



KLUANE NATIONAL PARK
YUKON
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THE LAST ICE SHEETS, 18 000-10 000 BC

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PLATE 1

Although the Laurentide Ice Sheet was a single confluent ice sheet throughout much of Late Wisconsinan time, it was composed of three parts: the Labradorian, Keewatin, and Foxe-Baffin sectors. There were separate flow patterns and slightly different histories of development in each sector. Hudson Ice is the term used for a major mass of Late Wisconsinan ice within and south of Hudson Bay prior to a series of rapid ice advances into bordering glacial lakes (the Coshocton surges). New Québec ice is the term for the retreating ice sheet in north-central Québec at the same time.

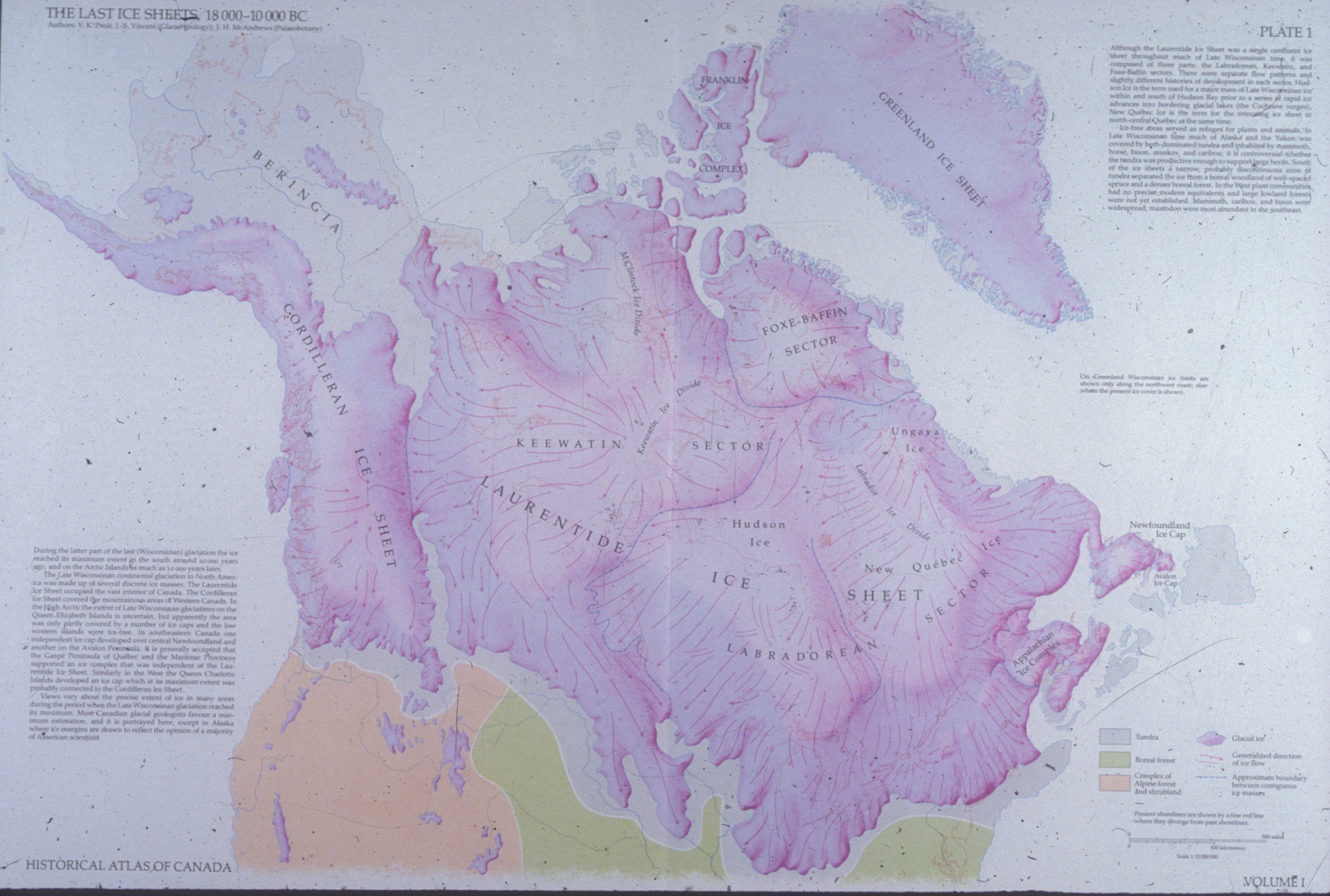
Ice-free areas served as refuges for plants and animals. In Late Wisconsinan time much of Alaska and the Yukon was covered by high-dominated tundra and inhabited by mammoth, horse, bison, muskox, and caribou; it is controversial whether the tundra was productive enough to support large herds. South of the ice sheets a narrow, probably discontinuous zone of tundra separated the ice from a boreal woodland of well-spaced spruce and a denser boreal forest. In the West plant communities had no precise modern equivalents and large lowland forests were not yet established. Mammoth, caribou, and bison were widespread; mastodon were most abundant in the southeast.

