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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SANTA CRUZ

FAULT-CONTROLLED PATTERNS OF UPLIFT IN THE CENTRAL CALIFORNIA COAST RANGE AND LASER-ABLATION DEPTH-PROFILE ANALYSIS OF ZIRCON

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

EARTH SCIENCES

by

Alexander Newton Steely

December 2016

The Dissertation of Alexander Newton Steely is approved:

Professor Jeremy Hourigan, Chair

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Tyrus Miller Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies

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ABSTRACT

FAULT-CONTROLLED PATTERNS OF UPLIFT IN THE CENTRAL CALIFORNIA COAST RANGE AND LASER-ABLATION DEPTH-PROFILE ANALYSIS OF ZIRCON

Alexander Newton Steely

The spatial pattern of uplift and long-term exhumation of the Santa Lucia range in central California is defined and the major structures responsible for this deformation are elucidated using low-temperature thermochronometry (44 apatite and 39 zircon (U-Th)/He cooling ages), geomorphic metrics of erosion, deformed late Quaternary marine terraces, geologic constraints, and a basin-subsidence analysis. Thermochronometers indicate rapid late Miocene cooling along the entire 90 km-long southwest flank of the range; $a \sim 6$ Ma onset of rapid exhumation is most consistent with available constraints. Exhumation rates are greatest NE of the San Gregorio-Hosgri fault (SGHF), decrease away from it, and are low across its trace to the SW. Deformed marine terraces also indicate a strong fault control on uplift; terrace elevations are 3–5 times higher directly NE of the SGHF and decay to baseline values over a ~5 km-wide zone; elevations drop rapidly across the fault to the SW. A geomorphic analysis using range-wide normalized channel steepness and river-profile plots of χ indicates higher rates of uplift NE of the SGHF, even when controlled for changes in lithology. Together, these data indicate that the SGHF has focused uplift and exhumation along its NE side since the late Miocene, has continued to do so in the late Quaternary, and is the primary driver of high topography and relief in the Santa Lucia range. A basin analysis indicates a cyclic pattern of uplift and subsidence over the last 80 m.y. that may be related to the emplacement of underplated schist during late Cretaceous crustal restructuring.

A multi-pulse method for single-collector ICP-MS laser ablation systems is presented that interrogates isotopic variation as a function of sample depth. The method resolves U-Pb ages in zircon with \sim 0.55 µm depth resolution and \sim 6% 2 σ uncertainty. Metrics of radiation damage, crystal-lattice distortion, and ablation depth indicate that crystal structure exerts a fundamental control on elemental fractionation and must be matched between standards and unknowns for ultimate age precision.

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Committee members Dr. Noah Finnegan and Dr. Emily Brodsky provided the inspiration to learn MATLAB by introducing me to a world where every geoscience question seems to be answerable by 'this little MATLAB script I wrote'. The Geomorphology Seminar class of 2014, led by Dr. Finnegan, was instrumental in developing some of the initial insight into the wealth of information encoded in the topography of the Santa Lucia range.

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Within this manuscript, A. Steely performed the data acquisition for U-Pb ages, software development, data collection for raman spectroscopy and vertical-scanning interferometric measurements of ablation depth, and the majority of the writing. E. Juel assisted with sample preparation and measurement of ablation pit depths. J. Hourigan supervised the research and provided extensive feedback on the mathematical description of the data-reduction process.

CHAPTER 1

PUNCTUATED CYCLES OF RAPID UPLIFT AND SUBSIDENCE OVER 80 MILLION YEARS IN THE SANTA LUCIA RANGE, CENTRAL CALIFORNIA: THE ROLE OF UNDERPLATED SCHIST IN STRAIN LOCALIZATION

ABSTRACT

The Santa Lucia range of central California exposes a nearly 8-km-thick composite section of late Cretaceous to late Miocene basin fill deposited on Salinian bedrock. Basin analysis techniques, in combination with geochronologic, thermobarometric, and thermochronometric constraints are used to document long-term cyclic patterns of vertical deformation in the range. There have been 4 major uplift and exhumation events—each with a duration of \sim 3–10 m.y.—separated by 3 periods of subsidence—with durations from 15–22 m.y. Each uplift cycle corresponds to a major tectonic event and all are marked by angular unconformities that locally reach the crystalline basement. Rapid shoaling of the basin is common to all but the first uplift cycle, which records a ~10 m.y. period of rapid exhumation that brought mid-crustal rocks to the surface. Each subsidence cycle is marked by rapid submergence of the basin to mid-bathyal depths; unconformities within these cycles are locally present, but less extensive.

The emplacement of schist—demonstrably weaker than crystalline rocks and presumably several km-thick—beneath the range in the late Cretaceous may have weakened the upper crust and focused subsequent vertical deformation. A layered model of lithospheric strength is developed as a means to explain periodic high-amplitude uplift and subsidence cycles. This model demonstrates that for realistic physical parameters, the crustal strength of the of the Salinian block is substantially limited by even a modest thickness of schist, so long as the schist resides at depths above those corresponding to fully plastic quartz flow.

INTRODUCTION

The vertical distribution of strength in continental lithosphere fundamentally shapes how and where strain is accommodated (e.g. Jackson, 2002; Burov and Watts, 2006). Our general model is that brittle deformation occurs in the upper crust until conditions—often temperature—cause ductile deformation mechanisms such as dislocation creep to be favored with greater depth (Byerlee, 1978; Brace and Kohlstedt, 1980; Kohlstedt et al., 1995). Such relationships indicate that the strength of the upper crust reaches a maximum at the mid-crustal depths where temperatures permit crystal-plastic deformation to dominate (e.g. Burov, 2011). In these models, rheologic stratification in the upper crust is almost always neglected because brittle behavior at the crustal scale depends little on lithology (Byerlee, 1978), and the nearly ubiquitous presence of quartz in continental rocks ensures that ductile behavior will largely be controlled by the rheology of quartz (Burov, 2011).

The presence of mica-bearing schist at the surface and at shallow depths throughout a large swath of central and southern California challenges the simple model of monolithologic upper and middle crustal rheology. Deformation experiments of biotite and muscovite schist indicate that it is many-times weaker than typical quartz-bearing continental rocks, and can deform plastically at depths of only 2–3 km (Shea and Kronenberg, 1992). There is a growing body of evidence that much of the Mojave Desert, the Transverse Ranges, and the Salinian block are underlain by such schist (Barth et al., 2003; Jacobson et al., 2007; Chapman et al., 2010). Collectively known as the Pelona–Orocopia–Rand schists, they are the manifestation of subduction erosion and tectonic underplating during Laramide shallow subduction (Saleeby, 2003; Ducea et al., 2009; Chapman et al., 2012). Thus, the rheologic conditions of many large crustal blocks throughout California may not be well represented by a simple, unlayered model of crustal strength. Furthermore, if these blocks are indeed much weaker than surrounding regions, they may serve to focus strain, and perhaps may even provide a first-order control on the location of major fault systems.

To evaluate how underplated schist may contribute to the localization of strain in the lithosphere, a layered rheologic model is developed to calculate yield strengths for a variety of scenarios, including the presence of underplated schist. One of the most significant predictions of the model is that mid-crustal strength can be completely destroyed by even a moderate thickness of schist if it lies within a critical depth window. If surrounded by stronger blocks, such a reduction in strength would tend to localize strain within the weaker block. The consequence of such strain localization would be that regions with underplated schist preserve evidence for greater amounts of strain than stronger regions with a similar tectonic history.

This prediction is tested in the Santa Lucia range of central California, where a nearly 8-km-thick late Cretaceous through late Miocene sedimentary basin was deposited on crystalline bedrock underlain by schist. During this time, the region experienced several major tectonic events, providing ample opportunity for the accumulation of strain. A subsidence analysis of the basin is developed and combined with constraints on bedrock crystallization, metamorphism, and exhumation to define the pattern of vertical deformation over the last ~80 m.y. These results are then compared against evidence of vertical deformation in the southern San Joaquin basin which lacks the same underplated schist but was exposed to a similar tectonic history. The data appear to support the prediction that strain is localized in regions with underplated schist, but several outstanding questions remain.

GEOLOGIC SETTING

The bedrock geology of the Santa Lucia range (Fig. 1-1) is characterized by high-grade metamorphic and deep-seated anhydrous igneous rocks (Compton, 1960; 1966a; Wiebe, 1966; Ross, 1976; Dibblee, 1974; 1979). The crystalline rocks are Late Cretaceous in age (Mattinson, 1978; Kistler and Champion, 2001; Barth et al., 2003; Colgan et al., 2012) and contain roof and screen pendants of marble and quartzite of the Paleozoic Sur Series (Trask, 1926; Wiebe, 1966; Ross, 1976). The Late Cretaceous schist of Sierra de Salinas crops out in the northeastern part of the range (Ross, 1976; Dibblee, 1974; 1979) and is the northernmost member of the Pelona-Orocopia-Rand schist—metasediments underplated during the Late Cretaceous (Barth et al., 2003; Grove et al., 2003; Kidder and Ducea, 2006; Chapman et al., 2010). Together, the crystalline rocks form an elongate belt of moderately to deeply exhumed Sierran basement—known as the Salinian block—that has been tectonically excised from its former location in the Mesozoic Sierra Nevada arc (Graham, 1978; Page, 1981; Dickenson, 1983). Restoration of slip along the San Andreas fault (e.g. Powell, 1993) partially restores the Salinian block to its original location, but further inboard displacement is required based on isotopic, thermobarometric, petrologic, and regional geologic constraints (e.g. Chapman et al., 2012). The structure responsible for this additional movement is most likely the Nacimiento fault, which separates plutonic and amphibolite–granulite-facies metamorphic rocks on the north from greenschist–blueschist-facies Franciscan mélange on the south (Ross, 1976; Dibblee, 1979; Hall, 1991; Page et al., 1998; Dickenson et al., 2005).

Figure 1-1. Generalized geologic map and cross section of the Santa Lucia range, central California. Geology and faults from Jennings and Bryant (2010) and Jennings et al. (2010). Simplified traces of the San Andreas and San Gregorio–Hosgri faults in red.

Substantial lithospheric reorganization occurred during the Late Cretaceous to Paleocene in the region that would later become the Mojave Desert, Transverse Ranges, and the Salinian block (Jacobson et al., 2007; Saleeby et al., 2007; Chapman et al., 2010). Rapid upper-crustal attenuation and exhumation in the Santa Lucia range brought >7.5 kbar and 850° C rocks to the surface over a 10 m.y. period from \sim 80–70 Ma, at rates of 2–3 mm/yr (Chapman et al., 2010). It was during this period that the schist of Sierra de Salinas was eroded from crystalline highlands, deposited on the down-going plate, subducted, and re-laminated at the base of the crust; the schist is now juxtaposed beneath the crystalline rocks that presumably provided the detritus for the schist protolith (Grove et al., 2003; Jacobson et al., 2011). It is hypothesized that these relationships are the result of subduction of a thick, buoyant, volcanic plateau during the transition to shallow Laramide-style subduction (Saleeby, 2003; Chapman et al., 2012).

The Late Cretaceous crustal restructuring quickly led to the accumulation of several kilometers of Late Cretaceous to Paleocene coarse-grained marine and non-marine basin fill (Fig. 1-2) that was deposited within normal-fault bound half grabens in the Santa Lucia and nearby La Panza ranges (Vedder and Brown, 1968; Ruetz, 1979; Graham, 1979; Dibblee, 1979; Grove, 1993). Marine deposition appears to have become more widespread by latest Paleocene through Eocene time, but major erosional and angular unconformities—and rapid changes in paleobathymetry—indicate several periods of subsidence and uplift during this time (Ruetz, 1979; Graham, 1976; 1979; Grove, 1993).

Marine basins rapidly shoaled at the end of the Eocene, a regional unconformity was developed, and the basins were completely re-submerged several m.y. later (Graham, 1976; Nilsen, 1981). This basin reorganization appears to precede the initial interaction of the Pacific and North America plates at ~30–28 Ma (e.g. Atwater and Stock, 1998; McQuarrie and Wernicke, 2005). The reason for this is not immediately clear, but is perhaps due to the proximity of the Pacific–Farallon spreading center and the subduction of young oceanic crust and (or) may be related to proto-San Andreas deformation (e.g. Graham, 1979).

Miocene paleogeography is complicated in the Santa Lucia range and Salinas Valley (Graham, 1976; 1978; 1979). In general, much of the range subsided and accumulated as much as 2.5 km of shallow to deep-marine deposits of the Monterey Formation (Graham,

Generalized stratigraphy of the Santa Lucia Range

Figure 1-2. Generalized stratigraphy and paleobathymetry of the central Santa Lucia range near Indians Ranch. Color of unconformity indicates depth of erosion: pink, crystalline basement; blue, Paleocene–Eocene units; brown, Oligocene units. Data are from Graham (1976; 1978; 1979), Ruetz (1979), Dibblee (1974; 1979), Seiders et al. (1983), Grove (1993), and Anderson et al. (2006).

1978; Dibblee, 1976; 1979). Local emergent highs formed and subsided along the trace of the Reliz–Rinconada fault, indicating fault activity (Graham, 1978). Deposits of Monterey Formation flank the currently exposed crystalline core of the Santa Lucia range to the northwest, northeast, and southeast, and an incomplete faulted section is exposed in the central-northwest part of the range (Dibblee, 1974; Rosenberg and Wills, 2016). However, the thickness of Miocene deposits in the central and southwestern parts of the range—if any—remains uncertain. A regional-scale Pliocene regression is recorded by subaerial clastic progradation that commonly contains recycled Miocene basin fill clasts (e.g. Page et al., 1998).

BASIN SUBSIDENCE ANALYSIS

METHOD, SOURCES OF DATA, AND UNCERTAINTY

The thickness and age of layers in a sedimentary basin provide first-order constraints on the subsidence rate of the basin through time (Mial, 2000). A simple plot of sediment thickness through time can provide some insight into the basin-forming processes, however, two main processes reduce the usefulness of such an approach. The first is that the measured thickness of sedimentary units is an underestimate of their thickness during deposition because of subsequent burial, compaction, and lithification (e.g. Steckler and Watts, 1978; Sclater and Christie, 1980). The second is that the addition of sediment to a basin causes additional subsidence through isostatic compensation. Calculating and removing these two effects forms the basis for a backstripping analysis and provides a more-reasonable estimate of the subsidence history of the basin that can then be related to external processes (e.g. Steckler and Watts, 1978).

To calculate the history of subsidence in the Santa Lucia range, we use the MATLAB-based program BasinVis 1.0 (Lee et al., 2016), which assumes an Airy-type isostasy. Given the geologic history of the range and the modern-day presence of a closely spaced network of faults, neglecting the lateral strength of the crust is more reasonable than trying to establish a basis for its flexural strength. We use the sea-level curves of Haq et al. (1988), and the porosity-depth relationships of Sclater and Christie (1980). The stratigraphic data used in the subsidence analysis are shown in Figure 1-2 and Table 1-1, and are compiled from Graham (1976; 1978; 1979), Ruetz (1979), Dibblee (1974; 1979), Seiders et al. (1983), Grove (1993), and Anderson et al. (2006).

Table 1-1. Stratigraphic data used in the subsidence analysis.

The stratigraphy of the central Santa Lucia range is complex, with imprecise age control, laterally varying unit thicknesses, and many regionally extensive unconformities (e.g. Ruetz, 1979; Graham, 1978; 1979; Dibblee, 1979). Three unconformities within the stratigraphy span 1–2.5 m.y. and for these we estimate that there was no sedimentation or erosion and use a linear interpolation of water depth. For the ~3-m.y.-long Paleocene–Eocene unconformity, we assume that there was no water in the basin—consistent with evidence of substantial uplift and erosion—but do not specifically account for any amount of subaerial erosion that may have occurred. Because of these simplifying assumptions, the calculated uplift rates for these periods are likely a minimum if there was relatively little submarine erosion of the basin stratigraphy. An additional complication arises from estimates of paleobathymetry in these strata (e.g. Graham, 1976; 1978; 1979), which have greater uncertainty than initially reported (S. Graham, Stanford University, oral commun., 2012). Because of this, we calculate a model using the published paleobathymetric estimates and additional models with 75% and 125% of these values to help determine the sensitivity of our model results to estimates of paleobathymetry.

RESULTS

The tectonic subsidence component of our analysis is shown in Figure 1-3 along with estimates of paleobathymetry. Two major periods of uplift and shoaling are identified by the analysis, at \sim 58–55 Ma, and between \sim 38–34 Ma; a third, \sim 5 Ma to present period is inferred by the exposure and erosion of late Miocene sediments beginning in the Pliocene (e.g. Christensen, 1965), and the late Miocene to ongoing uplift and exhumation of the range (Chapters 2 and 3). Uplift appears to have occurred more than twice as fast as subsidence, with the notable exception of very rapid subsidence from \sim 34–31 Ma. Each of the uplift events are correlated with a major change in tectonic regime, and is discussed further below.

Rates of subsidence and uplift should be viewed cautiously, however, considering the uncertainties in age (of the older units especially), the number and complexity of unconformities, and the uncertainties in paleobathymetry. For example, the uplift event at the end of the Paleocene (Fig. 1-3) is likely underestimated by our subsidence analysis because the several-m.y.-long unconformity indicates uplift, tilting, and erosion of up to 2 km of section in some locations (Graham, 1979; Ruetz, 1979). Additionally, the age of the upper-most Miocene Monterey Formation is uncertain in the Santa Lucia range; we used a relatively arbitrary value of 5 Ma because that is the age of the upper Monterey Formation to the north and northeast (e.g. Graham, 1978; Dibblee, 1979). A change in this value will alter the form of the subsidence curve since the late Miocene, but will not substantially change the overall pattern.

ESTIMATING CRUSTAL STRENGTH

METHOD AND SOURCES OF DATA

A simple 1-D model of crustal rheology with the ability to construct lithologic layering was developed to allow exploration of crustal strength for various upper- and mid-crustal scenarios. A two-slope Coulomb failure criteria was used to describe brittle behavior in the upper crust (e.g. Byerlee, 1978), whereby above confining pressures of 200 MPa the coefficient of friction (μ) is 0.6 and the cohesion is 50 MPa; at lower confining pressure, μ is 0.85 and there is no cohesion. A power-law equation for dislocation glide and creep was used to describe the plastic behavior of material in the mid to lower crust (e.g. Brace and Kohlstedt, 1980), except for mica schist, which is better described by an exponential equation (Table 1-2) (Shea and Kronenberg, 1992). The model calculates the differential stress at each depth using the hydrostatically adjusted confining pressure $(\varphi=0.36)$ and the user-defined temperature gradient. The model allows the strain rate to vary, but for comparison between models and to published strength curves, a value of 10⁻¹⁴ s⁻¹ was chosen. Material properties for a range of materials were taken from published laboratory experiments and are provided in Table 1-2.

Table 1-2. Rheologic properties of select geologic materials. A power-law equation is used to describe the bahvior of most materials except schist, which is better described by an exponential function. The sensitivity of schist relates to the temperature path and strain history of the rock. *C*, *A*, *N* and *α* are material parameters, σ_d is the differential stress, $\dot{\varepsilon}$ is the strain rate, *Q* is the activation energy, *R* is the Boltzman constant, and *T* is temperature.

Figure 1-4. Yield strength model results comparing rheologically layered upper crust with more-typical unlayered model. A). 30-km-thick continental crust with a moderate geothermal gradient behaves very differently than mica schist. B) A possible crustal cross section of the modern-day Salinian block with up to 20-km-thick upper crust overlying a 5-km-thick remnant oceanic plate and moderate geothermal gradient. The strong mid crust is very sensitive to even small amounts of schist. Rheological parameters provided in Table 1-1.

RESULTS

The most basic observation from this model—and the overall conclusion of Shea and Kronenberg (1992)—is that schist is substantially weaker than quartz-bearing crystalline rocks. For a hypothetical crustal cross section with a strain rate of 10^{-14} s⁻¹ and an upper-crustal geothermal gradient of 15° C/km, ductile behavior in schist begins at depths of ~3 km and schist is only ~1/4 as strong as quartz-rich rocks at their mid-crustal maximum (Fig. 1-4a). Depending on the depth where mica-schist-rich lithologies are found in the crust, the strength discrepancy could have wide-ranging effects on how strain is accommodated in the upper crust, for example, by serving as a ductile detachment zone at shallow depths (e.g. Zoback et al., 2002).

Such low geothermal gradients, however, are unlikely for the Santa Lucia range (e.g.

(Chapman et al., 2010), was exposed to hot asthenosphere in the Oligo–Miocene (e.g. Groome and Thorkelson, 2009), and localized late Miocene exhumation. Additionally, a simple and thick upper crust is an unlikely scenario for the Salinian block, which has been displaced from its initial location within the Mesozoic arc (e.g. Dickenson, 1983; Hall, 1991; Thompson, 1999).

Thus, a second model of crustal strength was developed (Fig. 1-4b) using geologic and geophysical cross sections of the coast range (Page et al., 1998; Thompson, 1999), and higher estimates of geothermal gradient. The general parameters of this model are a 20-km-thick upper crust that overlies a 5 km-thick oceanic plate underlain by the upper mantle, with a geothermal gradient of 25–30° C/km in the upper 20 km. As expected from the much higher geothermal gradient, the second model indicates a shoaling of the brittle-ductile transition, a decrease in the maximum differential stress, and a narrowing of the strong mid crust. The presence of schist—even as thick as 10 km—near the top of the remnant oceanic plate where it would seem most likely to occur has apparently little effect on the overall shape of the yield envelope. However, at depths normally occupied by the strongest crystalline crust—between \sim 150 $^{\circ}$ C to 300° C—the presence of schist can drastically reduce crustal strength.

DISCUSSION

INTEGRATED HISTORY OF VERTICAL DEFORMATION

IN THE SANTA LUCIA RANGE

A compilation of geochronology, thermobarometry, and thermochronology from the Santa Lucia range (Chapman et al., 2010) provides the vertical deformation history just prior to marine deposition (Fig. 1-5). Two time-temperature paths are shown, one indicates the crystallization of young plutons in the Santa Lucia range at 7.5 kbar depths followed by rapid exhumation to the surface, a result supported by older apatite and zircon ages in the northeastern part of the range (Chapter 3). The other path indicates the youngest age component of detrital zircons in the schist of Sierra de Salinas, followed by rapid burial to ~10 kbar depths and equally rapid exhumation to near the surface. This pattern—coupled with inverted metamorphic gradients in the schist (e.g. Ducea et al., 2006)—are characteristic evidence of the late Cretaceous crustal restructuring event that occurred during Laramide shallow subduction (e.g. Saleeby, 2003) and can be found in many locations in central and southern California (Chapman et al., 2010).

