



Thor Nels Vincent Karlstrom

1920–2014

From 1949 to 1965 Thor Karlstrom served as a U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) geologist in the Alaska Terrain and Permafrost Section. His published reports, maps, and coauthored book on the Kodiak Island refugium demonstrate his innovations and artistic abilities. Karlstrom compiled the 1964 map, Surficial geology of Alaska. He coauthored the 1965 Alaska map of Pleistocene and Holocene glacial extents. Following the great 1964 Alaska earthquake, he and a colleague documented widespread ground cracking and liquefaction features in the Cook Inlet lowland. Karlstrom mapped large portions of Kenai Peninsula lowland and Caribou Hills. He produced a seminal 1964 USGS Professional Paper with semi-quantitative methodologies proposing a foundational chronology for the Pleistocene glacial history of southcentral Alaska.

Photo credit: Karlstrom family