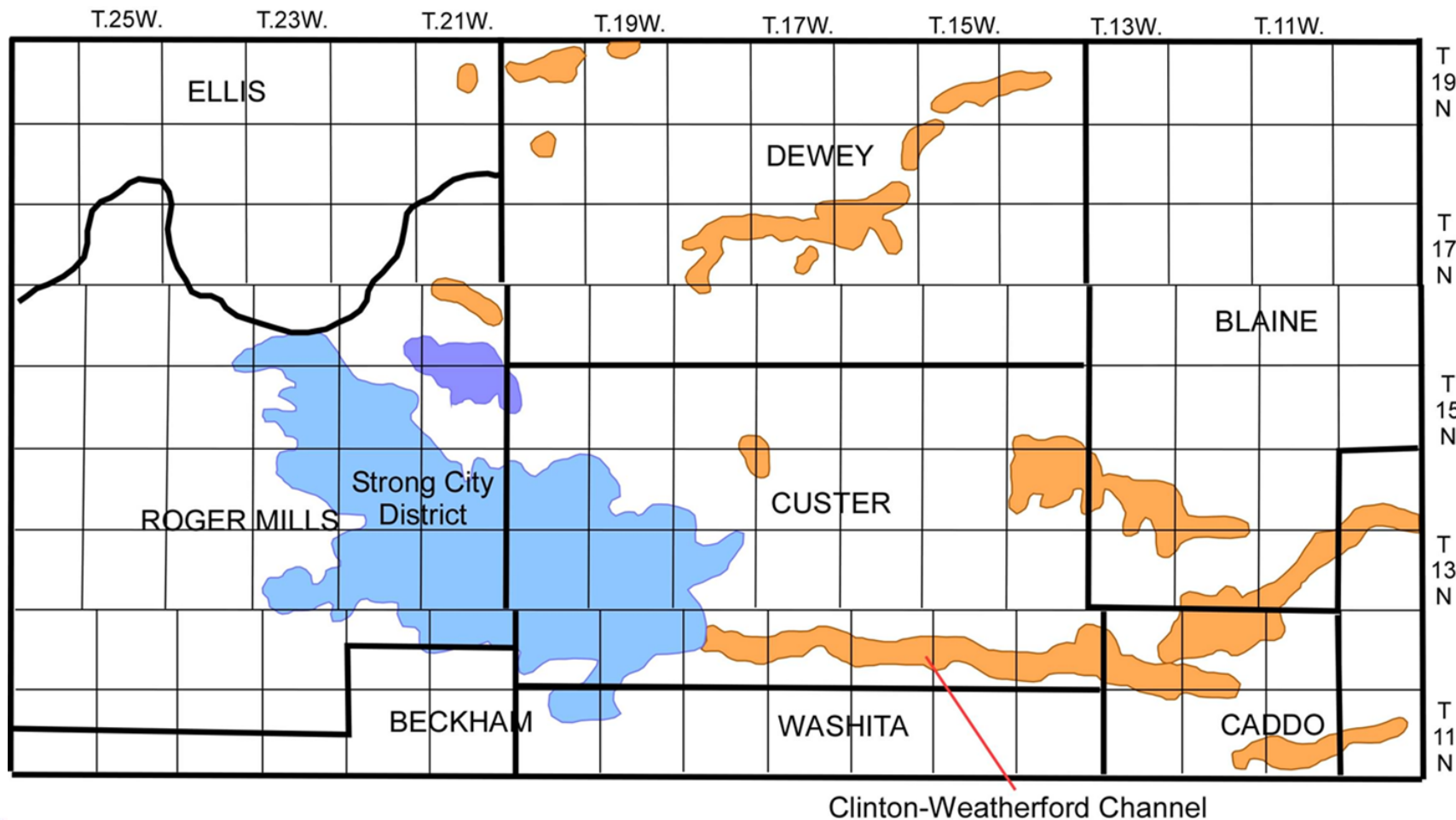
## Clinton-Weatherford channel and Strong City District







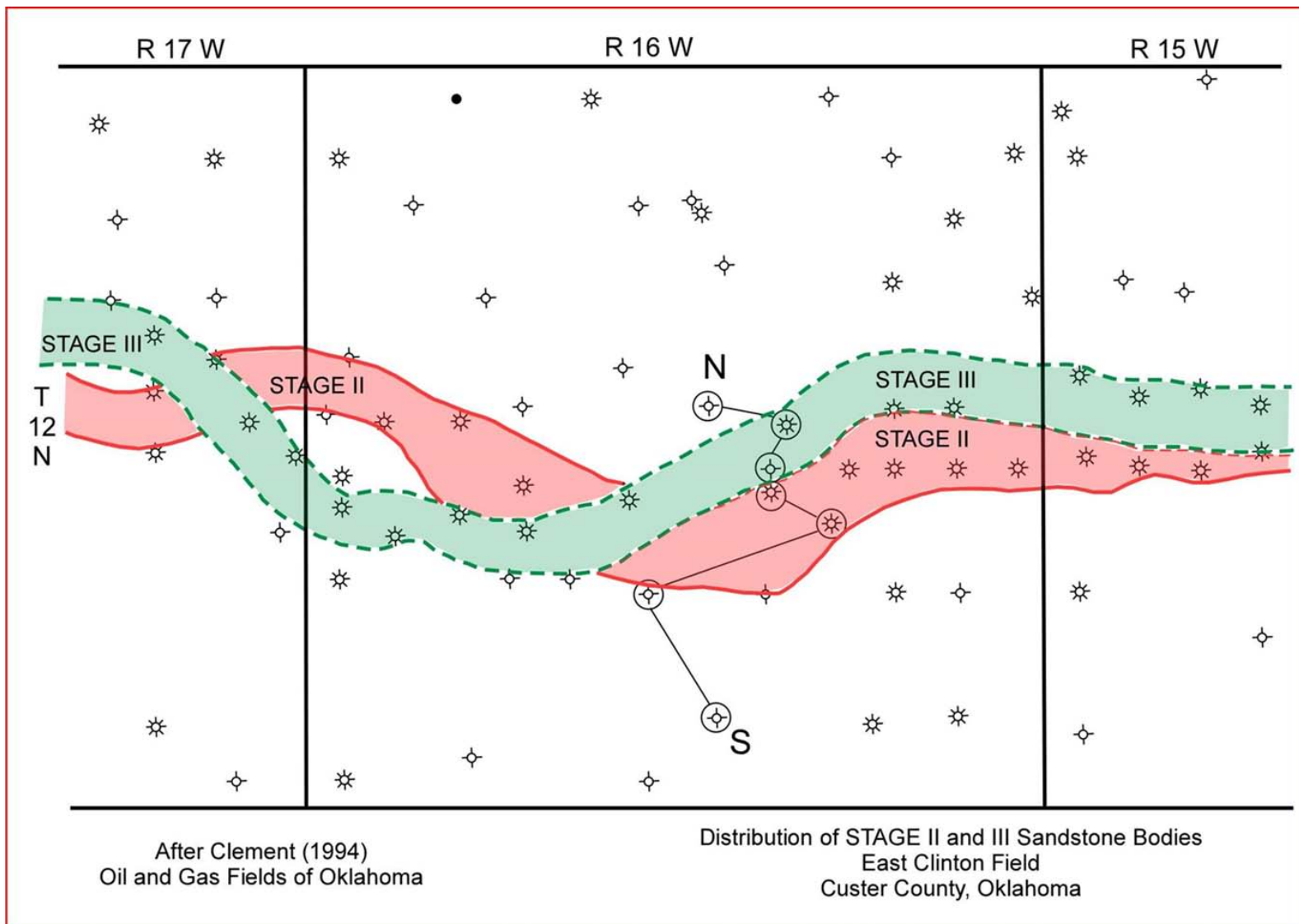
# Cherokee: Red Fork sandstone lowstand incision and deposition of basin floor fan



East Clinton Field: lack of accommodation forces incision and sediment dispersal to the west