On Greenland Wisconsinan ice limits are shown only along the northwest coast, elsewhere the present ice cover is shown.

During the latter part of the last (Wisconsinan) glaciation the ice reached its maximum extent in the south around 20 000 years ago, and on the Arctic Islands as much as 10 000 years later.

The Late Wisconsinan continental glaciation in North America was made up of several discrete ice masses. The Laurentide Ice Sheet occupied the vast interior of Canada. The Cordilleran Ice Sheet covered the mountainous areas of Western Canada. In the High Arctic the extent of Late Wisconsinan glaciation on the Queen Elizabeth Islands is uncertain, but apparently the area was only partly covered by a number of ice caps and the low western islands were ice-free. In southeastern Canada one independent ice cap developed over central Newfoundland and another on the Avalon Peninsula. It is generally accepted that the Gaspé Peninsula of Québec and the Maritime Provinces supported an ice complex that was independent of the Laurentide Ice Sheet. Similarly in the West the Queen Charlotte Islands developed an ice cap which at its maximum extent was probably connected to the Cordilleran Ice Sheet.

Views vary about the precise extent of ice in many areas during the period when the Late Wisconsinan glaciation reached its maximum. Most Canadian glacial geologists favour a minimum estimation, and it is portrayed here, except in Alaska where ice margins are drawn to reflect the opinion of a majority of American scientists.









WESTERN BROOK POND
GROS MORNE NATIONAL PARK
Newfoundland and Labrador
Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador
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SAINT-BASILE
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GREEN MEADOWS
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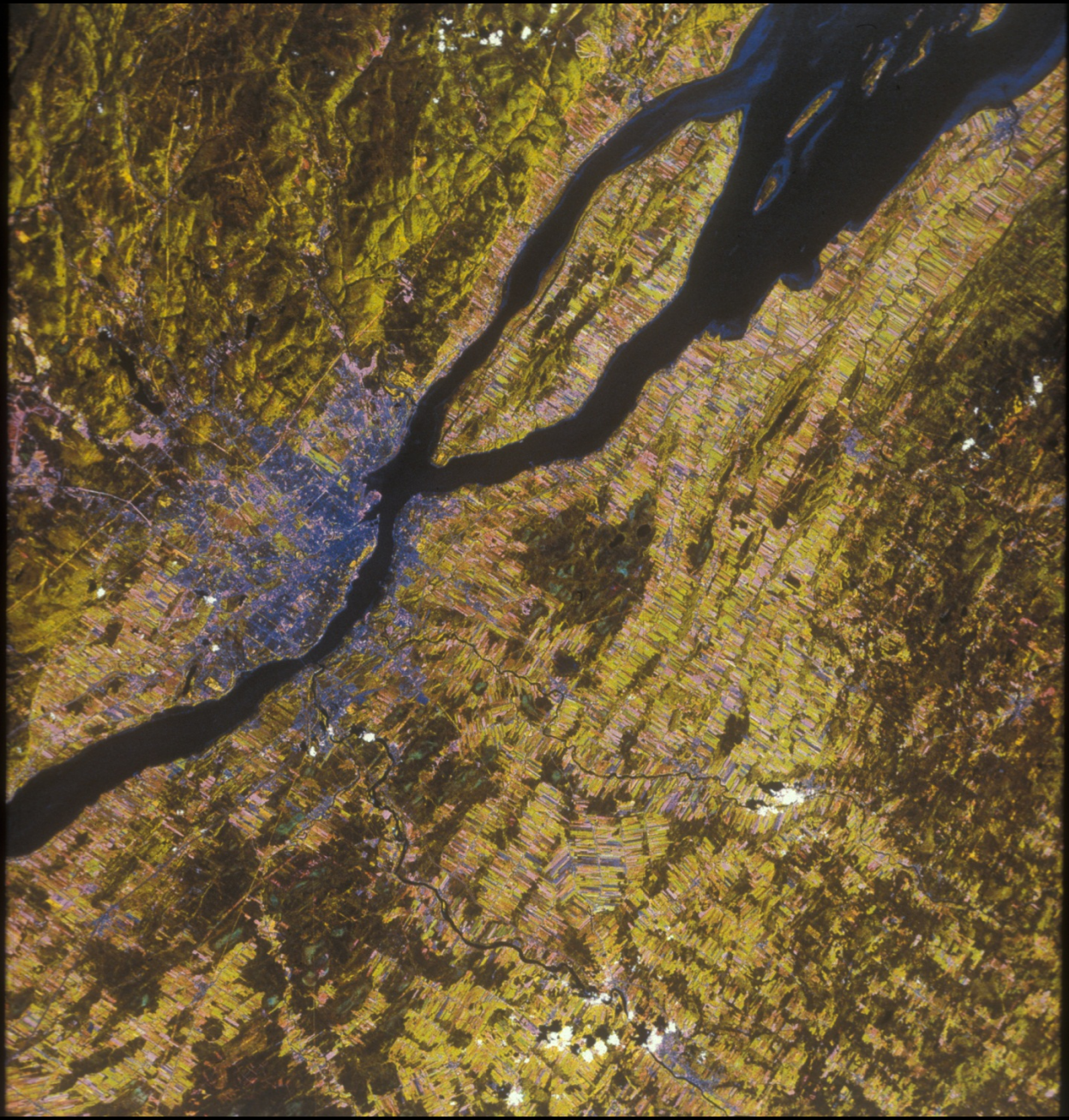