Figure 1-5. Integrated history of vertical deformation in the Santa Lucia range since the late Cretaceous. Constraints from geochronology, thermobarometry, and thermochronology as summarized in Chapman et al. (2010)—provide t-T paths for the crystalline bedrock and underplated schist of the range. Post-late-Cretaceous history is from the subsidence analysis presented here. Note the change in vertical scale between t-T paths and th subsidence history.

When combined with the subsidence analysis, the two datasets show that there have been 4 major uplift and exhumation events since ~80 Ma: the initial exhumation of the bedrock, two events bracketed by periods of subsidence and deposition, and the most recent and ongoing event. Each of these events lasted between ~3 and 10 m.y. and are separated by periods of subsidence that lasted between 15 and 22 m.y. Thus, there appears to be a cyclic pattern of uplift and subsidence where each uplift is both shorter in length and faster in rate than intervening periods of subsidence. Despite the strong periodic signal in these data, it seems unlikely that the cyclic pattern is the manifestation of an underlying periodic physical process, but more likely reflects the stochastic, yet somewhat rhythmic major tectonic changes over the past 80 m.y.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN UPLIFT AND TECTONIC EVENTS

Each of the uplift events is closely associated with a major change in tectonic regime. Initial late Cretaceous exhumation was likely a combination of uplift and erosion during the subduction of a buoyant volcanic plateau, followed by tectonic denudation during gravitational collapse towards the trench after the passage of the buoyant plateau (Saleeby, 2003; Chapman et al., 2012). Coarse-grained near-shore and marine sediments were deposited on this exhumed bedrock in steep normal-fault-bound crustal blocks (e.g. Ruetz, 1979; Grove, 1993) and may

reflect continuing gravitational collapse throughout the late Cretaceous and early Paleocene. The uplift event at the end of the Paleocene (Figs. 1-3 and 1-5) is perhaps related to slip along the Nacimiento fault (e.g. Dickenson et al., 2005), although whether it marks initiation or cessation of slip is uncertain. The major component of sinistral slip along the Nacimiento fault is constrained to pre-early Miocene based on an overlap sequence (Dickenson et al., 2005), but there is little definitive constraint beyond the late Cretaceous crystallization ages of Salinian plutons (Mattinson, 1978; Kistler and Champion, 2001; Barth et al., 2003) and their subsequent rapid exhumation (e.g. Chapman et al., 2010) on when the fault may have initiated.

The late Eocene to Oligocene event indicates a profound 7-m.y.-long restructuring of the basin (Figs. 1-3 and 1-5) which rapidly shoaled from >2-km-water depth, locally eroded to the crystalline basement, deposited coarse subaerial and nearshore sediment, and then rapidly re-submerged to >2-km-water depths (Dickenson, 1965; Graham, 1976; 1978; 1979; Dibblee, 1979). These events have been correlated with general 'proto-San Andreas' deformation (e.g. Graham, 1979), a hypothesis potentially supported by two additional lines of evidence. Palinspastic reconstructions (McQuarrie and Wernicke, 2005) indicate that at ~36 Ma, the Santa Lucia range—and the whole Salinian block in general—was located near where the Pacific plate would make initial contact with North America a few m.y. later, at 28–30 Ma (Atwater and Stock, 1998). The breakup of the Farallon plate into two microplates also appears to have occurred about ~28 Ma (Lonsdale, 1991; Atwater and Stock, 1998). The subduction of young and buoyant oceanic crust in the several m.y. prior to Farallon breakup and the establishment of two migrating triple junctions may provide a mechanism for uplift and disruption of basin deposystems along the most-westward parts of the continent. Together, these findings support the general idea that late Eocene to Oligocene basin restructuring in the Santa Lucia range is related to the transition from a convergent margin to transform plate boundary. Within this context, however, there is a notable lack of a strong signal in the subsidence analysis at ~23 Ma when the San Andreas fault initiated (Graham et al., 1989). This may suggest that by Miocene time the Santa Lucia range was structurally decoupled from crust to the northeast, perhaps along the Reliz-Rinconada fault.

The late Miocene to present phase of uplift is related to the increasing transpressional obliquity between the Pacific and Sierra Nevada-Great Valley plates (Page et al., 1998; Argus and Gordon, 2001; DeMets and Merkouriev, 2016). A substantial component of uplift and exhumation has been focused along the SW flank of the range adjacent to the SGHF (Chapters 2 and 3). Distributed late Miocene to present deformation (and uplift) within the range results from discrete slip along the closely spaced fault network (e.g. Compton, 1966b; Dibblee, 1974; 1979), and (or) as part of a broad and faulted contractional stepover between the SGHF and the RRF. Such a stepover has been suspected by many based on gradients in fault displacement, the presence of faulted late Miocene and older sedimentary rocks, and analysis of Plio–Pleistocene stratigraphy (Dickenson, 1965; Christiansen, 1965; Compton, 1966a; 1966b; Graham, 1978; Dibblee, 1979; Page et al., 1998; Dickenson et al., 2005; Langenheim et al., 2013). Although the timing and magnitude of late Miocene to present uplift are highly variable across the range (Chapters 2 and 3), the overall pattern is similar to previous disturbances and may not necessarily be more complex.

POSSIBLE ROLE OF UNDERPLATED SCHIST IN LOCALIZING STRAIN

Using the model developed here, even a modest 3–5-km-thick package of schist could limit mid-crustal strength if located at depths between ~5 and 10 km (Fig. 1-4b). Active subduction channels are typically between 1–7 km thick based on global fluxes of subducting material and seismic imaging (e.g. Stern, 2011), and underplated schist in central California is estimated to be of similar thickness (Ducea et al., 2009; Chapman et al., 2010). Within the Santa Lucia range—and elsewhere in central and southern California—underplated schist crops out at the surface and is inferred at shallow to moderate depths (Ross, 1976; Kidder and Ducea, 2006; Chapman et al., 2012; Niemi et al., 2013). These observations require that schist lies at these sensitive depths, or did at some time in the past, for locations adjacent to exposures of the Pelona–Orocopia–Rand schists.

Three simple predictions of shallow underplated schist are explored below. However, it can be difficult test these predictions at a range scale because differences in the geothermal gradient, initial thickness and depth of schist, and long-term temporal evolution of vertical deformation all have a strong effect on whether the schist drastically reduces strength, or does very little. Given the complicated geologic history of the regions in California which contain underplated schist, it is likely that these parameters vary both spatially and temporally.

In general, regions underlain by schist at depths corresponding to \sim <300 $^{\circ}$ C will deform more readily than other regions with a stronger mid crust (Fig. 1-4) because strain rate is often controlled by the weakest region (e.g. Zoback et al., 2002). Such a localization of strain predicts that regions with a weak mid crust will record a disproportionate fraction of accumulated geologic strain compared to adjacent crustal blocks with greater strength. An additional prediction is that fault density may be greater in regions where schist lies at shallow depths and the brittle portion of the crust is thinner (e.g. Mandl, 1988; Dauteuil and Mart, 1998).

 A third prediction is that a positive feedback may develop between strain rate and schist depth once the schist begins to decrease crustal strength. For example, consider a scenario in which a fault-bound block contains 10 km of crystalline rock and a 5-km-thick package of schist above a remnant oceanic plate (Fig. 1-4b). The top of the schist is at \sim 10 km depth and affects the overall strength of the crust very little. The block is then subjected to a period of oblique convergence and erosional exhumation (or extension and tectonic exhumation). As time progresses, the schist is advected upward and reduces the strength of the crust. The reduction in strength is met with a higher strain rate (and increased exhumation) because the block is now easier to deform than its surroundings. Such a positive feedback is somewhat like the 'tectonic aneurysm' hypothesis (e.g. Zeitler et al., 2001), but is modulated by the strength of layers beneath the schist and does not require extremely high and focused erosion.

With these predictions in mind, it seems likely that the presence of underplated schist beneath the Santa Lucia range has likely played a role in focusing deformation. The schist of Sierra de Salinas is exposed in the northeast part of the range (e.g. Ross, 1976) and presumably dips to the SW beneath most of the range (Kidder and Ducea, 2006; Ducea et al., 2009). The range has experienced frequent and high-amplitude vertical fluctuations over an 80-m.y. period (Fig. 1-5), even compared to basins from the southern San Joaquin valley (Moxon and Graham, 1987; Bartow, 1991; Goodman and Malin, 1992) which did not develop above shallow underplated schist and have lower geothermal gradients. Since the late Miocene, exhumation has generally focused along the SW flank of the range, and appears to be greater in magnitude where crystalline rocks are permissibly underlain by schist at 5–10 km depth than in other lithologies (Chapters 2 and 3). Lastly, the density of mapped faults in the crystalline rocks of the Santa Lucia range appears to be much higher than in nearby areas (Jennings and Bryant, 2010; Graymer et al., 2014; Rosenberg and Wills, 2016).

Together, these observations fit our predictions well, but several observations remain puzzling. For example, paleogeographic reconstructions (Graham, 1978; Graham et al., 1989) and low-temperature thermochronometry (Naeser and Ross, 1976; Bürgmann et al., 1994; Spotila et al., 2007; Colgan et al., 2012) indicate that the La Panza range and Santa Cruz mountains have not experienced the same magnitude or frequency of vertical deformation as the Santa Lucia range (Ducea et al., 2003; Chapter 2; Chapter 3). This seems unusual because the these ranges are cored by crystalline rocks of the Salinian block and are presumably underlain by schist like the Santa Lucia range. Additionally, since underplated schist is currently exposed in the Sierra de Salinas and at the base of the Gabilan range (Fig. 1-1), these areas are presumably quite weak, yet much work indicates their relative stability compared to other parts of the range (Graham, 1976; 1978; Dibblee, 1976; Chapter 3). The inferred lateral ramp of the Laramide shallow subduction channel (fig. 13 in Chapman et al., 2012) might be able to explain the differences between the Santa Cruz mountains and Santa Lucia range, but does not explain the remaining observations. One possibility is that perhaps the weak mid crust along the southwest margin of the Santa Lucia range has acted as a crustal 'crumple zone', where fault-perpendicular components of strain were localized and did not penetrate to the more-interior ranges. This is not wholly satisfactory because it still predicts that regions underlain by a weak mid crust exhibit little vertical deformation adjacent to the main San Andreas fault.

CONCLUSION

The Santa Lucia range of central California exposes a nearly 8-km-thick composite section of basin fill on the Salinian block that spans $~60$ m.y. between the late Cretaceous to late Miocene. Strata were deposited on the crystalline bedrock of the range, which records a ~10 m.y. period of rapid exhumation that brought mid-crustal rocks to the surface immediately prior to deposition of marine sediments. We perform a backstripping analysis to define the tectonic component of basin subsidence (or uplift). These results are combined with thermobarometric and geochronologic data to document long-term cyclic patterns of vertical deformation in the range.

There have been 4 major uplift and exhumation events—each with a duration of $~5$ –10 m.y.—separated by 3 periods of subsidence—with durations from 15–22 m.y. Each uplift cycle is marked by rapid shoaling of the basin and the development of regional angular unconformities that locally reach the crystalline basement. Each subsidence cycle is marked by rapid submergence of the basin to mid-bathyal depths; unconformities within these cycles are locally present, but less extensive. A period of relative calm in the mid- to late Miocene is suggested by our analysis, but nearby areas experienced significant tectonic disturbances as faults of the Rinconada-Reliz and San Andreas faults were forming.

Each of the uplift cycles appears to correspond to a major tectonic event. Initial exhumation of the Salinian block occurred during the drastic crustal restructuring which accompanied shallow-slab subduction and the replacement of strong lithosphere with weak underplated schist. The uplift cycle in the Paleocene is associated with outboard translation of the Salinian block during sinistral slip along the Nacimiento fault. The Oligocene-age cycle is tentatively associated with deformation preceding the breakup of the Farallon plate before establishment of a Pacific–North America transform boundary. The most-recent uplift cycle is likely related to oblique convergence between the Pacific and North America plates. This event is ongoing, has exposed the crystalline core of the range, and is actively eroding the older basin stratigraphy.

Based on this analysis it appears that the magnitude and rate of uplift and subsidence in the Santa Lucia range are greater than adjacent areas when restored for slip along the San Andreas fault. We suggest that the emplacement of several-km-thick weak schist beneath the range in the late Cretaceous profoundly weakened the Salinian block, permitting late Cretaceous excision of arc crust from southern California and subsequent high amplitude fluctuations in uplift and subsidence.

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CHAPTER 2

THE SAN GREGORIO–HOSGRI FAULT LOCALIZES RAPID AND ASYMMETRIC VERTICAL DEFORMATION IN CENTRAL COASTAL CALIFORNIA

ABSTRACT

The Neogene through late Quaternary history of vertical strain is assessed along a 90-km-long length of the Santa Lucia range in central California to better understand how vertical strain is accommodated along the Pacific–North America plate boundary using new zircon and apatite (U-Th)/He cooling ages and the elevation of the lowest-emergent late Quaternary marine terrace. From the NE, apatite (n=15) and zircon (n=18) ages decrease towards the San Gregorio–Hosgri fault (SGHF), are as young as 1.9 Ma (apatite) and 7.1 Ma (zircon) adjacent to the fault, and are much older SW across the fault trace. These data indicate that long-term vertical strain has been highly focused in a narrow window NE of the SGHF since the late Miocene and suggests that much, if not all the high topography along the rugged Big Sur coast, is controlled by this fault. The elevation of the lowest-emergent marine terrace—likely correlated with MIS 5c—was surveyed between Monterey and Big Sur and substantially increases data density over previous studies. These new data indicate that, like bedrock exhumation, terrace uplift is focused in a 1.5–3-km-wide zone NE of the SGHF. The similarities in magnitude and pattern between the two data sets is compelling evidence that long-term rates of exhumation are similar to near-modern rates of uplift, and suggest that both are controlled by the SGHF. This is puzzling, however, considering the significantly lower late Quaternary to modern slip rates on the SGHF compared to the late Miocene and Pliocene rates during accrual of most exhumation.

INTRODUCTION

The Coast Ranges of central California are located within a broad zone of northwest-trending dextral shear and oblique convergence between the Pacific and Sierra Nevada–Great Valley plates (Page et al., 1998; Argus and Gordon, 2001). The Santa Lucia range is one such mountain range, has the steepest topographic gradient of any coastal mountains in the conterminous United States, reaches heights of >1,500 m, and draws millions of visitors to its Big Sur coast. The topographic relief of the range is anomalous along the central coast and

greater than any transpressional reach along the San Andreas fault outside of the 'Big Bend'. The range is bound on the southwest (Fig. 2-1) by the San Gregorio-Hosgri fault (SGHF)—a major strike-slip fault of the San Andreas system (e.g. Dickenson et al., 2005), and on the northeast by the Reliz–Rinconada fault (RRF; Dibblee, 1976), yet these faults only carry a small fraction of the late Quaternary central-California slip budget (Weber, 1990; Hanson et al., 2004; Rosenberg and Clark, 2009), and an even smaller fraction of the modern strain field (e.g. d'Alessio et al., 2008; DeMets et al., 2014).

Our general expectation is that regions of rock uplift along strike-slip plate boundaries are found where there are coaxial components of shortening perpendicular to the main fault boundary (Sanderson and Marchini, 1984; Tikoff and Fossen, 1993; Jones et al., 2004). This often occurs in regions of oblique convergence (transpression) or where faults define a contractional step-over, and the magnitude of uplift is proportional to the obliquity and magnitude of the relative plate vectors (Sylvester, 1988; Fossen and Tikoff, 1998). Within this context, the Santa Lucia range seems to defy model predictions—it is bound by faults with low modern slip rates, does not have a well-defined transpressional geometry, yet has higher topography, greater relief, and potentially faster rates of exhumation (e.g. Ducea et al., 2003) than nearby and well-documented transpressional regions of the main San Andreas fault (Bürgmann et al., 1994; Spotila et al., 2007; Hilley et al., 2013; Niemi et al., 2013).

Uplift of the Santa Lucia Range is generally considered to be part of the 'Coast Range Orogeny', a period of distributed transpressional uplift along much of the central California coast thought to result from increased convergence starting about 3.5 Ma (Christensen, 1965; Compton, 1966; Page et al., 1998). An update of relative plate motions indicates that oblique convergence began earlier, at ~6–8 Ma, and has been increasingly convergent since ~5.2 Ma (DeMets and Merkouriev, 2016). Thus, a late Miocene and Pliocene history of uplift might be expected, given that the SGHF initiated at \sim 11 Ma (Clark, 1998) and has accumulated \sim 156 \pm 4 km of dextral offset since then (Dickenson et al., 2005). Previous studies, however, have been unable to fully assess the uplift history because there are no sedimentary rocks of the correct age along the southwest or central part of the range (e.g. Rosenberg and Wills, 2016). A late Miocene to Pleistocene history of uplift is partly confirmed by an apatite (U-Th)/He transect (Ducea et al., 2003), and suggests a spatial association with the SGHF. Additional support for the localization of strain along the SGHF is provided by deformed late Quaternary marine terraces near Santa Cruz (e.g. Bradley and Griggs, 1976) and Monterey (McKittrick, 1988) that indicate higher rates of uplift on the northeast side of the fault.

Three testable hypotheses are suggested by these data, and provide an opportunity to assess the location and magnitude of the oblique component of strain along the Pacific–North America plate boundary: 1) slip on the SGHF drives modern topography, the uplift of late Quaternary marine terraces, and long-term bedrock exhumation along the rugged coastline of the Santa Lucia range; 2) exhumation began in the late Miocene, not the late Pliocene, and continues today, and; 3) rates of vertical strain have generally been decreasing through time as slip rates on the SGHF decrease. These hypotheses are tested with two new datasets along a coastal transect from Monterey, CA southward across the SGHF near Big Sur: 1) long-term rates of bedrock exhumation from low-temperature thermochronometry in the abundantly exposed crystalline bedrock, and; 2) the late Quaternary pattern of uplift recorded by re-surveyed deformed marine terraces.

METHODS

(U-TH)/HE THERMOCHRONOMETRY

The zircon and apatite (U-Th)/He thermochronometers utilize the temperature-dependent retention of 4 He produced during radioactive decay of trace amounts of matrix-bound 238 U, 235 U, and 232 Th (Zeitler et al., 1987; Reiners et al., 2004). These two systems have nominal closure temperatures of \sim 180–200° C (zircon) and 65–75° C (apatite) and thus record the time-averaged vertical advection of rock from depths of ~6 and 2 km (Farley, 2000; Reiners et al., 2004). Bedrock samples were collected along an oblique crustal transect from Point Lobos southward across the SGHF (Fig. 2-2), and along the length of the Big Sur coast (Fig. 2-1); all analyses were performed at the UCSC Thermochronology and Plasma Analytical facility. New cooling ages for zircon ($n=18$) and apatite ($n=15$) are the weighted mean of 4–6 single-grain aliquots; a detailed description of methods can be found in Appendix A, a summary of ages is provided in Table 3-2, and analytical data are in Appendix B.

Exhumation rate and total exhumation since 10 Ma are calculated from cooling ages with some simplifying assumptions about the thermal state of the crust, an assumption of monotonic cooling since the Miocene, and estimated closure temperatures and depths for each sample; a detailed description of this method is available in Appendix A. Closure temperature is estimated using the sphere-equivalent radius of each aliquot (e.g. Meesters and Dunai, 2002), the relevant diffusion parameters for zircon (Reiners et al., 2004) or apatite (Farley, 2000), and iteratively solving the closure-temperature equation of Dodson (1973); sample-level values are the weighted mean of all aliquots. Isotherm depths were calculated in two ways: based on the wavelength and amplitude of modern topography and the exhumation rate (e.g Manktelow and Grasemann, 1997), and using a simple geothermal gradient (30° C/km) with the assumption

Figure 2-2. Uplift and exhumation are focused in a narrow zone NE of the SGHF. Map: (U-Th)/ He ages are from this study, except #078, which is from Ducea et al. (2003); fission track ages (Aft, Sft) are from Naeser and Ross (1976). Terrace elevations on the map are from this study only. Faults are from Jennings and Bryant (2010); fault nomenclature is from Dickenson et al. (2005). Panel A: Terrace elevations are from within the extent of the map (this study) and show a ~70 m relative change in elevation. Panel B: Terrace uplift rates use a MIS 5c correlation and the adjusted sea-level curves and summary of ages from Simms et al. (2016); alternative correlations also shown. Although terrace uplift appears faster, the overall pattern of higher vertical strain just NE of the SGHF is consistent across both data sets. Panel C: Cooling ages and estimate of total bedrock exhumation since 10 Ma using individual and paired-mineral exhumation rates.

that topography does not deflect the isotherm; the final sample-level value was the average of these two methods because there are no independent constraints on which is more likely. Interval exhumation rates were calculated for paired apatite and zircon samples.

MARINE TERRACE ELEVATIONS

Late Quaternary marine terraces are found along much of the central California coast (e.g. Simms et al., 2016), and their lateral continuity and initially uniform elevation provide an excellent passive strain marker for vertical deformation. Along the southwest margin of the Santa Lucia range, the MIS 5c terrace is the lowest-emergent and most-prominent surface, and can be traced nearly continuously from Monterey southward to Big Sur (McKittrick, 1988; Clark and Rosenberg, 1997; Rosenberg and Wills, 2016). However, colluvial cover precludes the use of geologic maps to determine accurate bedrock terrace elevations, and previous survey results (McKittrick, 1988) are presented on sketch maps unsuitable for the level of detail required for this effort.

Thus, to compare exhumation rates with estimates of late Quaternary uplift, the elevation of the contact between bedrock and sedimentary cover for the lowest and most-prominent marine terrace was surveyed along 180 km of coast, from Point Año Nuevo to the southern end of the Santa Lucia range near San Simeon (Fig. 2-1). The survey effort used a laser rangefinder, survey grade GPS receiver, and rugged tablet computer, which has the advantage over previous efforts (e.g. Alexander, 1953; Bradley and Griggs, 1976; McKittrick, 1988) of surveying the marine terrace where it is abundantly exposed along coastal bluffs. Typical vertical measurement uncertainty is ~0.7 m and measurement density is significantly higher (577 new vs. 32 existing measurements in Fig. 2-2 alone). Because the measurements were made along coastal bluffs, elevations are corrected for the distance to the back edge of the terrace as defined by previous workers and supplemented with lidar from the 2009–2011 California Coastal Conservancy Lidar Project. All efforts were made to survey only the lowest, most-prominent marine terrace and with few exceptions visual continuity of the terrace surface was maintained in the field. In those areas where continuity was difficult to establish, coastal lidar and oblique aerial photographs from the California Coastline Project were used. Appendix A contains a detailed description and validation of the method; Appendix C contains elevation data.