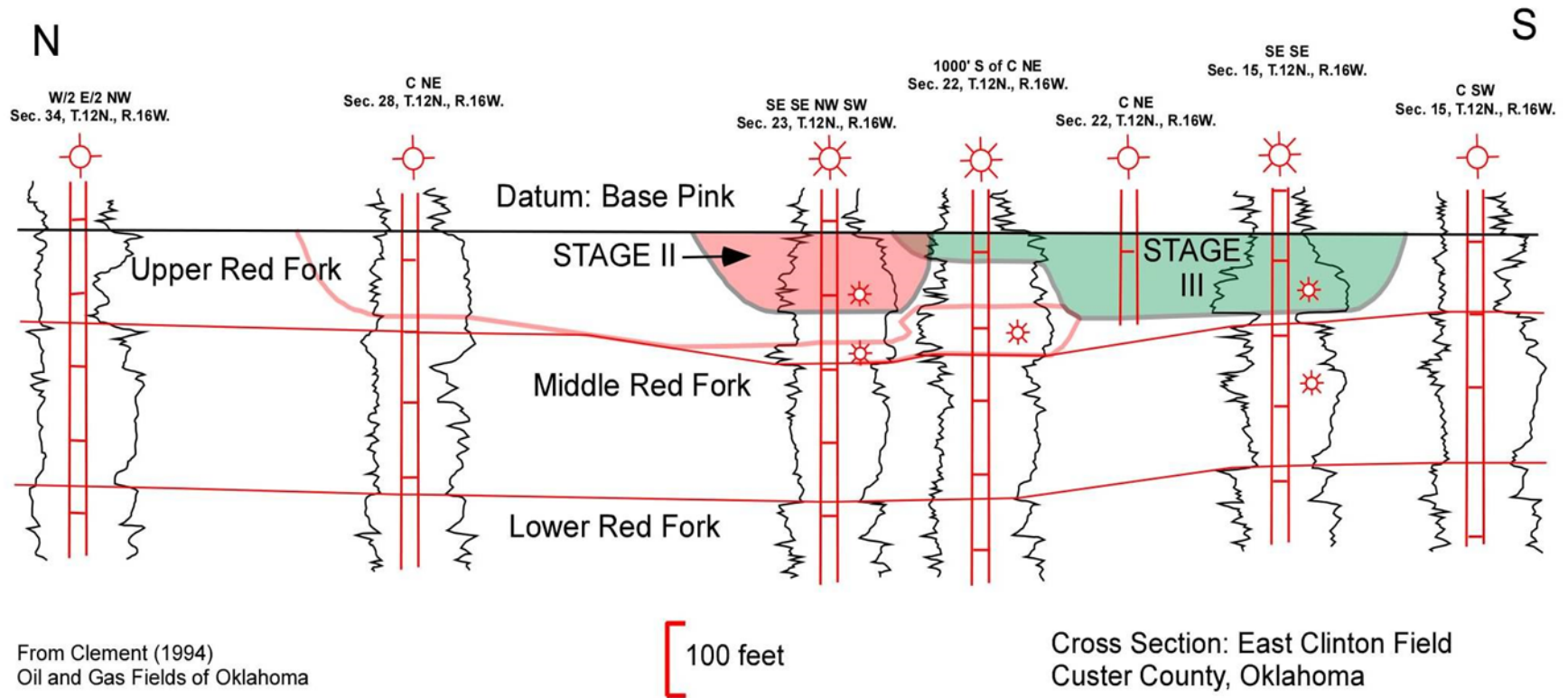


# Cherokee: Red Fork sandstone in East Clinton Field





# Cherokee: Red Fork sandstone in East Clinton Field



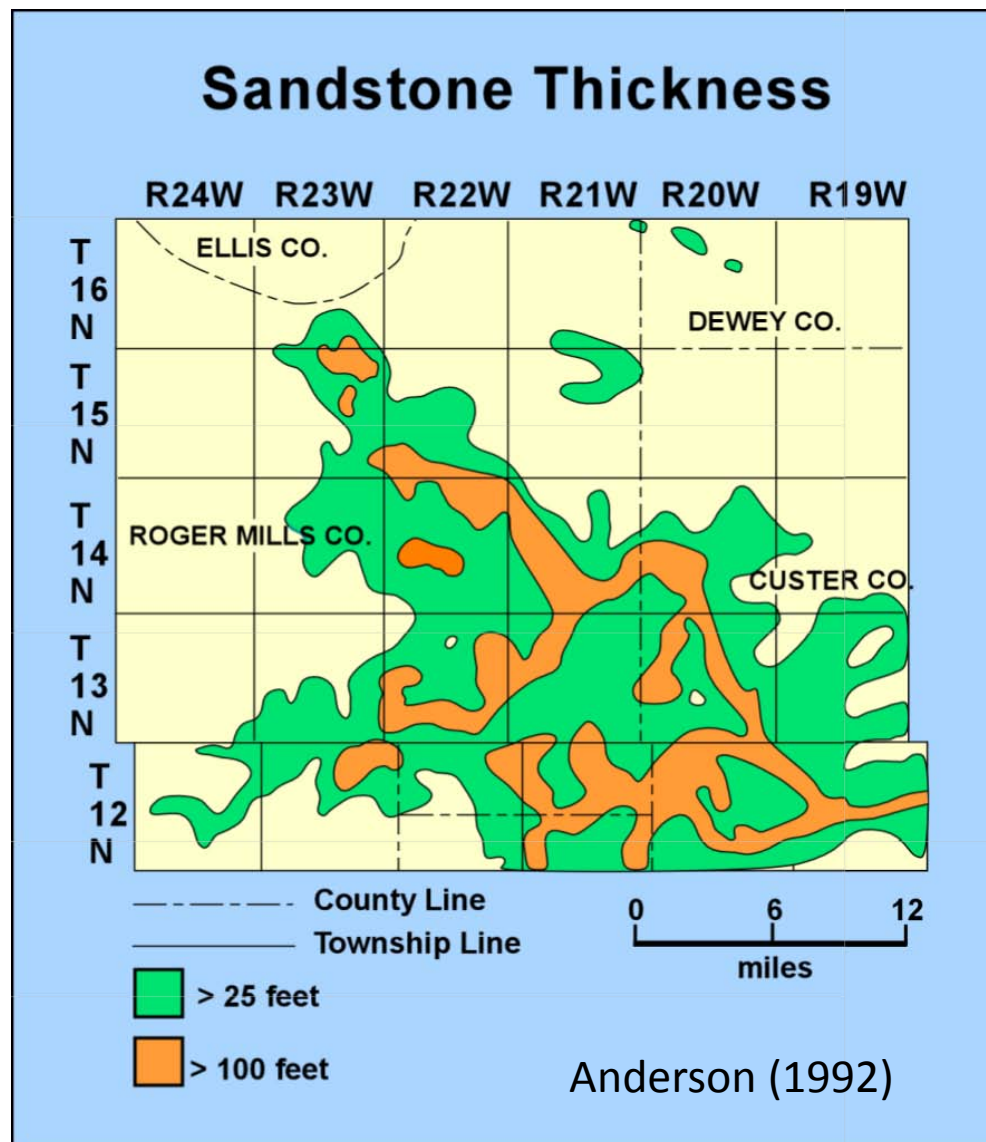
Heterogeneity of fill in the East Clinton valley



# Cherokee: Red Fork sandstone in Strong City District

West- to northwest-trending  
sandstone bodies with  
decreasing sandstone  
content distal to  
“feeder channel”  
in T.12 N., R. 19 W.

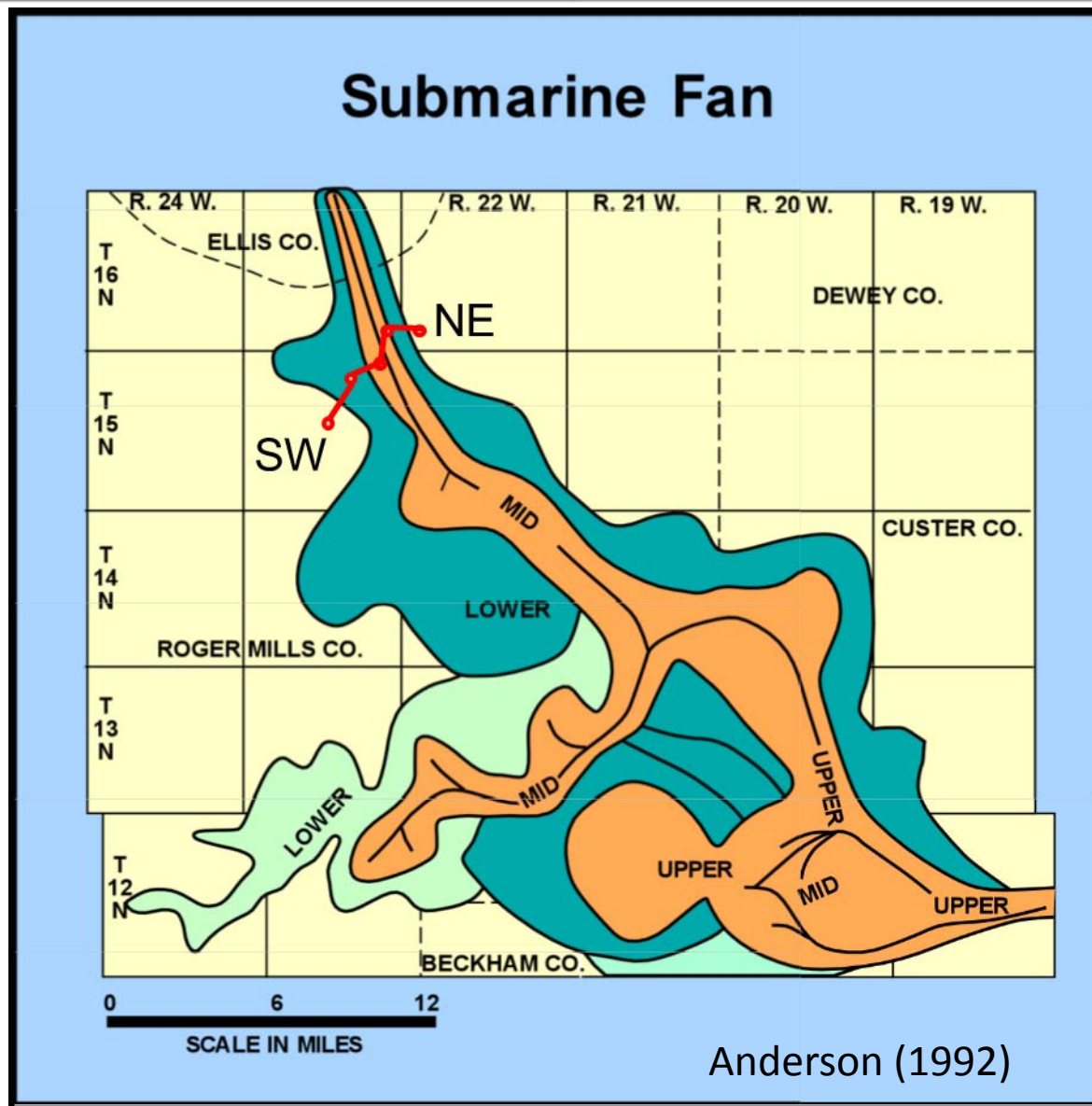
Upper Red Fork  
sandstone thickness





# Cherokee: Red Fork sandstone in Strong City District

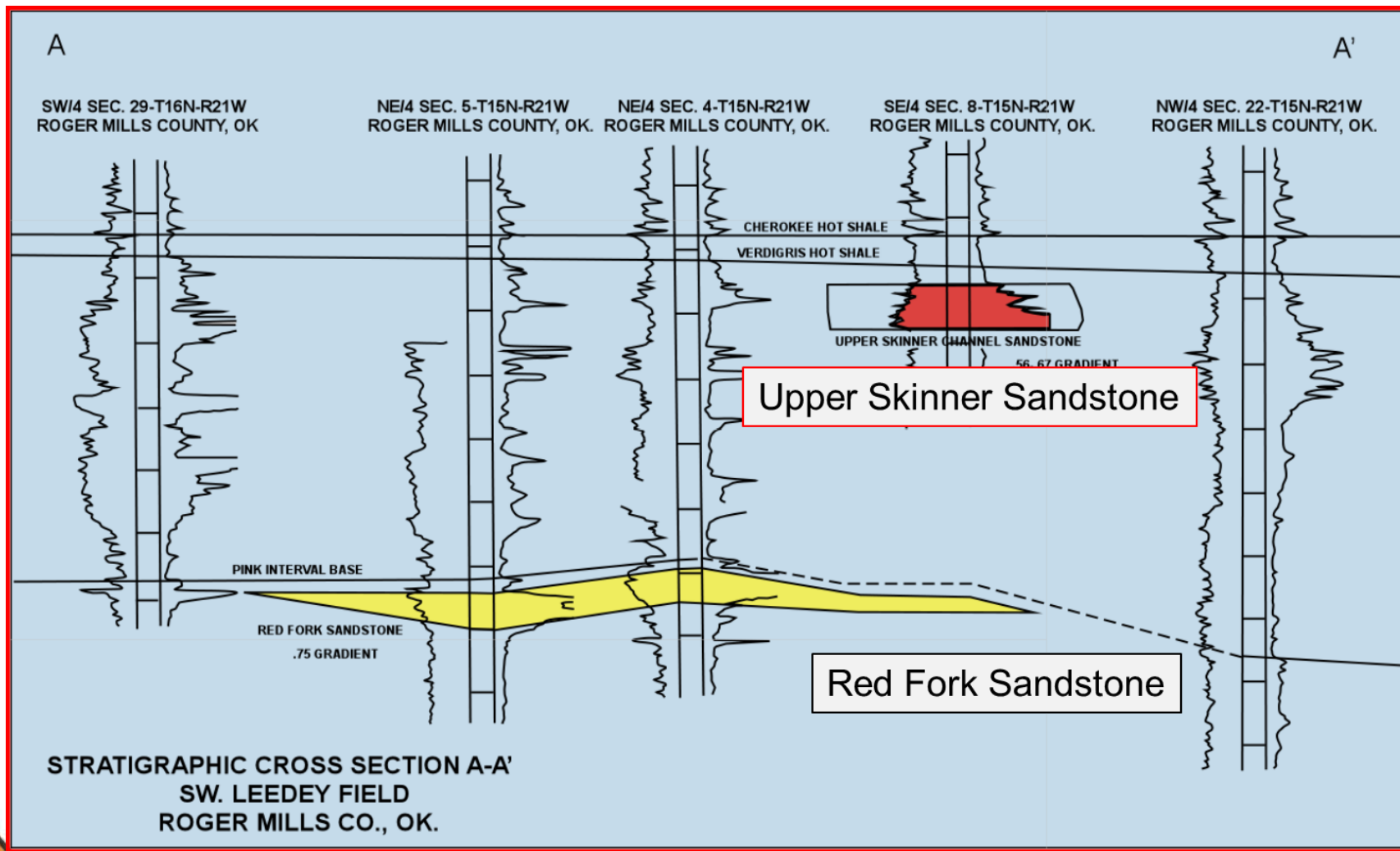
Interpretation of generalized  
Submarine-fan morphology  
from Anderson (1992)







