GEOCHEMISTRY AND AGE OF THE WESTERN MÉLANGE BELT IN THE CASCADE FOOTHILLS AND EASTERN PUGET LOWLANDS OF WASHINGTON STATE: A RECORD OF MULTIPLE MESOZOIC ARC TERRANE ACCRETIONS

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Regional geologic map of northwestern Washington.

Note the western mélange belt (WM) on the map in blue.

Also highlighted are the De Roux unit, in the central Cascades, and the Russell Ranch complex, in the Rimrock Lake inlier.

Diagram modified from Brown and Dragovich (2003) and MacDonald et al. (2017)
The western mélange belt was created by lumping numerous units with similar lithology and metamorphic grade (Frizzell et al., 1987).

E.G., Old Metamorphic Series, in part (Carithers and Guard, 1945), Olo Mountain Unit, in part, Sultan Unit, Stillaguamish Group, and Woods Creek intrusive bodies (Danner, 1957).

The units not placed in the western mélange belt became the eastern ménage belt (slightly older & more ultramafic rocks).

Silberling et al. (1987) placed the western mélange belt in the Olney Pass terrane; and, correctly noted the mélange consists of outcrop- to mountain-size phacoids of sedimentary rocks with less common meta-igneous rocks.
Summary of ages from the western mélange belt. Time scale from Ogg et al. (2016)

Fossil ages range from Middle Jurassic to Lower Cretaceous. Permian limestone is interpreted to be exotic. Igneous ages are Middle to Late Jurassic.

Fossil ages from Danner (1957; 1963; 1966), and Tabor et al. (2002) Igneous ages from Whetten et al. (1980), Frizzell et al. (1987), Tabor et al. (1993; 2002).
Western mélange belt undivided

- Metavolcanics
- Greenschist
- Metasedimentary
- Phyllite
- Metagabbro
- Metatronndhjemite

Fault zones
Structural block diagram showing the Sultan River and Lake Chaplain thrusts bounding the Lake Chaplain nappe of Dragovich et al. (2014, 2015).
Western mélange belt sandstone point-count data from Jett and Heller (1988).

A) $Q_m$–$F$–$L_t$ diagram after Dickinson et al. (1983).

B) $Q$–$F$–$L$ diagram after Dickinson et al. (1983).


$Q$—monocrystalline quartz + polycrystalline quartz + chert; $F$—feldspar (all plagioclase in these samples); $L$—unstable lithics; $Qm$—monocrystalline quartz; $L_t$—total polycrystalline lithic fragments, including stable quartzose; $Q_p$—chert + polycrystalline quartz; $L_v$—lithic volcanics; $L_s$—sedimentary + metasedimentary lithics.
CIA = chemical index of alteration (Nesbit & Young, 1982; Nesbit et al., 1995). ICV = index of compositional variability (Cox et al., 1995).

CIA suggested the western mélangé belt sedimentary samples are weakly to intermediately weathered.

ICV suggests the western mélangé belt sedimentary samples are mostly immature and transitional between felsic and intermediate.
Provenance sedimentary geochemistry for the western mélange belt plotted on the V-Ni-Th diagram of Bracciali et al. (2007).

Arkosic facies are intermediate to felsic
Lithic facies is intermediate to mafic.

Provenance sedimentary geochemistry for the western mélange belt modified from Roser and Korsch (1988).

Arkosic facies are mostly intermediate
Lithic facies are mostly mafic.

Sedimentary geochemistry discrimination diagrams for the western mélange belt. Samples plot in the field defined by back-arc basins.

Igneous samples from the western mélange belt plotted on the Th/Yb vs. Zr/Y magmatic affinity discrimination diagram of Ross & Bédard (2009). Samples are mostly tholeiitic.


Note the strong arc geochemical signature for most samples.

Normalized values are from Sun and McDonough (1989) and McDonough & Sun (1995).
Igneous samples form the western mélange belt plotted on the Th/Yb vs. Nb/Yb diagram of Pearce (1982, 2008).

Note the primarily arc composition for most samples.

Intrusives and tuffs from the western mélange belt plotted on the Fe-number vs. SiO₂ and modified alkaline-calcic index (MALI) vs. SiO₂ diagrams of Frost et al. (2001).
Detrital zircon U-Pb ages from western mélange belt sandstones

- 74 Ma (13-35J)
- 87 Ma (WMB-1)
- 96 Ma (08-45J)
- 110 Ma (14-39S)
- 159 Ma (15-27P)
- 166 Ma (15-28AF)

Arkosic facies (Dragovich et al., 2014; Sauer et al., 2017)

Arkosic facies (Brown, 2012)

Arkosic facies (Dragovich et al., 2009)

Lithic facies (Dragovich et al., 2015; Sauer et al., 2017)

Lithic facies (Dragovich et al., 2016)

Lithic facies (Unpublished)
• Western mélange belt consists of at least two distinct arc terranes:
  • one is Jurassic
  • one is Cretaceous

• In our map area, the Jurassic arc rocks are thrust faulted over the Cretaceous arc rocks.

• Relationship between Jurassic and Cretaceous arc rocks is structural.

Dragovich et al. (2016)
Age of nappe emplacement modified from Brown (2012). The 74 ma detrital zircon age decreases the maximum age of thrusting by 13 million years.
What, if any, implications do these finds have on terrane translations? See Sauer et al. (2017)