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Terrace ages in central California—and near Santa Cruz in particular—are the subject of much disagreement (e.g. Bradley and Griggs, 1976; Weber, 1990; Perg et al., 2001). Using morphology, detailed soil profile analysis, and a calculation of steady uplift rates, McKittrick (1988) correlated the lowest-emergent terrace near Monterey ('Terrace 1') with the 'Highway 1' terrace level near Santa Cruz (e.g. Bradley and Griggs, 1976) that appears most robustly correlated with MIS 5c (e.g. Weber, 1990). Future work may alter the age assignment of this terrace and shift uplift rates higher (for MIS 5a) or lower (for MIS 5e), but does not alter the physical pattern of uplift. The sea level curves and compilation of ages in Simms et al. (2016), which account for glacial isostatic adjustments, are used in the calculation of uplift rates.

RESULTS

UP TO 5 KM OF FOCUSED EXHUMATION NE OF THE SGHF SINCE 10 MA

Cooling ages for both apatite and zircon decrease consistently SW towards the SGHF and increase rapidly across its trace (Fig. 2-2) both in map view and when projected onto a SGHF-perpendicular profile. Estimates of exhumation rate indicate faster bedrock exhumation in a narrow ~1.5-km-wide zone NE of the SGHF, similar in style to the pattern of terrace uplift. Our profile transformation makes it appear that this highly exhumed region lies soley between the main SGHF and the Rocky Creek shear zone (RCSZ), but many <6 Ma cooling ages are found adjacent to the main fault SE of the RCSZ. Total exhumation since 10 Ma is at a maximum adjacent to the SGHF, and decreases rapidly to the NE or SW. Exhumation is minimal >10 km NE of the SGHF where Miocene-age marine rocks are preserved near Monterey (Clark and Rosenberg, 1997).

TERRACE UPLIFT IS FOCUSED IN A NARROW ZONE NE OF THE SGHF

The new terrace elevation data confirm and enhance the general pattern of increasing uplift with proximity to the SGHF. The improved spatial resolution indicates that terraces from near Monterey to \sim 6 km NE of the SGHF are uniformly low, rise gently between \sim 6 and 3 km, and rise rapidly between 0 and 3 km. The maximum amplitude of this elevation change is \sim 70 m. Terrace elevation rapidly decreases to the SW within a narrow crustal sliver between strands of the Sierra Hill fault; south of the Aguaje fault terraces are again relatively low and flat-lying.

Our terrace elevations differ slightly from those of McKittrick (1988) in the region of highest terrace elevation (between the RCSZ and the Sierra Hill fault). Four lines of reasoning support our interpretation: 1) there was no evidence for lower-elevation terraces between these two faults; 2) if a lower-elevation terrace was preserved (as it is to the north and south), its absence here would require focused and differential coastal erosion in this location only, for which there is no obvious mechanism; 3) the rapid changes in elevation are all co-located with major faults (e.g. Rosenberg and Wills, 2016), many of which were not yet mapped during the previous study, yet may have influenced possible correlations; 4) a faulted marine terrace is noted at ~110 m elevation in this area by Dickenson et al. (2005) and likely represents the next-older terrace level. Thus, the simplest explanation is that the two ~65-m-elevation data points of McKittrick (1988) on Figure 2-2 are incorrectly correlated with 'Terrace 2'.

DISCUSSION

THE SAN GREGORIO-HOSGRI FAULT EXERTS A FUNDAMENTAL CONTROL ON VERTICAL DEFORMATION

Rates and amplitudes of terrace uplift and bedrock exhumation increase SW towards the SGHF (Fig. 2-2), drop rapidly across its trace, and Plio–Pleistocene apatite cooling ages can be found adjacent to the SGHF for ~90 km (Fig. 2-1). These data confirm our hypothesis that uplift along the Pacific coast of the range is responding to slip along this major fault. The timing of uplift is more difficult to constrain, but the presence of late Miocene zircon cooling ages (as young as 7.1 Ma; Fig. 2-1), and a break-in-slope on a nearby age-elevation transect at ~6 Ma (Ducea et al., 2003) strongly support high rates of exhumation since the late Miocene. Nearly half of the total exhumation is focused between the main SGHF and the Palo Colorado fault, and most is within ~1.5 km of the SGHF. Such focused exhumation has been documented along thin crustal slivers along the main SAF, such as at Yucaipa Ridge (Spotila et al., 1998).

FOCUSED EXHUMATION EXPLAINS THE DEEPLY EXHUMED COASTLINE, BUT NOT UPLIFT OF THE WHOLE RANGE

The pattern of exhumation may partly explain the presence and orientation of deeply exhumed mid-crustal rocks of the Coast Ridge belt. The Coast Ridge belt crops out adjacent to the SGHF between Big Sur and the Nacimiento fault (Fig. 2-1), and is a mid-crustal (~25 km deep) exposure of the Sierran arc that that has been tilted ~30° NE (Kidder et al., 2003); most exhumation of these rocks occurred in the late Cretaceous during orogenic collapse above recently underplated schist (Kidder and Ducea, 2006; Chapman et al., 2010). The addition of as much as 5 km of exhumation since the late Miocene—and a steep NE gradient—provide a plausible mechanism to explain their NE dip and SGHF-parallel outcrop pattern.

Exhumation in a narrow band NE of the SGHF explains young coastal cooling ages and local high topography, but is insufficient to explain the >30 km width of the central Santa Lucia range or the Plio-Pleistocene uplift documented along the N, NE, and SW sides of the range (e.g. Christiansen, 1965). Two additional sources of uplift may explain this discrepancy. First, many steeply to moderately dipping faults obliquely cross the central portion of the range and have post-Pliocene shortening estimates of 10–12% (Compton, 1966). Second, the Reliz-Rinconada fault forms the steep NE margin of the range and has a Miocene to Quaternary history of transpressional deformation (Dibblee, 1976; Titus et al., 2007). Post-Pliocene shortening across these structures—in addition to a focused component of uplift along the SGHF—is perhaps sufficient to create the modern topography and relief of the entire range.

STRUCTURAL COMPLEXITIES ALONG THE SGHF

AND THEIR EFFECT ON UPLIFT RATES

The reach between the Sierra Hill fault and RCSZ (Fig. 2-2) is anomalous in that rates of terrace uplift are 50% greater than exhumation rates at a similar distance from the SGHF. We suspect that this discrepancy is related to a local, and possibly evolving, structural complexity along the SGHF in this location. The Sierra Hill fault forms the structural boundary between Salinian bedrock on the NE and Franciscan mélange on the SW and is the main expression of the SGHF (Dickenson et al., 2005). The RCSZ is an intra-Salinian structure that offsets the course of Bixby Creek ~1.3 km in a right-lateral sense (Dickenson et al., 2005) and is composed of a broad zone of closely spaced small faults (e.g. Rosenberg and Wills, 2016); both faults appear to offset the surveyed marine terrace in this study. Offshore, the RCSZ trends into a scarp that cuts Holocene deposits (Greene et al., 1973). Onshore mapping indicates that the RCSZ provides a straighter continuation of the main Sierra Hill fault (Fig. 2-2), and shows that the most-NW portion of the Sierra Hill fault is transpressional. Together, these observations suggest an evolving faulted transpressional stepover between the RCSZ and the main Sierra Hill fault that could plausibly explain higher terrace uplift rates in this fault-bound domain.

VERTICAL STRAIN ALONG THE CENTRAL CALIFORNIA PLATE MARGIN

It is puzzling that rates of terrace uplift adjacent to the SGHF near Big Sur (up to 0.8 mm/yr) are greater than those adjacent to the SAF near Santa Cruz (up to \sim 0.6 mm/yr; Anderson and Menking, 1994) because maximum late Quaternary slip rates are only 6–9 mm/yr on the SGHF (Weber, 1990). It is especially puzzling considering that the modern strain field indicates slip rates of only ~2 mm/yr along much of the SGHF (d'Alessio et al., 2005; DeMets et al., 2014) and that modern SAF-perpendicular convergence appears to be accounted for without significant convergence across the SGHF (Titus et al., 2011; DeMets et al., 2014). Furthermore, bedrock exhumation accrued along the SGHF during a time when slip rates were substantially higher (~16 mm/yr; Fig. 2-1), yet exhumation rates are comparable, or less than, late Quaternary uplift rates.

These observations raise fundamental questions about our knowledge of how vertical strain is being accommodated along this region of the plate boundary, and highlight the need for additional inquiry. Three hypotheses can potentially explain the rate discrepancy, and each has testable predictions for future work. 1) The terrace may be older than MIS 5c. A MIS 5e correlation might alleviate the rate discrepancy in the Santa Lucia range, but would likely alter terrace interpretations along the coast. 2) The range may be experiencing erosion-induced isostatic rebound that augments a smaller component of late Quaternary transpression. If erosion and exhumation were well matched during the Pliocene, a rapid reduction in exhumation with continued erosion could cause up to ~80% of the Pliocene rate and persist for several m.y. (e.g. Spotila, 2005). Such a mechanism would suggest that erosion-induced isostasy is the primary driver of vertical components of fault slip, and would force a significant reassessment of seismic probabilities in the region. 3) Relatively continuous clockwise rotation of plate vectors since the late Miocene (DeMets and Merkouriev, 2016) may have kept pace with the reduction in slip rate so that the resolved convergence has remained relatively constant through time. Although not supported by the modern strain field—which indicates that the Santa Lucia range behaves as a relatively rigid block (Titus et al., 2011; DeMets et al., 2014)—such a hypothesis is supported by reconstructed flow lines between the Pacific and Sierra Nevada/Great Valley plates, which indicate that the strike of the SGHF near Big Sur may not have become transpressional until ~0.78 Ma (DeMets and Merkouriev, 2016).

CONCLUSION

We use apatite and zircon (U-Th)/He thermochronometry in tandem with the elevation of the lowest-emergent marine terrace along the central California coast to tie high rates of bedrock exhumation and terrace uplift to slip along a >90-km length of the SGHF. Both data sets show that rates are low SW of the fault, become highly focused in a <3 km-wide zone NE of the fault, and decay slowly to reach minima at >10 km from the fault. The magnitude and gradient of exhumation help to explain the distribution and geometry of the deeply exhumed Coast Ridge belt plutonic and metamorphic rocks, but do not explain uplift of the entire range. Rates of terrace uplift are higher than those farther north or south of the Santa Lucia range, higher than exhumation rates, and are perplexing in light of low modern slip rates on the SGHF.

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CHAPTER 3

FAULT-CONTROLLED PATTERNS OF RAPID UPLIFT AND EXHUMATION ALONG THE LEADING EDGE OF THE CENTRAL CALIFORNIA COAST RANGE

ABSTRACT

The Santa Lucia range of central California is exhuming as fast or faster than many transpressional reaches along the main San Andreas fault system and has greater topographic relief than any coastal mountains in the continental United States. We define the spatial pattern of uplift and long-term exhumation of the range and elucidate the major structures responsible for this deformation using new low-temperature thermochronometry, geomorphic metrics of erosion, the elevation of deformed late Quaternary marine terraces, and geologic constraints. The collection of 44 apatite and 39 zircon (U-Th)/He cooling ages substantially increases existing coverage in the range (8 apatite ages) and is one of the most cohesive low-temperature thermochronometric datasets along the San Andreas fault system.

Apatite and zircon (U-Th)/He cooling ages indicate rapid late Miocene cooling along the entire 90 km-long southwest flank of the range following a period of low exhumation since at least the Oligocene. A \sim 6 Ma onset of rapid exhumation is most consistent with available constraints, but a range of \sim 5–10 Ma is permissible. The spatial distribution of ages indicates an overall decrease in age from NE to SW; the youngest ages lie adjacent to the San Gregorio–Hosgri fault (SGHF) on its northeast side and ages are substantially older across its trace. Late Miocene to modern exhumation rates vary substantially as a function of proximity to the SGHF: within a few km of the fault, rates from apatite are typically 0.35–0.8 mm/yr, and locally as high as 1.1 mm/yr while rates from zircon are 0.2–0.7 mm/yr; rates from both apatite and zircon are generally below 0.2 mm/yr at distances greater than 7 km to the NE of the fault, or SW across its trace.

Deformed marine terraces along the Big Sur coast also indicate a strong fault control on uplift; terrace elevations are 3–5 times higher directly NE of the SGHF and decay to baseline values over a ~5 km-wide zone; elevations drop rapidly across the fault to the SW. This pattern of NE-side uplift is a consistent feature of the SGHF from its junction with the Oceanic fault to its junction with the San Andreas fault ~250 km to the northwest, although the magnitude of uplift is greatest along the Santa Lucia range. Southeast of the Oceanic fault, the pattern reverses and terrace elevations drop to the NE of the SGHF. Coupled with available data, this strongly suggests that the vertical component of strain is transferred from the SGHF to inland structures across the Oceanic fault.

At a range-wide scale, rates of bedrock exhumation are well correlated with topographic relief in a 2.5-km window, normalized channel steepness, and hillslope gradient and suggest that the range is perhaps near long-term equilibrium between uplift and erosion. These correlations allow us to construct a continuous map of exhumation rate that we use to supplement our individual observations and define range-scale patterns of vertical deformation. These data confirm the presence of a rapidly exhuming band directly NE of the SGHF and Oceanic faults and indicate that high rates of exhumation are localized in a narrow zone between the Oceanic and Nacimiento faults in the south but decay slowly to the NE in the north, perhaps because of distributed transpressional uplift between the SGHF and Rinconada–Reliz fault. A geomorphic analysis using range-wide normalized channel steepness and river-profile plots of *χ* indicates higher rates of uplift in the fault-bound domains of high bedrock exhumation, even when controlled for changes in lithology.

Together, our data indicate that the San Gregorio–Hosgri fault system has focused uplift and exhumation along its northeast side since the late Miocene, has continued to do so in the late Quaternary, and is the primary driver of high topography and relief in the Santa Lucia range. These results call into question the long-held assumption that transpressional strain along the Pacific–North America plate boundary is focused along the San Andreas fault. The intense localization of strain in a narrow region of crystalline rocks adjacent to the SGHF is also puzzling. Perhaps the anomalous localization of uplift and exhumation at all scales in the range is related to the profound lithospheric reorganization that accompanied the Late Cretaceous underplating of the schist of Sierra de Salinas.

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INTRODUCTION

The Coast Ranges of central California are located within a broad zone of northwest-trending dextral shear and oblique convergence between the Pacific and Sierra Nevada–Great Valley plates (Page et al., 1998; Argus and Gordon, 2001). The Santa Lucia range, one such mountain range, lies SW of the San Andreas fault, reaches heights of >1,500 m, and draws millions of visitors to its Big Sur coast. The topographic relief of the range is anomalous along the central coast (Fig. 3-1), and is greater than any transpressional reach along the San Andreas fault outside of the 'Big Bend', including the nearby and rapidly exhuming Sierra Azul block (Bürgmann et al., 1994; Hilley et al., 2013) and the King Range (Dumitru, 1991). The range is bound on the southwest by the San Gregorio-Hosgri fault (SGHF)—a major strike-slip fault of the San Andreas system (e.g. Dickenson et al., 2005), and on the northeast by the Reliz–Rinconada fault (RRF; Dibblee, 1976), yet these faults only carry a small fraction of the late Quaternary central-California slip budget (Weber, 1990; Hanson et al., 2004), and an even smaller fraction of the modern strain field (e.g. d'Alessio et al., 2008; DeMets et al., 2014).

Regions of rock uplift along strike-slip plate boundaries are predicted where there are coaxial components of shortening perpendicular to the main fault boundary (Sanderson and Marchini, 1984; Tikoff and Fossen, 1993; Jones et al., 2004). This often occurs in regions of oblique convergence (transpression) or where faults define a contractional step-over (Sylvester, 1988; Fossen and Tikoff, 1998). The magnitude of such rock uplift is thought to be proportional to the obliquity and magnitude of the relative plate vectors (Fossen and Tikoff, 1998). Along the main Pacific–North America plate boundary, this type of model successfully predicts the regions of modern high topography (e.g. Montgomery, 1993; Argus and Gordon, 2001), the accrual of long-term geologic strain adjacent to the San Andreas fault (e.g. Sylvester, 1988; Titus et al., 2011), and to a first order, the distribution of bedrock exhumation (Spotila et al., 2001; 2007).

Within this context, it seems anomalous that the Santa Lucia range—bound by low-slip-rate faults without any clear stepover or well-documented transpressional reach—appears to have higher topography, greater relief, and potentially faster rates of exhumation (e.g. Ducea et al., 2003) than nearby and well-documented transpressional regions of the main San Andreas fault (Bürgmann et al., 1994; Spotila et al., 2007; Hilley et al., 2013). Uplift of the Santa Lucia Range is generally considered to be part of the post-Pliocene 'Coast Range Orogeny', a period of distributed transpressional uplift along much of the central coast of California thought to result from increased convergence across the Pacific–North America plate boundary at ~3.5 Ma (Christensen, 1965; Compton, 1966b; Graham, 1976; Dibblee, 1979; Page et al., 1998). Several lines of evidence suggest that uplift of the Santa Lucia range may have a more complex and longer history.

The SGHF—which bounds the southwest margin of the range—initiated at ~11 Ma (Clark, 1998) and has accumulated ~156 ±4 km of dextral offset since then (Dickenson et al., 2005). The RRF—which bounds the northeast margin of the range—has offset a suite of mid to late Miocene facies tracts 44 ±4 km and Pliocene markers by at least 18 km (Graham, 1978; Dibblee, 1979). An update of relative plate motions indicates a smoother and older transition from oblique divergence to oblique convergence (e.g. Cox and Engebretson, 1985; DeMets and Merkouriev, 2016). At the latitude of central California, there was oblique divergence in the Oligocene through late Miocene, a period of alternating oblique convergence and divergence from ~8 to 6 Ma, and increasing amounts of oblique convergence after ~5.2 Ma (Atwater and Stock, 1998; Argus and Gordon, 2001; DeMets and Merkouriev, 2016).

The Santa Lucia range thus appears to have been bound by active faults on both sides since at least ~11 Ma and has likely experienced oblique convergence since ~8 Ma. The observation of rapid late Miocene–Pleistocene exhumation adjacent to the SGHF from an apatite (U-Th)/ He transect (Ducea et al., 2003) in the southwestern part of the range appears to confirm the presence of an older history of uplift, and suggests that it may be spatially associated with the SGHF. Additional support for the localization of strain along the SGHF is provided by deformed late Quaternary marine terraces north of Santa Cruz and near Monterey that indicate higher rates of uplift on the northeast side of the fault (Bradley and Griggs, 1976; Lajoie et al., 1979; McKittrick, 1988; Anderson and Menking, 1994).

Uplift along the SGHF could explain the rugged Big Sur coast of the Santa Lucia range, but may not be adequate to explain the uplifted crystalline core of the range or the differences in morphology between the northern and southern portions of the range (Figs. 3-1 and 3-2). Uplift and erosion of the range interior could be accounted for by discrete slip along the closely spaced fault network (e.g. Compton, 1966b; Dibblee, 1974; 1979), and (or) as part of a broad and faulted contractional stepover between the SGHF and the RRF. Such a stepover has been suspected by many based on gradients in fault displacement, the presence of faulted late Miocene and older sedimentary rocks, and analysis of Plio–Pleistocene stratigraphy (Christiansen, 1965; Compton, 1966a; 1966b; Graham, 1978; Dibblee, 1979; Page et al., 1998; Dickenson et al., 2005; Langenheim et al., 2013). Farther to the southeast, the oblique-reverse Oceanic fault directly connects the southern SGHF and more-inland West Huasana faults (Hall, 1974; 1976; 1991; Hall and Prior, 1975) and likely transfers strain between the two (e.g. Hardebeck, 2010). The 2003 M6.5 San Simeon earthquake occurred on the Oceanic fault (Fig. 3-1) and was accompanied by NE-side up vertical movement (McLaren et al., 2008). The transfer of strain from the SGHF to more inland faults is also supported—but not required—by the discrepancy in late Quaternary slip rates north of (Weber, 1990; Weber et al., 1995; Simpson et al., 1997) and south of (Hanson and Lettis, 1994; Hanson et al., 2004; Johnson et al., 2014) the Santa Lucia range.

Together, these data provide three testable hypotheses: 1) that uplift accompanies slip on the SGHF and is the primary driver for both modern topography and long-term bedrock exhumation along the rugged coastline of the Santa Lucia range; 2) exhumation of the range began in the late Miocene, not the late Pliocene, and continues today; 3) that oblique faults through the range help to focus uplift and exhumation while transferring strain between the SGHF and more-inland fault systems. We test these hypotheses with three new datasets: 1) 44 apatite and 39 zircon (U-Th)/He cooling ages (in addition to 8 existing apatite ages) to document the million-year timescales of bedrock exhumation throughout the range; 2) the assessment of five key geomorphic metrics of erosion—topographic relief in a 2.5-km window, local hillslope gradient, normalized channel steepness (*ksn*), *χ*, and mean annual precipitation—to determine the landscape response to the vertical deformation field and identify potentially active faults, and; 3) the elevation of deformed late Quaternary marine terraces along the SGHF to document

patterns in late Quaternary rock uplift. We also compare our results against an existing 10Be cosmogenic denudation rate dataset (Young et al., 2015) and develop a working hypothesis for the relationship between millennial-scale denudation and long-term exhumation.

GEOLOGIC SETTING

The bedrock geology of the Santa Lucia range (Fig. 3-2) is characterized by high-grade metamorphic and deep-seated anhydrous igneous rocks (Compton, 1960; 1966a; Wiebe, 1966; Ross, 1976; Dibblee, 1974; 1979; Kidder et al., 2003). The crystalline rocks are Late Cretaceous in age (Mattinson, 1978; Kistler and Champion, 2001; Barth et al., 2003; Colgan et al., 2012) and contain roof and screen pendants of marble and quartzite of the Paleozoic Sur Series (Trask, 1926; Wiebe, 1966; Ross, 1976). The Late Cretaceous schist of Sierra de Salinas crops out in the northeastern part of the range (Dibblee, 1974; 1979) and is the northernmost member of the Pelona-Orocopia-Rand schist—metasediments underplated during the Late Cretaceous (Grove et al., 2003; Kidder and Ducea, 2006; Chapman et al., 2010). Together, the crystalline rocks form an elongate belt of deeply exhumed Sierran basement—known as the Salinian block—that has been tectonically excised from its former location in the Mesozoic Sierra Nevada arc (Graham, 1978; Dickenson, 1983). Restoration of slip along the San Andreas fault (e.g. Powell, 1993) partially restores the Salinian block to its original location, but further inboard displacement is required based on isotopic, thermobarometric, petrologic, and regional geologic constraints (e.g. Chapman et al., 2012). The structure responsible for this additional movement is most likely the Nacimiento fault, which separates plutonic and amphibolite–granulite-facies metamorphic rocks on the north from greenschist–blueschist-facies Franciscan mélange on the south (Ross, 1976; Dibblee, 1979; Hall, 1991; Page et al., 1998; Dickenson et al., 2005).