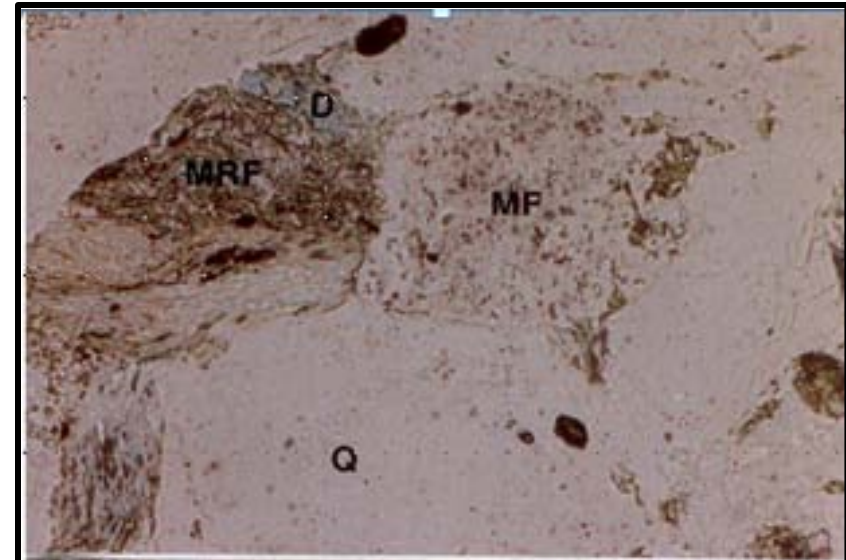
# Cherokee: Red Fork shallow-marine bar, SW Leedey Field



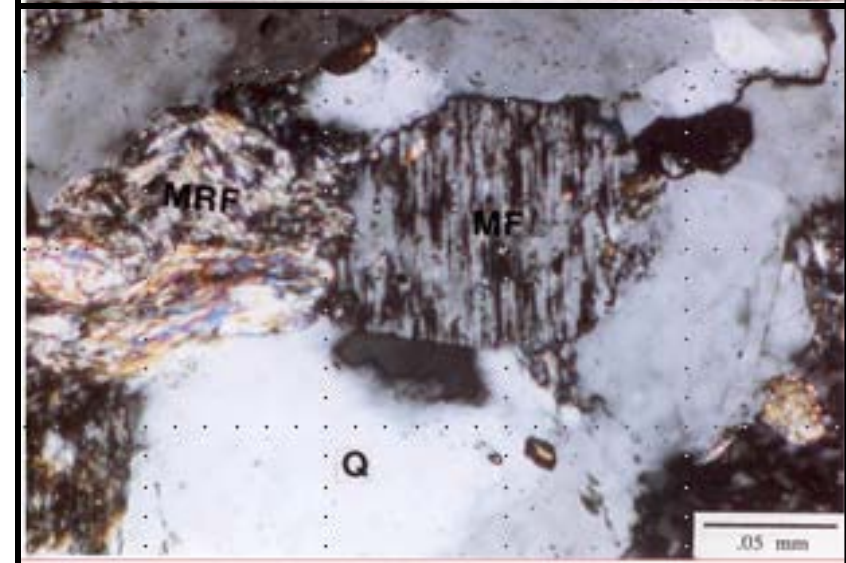


# Provenance and composition: northerly source and southerly source

Primary: northern source with  
metamorphic rock fragments  
(MRF)



Secondary: southerly source with  
granitic rock fragments  
microperthite (MP) and  
granophyre





# Cherokee: Red Fork sandstone characteristics

Large fluvial-deltaic complex that is incised by lowstand valleys

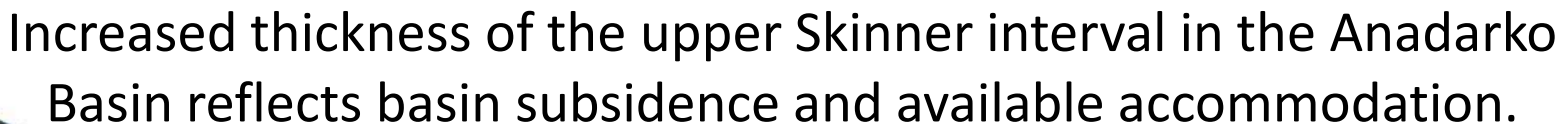
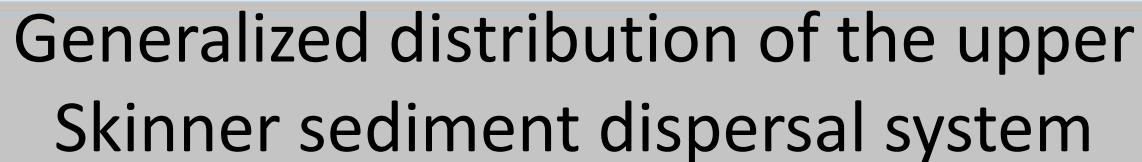
Lowstand valleys transported sediment across the shelf  
and provided sand for lowstand fans

Marine processes reworked and redistributed sand in  
delta-margin and shallow-marine settings

Abundant sand is evident in channel fills and fan complex

Detrital composition includes metamorphic rock fragments





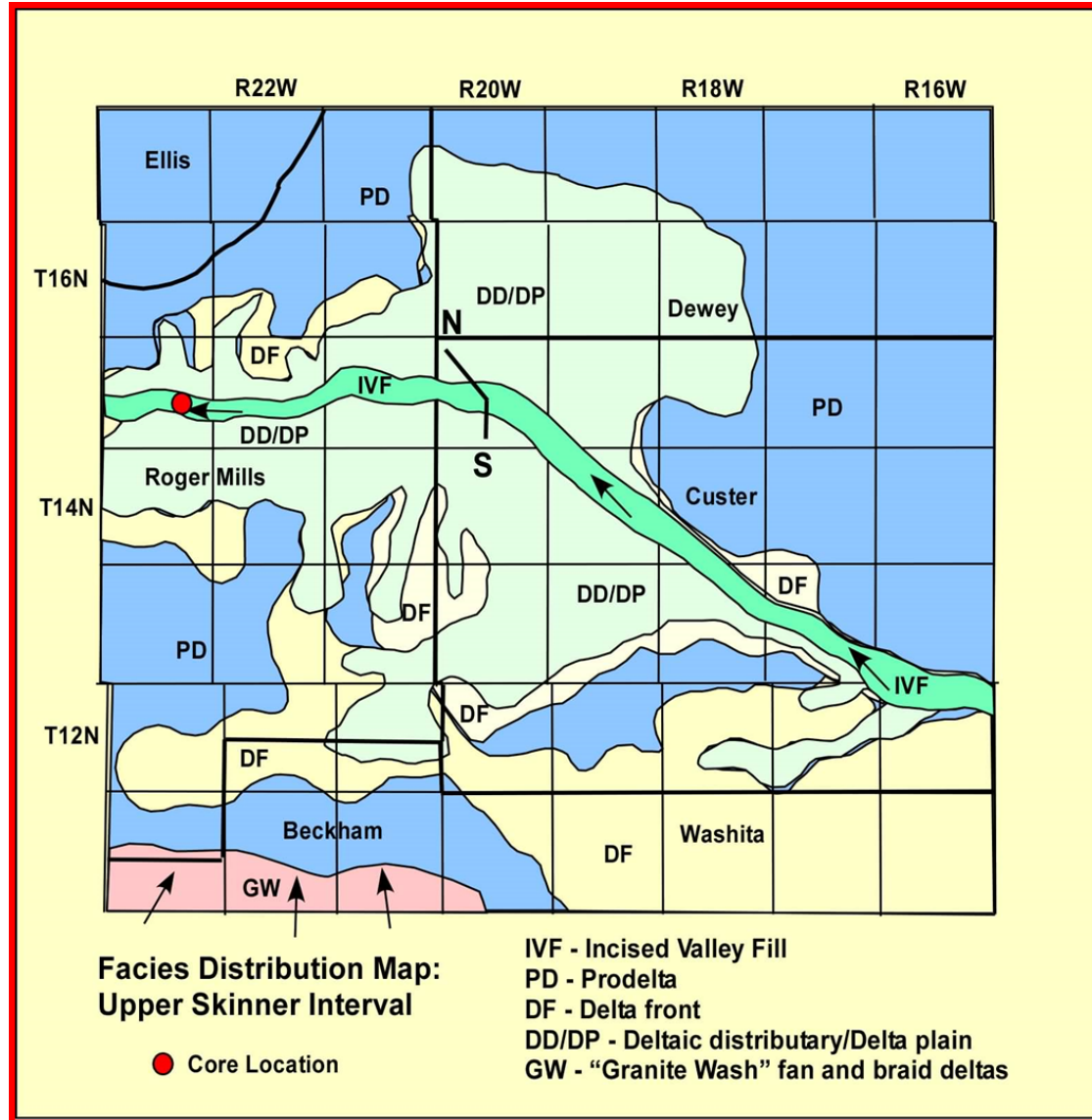


# Upper Skinner depositional facies

Distribution of interpreted depositional facies for the upper Skinner sandstone in the western part of the Anadarko Basin

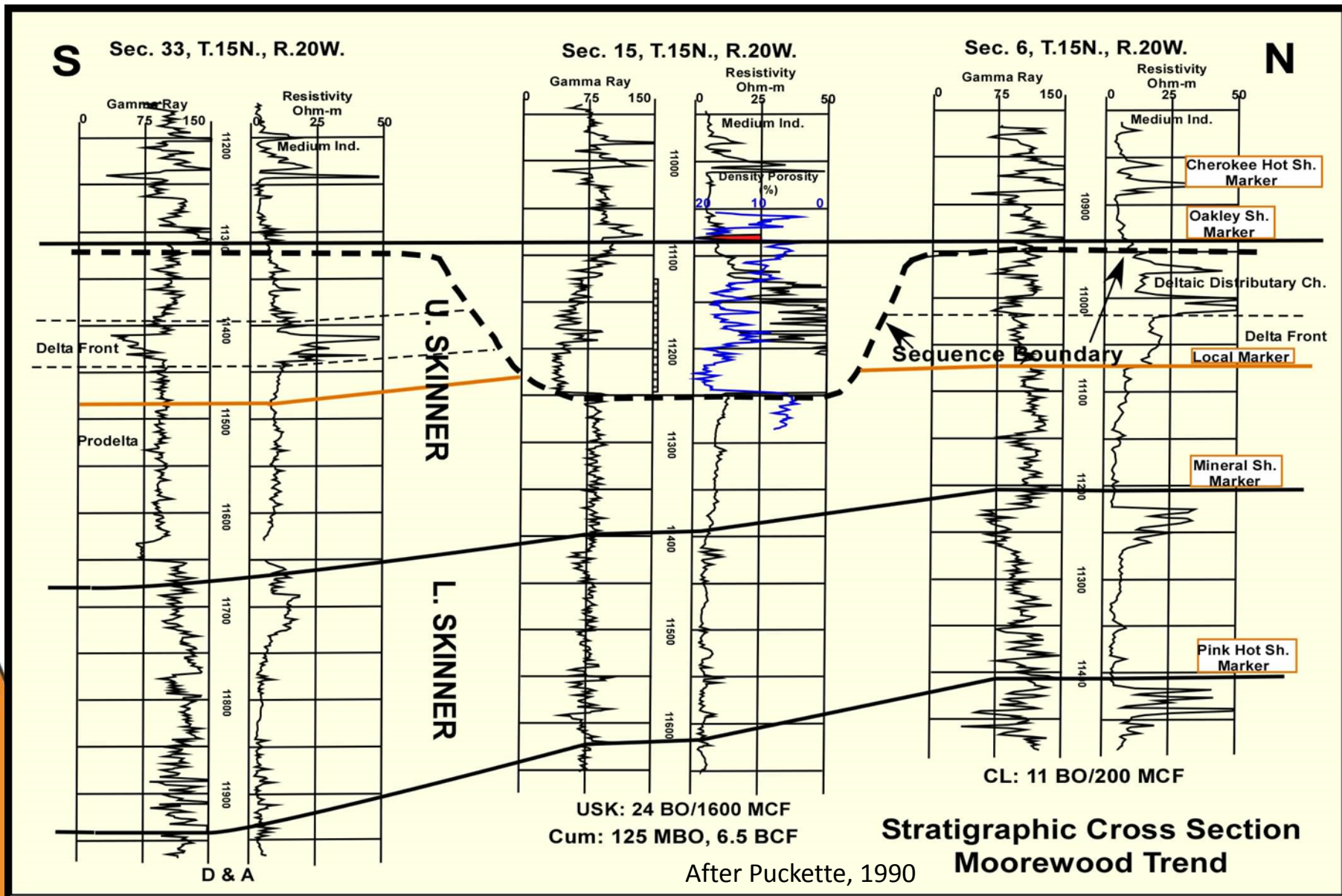
Fluvio-deltaic complex incised by valley. Lowstand delta at valley terminus

