

# Quaternary Fault and Fold Database of the United States

As of January 12, 2017, the USGS maintains a limited number of metadata fields that characterize the Quaternary faults and folds of the United States. For the most up-to-date information, please refer to the [interactive fault map](#).

## Red Canyon fault, Richards Creek section (Class A) No. 657b

Last Review Date: 2010-12-07

## Compiled in cooperation with the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology

*citation for this record:* Haller, K.M., compiler, 2010, Fault number 657b, Red Canyon fault, Richards Creek section, in Quaternary fault and fold database of the United States: U.S. Geological Survey website, <https://earthquakes.usgs.gov/hazards/qfaults>, accessed 12/14/2020 02:03 PM.

### Synopsis

**General:** Even though the largest historic earthquake in Montana resulted in surface rupture of part of this fault, little is known about its paleoseismic history. The Hebgen Lake earthquake (Mw7.3) of 1959 resulted in surface rupture on this fault and the nearby Hebgen fault [656]. The majority of published data are in reports dating from the early 1960s from studies initiated due to the 1959 Hebgen Lake earthquake.

**Sections:** This fault has 3 sections. The sections defined in this compilation are based on distinct differences in timing of most

	<p>recent surface faulting along the strike of the fault. The westernmost section [Red Canyon, 657a] ruptured in the 1959 Hebgen Lake earthquake; the other two sections [Richards Creek 657b, Maple Creek 657c] are prehistoric and are located to the east in Wyoming. The central section [657b] has postglacial offset, and the easternmost section [657c] displaces 0.63-Ma Lava Creek Tuff.</p>
<p><b>Name comments</b></p>	<p><b>General:</b> Pardee (1950 #46) noted morphology indicative of a fault-controlled range front along the northeastern side of Hebgen Lake but did not report a fault name. The earliest use of this fault name was probably from the numerous publications resulting from studies following the 1959 Hebgen Lake earthquake (Woodard, 1960 #653; Witkind and others, 1962 #633; Witkind, 1964 #247; Myers and Hamilton, 1964 #250; Witkind and others, 1964 #629; Witkind, 1969 #468). Myers and Hamilton (1964 #250) refer to the part of this fault southeast of the mouth of Red Canyon as the "Corey Spring fault zone." The Red Canyon fault extends from about 1 km northeast of the intersection of Kirkwood Creek and Hebgen fault [656], east to a point about 4 km into Wyoming and Yellowstone National Park.</p> <p><b>Section:</b> Named for Richards Creek, which flows parallel to the fault trace. The fault section is in bedrock north of the Grayling Arm of Hebgen Lake, but emerges onto surficial deposits and crosses Grayling Creek above the Parade Rest Ranch. From here, the fault continues southeast about 5 km further in a southeast direction, but becomes less conspicuous as the scarps decrease in size. It crosses U.S. Highway 191 just north of its intersection with U.S. Highway 28, and extends about 4 km eastward from Montana into Wyoming.</p> <p><b>Fault ID:</b> Refers to number 7 (Red Canyon fault) of Witkind (1975 #317), number 43 (Red Canyon fault) of Johns and others (1982 #259) and number 14 (Red Canyon fault) of Stickney and Bartholomew (1987 #85).</p>
<p><b>County(s) and State(s)</b></p>	<p>GALLATIN COUNTY, MONTANA PARK COUNTY, WYOMING</p>
<p><b>Physiographic province(s)</b></p>	<p>NORTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAINS</p>
<p><b>Reliability of location</b></p>	<p>Good Compiled at 1:125,000 scale.</p>