Substantial lithospheric reorganization occurred during the Late Cretaceous to Paleocene in the region that would later become the Mojave Desert, Transverse Ranges, and the Salinian block (Jacobson et al., 2007; Saleeby et al., 2007; Chapman et al., 2010). Rapid upper-crustal attenuation and exhumation in the Santa Lucia range brought >7.5 kbar and 850° C rocks to the surface over a 10 m.y. period from ~80–70 Ma, at rates of 2–3 mm/yr (Chapman et al., 2010). It was during this time of rapid exhumation and erosion that the schist of Sierra de Salinas was eroded from crystalline highlands, deposited in the subduction channel, and re-laminated at the base of the crust where it is now juxtaposed against the crystalline rocks that presumably

provided the detritus for the schist protolith (Grove et al., 2003; Jacobson et al., 2011). It is hypothesized that these relationships are the result of subduction of a thick, buoyant, volcanic plateau (Saleeby, 2003; Chapman et al., 2012).

The Late Cretaceous crustal restructuring quickly led to the accumulation of several kilometers of Late Cretaceous to Paleocene coarse-grained marine and non-marine basin fill that was deposited within normal-fault bound half grabens in the Santa Lucia and nearby La Panza ranges (Vedder and Brown, 1968; Ruetz, 1979; Graham, 1979; Dibblee, 1979; Grove, 1993). Marine deposition appears to have become more widespread by latest Paleocene through Eocene time, but several major erosional and angular unconformities—and rapid changes in paleobathymetry—indicate several periods of subsidence and uplift during this time (Ruetz, 1979; Graham, 1976; 1979; Grove, 1993).

Marine basins rapidly shoaled at the end of the Eocene, a regional unconformity was developed, and the basins were completely re-submerged several m.y. later million years (Graham, 1976; Nilsen, 1981). Such rapid changes may have been related to initial interaction of the Pacific and North America plates (e.g. Atwater and Stock, 1998), in a process like the well-documented wave of dynamic topography that follows the northwestward migration of the Mendocino Triple Junction (Furlong, 1984; Merrits and Bull, 1989; Groome and Thorkelson, 2009).

Miocene paleogeography is complicated in the Santa Lucia range and Salinas Valley (e.g. Graham, 1976; 1979; Graham et al., 1989). In general, much of the range subsided and accumulated as much as 2.5 km of shallow to deep-marine deposits of the Monterey Formation (Graham, 1978; Dibblee, 1976; 1979). Local emergent highs formed and subsided along the trace of the Reliz–Rinconada fault, indicating fault activity (Graham, 1978). Deposits of Monterey Formation flank the currently exposed crystalline core of the Santa Lucia range to the northwest, northeast, and southeast, and an incomplete faulted section is exposed in the central-northwest part of the range (Dibblee, 1974; Rosenberg and Wills, 2016). However, the thickness of Miocene deposits in the central and southwestern parts of the range—if any—remains uncertain. A regional-scale Pliocene regression is recorded by subaerial clastic progradation that commonly contains recycled Miocene basin fill clasts (e.g. Page et al., 1998).

METHODS

LOW-TEMPERATURE THERMOCHRONOMETRY **ACQUISITION OF NEW (U-TH)/HE AGES**

OVERVIEW

We use the apatite and zircon (U-Th)/He thermochronometers to document the million-year timescales of vertical deformation in the Santa Lucia range of central coastal California. The basis of (U-Th)/He dating is the quantitative retention of alpha particles (4He) produced during decay of matrix-bound radiogenic U and Th (Dodson, 1973; Zeitler et al., 1987). The retention of ⁴He is controlled by temperature-dependent diffusivity such that there is a temperature window—or 'partial-retention zone' (PRZ)—that spans behavior between complete retention and complete diffusion. A common simplification is to assume that relatively little geologic time is spent in the PRZ and that a single temperature—the 'closure temperature'—approximates the moment that 4He begins to be retained (Dodson, 1973). Other parameters, such as mineral species, grain morphology and size, and accumulated radiation damage all affect the diffusion behavior, and thus the closure temperature, of a sample (Farley, 2000; Reiners et al., 2004; Farley et al., 2011; Guenthner et al., 2013), For typical grain sizes and cooling rates of \sim 10° C/m.y., closure temperatures of apatite are \sim 70° C and zircon \sim 175° C, and record exhumation from 1.5–6 km paleodepths with typical geothermal gradients (Farley, 2000; Reiners et al., 2004).

SAMPLING STRATEGY AND LOCATIONS

We sampled along the Big Sur coast, from the interior part of the range, and along the NE edge of the range with a combination of near-horizontal and 'vertical' transects to constrain range-wide patterns of exhumation (Fig. 3-2). Equal-elevation transects can provide constraints on the relative spatial pattern of exhumation and (or) the long-term production of relief (House et al., 1998). Transects in steep topography ('vertical' transects) can provide constraints on the rate and timing of exhumation, especially if a preserved PRZ is encountered at high elevations (Ehlers, 2005; Gallagher et al., 2005). We maximized our constraining power by linking steep transects in the regions of highest relief (Fig. 3-1) with a low-elevation coastal transect and supplemented these data with dispersed samples throughout the range (e.g. Valla et al., 2011). Transects were selected based on high relief, accessibility, and bedrock type, with an emphasis on Late Cretaceous crystalline rocks. This emphasis reflects the known ability of these rocks to provide apatite and zircon for analysis (Mattinson, 1978; Barth et al., 2003; Ducea et al., 2003; Kidder et al., 2003). Samples were also successfully collected from metasandstone of the Mesozoic Franciscan mélange near Point Sur and Salmon Creek.

Thermal anomalies from wildfire and fluid flow can substantially bias (U-Th)/He ages, and especially so for apatite (Ehlers, 2005; Reiners et al., 2007). The Santa Lucia range has many hot springs, a testament to its relatively high geothermal gradient and abundant fractures, and has experienced many large and damaging wildfires in recent history. Thus, to prevent bias in our ages: 1) we did not sample near any active hot springs, 2) we did not sample where there was any evidence of past hydrothermal activity, and 3) every sample was extracted from an area that would have been shielded during a wildfire. Despite these efforts, many aliquots from the Junipero Serra transect—which burned in 2008—appear to have been partially reset, as discussed below. To our knowledge, this is the only location where this occurred.

ANALYTICAL SUMMARY

Analytical procedures for (U-Th)/He dating are detailed in Appendix A. In summary, apatite and zircon are extracted from the rock sample using standard crushing and separation techniques. Large, clear, and euhedral grains are picked, measured, and packed into Nb foil packets. The packets and grains are heated to ~1100–1300° C with a diode laser for several minutes in an ultra-high vacuum helium extraction cell. Evolved ⁴He gas is spiked with a calibrated ³He tracer, cooled to 16°K in a cryogenic trap, purified, and analyzed by a noble gas mass spectrometer. The mineral grains are then dissolved in acid with a radiogenic spike and analyzed on an inductively-coupled plasma mass spectrometer to determine U and Th contents of each grain. Apparent ages are calculated using the production-diffusion equation of Meesters and Dunai (2002) and corrected for the fraction of 4 He ejected from the outer \sim 20 μ m of the grain (Farley, 2002; Hourigan et al., 2005). Analytical data for each aliquot are available in Appendix B.

ESTIMATES OF EXHUMATION RATE

We use three separate methods to estimate exhumation rates in the Santa Lucia range, each of which requires different assumptions about the thermal state of the crust. In this section,

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we outline the basic assumptions for each method, discuss the estimation of closure temperature, and address the thermal state of the crust in the Santa Lucia range.

ESTIMATING THE CLOSURE TEMPERATURE

We estimate the bulk closure temperature for each sample using the individual aliquot grain measurements and iteratively solving the closure-temperature equation. We simplify our calculation by using the radius of a sphere with an identical surface area to volume ratio as the original grain (e.g. Meesters and Dunai, 2002). A sphere-equivalent radius is calculated for each aliquot using the equations provided in Farley (2002) and Hourigan et al., (2005) for apatite and zircon, respectively. We use the closure equation from Dodson (1973) and the aliquot age to iteratively determine a closure temperature that results in a <0.25° C difference between the predicted and observed cooling rate. Sphere-equivalent radii and aliquot closure temperatures are provided in the analytical data (Appendix B). Sample-level closure temperature is estimated as the mean of the aliquot values weighted by the inverse-square-error of the aliquot age. In this manner, the sample-level closure temperature is weighted the same way as the sample-level age. Alternative methods—such as aggregating the aliquot surface area and volume to calculate a sample-level sphere-equivalent radius (e.g. Gautheron and Tassan-Got, 2010)—are unsatisfying because the resulting closure temperature is weighted by geometry, but the sample-level age is not.

ESTIMATING THE GEOTHERMAL GRADIENT

It is likely that the geothermal gradient varies spatially throughout the Santa Lucia range as a function of both long- and medium-wavelength topography (e.g. Stüwe et al., 1994) and as a function of spatially varying exhumation rate (e.g. Manktelow and Grasemann, 1997). However, there are only sparse measurements of heat flow (65 mWm⁻² near Monterey; 75 mWm⁻² near San Simeon; 96 mWm⁻² in the central part of the range; Lachenbruch and Sass, 1980) and none are close to sample locations. Because of this, a single value for the bulk geothermal gradient (30° C/km) is chosen, like in other thermochronologic studies along the nearby San Andreas fault (e.g. Bürgmann et al., 1994). Two of the three approaches for estimating exhumation rate outlined below do not explicitly require a geothermal gradient. The third approach accounts for advection of isotherms during exhumation and the effect of topography. The geothermal gradient is used in this case to define the temperature at the base of the 1D thermal model; local geothermal gradients are evaluated for each sample and depart from the bulk value. This method does not address the long-wavelength (>20 km) variation of temperature that may exist along the length or across the width of the range.

A surface temperature value of 15° C (at sea level) is used in our calculations because it is the 30-yr average for this region (http://www.prism.oregonstate.edu/, accessed 09/01/2016), and we use an atmospheric lapse rate of -4.5° C/km to calculate surface temperature at elevation. We further assume that our samples have experienced monotonic cooling since they passed through their closure temperature. This assumption is likely true for Miocene and younger samples, but analysis of nearby sedimentary basins indicates several periods of pre-Miocene uplift and subsidence (e.g. Graham, 1978; Chapter 1).

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TOPOGRAPHY, SUB-

SURFACE TEMPERATURE, AND EXHUMATION

The thermal structure in the upper several km of crust is affected by the amplitude and wavelength of surface topography and the vertical advection of heat during erosion and exhumation (Stüwe et al., 1994; Mancktelow and Grasemann, 1997). To explore how these parameters affect the shape of isotherms, we determined the ratio of isotherm amplitude to topographic amplitude (α) for each of our vertical transects using the approximating equations for temperature and depth from Mancktelow and Grasemann (1997). The results of these calculations (Table 3-1) show that the amplitude of the 70° C isotherm—corresponding to the approximate closure depth of apatite—is between ~10–50% of the surface topography. Because of the dampening effect of depth, the 180° C isotherm—corresponding to the approximate closure temperature of zircon—is deflected <10% for rates up to ~1 mm/yr and thus can be simplified as a low-relief, nearly horizontal surface.

These results indicate that estimates of exhumation rate from apatite cooling ages need to consider the shape of isotherms; two simple cases make the point. If there has been little change in topographic relief between now and when a sample passed through its closure isotherm, using the shape of the present isotherm to calculate exhumation rates should provide a reasonable estimate of the true rate. If, however, the present topography was created entirely during the period of exhumation, the shape of the closure isotherm would have originally been flat and using the present isotherm would underestimate the true exhumation rate. The effect of rapid and recent changes in the location of high topography—perhaps resulting from drainage capture—may also locally affect these relationships.

SINGLE-SAMPLE ESTIMATES

We calculate exhumation rate for each sample using the sample-specific depth to the closure temperature and the cooling age. The closure depth is calculated in two separate ways that represent the two end-member scenarios for the shape of the closure isotherm: 1) with a horizontal isotherm and a geothermal gradient of 30° C/km—corresponding to a scenario of total relief production during exhumation, and; 2) by accounting for the effect of topography and advection of isotherms during exhumation using the equations of Mancktelow and Grasemann (1997) and parameters from Table 3-2—corresponding to a scenario of no relief production. The latter calculation is accomplished by using sample-specific topographic parameters estimated from a DEM, and by iteratively solving for depth and exhumation rate until the convergence is <1° C for closure temperature and <0.01 mm/yr for exhumation rate.

It is important to note that neither of these approaches is likely to capture the actual evolution of relief during exhumation. Because of this, an 'average' exhumation rate is calculated from the two approaches that conceptually corresponds to about half of the relief being produced during exhumation. Uncertainties on this value include the propagated uncertainty in cooling age for each of the two estimates, but do not consider uncertainties in model parameters; in most cases, the age uncertainties are much larger than the difference between the two model results (Fig. 3-3b). Figure 3-3a shows how the two isotherm models differ in their distribution of exhumation rates for a series of possible bulk geothermal gradients. In all cases, the 'flat-isotherm' model has higher rates and the 'deflected-isotherm' model is less sensitive to changes in

Figure 3-3. Variation of apatite exhumation rate as a function of isotherm model and average geothermal gradient. **Plot A**—Violin plots show the gaussian kernel density estimate of exhumation rate for potential average geothermal gradients and the two end-member scenarios of either completely flat isotherms or isotherms that are deflected based on exhumation rate and modern topography (e.g. Manktelow and Grasemann, 1997). **Plot B**—For a given geothermal gradient, the range of exhumation rates estimated by the two end-member scenarios is typically less than or comparable to the propagated 1σ uncertainty, which is based entirely on the relative uncertainty of the cooling age.

the bulk geothermal gradient. All estimates of exhumation rate, and the topographic parameters for each sample, can be found in Table 3-2.

AGE-ELEVATION RELATIONSHIPS

The age-elevation relationship (AER) for steep transects can provide estimates of the long-term exhumation rate in addition to estimates of the timing of major changes in exhumation (Braun et al., 2006). This method does not require assuming a value for the geothermal gradient if the closure isotherm is near horizontal. The slope of a line between two samples with a large change in elevation provides an estimate of the exhumation rate over the time interval of the samples (Ehlers, 2005). This scenario is likely the case for our zircon ages. However, when the closure temperature varies substantially in depth—as is the case for the 70° C isotherm—the slope of the AER will overestimate the actual exhumation rate by a factor of $(1-a)^{-1}$ (Braun, 2002a), where α is the ratio of isotherm amplitude to topographic amplitude. For an apparent exhumation rate of 0.4 mm/yr in a region with α =0.5, the AER overestimates the actual exhumation rate by a factor of 2. Large changes in relief during exhumation can also

alter the relationship between surface topography and the shape of the closure isotherm. If the parameter β is the relative change in relief, then the apparent exhumation rate from an AER may be modified by a factor of $β(β-α)⁻¹$, potentially resulting in vertical or negative slopes when β<α (Braun, 2002a).

Changes in exhumation rate with time may also alter the relationship between surface topography and isotherms. For example, consider a system in equilibrium with an exhumation rate of 0.5 mm/yr and surface topography similar to the Anderson Peak transect (Table 3-1). The 70° C isotherm will have an amplitude 20% of the surface topography with these conditions. A sudden increase in the exhumation rate to 1.0 mm/yr will be accompanied by re-equilibration of the thermal structure in less than a few hundred ka (Mancktelow and Grasemann, 1997). The amplitude of the new isotherm will be nearly double its earlier value, and compared to surface topography, will have an identical signature to a reduction in surface relief. Thus, nearly vertical or reversely dipping age-elevation relationships can be produced by reductions in surface relief *or* increases in exhumation rate with near-constant surface relief.

We can increase the resolving power of age-elevation relationships by taking advantage of the difference in closure temperature between apatite and zircon. We plot zircon cooling ages as a function of 'pseudo-elevation' which shifts each zircon age higher than the corresponding apatite from the same sample by $(T_{c}z-T_{c}a)/(dT/dz)$, where $T_{c}z$ and $T_{c}a$ are the estimated closure temperature for zircon and apatite, respectively (e.g. Reiners, 2005). Where no corresponding apatite sample exists, we use the average closure temperature of the nearest 6 apatite samples. Although the geothermal gradient (dT/dz) is explicit in this formulation (a value of 30 $^{\circ}$ C/km is used), the technique provides additional constraints on the possible timing of exhumation that is largely independent of assumed values.

An additional constraint that can help with interpreting age-elevation relationships is identification of the base of the partial-retention zone (e.g. Reiners, 2005). Samples from within the partial-retention zone (PRZ) often have a spread of ages that reflect differences in diffusion behavior. At a sample level, these differences manifest as large aliquot age dispersion and high propagated uncertainty; at a transect level, the PRZ is characterized by high variation in age with low variation in elevation. A linear regression of samples from below the PRZ can be used to determine the exhumation rate over that time interval, and the age of the break-in-slope between the regression and samples in the PRZ is often interpreted as the onset of exhumation (e.g. Ehlers, 2005).

DIRECT INVERSION THROUGH SPECTRAL ANALYSIS

Overview

To further characterize the relationship between elevation and age, we employ a spectral analysis method developed by Braun (2002b). The conceptual model is that at short wavelengths along a transect of cooling ages through a mountain range, any gradient in age reflects the local exhumation rate because the isotherm is essentially flat with respect to the wavelength of topography (e.g. Turcotte and Schubert, 2002). At very long wavelengths along a transect—such as those approaching the length of the range itself—the isotherms will completely mimic the topography and any gradient in age must be due to changes in surface relief.

Method

The goal of the spectral analysis is to separate the short-wavelength from the long-wavelength signals. This is accomplished through analyzing the 'frequency response' or 'admittance' function of the system, using elevation (z) as the stimulus signal and cooling age (a) as the response signal (Braun, 2002b). The frequency response function provides the gain at each sampled frequency and is computed with:

$$
G(\lambda) = \frac{S_{za}(f)}{S_{zz}(f)}
$$

Where $S_{za}(f)$ is the cross-power spectrum of elevation and age and $S_{zz}(f)$ is the auto-power spectrum of elevation. This provides a plot of inverse exhumation rate (m.y./km) as a function of wavelength. Gain values at short wavelength G_S (typically less than 8–10 km) estimate the local exhumation rate; gain values at asymptotically long wavelength G_L indicate relief production when positive and relief decay when negative; the relative change in relief since the mean age of the system is given by $(I - G_L/G_S)^{-1}$ (Braun, 2002b). No assumption of an average geothermal gradient is necessary because the method specifically deconvolves the response of age from the effect of elevation.

We compute the frequency response function for both apatite and zircon ages using a nearly 90-km-long by 12-km-wide swath of ages along the southwestern margin of the range; we do not include ages from SW of the SGHF. Because our data is not sampled in a regular grid, we use a Lomb-Scagle periodogram and Welch's overlapped-segment averaging estimator to compute the cross-power and auto-power spectra, as implemented in the program *REDFIT-X* (Ólafsdóttir et al., 2016). To test the robustness of our spectral analysis and evaluate analysis parameters, a LabView program was developed to interface with *REDFIT-X* that allowed us to randomly subsample our data and compile the results. We searched the *REDFIT-X* parameter space to determine the effect of amount of oversampling, number of overlapping segments, and number of withheld data points on the results. We concluded that an oversampling value (OFAC) of 5.0, four overlapping segments, and 4–5 withheld data points yielded the most stable results and these are the values we used in our final analysis.

Values of short-wavelength gain are calculated as the average of all data points with wavelengths <8 km (apatite) or <10 km (zircon). Although there are difficulties with sampling a periodic signal in this manner, it is a uniform criterion that can be applied to all model runs equally. We use a higher cut-off value for zircons because their exhumation from greater depth dampens their isotherm amplitude (Braun, 2002b).

METRICS OF EROSION AND DRAINAGE EVOLUTION

The study of tectonic geomorphology over the last century has largely confirmed the idea that the topography of landscapes can encode information about the spatial and temporal distribution of rock uplift (e.g. Wobus et al., 2006; Kirby and Whipple, 2001; 2012). In many non-glacial orogens, this information can often be successfully decoded from parametrizing and measuring characteristics of the fluvial network (Wobus et al., 2006). Such a focus on the role of fluvial incision, however, does not adequately address the erosion of steep uplands by debris flows and landslides (Stock and Dietrich, 2003), nor does it address the role of diffusive hillslope processes (e.g. Roering et al., 1999). To cover a range of possible mechanisms of erosion, we use five geomorphic metrics—normalized channel steepness, *χ*, local hillslope gradient, relief, and mean annual precipitation—to infer rates and patterns of erosion (Ahnert, 1970; Wobus et al., 2006; Kirby and Whipple, 2001; 2012; DiBiase et al., 2010; Perron and Royden, 2013) for all catchments draining the Santa Lucia range. We chose to isolate tributary catchments of the Salinas River and analyze only those in the Santa Lucia range because much of the Salinas catchment lies outside of our study area. The basis for each metric is discussed below.

CHANNEL STEEPNESS

We focus on the stream-power model of river incision (Howard, 1994; Whipple and Tucker, 1999, Whipple, 2004) which, for a river channel in steady state equilibrium between incision and uplift, can be written as:

$$
S(x) = k_s A(x)^{-m/n}
$$

and:

$$
k_{s} = \left(\frac{U}{K}\right)^{1/n}
$$

The change in elevation with respect to upstream distance (channel slope; *S(x)*) is a function of the ratio of uplift to erodibility—also known as the steepness index—(*U/K*), the upstream drainage area *A(x)*, and constants *m* and *n*. This construct is similar to the relationship first noted by Hack (1957) and Flint (1974) where local channel slope is a power-law function of upstream drainage area with a 'concavity index' and a steepness index; in the steady state formulation above, the ratio *m/n* is the 'concavity index'. The power-law relationship between slope and drainage area can be used to infer the parameters *m/n* and *ks* (e.g. Snyder et al., 2000; 2003), or alternatively, to infer the presence of transient signals in the system (Whipple and Tucker, 1999; 2002).