After Puckette, 1990





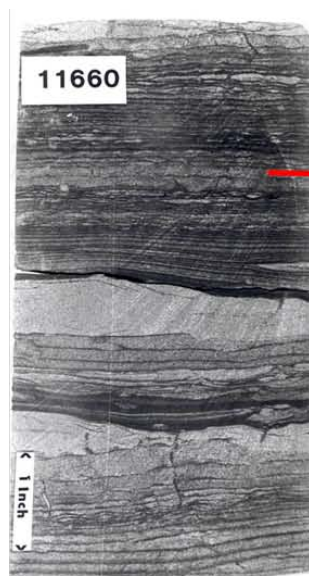
# Valley geometry: upper Skinner sandstone



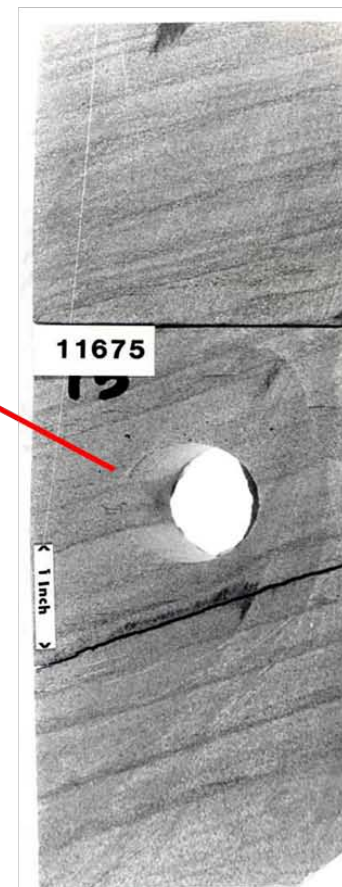
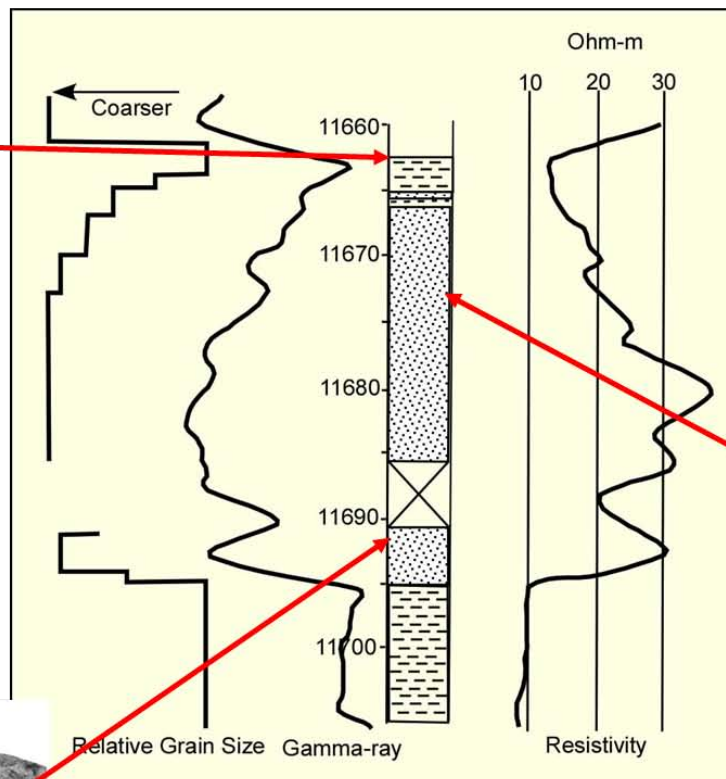




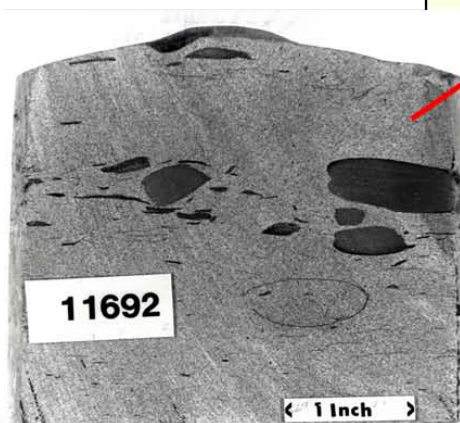
# Sedimentary features: upper Skinner valley filling sandstone



Tidal-laminae



Tabular cross beds



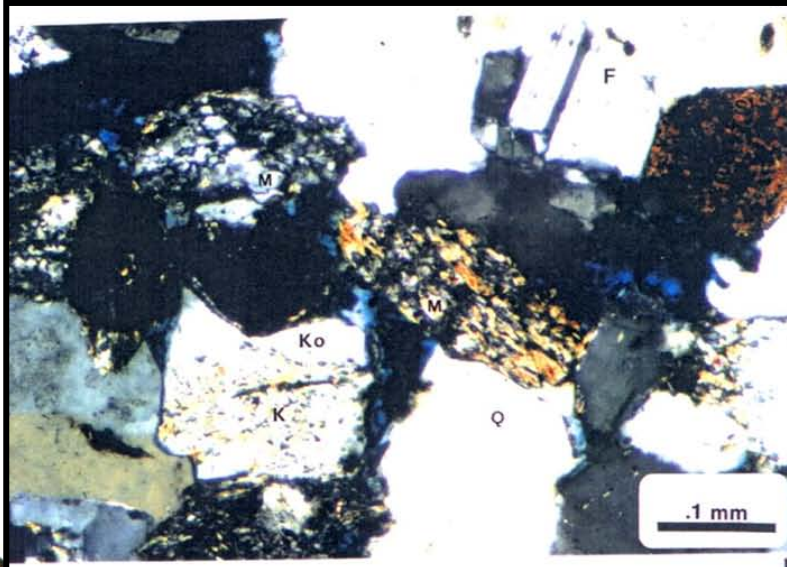
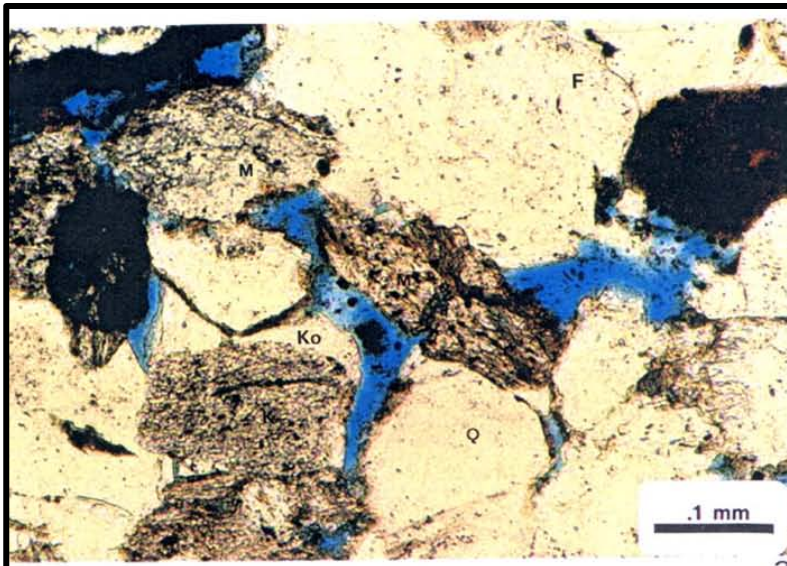
Sedimentary Features

Clay-clast conglomerate

After Puckette, 1990



# Detrital composition: upper Skinner sandstone



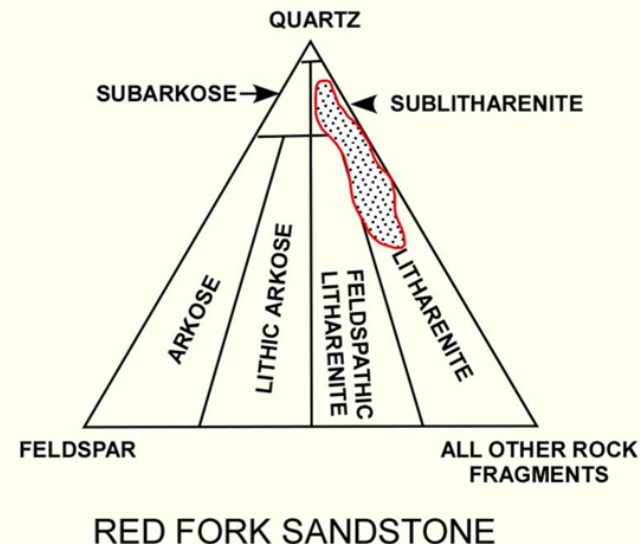
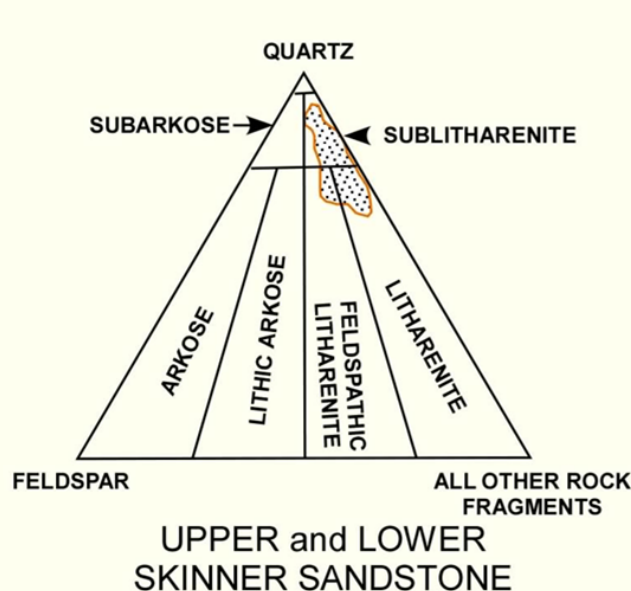
## Upper Skinner Sandstone Moorewood Trend

Photomicrographs of the Upper Skinner Sandstone showing metamorphic rock fragments common to Cherokee sandstones, which have the same provenance. Top is PPL, bottom CPL.

- Q – monococrystalline quartz
- F – plagioclase feldspar
- K – potassium feldspar
- M – metamorphic rock fragments



# Composition of Cherokee sandstones: Red Fork and Skinner sandstones are similar



General composition of Red Fork and Skinner sandstones.  
Plotted on a quartz-rock fragments-feldspar diagram of Folk (1974).