	<p><i>Comments:</i> Fault traces are from the surficial geology mapped at 1:62,500 by Pierce (1973 #3805) and the bedrock volcanic geology mapped by R.L. Christiansen and compiled at 1:125,000 (2001 #1784) and U.S. Geological Survey (1972 #639), further constrained by satellite imagery and topography at scale of 1:125,000. Reference satellite imagery is ESRI_Imagery_World_2D with a minimum viewing distance of 1 km.</p>
<b>Geologic setting</b>	<p>This high-angle, down-to-the-southwest, arcuate fault is one in a belt of active faults that extends westward from Yellowstone and that Pierce and Morgan (1992 #539) relate to the easterly track of the Yellowstone hotspot. The fault extends along the southwest flank of Kirkwood Ridge, continuing south along northeastern side of Red Canyon, northern side of Grayling Arm of Hebgen Lake, and extends into the glacial outwash plain west of Yellowstone basin. The fault generally parallels the strike of bedrock units (Witkind, 1964 #247; Myers and Hamilton, 1964 #250). Locally, the western section the fault follows the contact between massive limestone and thin-bedded shale (Doser, 1985 #22). Witkind (1964 #247), indicating that the net cumulative throw is several thousand feet along the central part of main fault section [657a], but the exact amount is indeterminable.</p>
<b>Length (km)</b>	<p>This section is 5 km of a total fault length of 29 km.</p>
<b>Average strike</b>	<p>N76°W (for section) versus N63°W (for whole fault)</p>
<b>Sense of movement</b>	<p>Normal</p>
<b>Dip Direction</b>	<p>S</p>
<b>Paleoseismology studies</b>	
<b>Geomorphic expression</b>	<p>A 3-m-high scarp is formed on the surface of Pinedale outwash gravel (Pierce, 1973 #3805). A fault scarp about 10-ft (3-m) high is formed on Pinedale fan gravel, and farther east, down faulting appears to control the formation of shallow lakes along Richards Creek.</p>
<b>Age of faulted surficial deposits</b>	<p>Offsets an alluvial fan formed by latest Pleistocene (20-30 ka) Pinedale outwash gravel.</p>

<b>Historic earthquake</b>	
<b>Most recent prehistoric deformation</b>	latest Quaternary (<15 ka) <i>Comments:</i> Offsets outwash deposited at glacial maximum, which is estimated to be about 20-30 ka.
<b>Recurrence interval</b>	<i>Comments:</i> At least one offset in past 20-30 k.y.
<b>Slip-rate category</b>	Less than 0.2 mm/yr <i>Comments:</i> Offset of 3 m in past 20-30 k.y yields a maximum slip rate that falls within the assigned category.
<b>Date and Compiler(s)</b>	2010 Kathleen M. Haller, U.S. Geological Survey
<b>References</b>	<p>#1784 Christiansen, R.L., 2001, The Quaternary and Pliocene Yellowstone Plateau volcanic field of Wyoming, Idaho, and Montana: U.S. Geological Survey Professional Paper 729-G, 145 p., 3 pls., scale 1:125,000.</p> <p>#22 Doser, D.I., 1985, Source parameters and faulting processes of the 1959 Hebgen Lake, Montana, earthquake sequence: <i>Journal of Geophysical Research</i>, v. 90, no. B6, p. 4537-4555.</p> <p>#259 Johns, W.M., Straw, W.T., Bergantino, R.N., Dresser, H.W., Hendrix, T.E., McClernan, H.G., Palmquist, J.C., and Schmidt, C.J., 1982, Neotectonic features of southern Montana east of 112°30' west longitude: Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology Open-File Report 91, 79 p., 2 sheets.</p> <p>#245 Murphy, L.M., and Brazee, R.J., 1964, Seismological investigations of the Hebgen Lake earthquake, <i>in</i> The Hebgen Lake, Montana, earthquake of August 17, 1959: U.S. Geological Survey Professional Paper 435-C, p. 13-17.</p> <p>#250 Myers, W.B., and Hamilton, W., 1964, Deformation accompanying the Hebgen Lake earthquake of August 17, 1959, <i>in</i> The Hebgen Lake, Montana, earthquake of August 17, 1959: U.S. Geological Survey Professional Paper 435-I, p. 55-98.</p> <p>#46 Pardee, J.T., 1950, Late Cenozoic block faulting in western</p>

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