Departures from spatially uniform *ks* can be useful and indicate at least one of three possibilities: 1) spatial gradients in the ratio of uplift to erodibility—such as an uplifting fault block or substantial changes in rock type, 2) changes to base level that are moving through the system—such as a migrating knickpoint or a temporal change in uplift rate across a bounding fault, or 3) behavior that is not well described by the model—such as a poor choice of *m/n* (e.g. Wobus et al., 2006; Kirby and Whipple, 2012; Perron and Royden, 2013; Mudd et al., 2014). In practice, it is often difficult to deconvolve the dual signals of uplift and rock erodibility encoded in *ks* if both vary substantially over a study area (as is the case for the Santa Lucia range). This can be accounted for by only analyzing *ks* in regions of relatively similar bedrock lithology.

Furthermore, we restrict our analysis to regions downstream of a threshold drainage area of 1 $km²$ to avoid sampling parts of the catchment where the stream-power model is inappropriate and erosion is more likely dominated by debris flows and landslides (e.g. Stock and Dietrich, 2003).

The determination of *ks* for a fluvial network requires measurement of drainage area and local channel slope which can be accomplished by a linear regression of channel slope and contributing drainage area on a log-log plot (Wobus et al., 2006). This approach, however, suffers from difficulties arising from the differentiation of inherently noisy elevation data and it can be difficult to accurately determine the relevant parameters. An alternative approach, first described by Royden et al. (2000) and Sorby and England (2004) and expanded in Perron and Royden (2013), is to integrate the stream-power equation instead of differentiating to obtain:

$$
z(x) = z(x_b) + A_0^{-m/n} k_s x
$$

and

$$
\chi = \int_{x_b}^x \left(\frac{A_0}{A(x')}\right)^{m/n} dx
$$

In this formulation, the elevation in the river channel at an upstream point $z(x)$ is a function of the steepness index ks and the integrated upstream drainage area χ ; a constant $z(x_b)$ represents the elevation of the base of the fluvial network, and A_0 is a reference drainage area (Perron and Royden, 2013). This transforms the x-coordinate of the river system into *χ* and linearizes the relationship between elevation and upstream drainage area. Because *χ* is an integral quantity, determining *ks* does not suffer from the aliasing and noise issues of log-log slope-area plots. The slope of the stream in the transformed coordinate system—M χ —is the quantity A_0 -m/n k s.

M*Χ* AND *KSN* AS A POTENTIAL MEASURE OF UPLIFT AND EROSION

In a simple fluvial network, a single value of *m/n* collapses and co-linearizes the main stem and tributaries onto a single line with the slope M*χ* (Perron and Royden, 2013). Although calculated differently, the quantity M χ , when multiplied by the constant A_0 ^{-m/n} is identical to normalized channel steepness, *ksn*. We calculate *ksn* throughout the study area to test our predications

of which faults control vertical deformation in the Santa Lucia range. In theory, an increase in uplift rate across a fault without a change in lithology should result in a proportional increase in *ksn*, and *ksn* should generally be larger in areas of higher uplift. Thus, the map-view distribution of *ksn* can become a screening tool for faults with relative vertical motion where lithologies are similar on either side.

Χ AS A POTENTIAL MEASURE OF DRAINAGE DISEQUILIBRIUM

The topology of drainage networks is often considered to represent the long-term (>105 yr) erosive response to the boundary conditions of rock uplift, erodibility, and climate (e.g. Montgomery and Dietrich, 1988). The ability of the *χ* transformation to reveal patterns in river channel slope, normalized for upstream drainage area, makes it an excellent tool to examine drainage basin dynamics (Willet et al., 2014). Two streams that meet at a common divide and end at a common base level must have the same drop in elevation. However, how the change in elevation is distributed over their length can vary substantially and it is this distribution of slope, normalized for drainage area, that the *χ* transformation reveals.

Mismatches in χ across a drainage divide indicate that the stream with lower χ is steeper and more aggressively eroding than the stream with higher *χ*. For regions with similar uplift and erodibility, this disequilibrium leads to the migration of the drainage divide towards the higher *χ* stream (Willet et al., 2014). Alternatively, a mismatch in chi across a drainage divide could also indicate equilibrium if there is a significant asymmetry in the distribution of uplift or erodibility (e.g. Shikakura et al., 2012). Thus, map-view patterns of *χ* can be judiciously used to infer drainage divide stability or the presence of equilibrium landscapes with asymmetric forcing.

CALCULATION OF *X* **AND M_{***Χ***}**

We employ a method to calculate *χ* and *ksn* similar to that described by Mudd et al. (2014), but modified to run in MATLAB and with much less computational overhead. *χ* is calculated using the TopoToolbox MATLAB script (Schwanghart and Scherler, 2014) using the equations of Perron and Royden (2013) and the USGS 10m National Elevation Dataset resampled to 30m resolution. Our script is modified to iterate through all stream networks in the DEM. After an initial run using the best-fitting *m/n* algorithm, we determined that the *m/n* value that best transforms all the data is ~0.5 and use this value for all streams to allow inter-network comparison
of chi and *ksn*. We use sea level as the base elevation for all drainages except for tributaries of the Salinas River where the local elevation of the confluence is used.

Once χ is calculated, we implement an algorithm that separates each stream segment and iteratively determines an optimum set of best-fit linear regressions. This is done using an implementation of the Shape Language Modeling toolbox (SLM), written by John D'Errico and modified for our purposes. The SLM toolbox uses an optimization routine to determine the location of a set number of 'knots' and the slope of intervening linear segments that minimizes the misfit using the least-squares method. The knot locations are free to vary anywhere between the two end points and we require the slope of the line to be non-decreasing, since any 'upstream flow' is a result of noise in the elevation data and not a physically meaningful result.

The number of fit segments is determined iteratively. A starting number of knots is provided based on the length of the stream segment and a goodness of fit is assessed using the adjusted R2 statistic. If the goodness of fit is too low, a knot is added and the SLM model runs again; if the goodness of fit is too high, a knot is removed. In this manner, poor fits are given additional degrees of freedom and overfit data are penalized. Based on the results of hundreds of model runs, the acceptable range of adjusted $R²$ was set between 0.997 and 0.999, the minimum number of knots is 3 (counting end points), and the maximum number of knots is 18. Although the adjusted $R²$ values are inflated because of serial correlation, their relative magnitudes are still meaningful.

Our approach to determining best-fit segments of *ksn* is a less-robust implementation than that described by Mudd et al. (2014) and trades computational efficiency for decreased parameterization. First, our fit segments of M*χ* must always be linked, even where parallel M*χ* segments are separated by a vertical drop, such as at a waterfall. In our implementation, a waterfall would manifest as three segments, two with identical M*χ* separated by a short segment with much higher M*χ*; in the Mudd et al. (2014) implementation, this would result in only two segments with differences in their y-intercept values. Second, we use a much more limited number of possible M*χ* segments. Our implementation is set to only allow a maximum of 16 independent segments, whereas hundreds are allowed in the Mudd et al. (2014) version. Despite using our relatively sparse set of knot parameters, even the longest stream segments appear adequately

fit at the scale of our study. Third, the relatively simple least-squares search through *m/n* space as described by Perron and Royden (2013) and implemented in the TopoToolbox script is not nearly as thorough and rigorous as the approach developed by Mudd et al. (2014). This is a justified difference, in part, because the large scale of our analysis requires that we pick a *m/n* value to use for all networks.

OTHER TOPOGRAPHIC METRICS OF EROSION

HILLSLOPE ANGLE

Hillslopes deliver sediment to fluvial networks through a variety of processes, from non-linear diffusion of soil and colluvium (e.g. Roering et al., 1999), to debris flows and landslides (e.g. Stock and Dietrich, 2003). In many tectonically active and eroding landscapes, hillslopes rapidly attain a threshold value and respond to further channel incision at their base through increased frequency of debris flows and landslides (Burbank et al., 1996; Montgomery, 2001; Larsen and Montgomery, 2012). This leads to the observation that erosion rates correlate well with hillslope angle until their threshold value is reached, but vary widely above this value (Burbank et al., 1996; Montgomery and Brandon, 2002; Binnie et al., 2007; Ouimet et al., 2009). Catchment-mean hillslope angle has been successfully used in many studies to document this transition from transport-limited erosion below the threshold to detachment-limited erosion above (e.g. Binnie et al., 2007; DiBiase et al., 2010). In the nearby San Bernardino and San Gabriel mountains, this transition occurs over a range of hillslope angles from ~20–30° (Binnie et al., 2007; DiBiase et al., 2010). We calculate slope from the 10m USGS National Elevation Dataset and determine mean values for all catchments in the study area.

RELIEF

Relief of mountain ranges has long been considered a key metric that relates topography and erosion (Ahnert, 1970; Schmidt and Montgomery, 1995). The scale at which relief should be calculated is more uncertain; at short lengths relief becomes a metric of local surface slope; at long lengths it mimics maximum topography. We calculate relief in a 2.5-km-radius window because it is linearly proportional to normalized channel steepness (and positively correlated with rates of long-term erosion) in the San Gabriel and San Bernardino mountains (Binnie et al., 2007; DiBiase et al., 2010). Relief calculated in 5-km and 1-km-radii are not as well correlated with channel steepness (DiBiase et al., 2010). The Santa Lucia range is similar in lithology to

the San Gabriel and San Bernardino ranges, has similar young cooling ages, and thus may display similar relationships between relief and erosion. Relief is calculated from the 30m USGS National Elevation Dataset and average values are calculated for all catchments in the study area.

DEFORMED MARINE TERRACES

To compare time-averaged exhumation rates and metrics of erosion with more recent rates of surface uplift along the Big Sur coast, we surveyed the bedrock-surface elevation of the lowest-emergent marine terrace near Ragged Point (this study), between Big Sur and Monterey (Chapter 2) and from Aptos northward to Point Año Nuevo (Chapter 1). The lowest terrace level was chosen specifically because reconnaissance work in Big Sur revealed that only a single marine terrace is preserved in most locations, that the lowest-emergent terrace throughout the region is morphologically distinct from older terraces owing to its generally excellent preservation and both prominent and wide wave-cut platform, and the terrace remnants in Big Sur can be nearly continuously mapped into the first widespread emergent terrace near Monterey (McKittrick, 1988; Clark et al., 1997; Rosenberg and Wills, 2016) and San Simeon (Hanson et al., 1994).

The survey was completed using a laser rangefinder, survey grade GPS receiver, and rugged tablet computer; typical vertical measurement uncertainties with this method are ~ 0.7 m (a detailed description of uncertainty estimation is provided in Appendix A). Our method has the advantage over previous efforts (Alexander, 1953; Bradley and Griggs, 1976; McKittrick, 1988) of surveying the marine terrace where it is abundantly exposed along coastal bluffs. Because these measurements were made along coastal bluffs, elevations are corrected for the distance to the back edge, as defined by a prominent break-in-slope in airborne lidar from the 2009–2011 California Coastal Conservancy Lidar Project (http://coast.noaa.gov/dataviewer/) or where detailed geologic mapping exists (Clark et al., 1997; Graymer et al., 2014; Rosenberg and Wills, 2016). All efforts were made to survey only the lowest, most-prominent marine terrace. Elevation data and a detailed description of the methods used are available in Appendices A and C.

60

The lateral continuity and initially uniform elevation of the lowest-emergent marine terrace along the central California coast make it an excellent strain marker, regardless of its age (e.g., Anderson, 1990; Valensise and Ward, 1991). Terrace ages in central California—and near Santa Cruz in particular—are the subject of disagreement (e.g. Perg et al., 2001; Weber, 1990), but the closest ages to Ragged Point (Hanson et al., 1994) seem less contentious. Near San Simeon the 'San Simeon terrace' is the lowest well-developed terrace and is correlated with the MIS 5c sea level high stand (Hanson et al., 1994). We tentatively correlate the uplifted marine terraces found along the Big Sur coast to the north of and near Ragged Point with the MIS 5c terrace near San Simeon based on the lack of any lower-elevation terraces, and on their similar morphologic character. This correlation is further supported by a late Quaternary uplift rate of >=0.75 mm/yr near Ragged Point provided—but not discussed—by Hanson et al. (1994). This rate predicts a terrace elevation near Ragged Point >78 m, in reasonable agreement with our surveyed terrace heights.

RESULTS

LOW-TEMPERATURE THERMOCHRONOMETRY

Table 3-2 presents the results of new apatite and zircon (U-Th)/He ages collected in 4 steep transects—three along the Big Sur coast, and one in the highest-relief part of the interior of the range in addition to 11 new ages scattered throughout the range. The results of a coastal transect between Monterey and Big Sur (Chapter 2), the original data for the apatite Cone Peak transect (Ducea et al., 2003), and several apatite fission track results from Naeser and Ross (1976) are also provided.

STEEP TRANSECTS

PALO CORONA

Overview

The Palo Corona transect is the farthest north of our vertical transects (Fig. 3-2), covers an area from Soberanes Creek at sea level to Palo Corona at ~830 m elevation, and is the only transect that is sub-parallel to the SGHF instead of perpendicular. Bedrock consists predominantly of the hornblende-biotite quartz diorite of Soberanes Point (Wiebe, 1966; Ross, 1976, Clark and Rosenberg, 1999; Rosenberg and Wills, 2016) and the granodiorite of Cachagua (Dibblee, 1974; Ross, 1976). Apatite ages increase steadily from 10.7 Ma at sea level to 17–27

Table 3-2. Summary of low-temperature thermochronometric ages, exhumation rates, and parameters. Topography values indicate wavelength (λ), amplitude (Δ), and base elevation (z₀) and are estimated from a 30 m DEM. Sources of data: 1, A. Steely, 2016; 2, A. Mere, 2016; 3, D. Orme, 2009; 4, J. Ooms, 2012; 5, Ducea et al. (2003); 6, Naeser and Ross, 1976.

Sample # Map ID/	Longitude Latitude/	SGHF (km) Distance to	Elevation (m)	Relief in 2.5 km radius (m)	No. of aliquots Analysis type/	Cooling age $\pm 1\sigma$	Est. bulk T_c (°C)	λ ₂ / Δ ₂₀ /(km) Topography	Depth to T _c (km)	Local geothermal gradient (°C/km)	Exhumation rates deflected/flat (mm/yr)	exhumation rate $\pm 1\sigma$ (mm/yr) Average	Source
Zircon (U-Th)/He													
$\overline{\mathbf{4}}$	36.1461	16.25	1780	967	ZHe	78.07	171.4	5.2/0.48	5.25	27.8	0.08	0.09	1
AS004	-121.4208				3	± 3.85		0.85			0.10	± 0.006	
6	36.1467	15.78	1556	1042	ZHe	86.39	167.4	5.2/0.48/	5.12	28.9	0.07	0.07	1
AS006 8	-121.4285 36.1430	15.19	1360	1110	4 ZHe	± 8.61 90.61	169.2	0.85 5.2/0.48/	5.16	29.9	0.08 0.06	± 0.011 0.07	$\mathbf{1}$
AS008	-121.4332				4	±12.72		0.85			0.08	± 0.014	
10	36.1366	14.87	1073	1146	ZHe	108.50	166.7	5.2/0.48/	5.07	31.6	0.05	0.05	1
AS010	-121.4309				$\overline{4}$	\pm 5.86		0.85			0.06	± 0.004	
16	36.2844	0.66	719	1064	ZHe	27.05	180.8	5.6/0.55/	5.04	31.5	0.21	0.23	$\mathbf{1}$
AS016	-121.8010				$\overline{4}$	± 4.25		0.0			0.25	± 0.051	
17 AS017	36.2914 -121.8156	0.10	606	1038	ZHe	19.45 ± 9.45	182.6	8.0/0.55/ 0.0	4.87	33.3	0.28 0.34	0.31 ±0.215	1
18	36.2963	-0.65	463	881	3 ZHe	27.58	182.8	10.0/	5.07	33.2	0.20	0.22	1
AS018	-121.8305				7	± 2.61		0.55/0.0			0.24	± 0.029	
19	36.1803	4.13	1189	1017	ZHe	25.15	180.4	7.6/0.65/	5.05	29.0	0.25	0.27	$\mathbf{1}$
AS019	-121.6422				3	± 4.60		0.0			0.29	± 0.069	
20	36.1770	3.73	1051	1115	ZHe	20.02	180.9	7.6/0.65/	4.89	30.4	0.30	0.33	1
AS020	-121.6443				3 ZHe	± 0.47		0.0			0.35	± 0.011	
22 AS022	36.1721 -121.6481	3.11	835	1202	4	20.52 ±3.42	187.6	7.6/0.65/ 0.0	5.06	31.7	0.29 0.35	0.32 ± 0.075	$\mathbf{1}$
24	36.1598	1.29	370	1122	ZHe	11.66	187.0	7.6/0.65/	4.55	37.9	0.42	0.49	1
AS024	-121.6615				4	± 0.39		0.0			0.57	± 0.023	
25	36.1584	0.94	245	995	ZHe	12.22	187.1	7.6/0.65/	4.59	38.6	0.40	0.46	1
AS025	-121.6653				5	± 1.18		$0.0\,$			0.53	± 0.063	
26	35.8547	6.04	980	641	ZHe	19.13	181.4	13.0/	4.84	31.1	0.30	0.34	1
AS026 27	-121.3235 35.8564	5.77	897	658	$\overline{4}$ ZHe	± 5.03 35.73	180.8	0.50/0.0 13.0/	5.15	30.0	0.37 0.17	±0.125 0.18	1
AS027	-121.3302				$\overline{4}$	± 6.92		0.50/0.0			0.19	± 0.050	
29	35.8473	4.58	635	804	ZHe	12.85	181.7	13.0/	4.52	35.1	0.40	0.46	1
AS029	-121.3376				$\overline{4}$	± 1.45		0.50/0.0			0.52	± 0.074	
30	35.8354	3.39	442	946	ZHe	67.33	175.3	13.0/	5.16	31.4	0.08	0.09	1
AS030	-121.3407				4	±17.21		0.50/0.0			0.09	± 0.032	
31 AS031	35.8279 -121.3448	2.51	402	1052	ZHe $\overline{4}$	28.94 ± 5.31	182.9	13.0/ 0.50/0.0	5.10	33.4	0.19 0.22	0.21 ± 0.054	1
32	35.8167	1.19	320	906	ZHe	23.30	184.4	13.0/	5.03	34.6	0.23	0.25	1
AS032	-121.3511				$\overline{4}$	± 3.09		0.50/0.0			0.28	± 0.047	
33	35.8136	0.55	150	891	ZHe	23.95	182.0	13.0/	4.97	35.7	0.21	0.24	1
AS033	-121.3575				7	±7.11		0.50/0.0			0.26	± 0.099	
45	36.4603	6.93	120	676	ZHe	83.98	173.1	10.0/	5.08	33.2	0.06	0.07	$\mathbf{1}$
AS045 46	-121.9084		4	564	4 ZHe	± 4.47	170.3	0.45/0.0	4.96	34.4	0.07 0.07	± 0.005	
AS046	36.4551 -121.9256	5.38			4	67.39		10.0/ 0.45/0.0				0.08 ± 0.016	1
47	35.8086	-0.24	5	817	ZHe	± 9.58 67.13	172.4	13.0/	5.05	34.3	0.08 0.07	0.08	$\mathbf{1}$
AS047	-121.3639				3	±2.15		0.50/0.0			0.09	± 0.004	
48	36.1564	0.37	20	824	ZHe	16.35	184.5	7.6/0.65/	4.75	38.6	0.29	0.33	$\mathbf{1}$
AS048	-121.6720				5	± 2.90		0.0			0.38	± 0.084	
49	36.5227	9.98	3	390	ZHe	87.55	173.5	6.0/0.30/	5.08	34.1	0.06	0.06	$\mathbf{1}$
AS049 50	-121.9298 36.3739	1.57	98	488	\mathfrak{Z} ZHe	± 2.41 29.65	179.7	0.0 12.0/	5.00	35.4	0.07 0.17	± 0.002 0.19	2
AS050	-121.8955				3	± 3.90		0.45/0.0			0.21	± 0.035	
51	36.3756	1.08	61	477	ZHe	31.00	173.7	12.0/	4.84	35.6	0.16	0.17	2
AS051	-121.9047				5	±2.14		0.45/0.0			0.19	± 0.017	
52	36.3958	2.60	$\overline{4}$	489	ZHe	32.65	178.7	12.0/	5.00	35.8	0.15	0.17	2
AS052	-121.9038				5	±3.59		0.45/0.0			$0.18\,$	± 0.026	

Figure 3-4. Age-elevation relationships for apatite and zircon (U-Th)/He suggest exhumation began in the late Miocene between ~6 and 12 Ma. **Panel A** shows ages for both minerals. Elevations for zircon samples are shifted upwards to account for their higher closure temperature. In general, pre-15 Ma zircon ages are highly variable, show little trend with topography, and likely represent sampling from either above or within the partial retention zone. The youngest zircon samples are found at the lowest elevation and may reflect more rapid late-Miocene cooling. **Panel B** shows the apatite samples in more detail, with linear regressions for vertical transects discussed in the text; regression parameters can be found in Table 3-1. The alternative ages for some samples from the Junipero Serra transect are discussed in the text

Ma along the higher ridgeline. We analyzed only the lowest two samples for zircon, and these yielded late Cretaceous cooling ages.

Rates of exhumation

The presence of widely varying age—and high within-sample age dispersion—above ~500 m on an age-elevation plot suggest the presence of an exhumed partial retention zone (Fig. 3-4). Low within-sample dispersion and monotonic changes in age with elevation below 500 m suggest that the lower part of the transect has been exhumed from beneath the PRZ. The break-in-slope between the fossilized PRZ and more-rapidly cooled samples is sometime in the mid to late Miocene, between ~15–20 Ma. Age-elevation relationships (AER) indicate ~0.08 mm/yr of apparent exhumation during the mid to late Miocene (Table 3-3). Exhumation rates of ~0.14 mm/yr since 10.7 Ma are needed to exhume the youngest samples and are nearly double the older rates. Exhumation rates calculated for individual samples are 0.08–0.17 mm/yr.