# Cherokee: Skinner sandstone characteristics

Fluvial-deltaic complexes that are incised by lowstand valleys

Channel fill is dominated by fluvial sands

Marine influence (if present) is limited to top of channel fills

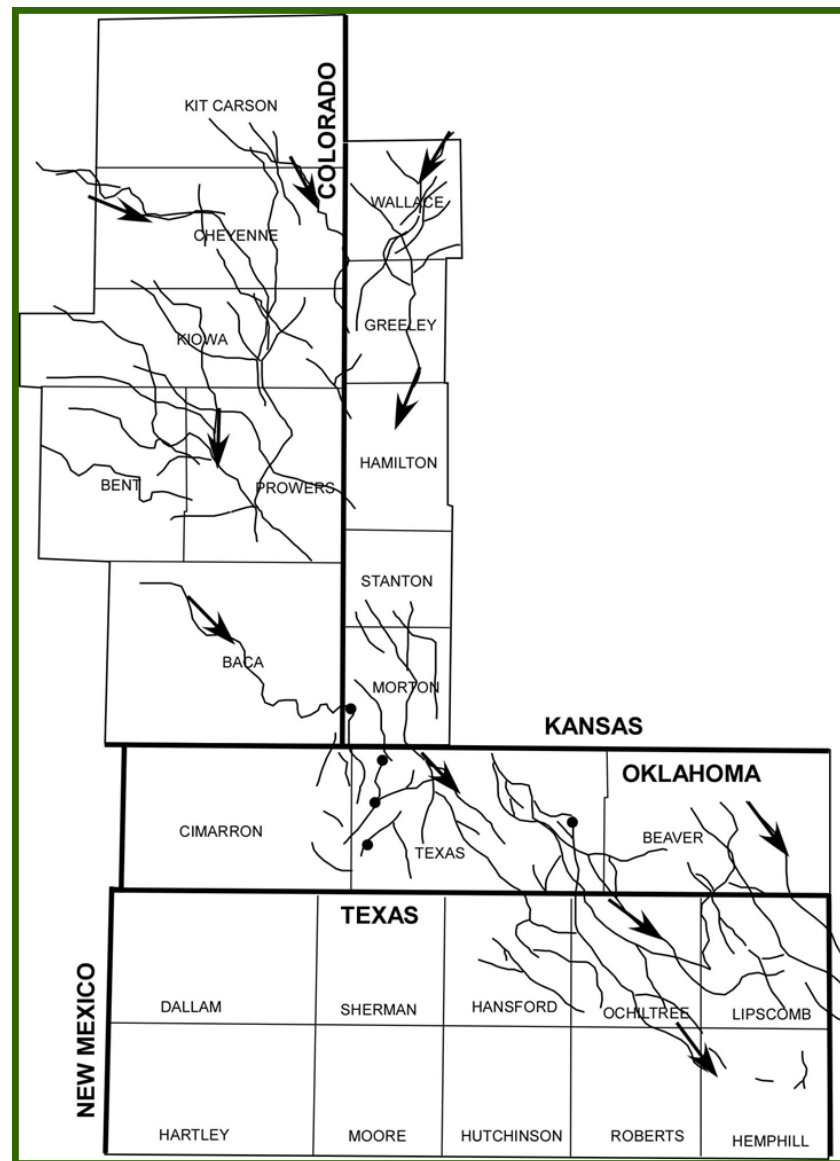
Sand was relatively abundant and redistributed by  
coastal processes (delta-fringe environments common)

Detrital framework grains include metamorphic rock fragments



# Southerly flowing, Upper Morrow sediment dispersal system

Upper Morrow channel-fill sandstone bodies form linear trends



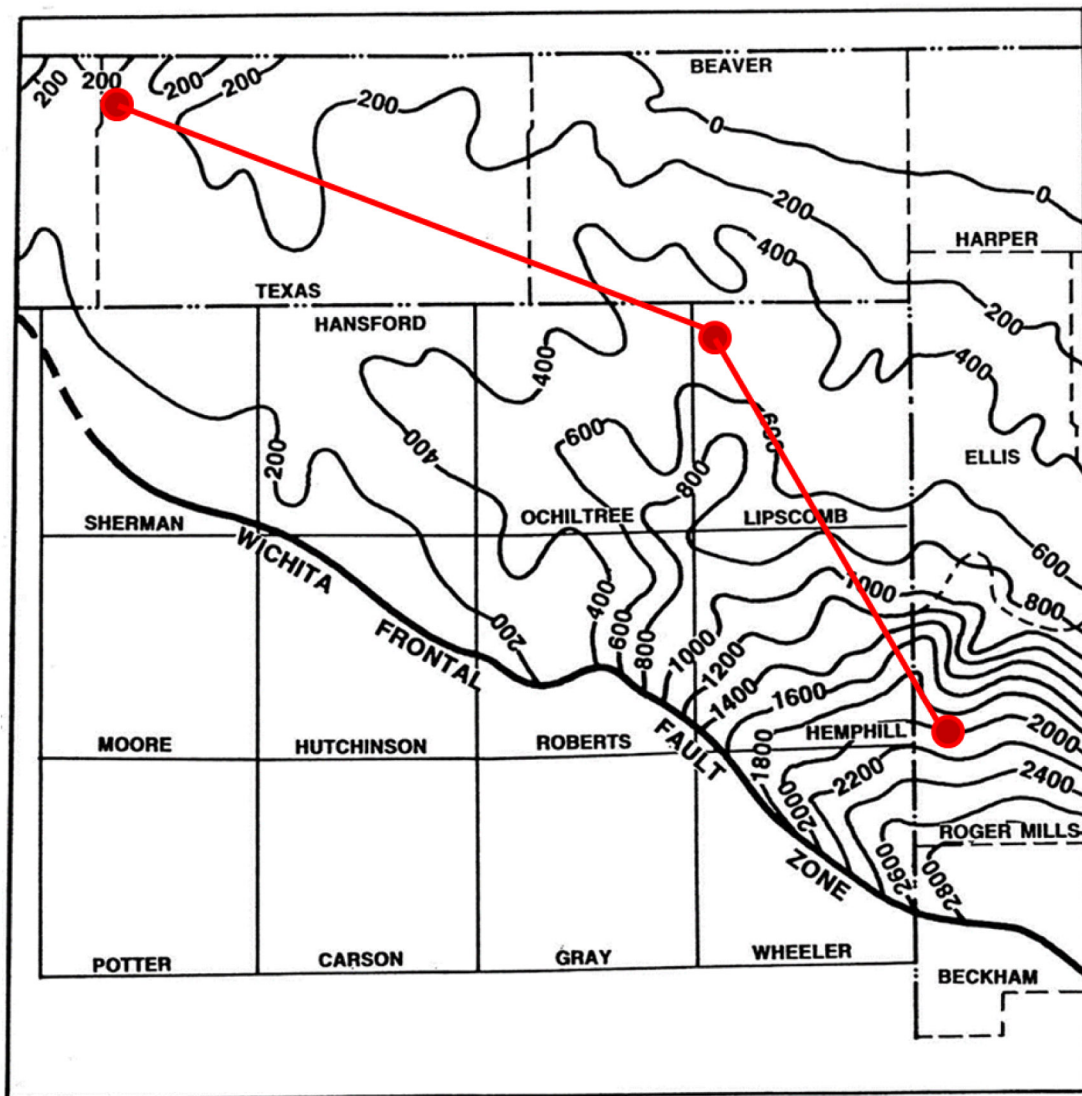
Puckette et al., 1996





# Thickness of the Upper Morrow interval: western Oklahoma, Texas Panhandle and Oklahoma Panhandle

Red line is cross section shown in following slide

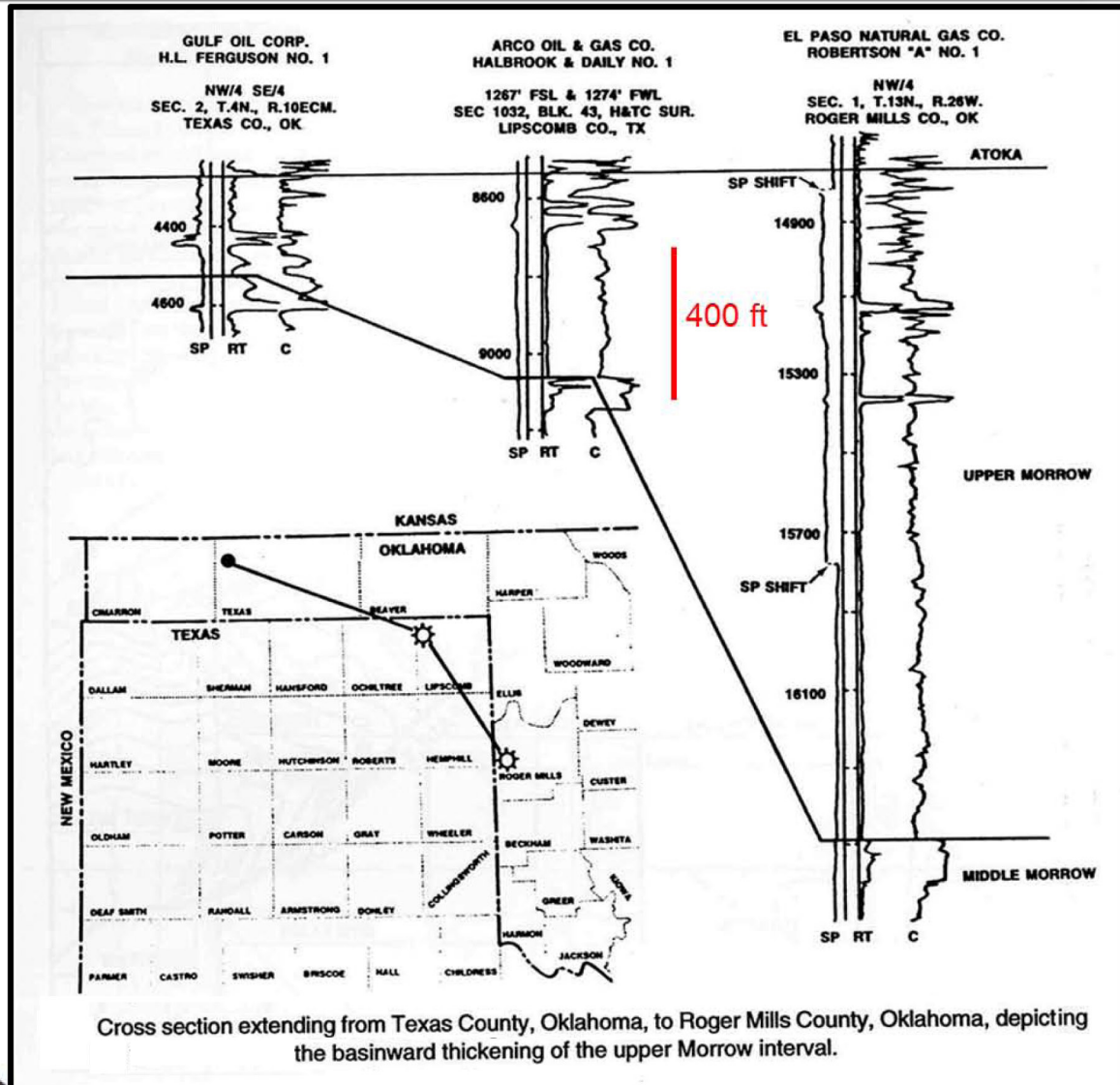


Puckette et al., 1996

Thickness map of the upper Morrow interval in western Oklahoma and the Texas and Oklahoma Panhandles.