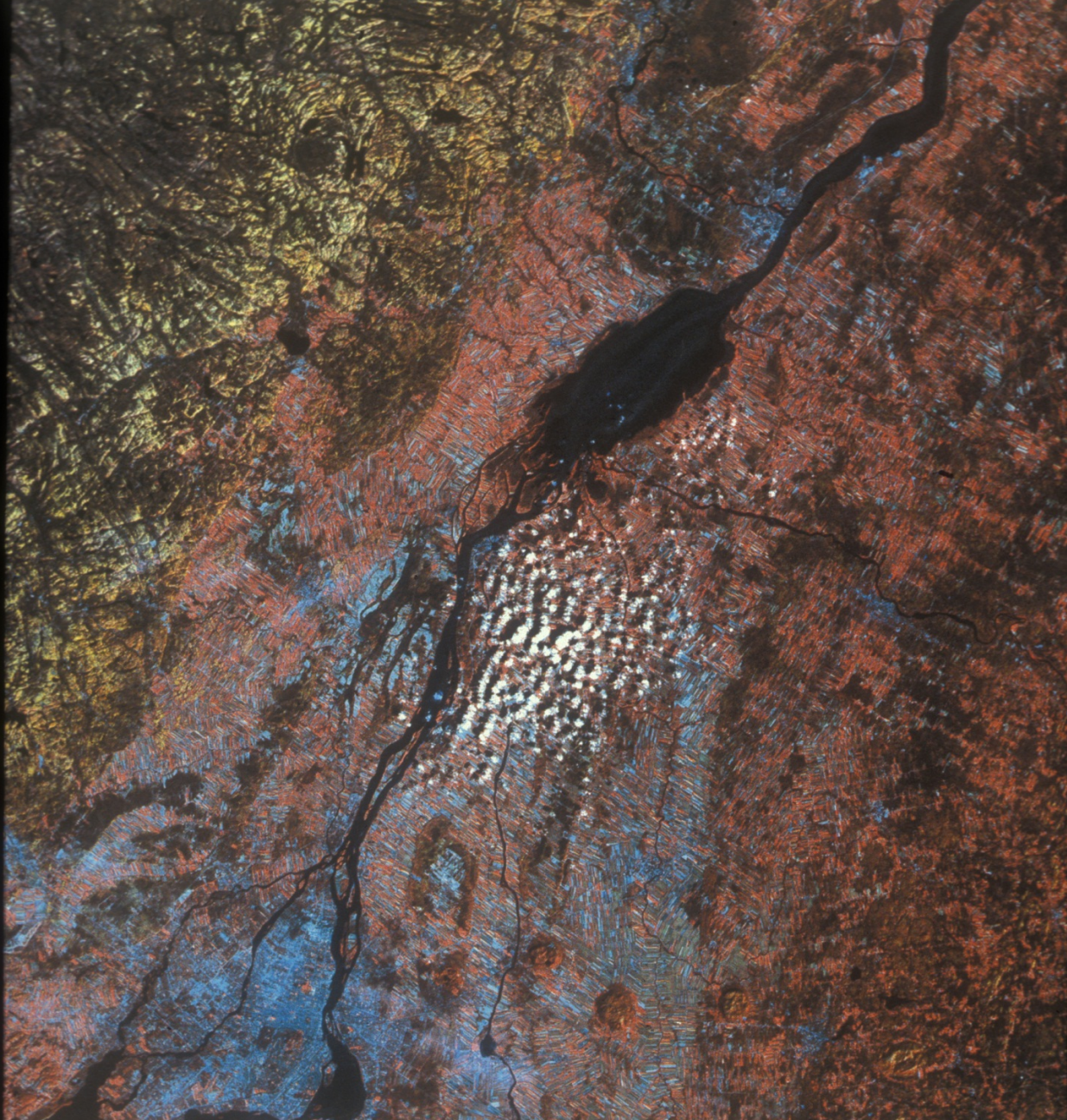
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