ANDERSON PEAK

Overview

The Anderson Peak transect begins near sea level at Julia Pfeiffer-Burns State Park and ascends to nearly 1,200 m elevation at the top of Anderson Peak. The lowest-most sample (ID-48) is from a rounded granitic boulder in the unnamed Cretaceous conglomerate of Hall (1991), located SW of the Sur fault, a likely strand of the SGHF (Dickenson et al., 2005). The remainder of samples are from garnetiferous charnockitic tonalite and quartzofeldspathic gneiss of the Coast Ridge belt (Compton, 1960; Ross, 1976); the tonalite has an emplacement ages of ~98–99 Ma (Mattinson, 1978). Apatite cooling ages are 3.7–4.1 Ma between 250–1050 m elevation; zircon ages are 11.5–12.2 Ma below 250 m elevation and increase steadily to \sim 25 Ma at the highest elevation (Fig. 3-4; Table 3-2). The lowest-most sample (ID-48) did not yield apatite, and its zircon cooling age (~16.4 Ma; Table 3-2) is much older than nearby and higher samples from the NE side of the Sur fault.

Rates of exhumation

The apatite AER for this transect is vertical to reversely dipping (Fig. 3-4) and suggests either: 1) changes in surface relief since the mean age of the system that are similar in magnitude to the deflection of isotherms (e.g. Braun, 2002a), or 2) very rapid late Miocene to Pliocene

			AER estimates				Post-apatite estimates		Paired-sample estimates		
Transect	Age range (Ma)	.rates from ind. samples (mm/yr) Exh.	rate \bullet exh. (mm/yr) AER.	AER intercept (km)	\mathbb{R}^2	Age of lowest sample $\pm 1\sigma$ (Ma)	estimate sample $(mm/yr)^e$ Ind. exh.	estimate (mm/ yr) ^d AER exh.	Age range (Ma)	$(mm/yr)^f$ Exhumation rate	Sample
Apatite (U-Th)/He											
Palo Coronaa	$10.7-$ 20.1	$0.08 -$ 0.17	0.08	-0.89	0.875	10.7 ± 0.3	$0.16-$ 0.18	0.14	$10.7 - 67.4$	$0.05-$ 0.07	AS046
Anderson Peak	$3.7-$ 4.1	$0.54-$ 0.79	-0.70	3.33	0.1622	3.9 ± 0.9	$0.39-$ 0.71		$4.1 - 11.7$	$0.43-$ 0.48	AS024
Cone Peakb	$2.3-$ 6.1	$0.51-$ 0.95	0.35	-0.64	0.932	2.3 ± 0.1	$0.88 -$ 1.02	0.89	$2.3 - 7.1$	$0.58 -$ 0.72	AS057, DCONE1
Salmon Creek	$3.9 -$ 6.8	$0.38 -$ 0.58	0.22	-0.64	0.831	4.2 ± 0.9	$0.34-$ 0.52	0.47	$5.6 - 12.8$	$0.43-$ 0.58	AS029
Zircon (U-Th)/He											
Palo Corona	$67.4-$ 84.0	$0.07 -$ 0.08									
Anderson Peak	$11.5-$ 25.1	$0.27 -$ 0.49	0.07	-3.41	0.927	11.8 ± 1.2 c	$0.42-$ 0.52c	$0.44-$ 0.54			

Table 3-3. Estimates of exhumation rate for steep transects along the coast of the Santa Lucia range using age-elevation relationships (AER), individual sample exhumation rates, and paired-sample estimates.

a AER does not include sample AS042

12.8– 67.3

Cone

Salmon Creek

b AER does not include sample D_CONE_7

 $0.09 - 0.46$

c Calculated using average of youngest three ages, ID-24, 25, 65

dEstimated using the zero-intercept method, average closure temperature for all samples in the transect, and assuming a geotherm of 30°C/km

0.46 – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – –

e Estimated using the closure temperature of the youngest sample, a geotherm of 30°C/km, and the 1σ uncertainty in age

f Estimated using paired apatite and zircon ages from the indicated sample

Peak 7.1 0.75 – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – – –

exhumation (e.g. Spotila et al., 1998). Using plausible values of $α$ (Table 3-1), modern relief would have to be a small fraction (0.2–0.4) of its early Pliocene value if the over-steepened AER were caused by changes solely in surface relief. A more-likely scenario is a rapid change in exhumation rate accompanied by modest changes in surface relief. Such punctuated exhumation has been invoked to explain vertical AERs in narrow fault blocks along the San Andreas fault (Spotila et al., 1998). Apparent exhumation rates calculated from individual apatite samples are 0.54–0.79 mm/yr.

The AER for zircon records a more-simple cooling history (Fig. 3-4), with 0.07 mm/yr of exhumation during the mid to late Miocene (Table 3-3). This rate is nearly identical to that obtained over a similar time period from apatite of the Palo Corona transect. Regardless of the complexities in the Pliocene exhumation history, average exhumation rates ~0.47–0.56 mm/ yr are required since the late Miocene to bring the zircon samples to the surface (Table 3-3).

SALMON CREEK

Overview

The Salmon Creek transect begins at sea level and reaches heights of 980 m near Lions Peak (Fig. 3-2). The lowest sample, taken at a beach cove, is from a brown, indurated, coarsegrained arkosic sandstone with stringers and beds of finer-grained mudstone and muddy sandstone. The arkose was penetratively brecciated and fractured to the northeast, and greenstone and serpentinite were found upstream of the damaged rock. The most-northeastward strand of the SGHF at Ragged Point, 4 km to the SE, projects into this area (Graymer et al., 2014) and based on our mapping during sample collection, likely separates the metavolcanic block on the NE from the sampled arkose on the SW. A strand of the SGHF was mapped in this location at a regional scale by Dibblee (1976). The remainder of the transect samples are from sandstone blocks and slabs within argillitic matrix of the Franciscan mélange (Dibblee and Minch, 2007; Graymer et al., 2014).

Apatite ages range from 3.9–24.6 Ma and zircon ages range from 12.9–87.5 Ma. For both apatite and zircon, the oldest ages within the transect are found at the lowest elevation across the projected trace of a strand of the SGHF. This relationship—of substantially older cooling ages directly SW across strands of the SGHF—is also observed at the base of the Anderson Peak transect and in an equal-elevation transect between Monterey and Big Sur (Chapter 2). The youngest apatite sample NE of the fault strand (ID-33) has a weighted mean age of 3.9 ±0.9 Ma (n=5) but contains two aliquots <2.5 Ma (Appendix B). Zircon ages from the same sample show a nearly bimodal distribution of individual ages, with a population at \sim 13 Ma (n=4) and as young as 10.3 Ma) and an early Miocene to Eocene population (n=3) (Appendix B). These observations, coupled with a uniformly young zircon sample at higher elevation (ID-29), the generally large within-sample dispersion of zircon ages, and lack of consistent zircon age-elevation relationships all suggest that base of the zircon PRZ may now just beginning to become exhumed.

Rates of exhumation

The apatite AER indicates an apparent exhumation rate of ~0.22mm/yr during the latest Miocene and Pliocene (Fig. 3-4; Table 3-3). The wavelength and amplitude of topography in this area (Table 3-1) suggest that that this rate may be an overestimate if topographic amplitude has not changed since the Pliocene. Apparent exhumation since ~4.2 Ma is estimated at 0.34–0.52 mm/yr; average rates calculated for individual apatite ages are 0.38–0.58 mm/yr. Average apparent exhumation since 13 Ma from zircon ages (using either the young population of sample ID-33 or the entire sample of ID-29) is ~0.4 mm/yr.

JUNIPERO SERRA

Overview

The Junipero Serra transect begins near Indians Ranch in the central part of the Santa Lucia range (Fig. 3-2); the lowest sample is from \sim 868 m elevation and the transect ascends to the top of Junipero Serra Peak at 1780 m elevation (the highest peak in the range). Rocks in the transect are the porphyritic granodiorite and quartz diorite of the Bear Mountain and Junipero Serra Peak plutons, and quartzofeldspathic gneiss (Ross, 1976); garnets, in euhedral grains up to several mm and in rare clots up to 1 cm were observed in the gneiss and in aplite dikes throughout the transect. A fault across the transect near sample ID 10 is depicted on some maps (e.g. Dibblee, 1974; 1979) but is placed south of our transect on the most recent compilation (Rosenberg and Wills, 2016).

Apatite ages range from 6.6 Ma to 30.2 Ma, lack a clear age-elevation relationship, and have large within-sample age dispersion (Fig. 3-4; Table 3-2). The presence of much younger samples at higher elevation than older samples is difficult to interpret and most samples appear to contain two distinct populations—an older, typically mid Miocene to Oligocene population—and a younger <12 Ma population. We suspect that the young population of ages is not geologically meaningful, but is the result of resetting during wildfire. The Junipero Serra area experienced a large wildfire in 2008 and although we tried to collect samples from areas that would have been shielded from the fire, it is possible that the heating from that event has reset some of the

apatite grains; the youngest ages are from an area that experienced the greatest fire intensity. There is no correlation between young ages and grain geometry that could be used to screen for reset ages. A simple screening for 'too young' ages is unsatisfactory because it is impossible to know if the remaining analyses are also too young because of resetting. With these difficulties in mind, we provide a tentative estimate of some samples from this transect by simply removing ages that fall far outside of the oldest ages and consider the resulting age to be a lower estimate of the actual sample cooling age (Fig. 3-4; Appendix B).

Rates of exhumation

We do not consider exhumation estimates from the apatite ages to be robust enough to indicate anything more than late Oligocene through mid-Miocene cooling. Zircon ages are not affected by wildfire in the same way as apatite because of their different diffusion kinetics (Reiners et al., 2004). Ages vary from ~78 to 108 Ma, and are the oldest within the Santa Lucia range. The oldest zircon (U-Th)/He ages are similar to—and nearly overlap—the 117 ±12 Ma Rb-Sr age for the Bear Mountain and Junipero Serra Peak plutons (Everenden and Kistler, 1970). The old cooling ages are difficult to explain considering substantial evidence for rapid cooling of most plutonic and metamorphic rocks in the range during the late Cretaceous (Naeser and Ross, 1976; Mattinson, 1978; Kidder and Ducea, 2006). Equally puzzling is the inverted age-elevation relationship that indicates younger cooling at higher elevations. There are no age-eU correlations (e.g. Guenthner et al., 2013) that could be used to explain this relationship (Table 3-2; Appendix B).

COASTAL SAMPLES

A single sample (ID-57) of quartzofeldspathic gneiss from the Coast Ridge belt (Ross, 1976) was collected just NE of the major bounding fault with Franciscan rocks at the base of the Cone Peak transect of Ducea et al. (2003). Although insufficient apatite was recovered to replicate the young ages reported by Ducea et al. (2003), the sample yielded a 7.1 \pm 0.7 Ma zircon cooling age. This age is identical to a 7.1 \pm 0.5 Ma (n=14) zircon (U-Th)/He age from metasandstone in this area reported by Lori (2016), although the exact location of her sample was not provided. These zircon ages are the youngest in the entire range and indicate apparent exhumation rates of ~0.75 mm/yr since the late Miocene. The youngest apatite age from the

Ducea et al. (2003) transect is 2.2 Ma and suggests similar exhumation rates of 0.88–1.02 mm/ yr (Tables 3-2 and 3-4).

Three samples from charnockitic plutonic rocks between fault strands of the SGHF near Big Creek (ID-61, 62, and 64) yielded zircon cooling ages of 8.0–15.8 Ma. The youngest sample (8.0 ±1.0) is from a narrow fault-bound sliver of Salinian plutonic and metamorphic rock within Franciscan mélange (Hall, 1991; Rosenberg and Wills, 2016) and suggests an average exhumation rate of 0.56–0.82 mm/yr, similar to rates a few km to the south at the base of the Cone Peak transect. The remaining two show little variation in age with elevation (150–488 m) and are within discrete fault blocks NE of the main fault separating Franciscan mélange from Salinian rocks (Rosenberg and Wills, 2016). These two samples have apparent exhumation rates of -0.38 mm/yr (Table 3-2).

RANGE-INTERIOR SAMPLES

One sample (ID-56) was collected on the northeast side of the Santa Lucia range, in a quarry near Salinas, from the ~81 Ma (Kistler and Champion, 2001) garnetiferous quartz monzonite of Pine Creek (Ross, 1976). The sampled location lies several km structurally above the schist of the Sierra de Salinas and is overlain along a nonconformity several km to the north by Miocene and Plio-Pleistocene units (Clark et al., 2001). The apatite cooling age (65.0 ±5.8 Ma) is the oldest in the range and close to the zircon cooling age $(67.5 \pm 3.4 \text{ Ma})$. These ages indicate very rapid cooling in the late Cretaceous (~1.5 mm/yr between 65 and 67 Ma), possibly associated with unroofing of the underlying schist of Sierra de Salinas (Chapman et al., 2010).

Several samples from the interior part of the range were collected and analyzed by J. Ooms and C. Gallagher (UCSC, written commun., 2012) within quartz diorite, granodiorite, and quartzofeldspathic gneiss (Ross, 1976). Apatite cooling ages from these samples indicate late Miocene cooling at high elevation near Uncle Sam Mountain (ID-80 and 89), late Miocene cooling in the high-elevation headwaters of Arroyo Seco near Black Cone Peak (ID-81–84), and Oligocene cooling near Cachagua (ID-86) (Table 3-2).

SPECTRAL ANALYSIS

Results from spectral analysis of apatite and zircon in a 12-km-wide by 90-km-long swath are shown in Figure 3-5. The frequency response function at short wavelength of all apatite

Figure 3-5. Results from spectral analysis of age-elevation relationships from apatite and zircon (U-Th)/He thermochronometry along a ~12 km-wide swath adjacent to the SGHF. Gain values at short wavelength indicate the inverse of the mean exhumation rate (Braun, 2002b). The value β is a measure of the relief generation since the average age of the system and uses the ratio between the asymptotic gain at long wavelength (G_I) and the short-wavelength gain (G_s) in the form β=(1-G_l/G_s)-1. Apatite data suggest that, when analyzed together, relief has increased since ~9 Ma and average exhumation is ~0.2 mm/yr. Zircon data indicate a higher proportion increase in relief since ~30 Ma, but with lower long-term rates.

data suggests an exhumation rate of \sim 0.22 mm/yr and an \sim 30% increase in relief since \sim 9 Ma; excluding the somewhat-anomalous Anderson Peak data changes this result slightly, but is still within the envelope of subsampled model runs. Analysis of zircon data suggest an average exhumation rate of ~0.05 mm/yr and >300% increase in relief since ~30 Ma. To a first order, the amount of exhumation indicated by the zircon analysis (~1.5 km) can be completely explained by the exhumation indicated by the apatite analysis (~1.9 km). Given that relief in the analyzed swath is presently \sim 1,200 m, it suggests relief of \sim 900 m in the late Miocene and \sim 350 m in the Oligocene.

METRICS OF EROSION AND DRAINAGE EVOLUTION

We present the results of five catchment-averaged geomorphic metrics (Fig. 3-6) to understand the general response of the Santa Lucia range to the processes of uplift and erosion. We then examine the map-pattern and profile results of our *χ* and *ksn* analysis to understand the spatial variation in these values. Data for each drainage basin are provided in Table 3-4 and the location of basins can be found on Figure 3-14. Data from the San Gabriel Mountains are provided for comparison and are from DiBiase et al. (2010).

Table 3-4. Catchment-mean values of geomorphic metrics, exhumation rate, and denudation rate for catchments >5 km² in the Santa Lucia range. ¹⁰Be cosmogenic denudation rates from H. Young (Stanford University, written commun., 2016). Basins with a 'b' and those with area <5 km² denote sub-basins used in the estimate of denudation rate and are included for comparison.

Map ID	Lat. Long. WGS84	Dist. to coast (km)	Drainage area (km ²)	Mean annual precipitation $\pm 1\sigma$ (mm/yr)	radius ±1SD (m) relief in 2.5-km Mean value of	Mean hillslope angle ±1SD (°)	Mean $ksn \pm 1\sigma$ (m ¹)	Mean ksn $(m^{0.9})$	exhumation rate $±1\sigma$ (mm/yr) Mean	¹⁰ Be cosmogenic denudation rate $\pm 1\sigma$ (mm/yr)
1	36.6717 -121.7898	33.3	16.6	373 ± 2	90 ± 29	$\overline{3.1}$ ± 2.8	16 ± 4	12	-0.12 ± 0.009	
2	36.6220 -121.7863	30.0	17.3	373 ± 11	160 ± 30	5.5 ± 3.5	35 ±12	25	-0.10 ± 0.009	
3	36.6232 -121.8146	28.1	8.7	383 ± 6	162 ± 15	4.1 ± 2.6	48 ± 10	33	-0.10 ± 0.005	
4	36.5833 -121.8078	25.7	50.0	415 ± 22	250 ± 76	9.1 ± 7.6	41 \pm 5	29	-0.07 ± 0.023	
5	36.5873 -121.8793	21.1	14.0	446 ± 53	253 ± 61	7.9 ± 6.9	25 ± 5	18	-0.05 ±0.020	
6	36.5793 -121.8864	20.1	10.1	469 ± 52	291 ±45	11.5 ± 8.3	27 ± 4	20	-0.03 ± 0.016	
7	36.4272 -121.6820	23.1	659.7	692 ± 216	632 ± 177	22.4 ± 10.6	144 ± 4	88	0.07 ± 0.068	0.09 ± 0.01
8	36.4861 -121.8696	14.5	36.9	662 ±122	598 ± 81	23.1 ± 9.4	117 ± 9	73	0.11 ± 0.032	
9	36.4779 -121.9033	11.6	8.6	749 ± 77	633 ± 69	27.2 ± 9.6	144 ± 14	87	0.17 ± 0.024	0.07 ± 0.01
10	36.4351 -121.8834	9.9	7.2	971 ± 211	778 ± 97	28.7 ± 8.5	199 \pm 34	117	0.27 ±0.056	$- - -$
11	36.4139 -121.8588	10.1	27.5	1142 ± 263	794 ±91	27.7 ± 8.8	221 ±12	129	0.27 ± 0.060	0.20 ± 0.01
12	36.3855 -121.8464	8.9	13.8	1150 ± 272	803 ± 145	26.1 ± 8.6	201 ± 18	118	0.32 ± 0.061	$- - -$
13	36.3657 -121.8429	7.7	29.4	1037 ± 276	824 ±129	26.0 ± 8.8	200 ± 22	118	0.40 ± 0.101	0.09 ± 0.02
14	36.3270 -121.7895	8.6	104.1	1069 ± 184	913 ± 144	29.9 ± 9.2	179 ± 9	107	0.38 ±0.170	0.27 ± 0.02
15	36.2490 -121.7061	8.7	153.2	1091 ±127	922 ± 151	30.0 ± 10.0	187 ± 10	111	0.33 ±0.162	$0.70\,$ ± 0.11
16	36.1931 -121.6823	6.3	9.7	1121 ± 76	1116 ± 88	30.5 ± 8.1	312 ± 25	176	0.56 ±0.068	0.35 ± 0.02
17	36.1387 -121.6141	7.1	11.0	1093 ± 86	1088 ± 120	29.5 ± 8.7	368 ±44	204	0.50 ± 0.087	0.23 ± 0.02
18	36.0913 -121.5556	7.7	57.8	1138 ± 132	1002 ± 153	29.4 ± 8.7	308 ± 25	174	0.46 ± 0.117	0.21 ± 0.01
19	36.0328 -121.5064	6.9	22.1	1090 ± 93	1234 ± 141	32.3 ± 8.8	321 ± 28	180	0.61 ± 0.108	0.28 ± 0.02
20	35.9919 -121.4582	7.3	16.6	1023 ± 74	955 ± 93	28.5 ± 9.6	282 ± 26	161	0.43 ± 0.085	0.28 ± 0.02
21	35.9490 -121.4467	5.0	16.0	976 ± 106	948 ±72	28.0 ± 8.8	242 ± 15	140	0.45 ± 0.069	$---$
22	35.9097 -121.4089	4.8	42.3	977 ± 91	796 ± 91	26.4 ± 9.0	238 ± 16	138	0.34 ±0.109	
23	35.8743 -121.3925	3.4	10.9	1040 ± 104	926 ± 102	26.3 ± 9.1	331 ± 95	185	0.44 ± 0.097	
24	35.8586 -121.3736	3.6	11.3	1100 ± 75	897 ±146	26.0 ± 9.0	328 ± 41	184	0.44 ± 0.103	

Figure 3-6. Catchment-mean metrics of erosion as a function of distance NE from coastline. Data are available in Table 3-4. **Plot A—**Precipitation, relief, and distance from the coast are all strongly correlated. Precipitation reaches maximum values in the greatest-relief catchments, although the high-relief catchments in the Sierra de Salinas are noTable outliers to this trend. **Plot B—**Relief and slope are well correlated, with a change in behavior suggested at slopes near ~25°. **Plot C—**Relief increases linearly with channel steepness with a possible break-inslope at ~100 ksn. Values of relief are more dispersed and generally higher in the San Gabriel mountains than in the Santa Lucia range for similar ksn. **Plot D—**Mean slope increases consistently to ksn of ~100 before becoming invariant at values of 25–30°. This invariance is similar in style, but lower in value, to the San Gabriel mountains and suggests a change in erosion processes. Data from the San Gabriel mountains are from DiBiase et al. (2010). Normalized channel steepness index, ksn, is plotted here as $m^{0.9}$ to compare with values reported in DiBiase et al. (2010), but elsewhere is reported as m1.

RANGE-SCALE VARIATIONS IN SLOPE, RELIEF, PRECIPITATION, AND AREA

The most-robust, and somewhat surprising result of our analysis is that catchment-mean relief—as measured in a 2.5-km window around each pixel and averaged throughout the catchment—has a strong positive correlation with precipitation (Fig. 3-6a), local hillslope angle (Fig. 3-6b), and normalized channel steepness, *ksn* (Fig. 3-6c). To a first order, this suggests that, regardless of the erosional processes at work, relief in a 2.5-km window is a reliable predictor of all other metrics of erosion in this landscape. This is somewhat surprising in consideration of the range of likely exhumation rates, the varied lithology, and the large differences in sourceto-sink gradient between range-interior and coastal fluvial networks.

In detail, however, there are strong NE–SW asymmetries in some of the data. The strongest asymmetry is the disproportionate distribution of precipitation on coastal (SW) drainages and the moderate to weak dependence of hillslope and *ksn* on location (Fig. 3-6d) might reflect this asymmetry. Another, more subtle aspect of the data is that a single linear fit does not appear to adequately capture any of the relationships. Both *ksn* and local hillslope angle appear to have a change in behavior near 500–750 m of relief; below this value hillslope angle and *ksn* increase more steeply. When hillslope angle and *ksn* are plotted together (Fig. 3-6d), it appears that slope increases quickly below a *ksn* value of ~100, and may become invariant near 25–30° with increasing *ksn*.