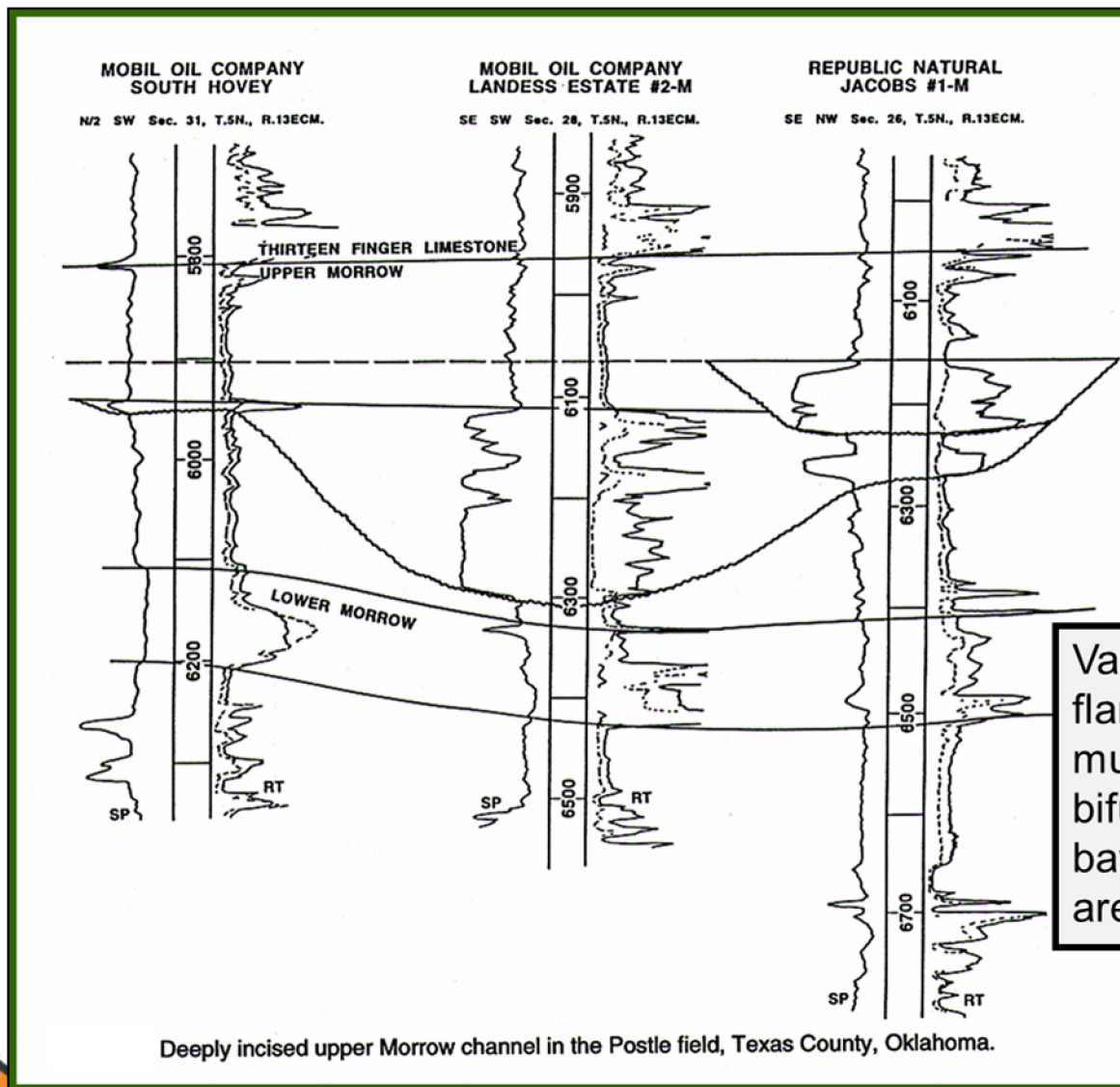
# Isolated Upper Morrow sandstone bodies within thick mudrock (shale) interval



Isolated sandstone bodies (<50 total feet) within thick (1500 feet) Upper Morrow interval



# Upper Morrow: valley fill geometry in Postle Field



Upper Morrow

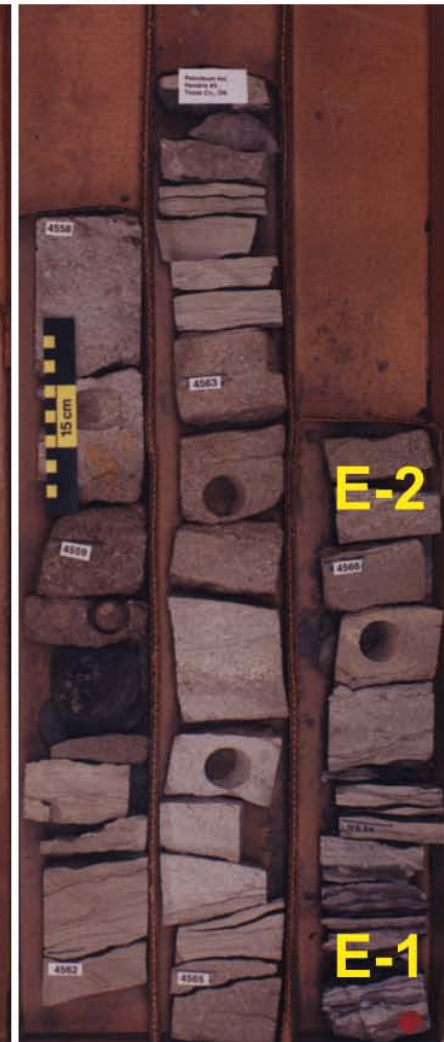
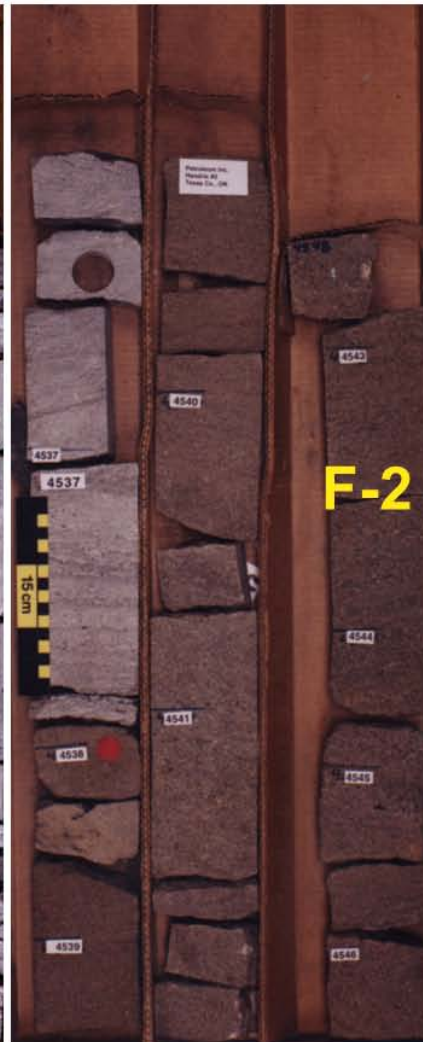
Incised valley  
Postle Field,  
Texas, Co., OK

Valley fill deposits are flanked by marine mudstones. No overbank, bifurcating distributary, bay or delta fringe deposits are evident



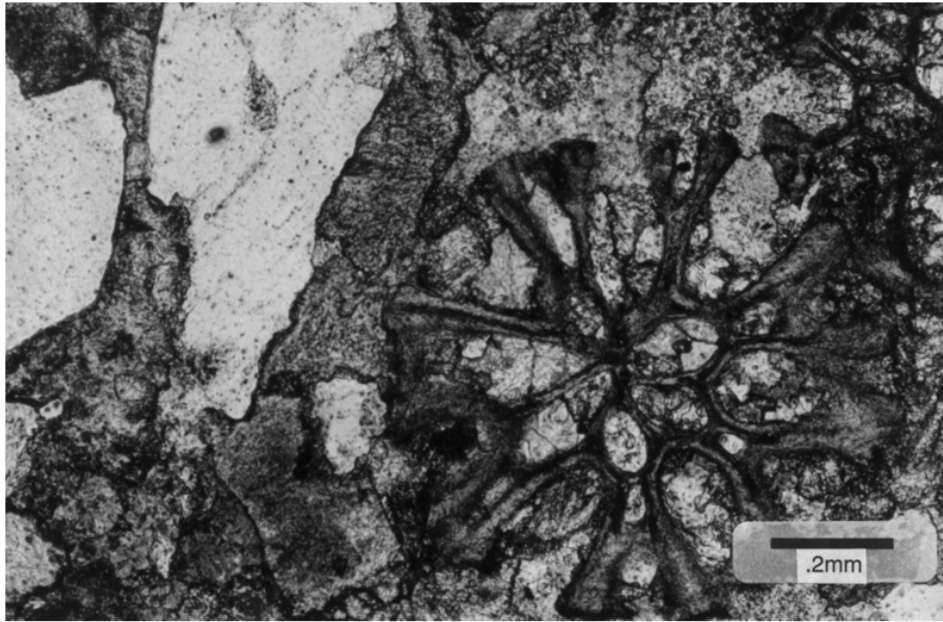


# Upper Morrow depositional facies: Petroleum Inc. Hendricks #3, T.6N., R.10E.C.M., Texas Co., OK



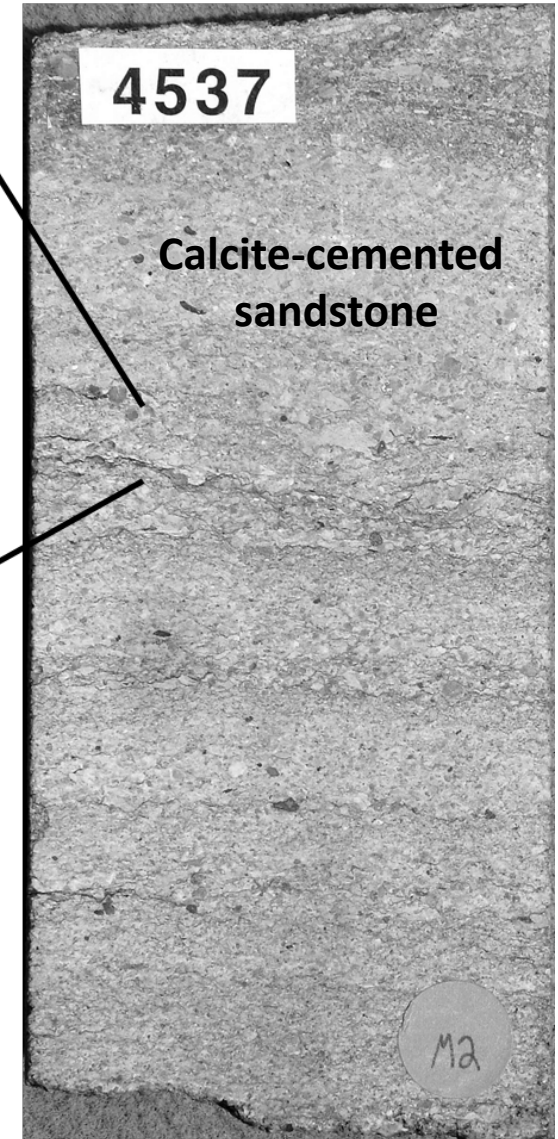


# Marine influenced Upper Morrow deposition



Bryozoan fossil fragment

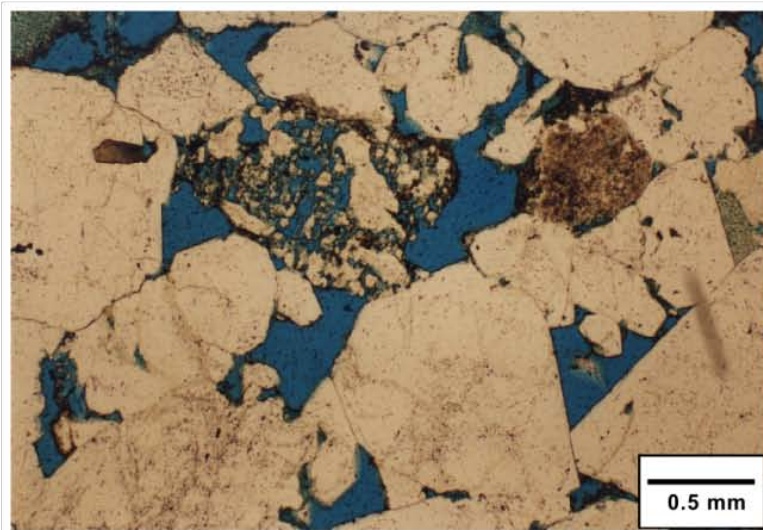
Marine indicators in the  
Upper Morrow valley fill