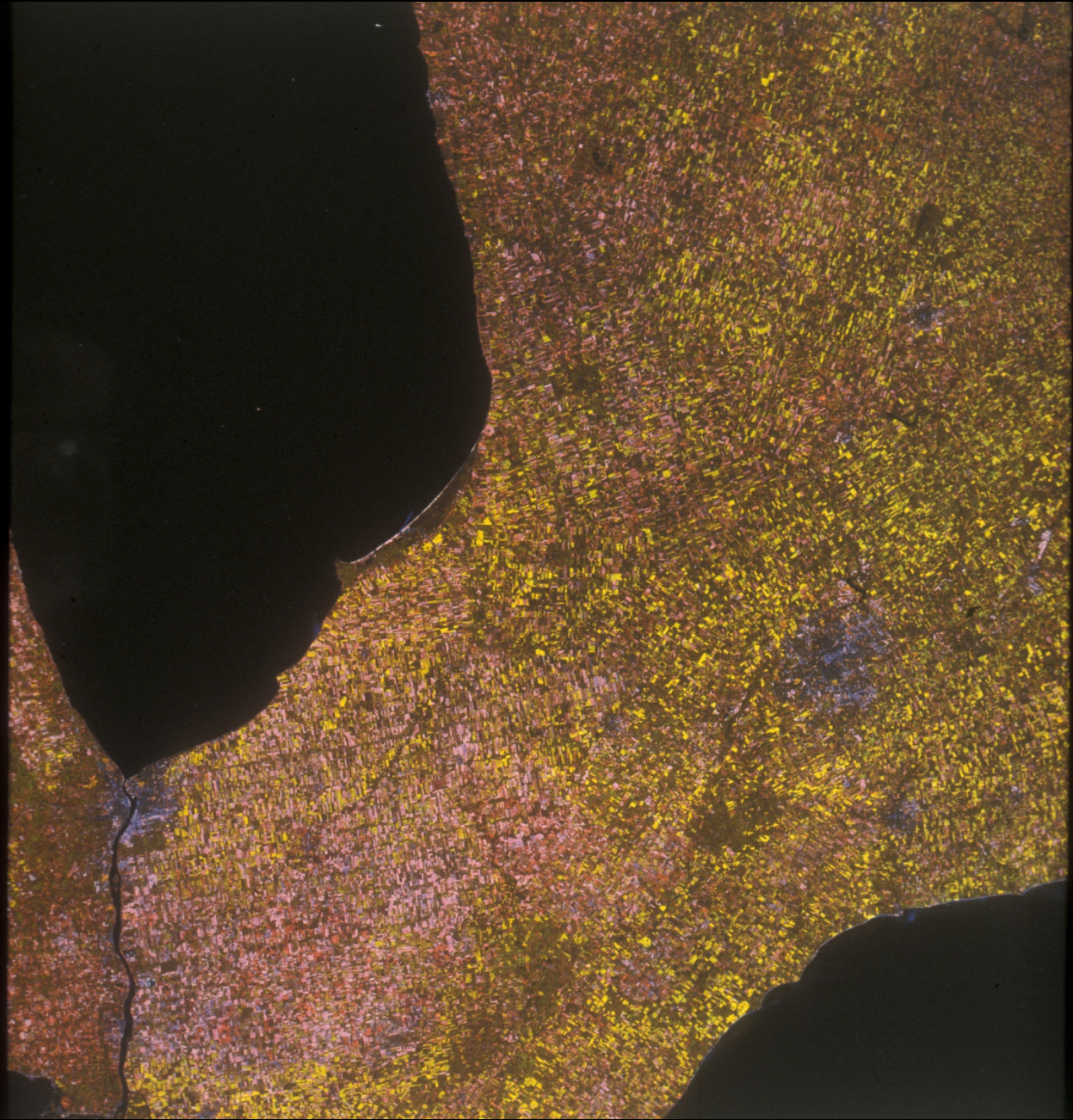