Our data from the Santa Lucia range generally have relationships between metrics of erosion like the San Gabriel mountains (DiBiase et al., 2010), although their data are more scattered. Notably, there is much greater relief in the San Gabriel mountains and the correlation between relief and hillslope angle is much broader in their data (Fig. 3-6b). The general pattern between *ksn* and slope is quite similar between the two ranges (Fig. 3-6d), but the Santa Lucia range appears less capable of sustaining the higher hillslope angles observed in the San Gabriel mountains. There, the invariance of hillslope in steep drainages and at high relief is thought to mark a shift from transport-limited to detachment-limited erosional processes (DiBiase et al., 2010). If so, the lower-value transition to invariant behavior in the Santa Lucia range may indicate a lower threshold for detachment-limited processes.

DRAINAGE DIVIDE CHARACTERIZATION USING *Χ*

A map of *χ* values for the Santa Lucia range (Fig. 3-7) shows that several drainage divides have moderate to high mismatches in *χ* values, the most prominent of which is found along the main coastal divide south of the Big Sur River and north of Salmon Creek. This divide traverses both crystalline rock and Franciscan mélange, and the mismatch is most pronounced where the youngest apatite and zircon cooling ages are found along the coast (Fig. 3-2). South of Salmon Creek, and north along the coastal divide from the Big Sur headwaters, *χ* values are more balanced. A strong mismatch in *χ* values is also found along the crest of the Sierra de Salinas. Moderate mismatches in *χ* are noted along a drainage divide that is subparallel to the RRF near Paso Robles (Fig. 3-7), and in a few scattered locations throughout the range. Because there is such strong spatial variation in rates of rock uplift (see below), it is unlikely that these mismatches can be interpreted as indicating only drainage-divide migration.

PATTERNS OF CHANNEL STEEPNESS

We examine the spatial patterns of channel steepness with a map of *ksn* (Fig. 3-7), and with a coastal transect of *χ* plots (Fig. 3-8). Several patterns are immediately obvious from the map distribution of *ksn*: 1) high values of *ksn* are localized in a band parallel to the SGHF from the Little Sur River to Salmon Creek, regardless of rock type; 2) south of Salmon Creek, high values of *ksn* are found in a SE-narrowing zone between the Oceanic fault and fault strands subparallel to the Nacimiento fault; 3) NE of the coastal divide and away from the SGHF, high values of *ksn* are correlated with crystalline rocks; 4) values of *ksn* are low SW of the SGHF and where channels are developed on sedimentary rocks away from major fault zones; 5) there is little change in *ksn* across the Reliz-Rinconada fault.

The coastal transect of *χ* plots (Fig. 3-8) confirms the general trends from the map (Fig. 3-7), and enhances our resolution on the potential correlation between structures and channel steepness. On the NW, channels have low M*χ* where developed on Miocene sedimentary rocks and steepen as the rock type changes and drainages become closer to the SGHF. Low values of M*χ* are found along the lowest reaches of 3 drainages that cross strands of the SGHF (13, 14, and 15 on Figs. 3-7 and 3-8); the portion of these drainages NE of the SGHF have much higher values of M*χ*.

Figure 3-7. Simplified geologic map, values of χ, and values of ksn in the Santa Lucia range indicate that streams are steeper adjacent to the SGHF than elsewhere and that there is locally strong drainage-divide asymmetry. Values of ksn are high in both crystalline rocks and Franciscan mélange along the SGHF, and increase across the Oceanic fault in rocks of similar lithology. Values of ksn also increase SW across a zone of fault strands subparallel to the Nacimiento fault, in a pattern like the post-seismic surface uplift of the 2003 San Simeon earthquake (McLaren et al., 2008). Catchments labeled here are the same as in Fig. 3-7; fault abbreviations same as Fig. 3-1.

Figure 3-8. Profiles of χ and elevation in a swath along the coast from near Monterey to south of San Simeon. Steeper plots indicate larger uplift-to-erodibility ratios (ksn). Overall, these data suggest increasing uplift with proximity to the SGHF and increasing uplift NE across the Oceanic fault. Each profile is shifted along the axis by a χ-value of 1500; the numbers at the base of each profile indicate its location on Figure 3-13; catchment-mean ksn is indicated at the top of each profile. Red lines indicate profile segments NE of the fault labeled above the profile; black lines indicate profile segments SW of the labeled fault. Except for the slivers of metavolcanic rocks along the West Huasana fault, profiles are steeper across the SGHF and Oceanic faults, even where developed in similar lithologies. Shading and italicized labels indicate dominant lithology.

The change in lithology from crystalline to Franciscan mélange (across the Nacimiento fault) does not appear to substantially affect the values of M*χ*; 3 of the 7 steepest drainages are developed on mélange. South of Salmon Creek (25 on Figs. 3-8 and 3-7), values of M*χ* decrease substantially, although the dominant lithology does not substantially differ. Here, however, values of M*χ* appear to be largely controlled by the Oceanic fault—channels NE of the fault are more steep. The dominant lithology on both sides is Franciscan mélange, although there are local patches of younger sedimentary rocks. Very high values of M*χ* along drainages 38 and 39 (Fig. 3-7) separate channels with similar values of M*χ*. These steeper segments may be due to uplift along the West Huasana fault, but are more likely the result of local juxtaposition of a narrow band of metavolcanic rocks across fault zone.

DEFORMED MARINE TERRACES

The results of our survey of the lowest-emergent marine terrace at the southeastern end of the Santa Lucia range are shown in Figure 3-9, along with terrace elevations near San Simeon from Hanson et al. (1994) and low-temperature thermochronometry from Salmon Creek. Near Ragged Point, terrace elevations are low SW of the SGHF, highest directly NE of the fault, and

Figure 3-9. Marine terrace elevations and low-temperature thermochronometry near San Simeon indicate that surface uplift and bedrock exhumation are focused NE of the SGHF and Oceanic faults. Terrace data NW of Point Piedras Blancas is from this study and includes surveyed and lidar-based estimates; terrace data near San Simeon are from Hanson et al. (1994). Faults modified from Graymer et al. (2014) and Jennings and Bryant (2010).

decrease gradually in elevation with distance NE of the fault. This pattern of relative elevation change is like that observed between Big Sur and Monterey, 90 km to the NW (Chapter 2), and near Point Año Nuevo, 150 km to the NW (Chapter 1). The pattern of vertical deformation appears to change substantially SE of the junction between the Oceanic and San Simeon fault zones (Fig. 3-9). Near San Simeon, terrace elevations *decrease* to the NE across the San Simeon fault zone (Hanson et al., 1994).

These observations suggest to us that NE-side up vertical deformation may bypass the San Simeon fault zone and be transferred to the Oceanic fault SW of its junction with the SGHF, as suggested by several tectonic models (Lettis et al., 2004; McLaren et al., 2008; Hardebeck, 2010). This interpretation is also consistent with the observed NE increase in M*χ* across the trace of the Oceanic fault (Fig. 3-7), higher topographic relief NE of the fault (Fig. 3-1), and known NE-side up co- and post-seismic uplift from the 2003 San Simeon earthquake (McLaren et al., 2008).

DISCUSSION

VARIATIONS IN ESTIMATES OF EXHUMATION RATE

Estimates of exhumation rate are inherently noisy due to uncertainties in the cooling age, closure temperature, and relationship between surface topography and the closure isotherm. In the Santa Lucia range, exhumation rates derived from spectral analysis are the lowest, and rates from individual samples are generally highest (Tables 3-2 and 3-4; Fig. 3-5). We address three possible reasons that may explain these observations below.

CHANGES IN RELIEF

One possibility is that changes in overall topographic relief—coupled with the amplitude of the isothermal surface—have altered the relationship between the free-cooling surface and the closure isotherm. Rates of exhumation derived from AERs can be adjusted for these parameters (Braun, 2002a) using the relief change estimated from spectral analysis (β =1.3 since ~9 Ma) and transect- and rate-specific values of α (Table 3-1). Rates from the Palo Corona and Salmon Creek transect are little affected by this adjustment, but rates from Cone Peak are reduced from ~0.35 to ~0.2 mm/yr. Although it is difficult to perform the same analysis for the Anderson Peak transect, the α and β parameters indicate that the AER is certainly too steep. Together, these data and analyses provide some support for the ~0.2 mm/yr exhumation rate derived from the spectral analysis. In detail, however, the spectral analysis method and the adjustments to the AER rest on the same set of assumptions and do not necessarily constitute independent verification. Additionally, it would require extreme geothermal gradients (>100° C/km) to produce the range of low-elevation apatite cooling ages (as young as 2.2 Ma) with exhumation rates $near \sim 0.2$ mm/yr.

SPATIAL GRADIENTS IN ROCK UPLIFT

A more-likely explanation is that the underlying assumptions of both the spectral analysis and AER methods are inadequately met. Both methods aggregate exhumation behavior at large spatial scale into single values of exhumation, and are most applicable to landscapes with nearly uniform uplift and erosion that lack through-going active crustal faults. A good example is the southern Sierra Nevada range where the spectral method has been shown to retrieve known rates of exhumation and relief change (House et al., 1998; Braun, 2002b).

In the Santa Lucia range, patterns in the relative deformation of marine terraces from Monterey to Big Sur (Chapter 2) and northward from Ragged Point (Fig. 3-9) indicate that there is considerably higher rock uplift in a 3-km window NE of the SGHF than at greater distance (Fig. 3-10). In both locations, the terrace elevation increases 3–5x over a 3-km distance; a result that is not tied to age estimates of the terrace. Integrated over several m.y., such a localization of strain would violate the assumption of block

Figure 3-10. Distance and polarity from the San Gregorio–Hosgri, Oceanic, and West Huasana faults are strong predictors of marine terrace elevation, exhumation rate, and normalized channel steepness.

uplift required to use an AER to determine an exhumation rate, and would manifest as decreasing rates of exhumation with distance from the SGHF. Such a pattern is observed in our data where exhumation rates closely mimic the relative change in terrace elevation and are 3–5x higher within 3 km of the fault (Fig. 3-10). These observations indicate that the assumption of block uplift required for spectral analysis is likely unmet at short wavelengths, but may still hold generally true at wavelengths approaching the length of the range.

AMPLITUDE OF CLOSURE ISOTHERMS

Our method of estimating individual-sample exhumation rates does not require any assumption of block uplift and thus likely provides a more-faithful representation of spatial patterns of exhumation than the other two approaches. However, this method does require more assumptions about the thermal structure of the crust than the AER or spectral method. We believe that our method of averaging two estimates of the exhumation rate—one assuming a horizontal closure isotherm and one assuming a closure isotherm that mimics modern topography—dampens the uncertainty in the thermal structure of the crust (Fig. 3-3). Changes to the average geothermal gradient, or substantial long-wavelength variation, will affect both estimates of exhumation rate. Variations of $\pm 5^{\circ}$ C in the average geothermal gradient result in exhumation rates +17% or -13% for estimates using non-horizontal closure isotherms.

TIMING OF EXHUMATION IN THE SANTA LUCIA RANGE

LITTLE EXHUMATION DURING THE OLIGOCENE TO LATE MIOCENE

Several lines of evidence suggest that there was relatively little exhumation between the late Oligocene and late Miocene in the Santa Lucia range. Age-elevation relationships of apatite from the Palo Corona transect and zircon from the Anderson Peak transect both indicate low (0.05–0.07 mm/yr) exhumation between ~25 and 11 Ma (Fig. 3-4 and Table 3-4). Our results from spectral analysis of zircon and apatite (Fig. 3-5) indicate that the entire component of exhumation between the present and \sim 30 Ma can be accrued by exhumation since \sim 9 Ma and requires no net exhumation from 9–30 Ma. Analysis of sedimentary basins in the central Santa Lucia range and Salinas valley indicate that subsidence was prevalent across much of the Santa Lucia range beginning in the Late Cretaceous (Ruetz, 1979; Grove, 1993) and continuing intermittently through the late Miocene (Graham, 1976; 1978; Dibblee, 1979). Paleogeographic reconstructions of the central California margin between 18 and 9 Ma indicate that much of the Santa Lucia range was submerged below sea level at some point in the Miocene (Graham, 1978; Graham et al., 1989). Plate reconstructions also indicate that the central California margin was probably obliquely divergent in the Oligocene and early to middle Miocene (Atwater and Stock, 1998; Argus and Gordon, 2001).

RAPID EXHUMATION FROM THE LATE MIOCENE THROUGH THE PLIOCENE

In contrast, there has been relatively rapid cooling and exhumation along the SW flank of the Santa Lucia range since the late Miocene. Nearly all apatite cooling ages within 10 km of the SGHF are younger than the late Miocene and most are Pliocene (Table 3-2; Fig. 3-2). Regardless of the exact thermal structure of the crust, these young ages indicate substantial exhumation since the late Miocene.

The precise transition between the older, slower exhumation and the more-rapid, younger exhumation is difficult to determine, but several lines of evidence suggest it is between ~5 and 12 Ma, and most likely sometime after ~8 Ma. When considered together, the age-elevation relationships of apatite and zircon from the Anderson Peak and Salmon Creek transect (Fig. 3-4) suggest that more-rapid exhumation began sometime between 12 and 6 Ma. This result is independent of the exact magnitude of the pseudo-elevation adjustment, and varies depending on whether the youngest three zircon ages from Anderson Peak are interpreted as part of the zircon PRZ or as part of the more-rapid exhumation; both alternatives are consistent with the data. Apatite from the Cone Peak transect may preserve the apatite PRZ at high elevations (Fig. 3-4), and if so, suggests that more-rapid exhumation began ~6 Ma (Ducea et al., 2003), consistent with our new ~7.1 Ma zircon cooling age at the base of the transect. No other late Miocene or younger apatite PRZs were observed in the remaining transects. A plot of exhumation rate through time for all apatite data indicates two possible time periods of more-rapid increases in exhumation rate (Fig. 3-11). Prior to ~15 Ma, all estimates of exhumation rate are below ~0.2 mm/yr. Between ~9–12 Ma, rates appear to nearly double, and then may double again between ~5–7 Ma.

Basin analysis in the nearby Neogene stratigraphy suggests a complicated history of emergence and subsidence in the mid to late Miocene (Graham, 1978; Graham et al., 1989). Local fault-oblique emergent highs are associated with development of the Reliz-Rinconada fault

Figure 3-11. Plot of exhumation rates through time in the Santa Lucia range indicate two possible pulses of rate increase. The earlier pulse, at ~9–12 Ma corresponds to the ~11 Ma initiation of the SGHF (Clark, 1998); the younger ~5–7 Ma pulse is remarkably similar to the onset of oblique convergence at this latitude (DeMets and Merkouriev, 2016).

beginning about 15 Ma, but are largely submerged by 9 Ma (Graham, 1978). Most of the Santa Lucia range is predicted to be under >500 m water depth at 9 Ma (Graham, 1978), but there are no direct constraints on the paleogeography of the SW flank of the range because basin deposits—if present—have been eroded. Thus, some uplift along the SW flank of the range between ~12 and 9 Ma is permissible, but not required, and if present, does not appear to have shed sediment into the deep basins to the NE. If there was significant uplift during that time, the nascent range may have remained submerged below sea level and grown with little erosion.

Additional constraints on the timing of exhumation are provided by the age of the San Gregorio-Hosgri fault and reconstructions of relative plate vectors. The SGHF is believed to have initiated at ~11 Ma based on an offset ash bed (Clark, 1998), and this age fits well with the first pulse of more-rapid exhumation noted between ~12–9 Ma (Fig. 3-11). Refinements to relative plate motion reconstructions (Atwater and Stock, 1998; Argus and Gordon, 2001; DeMets and Merkouriev, 2016) indicate that central California experienced transtension prior to ~8 Ma, increasing transpression after ~5.2 Ma, and a period of alternating transtension and transpression between 5.2 and 8 Ma. Within this framework, it seems more likely that exhumation on the NE side of the SGHF began with the onset of transpression sometime since 8 Ma, several m.y. after fault initiation. There is a remarkable correlation between rapid post-6 Ma cooling in the Anderson Peak, Cone Peak, and Salmon Creek transects and the ~5.2 Ma onset of significant transpression predicted by the plate reconstructions of DeMets and Merkouriev (2016) and to a lesser extent by those of Argus and Gordon (2001).

Taken together, permissible ages for the onset of rapid exhumation are from \sim 6–12 Ma; likely ages are from \sim 6–8 Ma, and a \sim 6 Ma age appears to be the most consistent with available constraints. Given that the cumulative slip of many faults comprises the SGHF system (e.g. Dickenson et al., 2005; Langenheim et al., 2013), and that there appears to have been several m.y. of alternating periods of transpression and transtension between 8 and 5.2 Ma (DeMets and Merkouriev, 2016), it is perhaps unsurprising that there is significant variation in the thermochronometric and geologic estimates of when exhumation began.

STEADY RATES OF EXHUMATION SINCE THE PLIOCENE

Estimates of exhumation rate from age-elevation relationships appear to indicate that rates have increased since the latest Pliocene (Table 3-4; this study) or earliest Pleistocene (Ducea et al., 2003). This argument is based on an extrapolation of the exhumation rate required to bring the lowest-elevation sample to the surface since its cooling age, given an assumed geothermal gradient, and an assumption of relatively uniform uplift. For example, if the 0.35 mm/yr exhumation rate calculated for the Cone Peak transect (Table 3-4) had persisted from the lowest-elevation cooling age (2.2 Ma) to the present day, it is only sufficient to exhume 0.77 km of rock. Because the lowest-elevation sample has a closure temperature of ~74° C, the common inference is that rates must have increased since 2.2. However, at least two alternative hypotheses could also explain this discrepancy: 1) a strong spatial variation in geothermal gradient, or; 2) a strong spatial variation un uplift.

The first hypothesis rests on the idea that the geothermal gradient is high enough to shoal the closure depth to the depth predicted by a continuous exhumation rate. At Cone Peak, this requires a geothermal gradient exceeding 75° C/km for either the 2.2 Ma apatite (ID-71) or the ~7.1 Ma zircon (ID-57) cooling age. Similar high gradients are required for the Salmon Creek and Anderson Peak transects. Such geothermal gradients are much higher than predicted for each of these locations (45–52° C/km at the base of Cone Peak and 39° C/km at the base of Salmon Creek) when topography and exhumation are considered (Table 3-2). Thus, an elevated geothermal gradient along the coast is an unattractive option for the apparent temporal rate increase.

The second hypothesis rests on the idea that if the samples from the bottom of the transect are being advected faster than samples at the top of the transect, the single-value AER will underestimate the actual exhumation rate everywhere along the transect. Spatial gradients in exhumation adjacent to the SGHF are well demonstrated by deformed marine terraces and the pattern of cooling ages along a coastal transect (Chapter 2) and when exhumation rates from the range are analyzed together (Fig. 3-10). These observations provide a compelling mechanism to explain the apparent temporal rate increase. Lower samples—closer to the SGHF—have experienced substantially faster rock uplift than samples at higher elevation that are farther from the SGHF. Thus, age-elevation relationships that suggest a post-Pliocene increase in exhumation rate are not supported over alternative interpretations.

PREDICTING EXHUMATION IN THE CENTRAL CALIFORNIA COAST RANGES

We estimate exhumation rate throughout the range using the relationship between apatite exhumation rate and both distance from the SGHF and local topographic relief (Fig. 3-12). The relationship between exhumation and distance is quite compelling, and is one of the most outstanding features of our dataset; a similar pattern is noted in data from the entirety of the San Andreas fault system (Spotila et al., 2007). An exponential equation describes these data reasonably well (Adj. $R^2=0.597$) up to the trace of the SGHF, but not on the SW side. Relief is calculated within a 2.5-km window around each sample, and is highly correlated with other metrics of erosion (Fig. 3-6). Although the data are certainly scattered, there is a general trend of increasing exhumation rate with increasing amount of relief (Adj. R^2 =0.2447). A nonlinear function that combines an exponential fit for distance and a linear fit for relief produces a much better fit (Adj. R²⁼0.727) than either of the single-variable models (Fig. 3-12c). This model is used to interpolate a map of exhumation (Fig. 3-13). Because areas SW of the SGHF do not exhume as rapidly as those on the NE side, areas SW of the fault use only the relief component of the fit.

Figure 3-12. Relationships between exhumation rate, topographic relief, and distance to the SGHF for apatite and zircon. **Plot A**—Apatite exhumation rate shows a weak to moderate correlation with topographic relief, but is misleading because almost all of the data above the regression line are within 5 km of the SGHF. **Plot B**—Apatite exhumation rate is strongly correlated with distance from the SGHF; rates NE of the fault decrease rapidly away from the fault. **Plot C**—Contour map of exhumation rate for the nonlinear function that combines exponential decay with distance and linear increase with greater relief. **Plots D and E**—Zircon exhumation rates show similar correlations with relief and distance.

The interpolated model of exhumation rate successfully predicts several important geologic relationships: 1) low exhumation is shown in regions known to preserve Miocene marine sediments or younger Plio-Pleistocene deposits; 2) high exhumation is predicted in the regions with the youngest apatite and zircon cooling ages; 3) moderate exhumation is predicted in the hangingwall of the NE-dipping oblique-reverse Oceanic fault, consistent with post-seismic deformation and detailed geophysical investigation (McLaren et al., 2008; Hardebeck, 2010);

Figure 3-13. Predicted exhumation rate throughout the range using the relationship between apatite exhumation rate and both distance to the SGHF and topographic relief (Fig. 3-12c).

4) the coastal gradient in cooling ages from Monterey to Big Sur is well predicted; 5) the drop in rate SW across the SGHF is well predicted; 6) a general NE crustal tilt (higher exhumation on the SW) and NW-trending antiformal shape are predicted by our model and are well documented by studies of post-Pliocene deformation (Compton, 1966b; Christiansen, 1965; Montgomery, 1993; Page et al., 1998), and; 7) less exhumation is predicted in the Sierra de Salinas than expected from their steep range-front morphology, consistent with studies indicating the Reliz-Rinconada fault is either inactive or active at very low rates in the late Quaternary (Rosenberg and Clark, 2009).