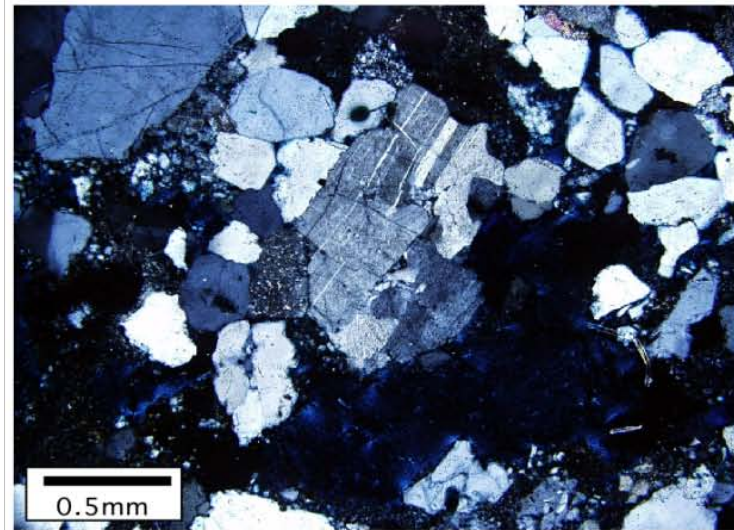




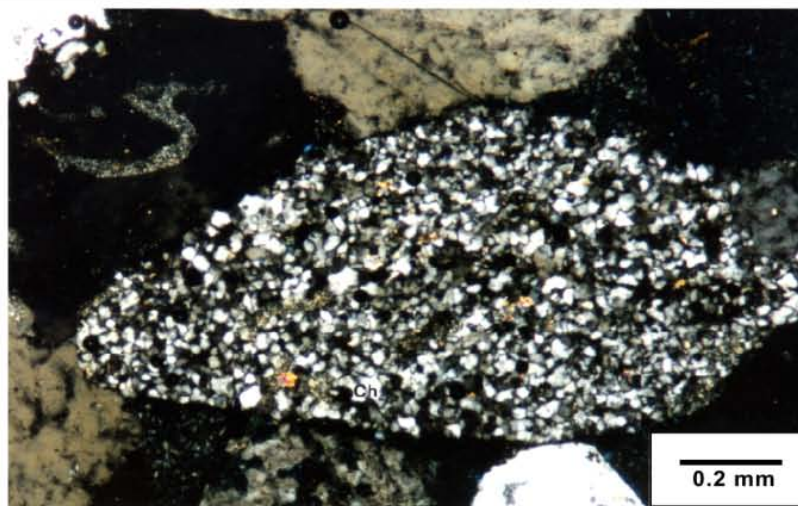
# Upper Morrow: detrital constituents/composition



Primary and secondary porosity



Plagioclase feldspar and quartz



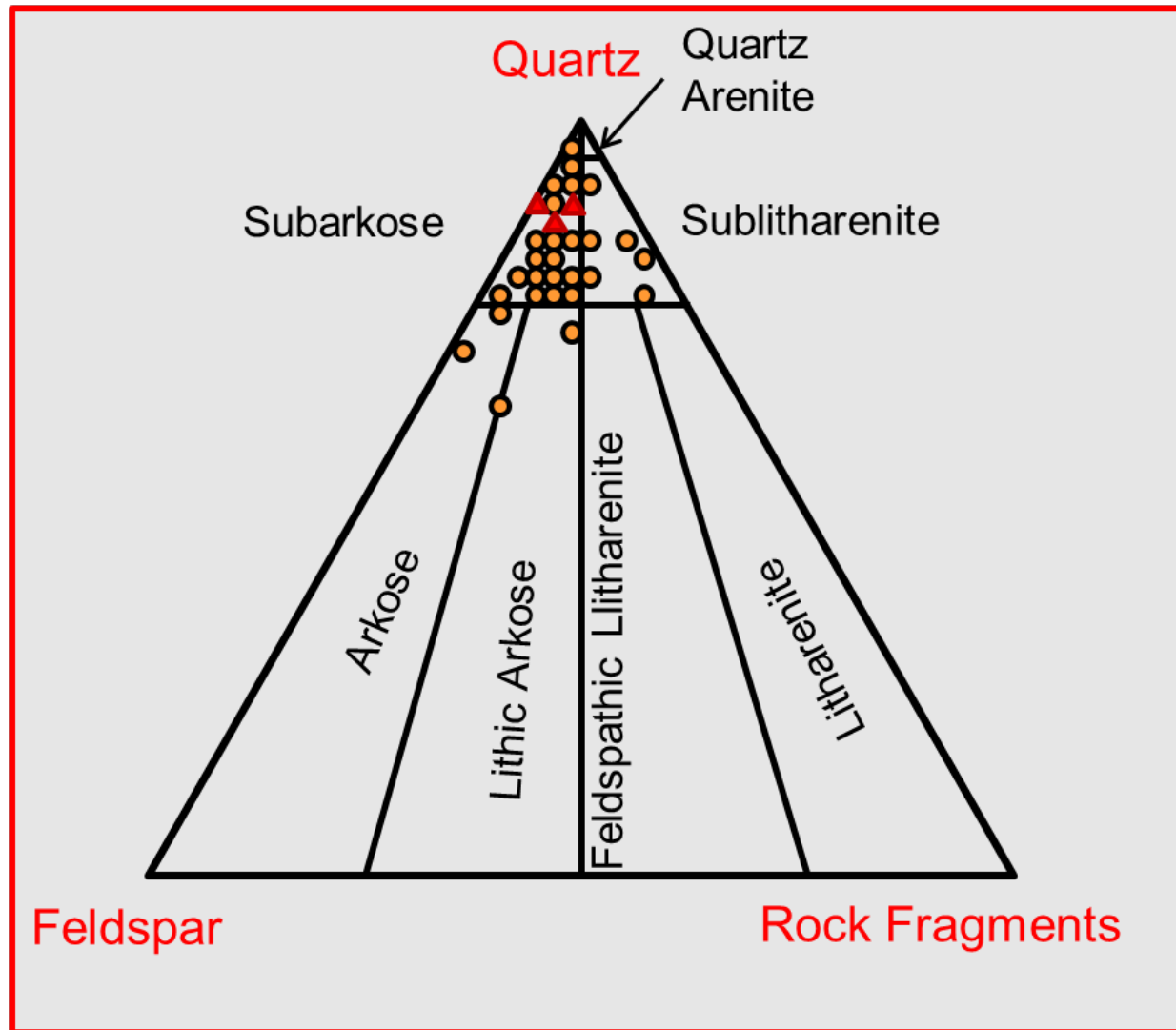
Chert: sedimentary rock fragment



Granophyre: igneous rock fragment



# Classification of Upper Morrow sandstones

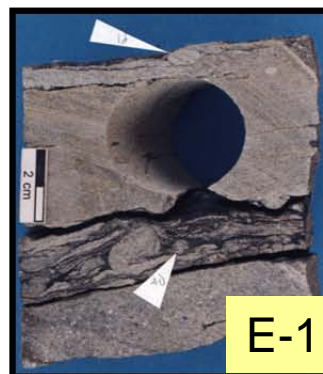
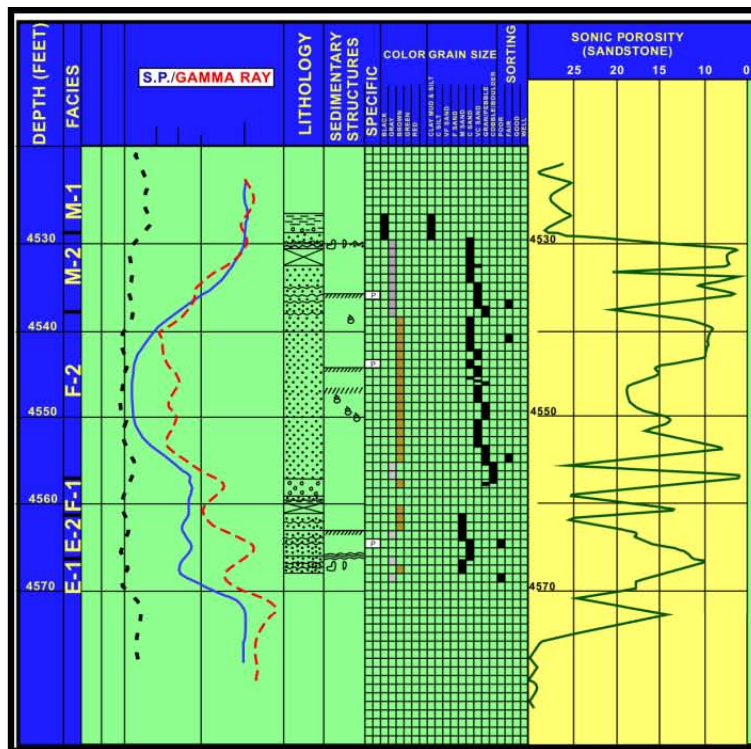


(After Gerken, 1992, Harrison, 1990, and Munson, 1989)





# Upper Morrow depositional facies





# Facies-dependent reservoir quality

	Lithofacies	Sedimentary Structures Depositional Facies	Generalized Reservoir Quality
Fluvial	F-1	<b>Matrix-supported paraconglomerate</b> <i>High current-energy stream</i>	<b>Poor: cement and pseudomatrix</b>
	F-2	<b>Coarse-grained sandstone &amp; Conglomerate w/ stacked, Fining-upward sequences</b> <i>High energy braided stream, mid-lower channel fill</i>	<b>Fair to Good: abundant primary and enlarged secondary porosity</b>
	F-3	<b>Rippled &amp; low angle cross-bedded Fine to coarse grained sandstone</b> <i>Meandering stream, upper channel fill</i>	<b>Fair to Good: porosity reduction by cementation and pore-filling kaolinite</b>
	F-4	<b>Fine-grained sandstone, Shale and coaly intervals</b> <i>Channel abandonment</i>	<b>Poor to fair: intergranular space filled with clay- and silt-rich matrix</b>
Estuarine	E-1	<b>Burrowed shale and fine-grained sandstone</b> <i>Mid-estuarine, low energy environment</i>	<b>Poor: low porosity and permeability are result of cement and pseudomatrix</b>
	E-2	<b>Burrowed fn-gr. sandstone &amp; Coarse-grained sandstone</b> <i>Upper-estuarine, fluvial and tidal processes</i>	<b>Fair: primary and enlarged intergranular porosities are common</b>
Marine	M-1	<b>Fossiliferous shale/claystone</b> <i>Low-energy, restricted offshore shelf setting</i>	
	M-2	<b>Fossiliferous sandstone</b> <i>High-energy shallow marine setting</i>	<b>Poor: extensive calcite cement</b>



## Observations: Upper Morrow

- Fluvial channel system (southerly flowing)
- Delta-fringe deposits are not evident
- Valleys contain evidence of estuarine and marine sediments
- Sand appears to be confined to channels (No delta-plain or interdistributary deposits)
- Detrital composition Includes chert, microcline and granitic rock fragments (No schistose metamorphics)





# Comparative sand supply and types of deposits

- Cherokee: Oversupplied with sand-sized sediment, lower mudrock to sandstone ratio
- Cherokee: Extensive multistoried channel-filling (fluvial) sandstone units, sandy delta-fringe and delta-plain deposits; sandy marine deposits including shelf bars, slope-channel fills and basin-floor fans
- Upper Morrow: Undersupplied with sand, higher mudrock to sandstone ratio
- Upper Morrow: Rare delta-fringe or plain deposits; sandy marine deposits limited to channel boundaries. Channel fill is heterogeneous and contains fluvial, estuarine, and marine deposits.