VIEUX-QUÉBEC
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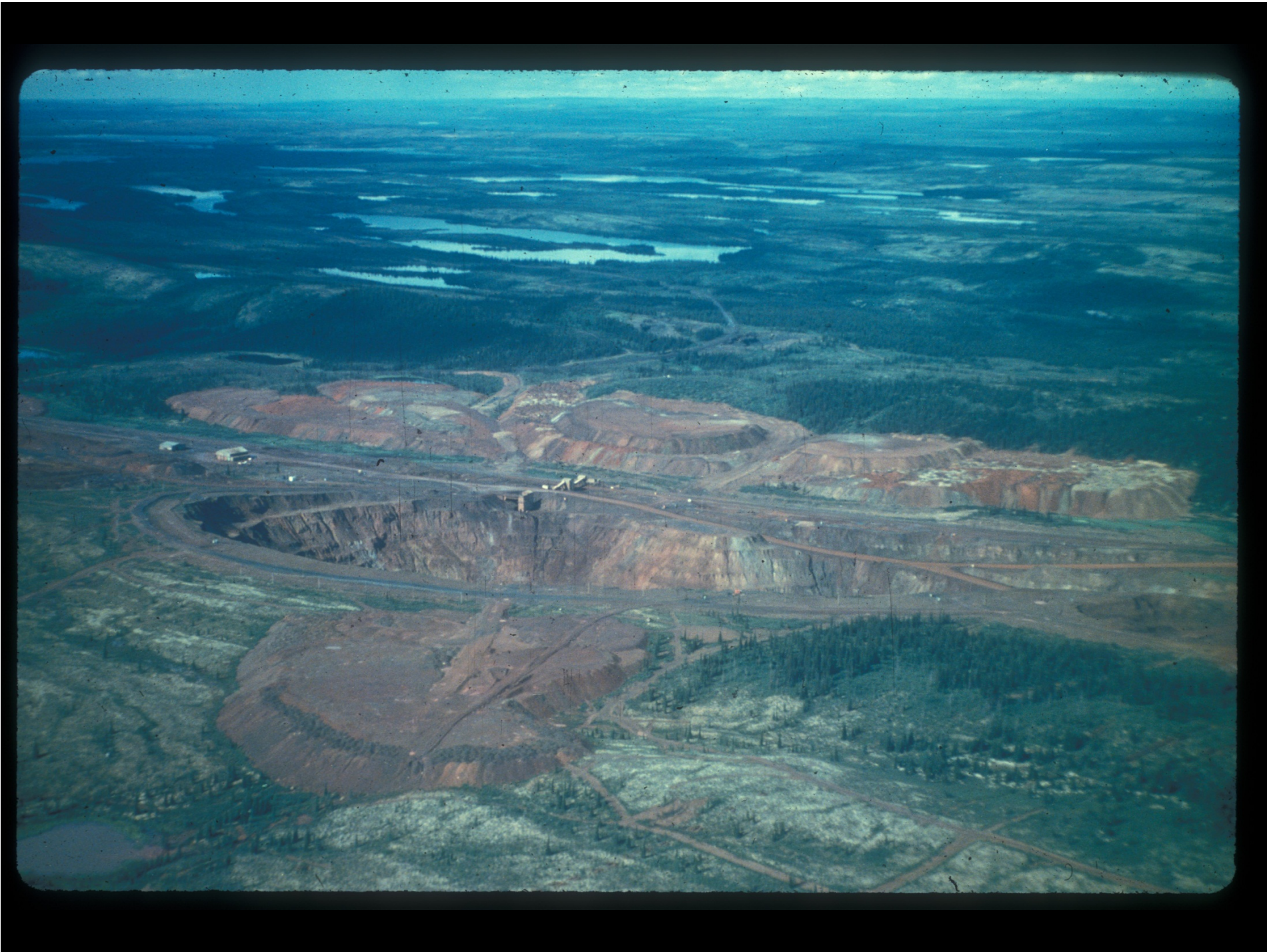




**FERGUS
ONTARIO**
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1000 ISLANDS
LA RUE MILLS
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**VALPARAISO
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CARDSTON
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