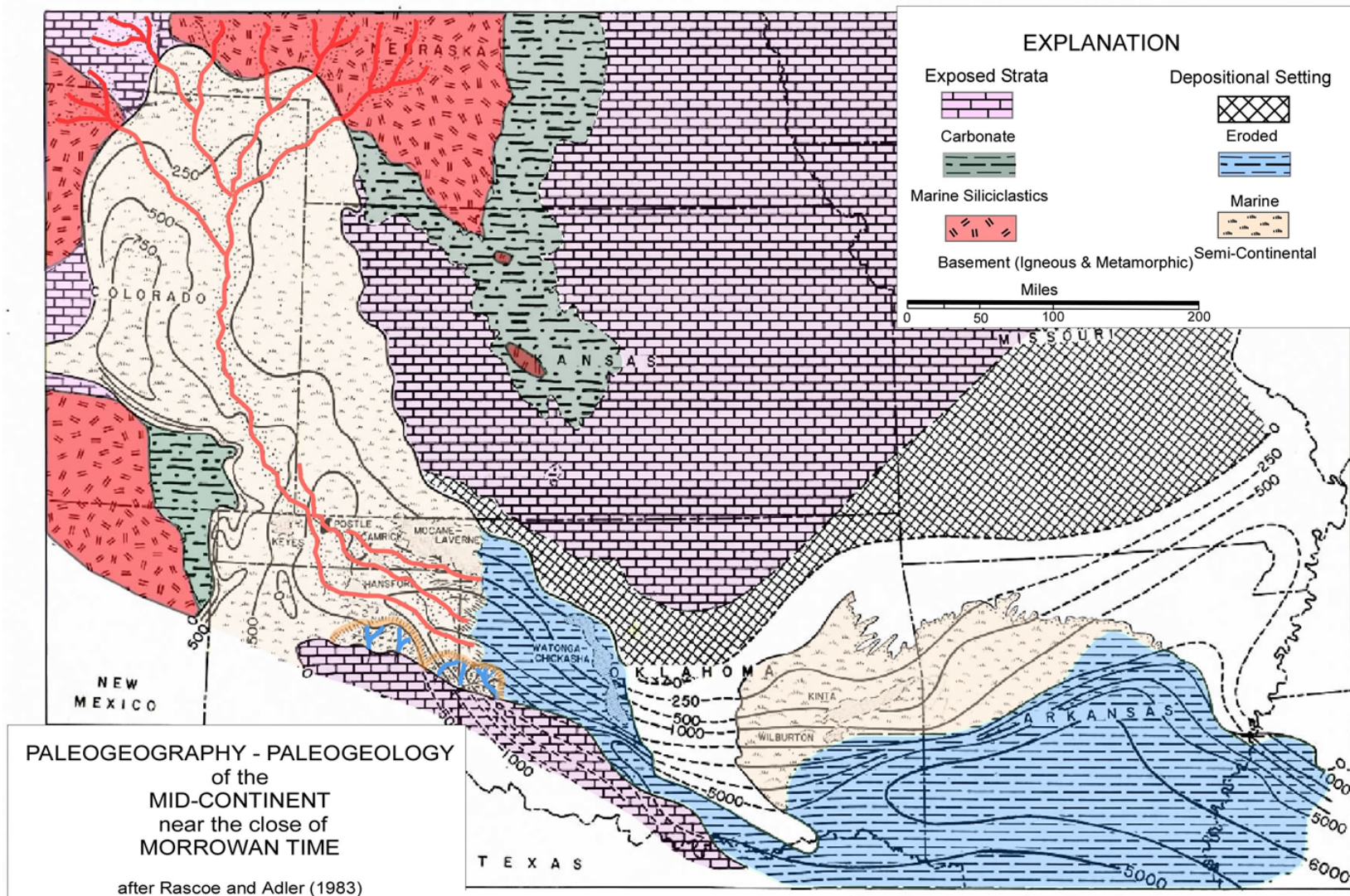


# Comparative Composition: Upper Morrow and Cherokee

- Cherokee: Metamorphic rock fragments important detrital framework grains
- Metamorphic rock fragments and feldspars critical to genesis of secondary porosity in sandstones
- Upper Morrow: granitic-rock fragments important detrital-framework grains; chert more abundant.
- Dissolution of granitic-rock fragments and chert contributes to secondary porosity



# Upper Morrowan Paleogeography

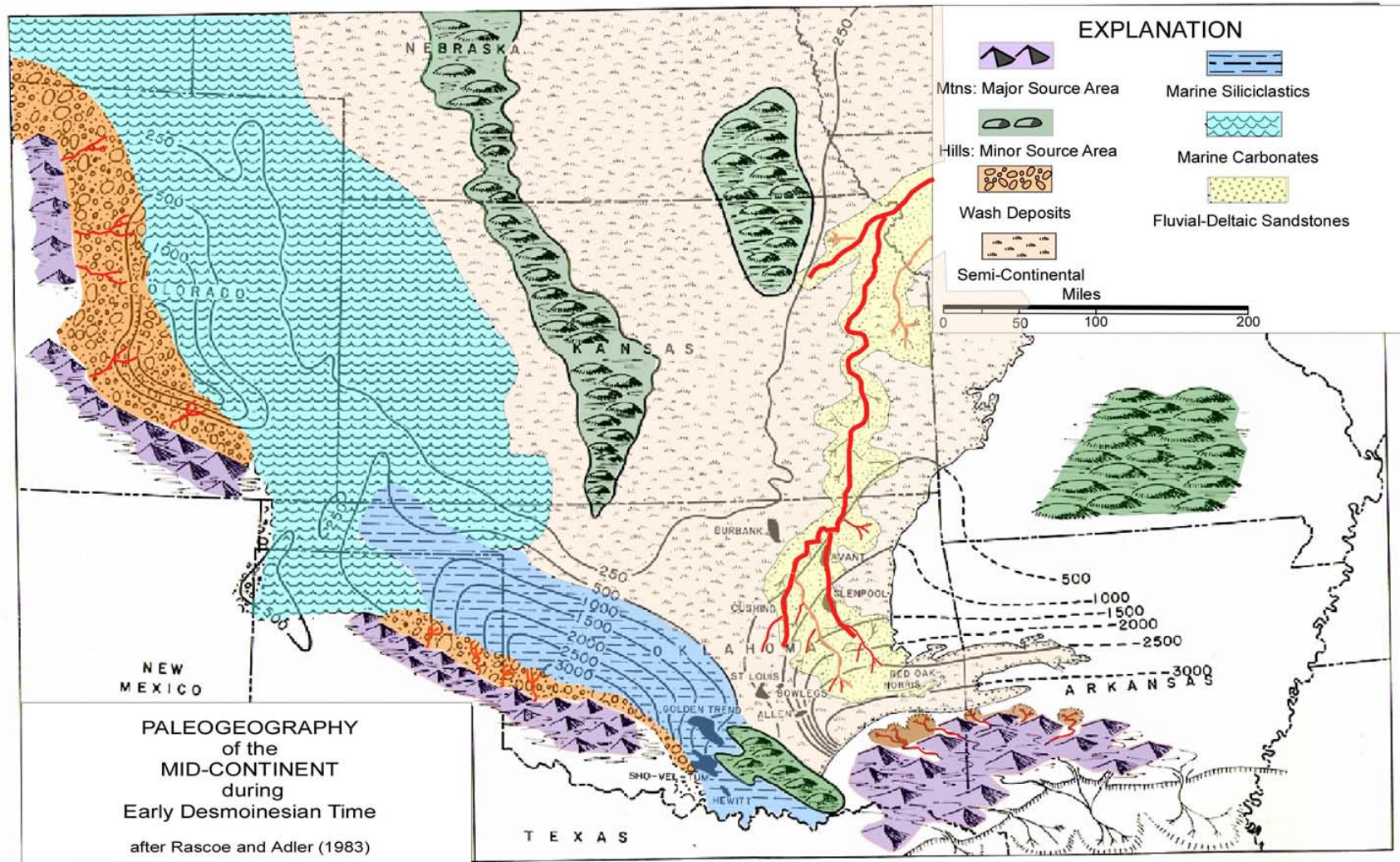


After Rascoe and Adler (1983)





# Early Desmoinesian Paleogeography – Bartlesville Sand



After Rascoe and Adler (1983)



# Drainage Basin Attributes

## Morrow

Size: 128,700 km<sup>2</sup> (80,000 mi<sup>2</sup>) (Swanson, 1979)

Geology: Mostly sedimentary rocks: mudrocks and carbonates that weather to mud or soluble matter.  
Limited basement compared to Cherokee

## Cherokee

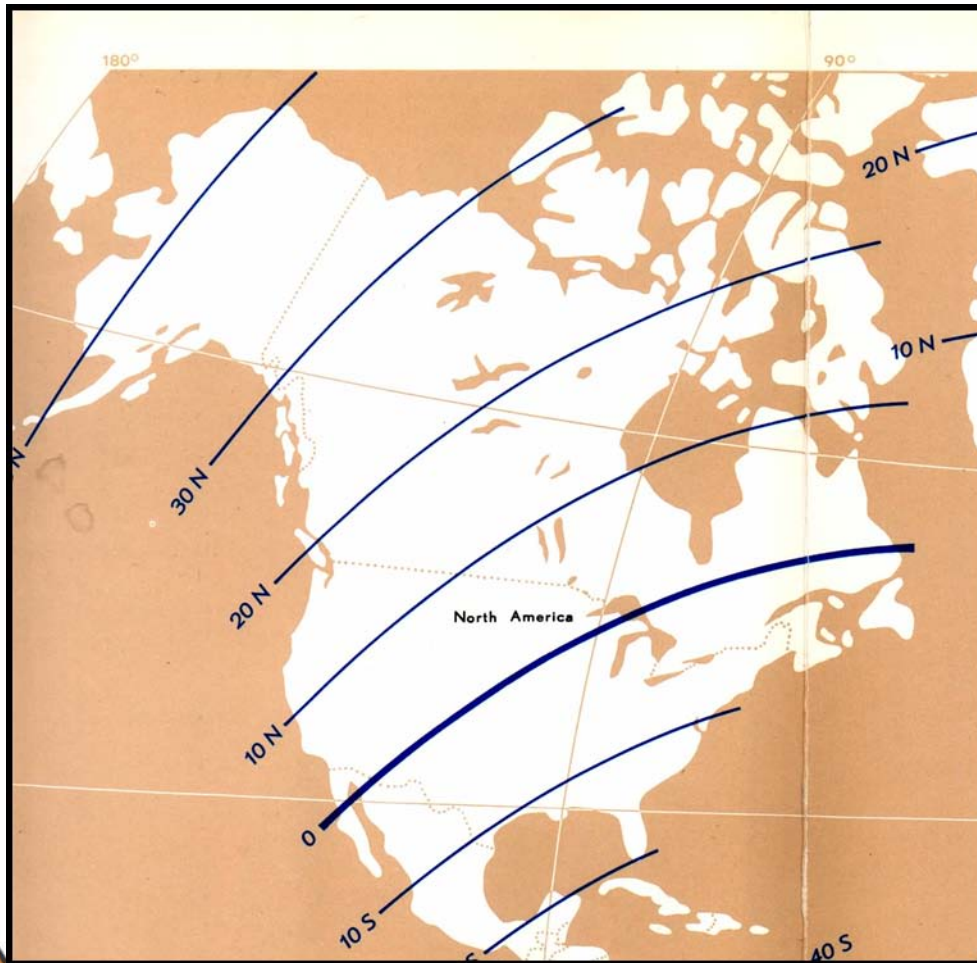
Size: > 300,000 km<sup>2</sup> (187,500 mi<sup>2</sup>)

Geology: Basement of Canadian Shield, Northern Appalachian Shield, and Southern Appalachians?





# Climate: Paleolatitudes during Carboniferous



Orogenic belts that formed after the Morrow were prominent during Cherokee deposition and could have intensified monsoon effects, creating wet/dry cycles with larger precipitation events.

Desmoinesian (Cherokee) was wetter than Morrowan (Phillips et al., 1985).

Equatorial Climate: Floral evidence suggests tropical conditions (Habicht, 1979)



# Topography during the Pennsylvanian



Early Pennsylvanian



Late Pennsylvanian



# Summary and Interpretation

- **Cherokee** dispersal systems were **well supplied** with **sand-derived** from **shield rocks** in **larger drainage basin**. **Common source** for all Cherokee sandstones.
- **Lowstand** deposits are **submarine fans** (RF) and **lowstand deltas** (SK).
- **Transgressive** deposits are **dominantly fluvial**, marine influence is limited.
- **Morrow** dispersal system was comparatively **undersupplied with sand** derived primarily from **smaller drainage basin** with basement rocks of the **Ancestral Rockies, Cambridge Arch, & Central KS Uplift**. Mud and **chert** came from weathered **sedimentary rocks**.
- **Lowstand** deposits are primarily **channel-lag conglomerates** and **sand** was transported into Morrow sea and **diluted by mud**.
- **Transgressions captured sand** in **valleys**: valleys flooded, generating **fluvial, estuarine** and **marine** deposits.
- Climatic favors **accelerated weathering in Cherokee**, and monsoon pattern could have provided seasonal discharge to carry larger sediment volumes.



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