The distribution of the youngest ages is strongly correlated with the regions of highest relief (Fig. 3-12) and appears to indicate both along- and across-strike gradients in exhumation (Fig. 3-13). The highest exhumation rates appear focused near—and NW of—the junction of the SGHF and Nacimiento fault. To the SE of this junction, the Nacimiento fault and the southern SGHF–Oceanic–West Huasana faults define a narrow block of Franciscan mélange with moderate exhumation rates (Fig. 3-13). This narrow block is the topographic expression of the southern Santa Lucia range. North of the junction exists a much wider zone of exhumation between the SGHF and the Sierra de Salinas segment of the Reliz-Rinconada fault. The highest rates of exhumation are in a narrow block of crystalline rocks directly NE of the SGHF and rates decrease to the NE and NW.

LOCALIZATION OF UPLIFT AND EXHUMATION

At least five independent data sets (low-temperature thermochronometry, geologic relationships, estimates of post-Pliocene surface uplift, geomorphic metrics of erosion, and deformed marine terraces) indicate that vertical deformation in the Santa Lucia range is asymmetric, with the greatest amounts of uplift and exhumation on the NE side of the San Gregorio-Hosgri and Oceanic faults.

LOW-TEMPERATURE THERMOCHRONOMETRY

Late Miocene and younger ages from three separate low-temperature thermochronometers (apatite and zircon (U-Th)/He and apatite fission track) are found NE of and near the SGHF whereas the interior and NE part of the range contain older mid-Miocene to Late Cretaceous cooling ages (Fig. 3-2 and Table 3-2). The youngest cooling ages are found directly NE of the SGHF and include many 1.9–4 Ma apatite cooling ages and 7.1–11.5 Ma zircon cooling ages (Table 3-2). Ages this young are unprecedented anywhere along the San Andreas fault system outside of the most transpressional portions of the main plate-boundary fault (Dumitru, 1991; Bürgmann et al., 1994; Spotila et al., 1998, 2007; Niemi et al., 2013). A simple isochron map (Fig. 3-2) shows the overall pattern in cooling ages but does not explicitly adjust for age-elevation relationships and could produce a spurious correlation if the SGHF were simply co-located with the lowest elevations in the range. Rates of exhumation calculated from individual cooling ages remove the effect of elevation and are also strongly correlated with distance from the SGHF (Fig. 3-10).

DISTRIBUTION AND ORIENTATION OF LATE CRETACEOUS– MIOCENE SEDIMENTARY ROCKS

The distribution of Late Cretaceous through Miocene sedimentary rocks in the range provides a first-order constraint on the amount and location of uplift. On the Salinian block, sedimentary rocks are nearly completely absent along the coastal divide adjacent to the SGHF where cooling ages are young (Fig 3-2; Rosenberg and Wills, 2016). The closest sedimentary rocks NE of the SGHF in the central part of the range are Late Cretaceous, floor a thick basin to the NE, and generally dip NE (e.g. Dibblee, 1974). The lack of these rocks along the range crest, their NE dip, and the increasing stratigraphic levels exposed to the NE all suggest a moderate amount of tilt subparallel to the SGHF and sufficient erosion to remove them from high elevations.

PATTERNS OF POST-PLIOCENE SURFACE UPLIFT

Estimates of post-Pliocene range-wide uplift from stratigraphic relationships indicate a NW-trending uplifted core that is subparallel to the SGHF and plunges NW towards Monterey (Christensen, 1965; Page et al., 1998). Substantial stratigraphic relief was also created along the Sierra de Salinas segment of the Reliz-Rinconada fault during this time (Christensen, 1965). A lack of post-Miocene sedimentary rocks along the SW border of the range leaves much of the area closest to the SGHF unconstrained by this method. However, E and SE of San Simeon, the steep SW limb of the uplift is more constrained and approximates the trace of the Oceanic fault (Christensen, 1965). Nearby, analysis of paleocurrent indicators from Plio-Pleistocene rocks between the coast and Paso Robles indicates that there was a coastal divide shedding sediment eastward since at least the late Pliocene (Galehouse, 1967).

GEOMORPHIC METRICS OF EROSION

In a stream-power model of river incision, the value of *ksn* encodes the ratio between uplift and erodibility, such that higher values of *ksn* can be attributed to a more durable substrate or higher rates of uplift (e.g. Wobus et al., 2006). We constructed a plot of *ksn* as a function of distance from the SGHF–OF–WHF for each of the three main lithologies along the coast to explore these parameters at a range-wide scale (Fig. 3-10). The plot is constructed by measuring the distance between each pixel and the bounding fault and plotting the value of *ksn* for that pixel. Because this results in >104 points, we plot the density of points in bins that measure 0.25 km in distance by 25 m in *ksn*.

Our analysis indicates that at both range-wide and local scales, *ksn* is relatively low on the SW side of the SGHF–OF–WHF system, increases substantially directly across the fault, and decreases with distance from the fault. This signal is observed in all three lithologies (Fig. 3-10) and strongly suggests that the increase in *ksn* is a function of relative uplift, and not the durability of the bedrock substrate. The range-wide pattern of *ksn* is also noted in map and profile view where abrupt increases are found in every drainage that crosses the Oceanic fault (n=7; Fig. 3-8), and where drainages cross strands of the SGHF (n=3; Fig. 3-8). Such acrossfault changes are also noted along fault strands subparallel to the Nacimiento fault (Fig. 3-7), although the presence of a change in lithology makes it less clear that the change is related to differential uplift. The range-wide patterns observed in *ksn* are nearly identical to the patterns of exhumation rate and marine terrace elevation (Fig. 3-10).

DEFORMED MARINE TERRACES

Lastly, deformed marine terraces along >100 km of the SGHF, from Point Año Nuevo to San Simeon (Figs. 3-1 and 3-10) also indicate that uplift is highly focused NE of the fault (Bradley and Griggs, 1976; Lajoie et al., 1979; Weber, 1990; McKittrick, 1988; Hanson et al., 1994; Chapter 1; Chapter 2). Although there are uncertainties in terrace age along the central California coast, the lateral continuity and similar initial elevation of marine terraces make them an excellent strain marker. Thus, even if the age correlations near Ragged Point (this study), between Big Sur and Monterey (McKittrick, 1988; Chapter 2), or near Santa Cruz (e.g. Weber, 1990; Perg et al., 2001; Chapter 1) prove to be incorrect with additional study, the relative uplift and deformation of an initially horizontal sea-level datum across the SGHF remains a robust result. Differences in the relative deformation pattern of marine terraces near Ragged Point and San Simeon further suggest that surface uplift is partitioned onto the Oceanic fault instead of continuing southeast along the San Simeon fault zone (Fig. 3-10).

STRAIN TRANSFER BETWEEN THE SGHF AND INLAND FAULTS

Our analysis of low-temperature thermochronometry, geomorphic metrics of erosion, and deformed marine terraces suggest that vertical strain is transferred from inland faults to the
SGHF across the Oceanic and Nacimiento faults, and perhaps across faults farther NW in the range.

OCEANIC FAULT

Our predicted values of exhumation rate increase stepwise SE to NW, from low rates near and SE of San Simeon—that are similar to rates of rock uplift determined from deformed marine terraces (Hanson et al., 1994)—to moderate rates across the Oceanic fault, to the highest rates in the range across the Nacimiento fault (Fig. 3-13). Increases in *ksn* values NE across the Oceanic fault (Figs. 3-7 and 3-8) and changes in the accommodation of vertical strain SE of the junction between the Oceanic and SGH faults (Fig. 3-9) appear to corroborate its role in focusing uplift NE of its trace. The 2003 M6.5 San Simeon earthquake occurred on the Oceanic fault and had a mostly NE-side up reverse sense of slip and broad NE-side up post-seismic deformation (McLaren et al., 2008). Additionally, just NW of the junction between the Oceanic fault and SGHF, an oblique-reverse M5.1 event occurred in 1991 (Hardebeck, 2010). Together, these data provide strong support for a tectonic model where strain is transferred from the West Huasana fault to the SGHF across the Oceanic fault (e.g. Lettis et al., 2004; Hardebeck, 2010).

NACIMIENTO FAULT

Slip transfer along the Nacimiento fault is more difficult to constrain, but strongly suggested by the apparent localization of high exhumation NE of its junction with the SGHF and its similar geometry to the Oceanic fault (Fig. 3-13). Arguments against significant displacement on the Nacimiento fault are based on an overlapping and relatively undisrupted basal unit of the Vaqueros Formation west of Paso Robles (e.g. Dickenson et al., 2005). It is not clear how much displacement might be needed along the Nacimiento fault to account for the higher rates of exhumation NE of the fault junction, but it could be a relatively small amount if it is all converted into uplift. Regardless, there are many sub-parallel and en-echelon fault strands SW of the basal Vaqueros Formation (e.g. Graymer et al., 2014) that could plausibly link the northern end of the West Huasana fault with the Nacimiento fault, bypass the slip constraint, and possibly transfer a few km of slip. Geophysical investigation (Langenheim et al., 2013) suggests a much larger lateral displacement on the West Huasana fault than previously recognized (McLean, 1993; Hall et al., 1995). The transfer of some of this displacement across the oblique Oceanic and Nacimiento faults onto the SGHF may help balance the slip budget and provide a plausible mechanism to explain the observed patterns of uplift and exhumation.

FAULT MESH IN THE NW SANTA LUCIA RANGE

Slip transfer between strands of the Reliz-Rinconada fault and the SGHF has been proposed to account for the NW decrease in slip along the RRF, uplifted crustal blocks in the north-central Santa Lucia range, and discrepancies in late Quaternary slip rates on the SGHF north and south of the Santa Lucia range (Graham, 1978; Dibblee, 1979; Weber, 1990; Dickenson et al., 2005; Langenheim et al., 2013; Johnson et al., 2014). Within the range, several NW-striking faults—most notably the Junipero Serra and Tularcitos faults—cut and offset late Cretaceous through late Miocene strata along steep faults and indicate at least some component of oblique slip after the late Miocene (Compton, 1966b; Dibblee, 1979).

Our oldest apatite cooling age $(65.0 \pm 5.8 \text{ Ma})$ is located adjacent to the NW RRF (ID-56; Fig. 3-2) and strongly suggests that there has been little exhumation there since the late Cretaceous. This observation supports interpretations of decreasing slip along the RRF (e.g. Graham, 1978) and little or no late Quaternary activity (Rosenberg and Clark, 2009). Late Miocene cooling ages at moderate and high elevation from the central part of the range (ID 80–89) are consistent with uplift and exhumation since the late Miocene, but neither require nor preclude slip on individual fault strands. Values of *ksn* are generally high in the north-central part of the range and are compatible with higher rates of uplift and exhumation, but are inconclusive because the high values could arguably be produced by the presence of more durable crystalline bedrock. Together, our results support the hypothesis of late Miocene strain transfer across the Santa Lucia range, but do not provide conclusive evidence of its pattern or timing.

REGIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF UPLIFT AND EXHUMATION IN THE SANTA LUCIA RANGE

The data presented above show that the San Gregorio–Hosgri fault system exerts a fundamental control on the magnitude and pattern of uplift and exhumation in central California. Rates of bedrock exhumation are substantially higher in a narrow window along the SGHF than along most of the San Andreas fault north of the 'Big Bend' (Spotila et al., 2007; Niemi et al., 2013). Rates in the Santa Lucia range are locally higher than those in the Sierra Azul block,

an exhuming crustal block along a transpressional bend and stepover of the San Andreas fault near Santa Cruz (Bürgmann et al., 1994; Hilley et al., 2013). These observations are especially surprising given that estimates of the modern strain field in central California from GPS predict the exhumation of the Sierra Azul block, but fail to predict the even-greater exhumation of the southwest Santa Lucia range (d'Alessio et al., 2008; Rolandone et al., 2008; Titus et al., 2011; DeMets et al., 2014). There, permanent and semi-continuous GPS stations appear to indicate that within uncertainty the Santa Lucia range behaves as a relatively coherent block bound by low slip rate (<2 mm/yr) faults with little or no across-range change in fault-perpendicular components of strain (e.g. Titus et al., 2011; DeMets et al., 2014). Such low slip rates are generally confirmed by paleoseismic studies along the major faults of the SGHF: the San Gregorio fault indicates ~4–8 mm/yr (Weber, 1990; Weber et al., 1995); the San Simeon fault zone indicates -1 –3 mm/yr (Hanson et al., 2004); and the Hosgri fault indicates a minimum of 2.6 \pm 0.9 mm/ yr (Johnson et al., 2014).

Given that low late Quaternary slip rates on faults SW of the San Andreas fault are a consistent result, these observations and constraints appear to challenge our assumptions of how strain is distributed along the Pacific–North America plate boundary in three main ways: 1) how can robust evidence of late Quaternary through late Miocene rock uplift and exhumation be reconciled with a modern strain field that does not predict these features, 2) why were coaxial components of plate boundary strain focused in the Santa Lucia range during the late Miocene through Pleistocene instead of along the main San Andreas fault, and 3) what mechanism accounts for long-term $(>10^6$ yr) differential exhumation within narrow $($-3-5$ km-wide) zones$ of crystalline bedrock? The answer to these questions is not immediately clear, but several hypotheses may explain the observations.

RATE CHANGES ALONG THE SGHF AND POSSIBLE LATE QUATERNARY ISOSTATIC UPLIFT OF THE RANGE

One explanation for the discrepancy between the modern strain field and evidence of uplift and exhumation invokes isostatic adjustment of the range in the wake of a recent and rapid decrease in slip rate along the SGHF. Offset geologic markers along the SGHF constrain slip at ~11 Ma and ~8 Ma (Clark, 1998; Dickenson et al., 2005), and in the late Quaternary since ~230 ka (e.g. Weber, 1990). Within these bounds, late Miocene to Pleistocene rates were ~16–18 mm/ yr, substantially higher than those since the late Quaternary. If such high slip rates persisted through 0.5 Ma, for example, the near-constant clockwise rotation of plate vectors during that time (DeMets and Merkouriev, 2016) would have increased the coaxial component of shortening across the range to a maximum at 0.5 Ma. If exhumation and erosion were well matched at that time—as perhaps indicated by the relationship between exhumation and modern metrics of erosion in our data—continued erosion after 0.5 Ma would be met with isostatic uplift at rates of about 4/5 the erosion rate (e.g. Turcotte and Schubert, 2002). Modeling of an instantaneous drop in tectonic uplift during orogenic evolution suggests that high rates of rock uplift persist for several m.y. after the change because of isostatic adjustment (Spotila, 2005).

Isostatic uplift can explain much of the magnitude of marine terrace uplift, but alone does not adequately explain the entire uplift, nor why elevation is so closely tied to the SGHF (Fig. 3-10). The distribution and elevation of marine terraces clearly indicate they are cut and offset by strands of the SGHF since the late Quaternary (Chapter 2; Lajoie et al., 1979; Weber, 1990; Hanson et al., 1994; Dickenson et al., 2005). Thus, there is at least some component—perhaps small—of late Quaternary transpression across the SGHF that is responsible for their deformation. One solution is that the isostatic adjustment utilizes existing faults to accommodate uplift, in a process similar to some Basin and Range faults that experienced increased fault activity as a result of late Quaternary lake recession (Karrow and Hampel, 2010). Together, these two components could explain the pattern of high-elevation marine terraces without requiring that their uplift is tied entirely to high rates of late Quaternary plate-boundary transpression.

POSSIBLE MECHANISM OF STRAIN LOCALIZATION ALONG

THE OUTER EDGE OF THE SANTA LUCIA RANGE

At ~6 Ma, when rapid exhumation had begun along the length of the Santa Lucia range adjacent to the SGHF, the range was located near the southern San Joaquin basin (e.g. Powell, 1993). Since then, there has been no location between the southern San Joaquin basin and the transpressional bend near Santa Cruz that has experienced the magnitude of exhumation recorded in the Santa Lucia range as it has been transported to the NW (e.g. Bartow, 1981; Goodman and Malin, 1992). This suggests that the range has acted like the 'crumple zone' on modern cars, whereby coaxial components of plate-boundary strain are preferentially focused along the outer edge of the Salinian block instead of being transferred across the range to the San Andreas fault.

One possible mechanism to account for this invokes the late Cretaceous crustal restructuring that juxtaposed the schist of Sierra de Salinas beneath crystalline rocks of the Sierran batholith (Kidder and Ducea, 2006; Chapman et al., 2010; 2012). Within the Santa Lucia range, this is likely manifest as a several km-thick package of schist structurally beneath the entire crystalline core of the range (e.g. Kidder and Ducea, 2006). A shallow and sub-horizontal detachment zone has been inferred beneath the range based on geophysical data (Page et al., 1998) and may represent this discontinuity. The strength of mica schist is substantially less than the crystalline rocks that lie above it (Shea and Kronenberg, 1992) and so the replacement of crystalline rock with weak schist at mid-crustal depths might cause a rheological contrast with surrounding unaltered crust that is large enough to focus compressional deformation along the edge of the range.

MECHANICAL PROBLEM OF A NARROW WINDOW OF HIGH EXHUMATION

The intense localization of vertical strain in a narrow window along the SGHF is also unusual behavior. Rates of exhumation increase rapidly within \sim 5 km of the SGHF and are highest adjacent to the fault (Fig. 3-10; Chapter 2). Such a pattern is impossible to produce in crystalline rock with block uplift along a single steeply NE-dipping fault because each point in the hangingwall is advected upwards by an equal amount. A model of synclinal folding above a NE-dipping fault might explain the overall pattern, but such a fold requires a ~10 km wavelength and ~1 km amplitude (assuming a 3 Ma apatite age at the fault and a 9 Ma age at 5 km distance). Using typical values of Young's modulus, the elastic thickness of crystalline crust would need to be ~1 km to produce such a fold (e.g. Turcotte and Schubert, 2002).

One alternative is that closely spaced faults divide the NE side of the SGHF into a series of thin crustal zones or lenses that each can have a different exhumation rate. In some locations such as between Monterey and Point Sur (Fig. 3-2; Chapter 2)—changes in marine terrace elevation and exhumation rate coincide with such fault-bound lenses. Additionally, crystalline rock is nearly always intensely fractured where observed, even where no faults are mapped along the southwest flank of the range. These observations, and the overall high density of faults mapped range-wide (Rosenberg and Wills, 2016), provide some support for this hypothesis.

Neither of these hypotheses are entirely satisfactory if the crust of the Santa Lucia range is composed solely of crystalline rock: the folding of a thin carapace of crystalline rock requires unusual physical parameters; $a \sim 3-5$ -km-wide shear zone seems more likely—and is locally observed—but requires the presence of a nearly 90 km-long shear zone that has apparently remained elusive after decades of field mapping. However, the presence of weak schist at depth beneath the crystalline rock may ease some of these constraints. In the case of folding, a flexural thickness of ~1–2 km may be entirely possible if schist were located at shallow depth—a permissible option from available geologic constraints (e.g. Kidder and Ducea, 2006; Chapman et al., 2010). Closely spaced faults are also more likely where a thin elastic layer—such as a crystalline 'lid'—overlies a viscous layer—such as weak schist (e.g. Dauteuil and Mart, 1998). The absence of such faults on geologic maps is suspicious, but if displacement on each strand is relatively small, they would be difficult to detect in crystalline rock lacking marker horizons. It is notable that a similar pattern of exhumation—highest adjacent to the main strike-slip fault and decaying with distance without notable shear zones or folds—is found along the SAF in the San Emigdio Mountains, where underplated schist also lies at shallow depth below crystalline rock (Niemi et al., 2013).

CATCHMENT-MEAN EXHUMATION AND 10BE DENUDATION

We use our interpolated map of exhumation rate (Fig. 3-13) to calculate catchment-mean exhumation rate (Fig. 3-14). As with Figure 3-13, there is considerable uncertainty on the actual values of exhumation rate, and so this map is best viewed as depicting the relative differences between catchments. Many of the most-striking features of this dataset are similar to those listed for Figure 3-13, namely that exhumation is largely localized along the San Gregorio-Hosgri and Oceanic faults. It is notable that when averaged in this way, large drainages developed on crystalline rock with high *ksn* values (e.g. Arroyo Seco, 51; Carmel River, 7) have low catchment-mean exhumation rates.

Our catchment-mean rates of exhumation do not compare favorably with denudation rates (Figs. 3-14 and 3-15a). Denudation rates were calculated for 18 basins in the Santa Lucia

Figure 3-14. Drainage basins >5 km2 in the Santa Lucia range show systematic differences in catchment-mean exhumation rate as a function of distance from the SGHF but compare poorly with denudation rates from 10Be cosmogenic dating (H. Young, written commun., 2016). The greatest mismatch between exhumation and denudate is found in the steep drainages south of Point Sur and north of the Nacimiento fault. Exhumation rates are calculated from data in Fig. 3-13. Four basins under 5 km2 (ID 100–103) are shown here because they were sampled for denudation estimates. Fault abbreviations are the same as Fig. 3-1.

range using ¹⁰Be cosmogenic radionuclides (Young et al., 2015; H. Young, Stanford University, written commun., 2016). There is no statistical correlation (p>0.08) between exhumation and denudation (Fig., 3-15a), and the mismatch can be plainly observed in map view (Fig. 3-14). Denudation rates in the range also do not appear to correlate strongly with topographic metrics of erosion, such as *ksn* or relief (Young et al., 2015). This is a very puzzling result considering how well these metrics agree internally and appear to indicate the range is perhaps near equilibrium between long-term uplift and erosion. Somewhat surprisingly, the magnitude of the discrepancy appears to be well correlated with catchment-mean slope (Fig. 3-15b).

We suspect that the mismatch between denudation and exhumation rates may be explained by biases in the sediment supply related to landslides (e.g. Puchol et al., 2014). Landslide deposits are a large portion of the surficial units throughout the range (e.g. Rosenberg and Wills, 2016) and have been suggested to be the dominant erosional process on the steeper slopes of the range (Ducea et al., 2003). Additionally, our analysis of geomorphic metrics indicates a change in behavior above catchment-mean slopes of ~25° (Fig. 3-6) that could signal an increasing role of landslides in sediment transport (e.g. Binnie et al., 2007; Ouimet et al., 2009; DiBiase et al., 2010). Landslides can bias 10Be cosmogenic denudation rate estimates by introducing large quantities of material with low cosmogenic radionuclide concentration to the fluvial system—which overestimates denudation rate, and through the generation of a grain-size dependency on cosmogenic radionuclide concentration—which underestimates

Figure 3-15. Plot A—Catchment-mean exhumation rate shows no statistical correlation (p>0.05) with denudation rates measured from cosmogenic 10Be in 18 drainages; denudation rates from H. Young (Stanford University, written commun., 2016). **Plot B—**The misfit between exhumation and denudation has a moderate correlation with catchment-mean slope.

denudation rate downstream of the landslide (Puchol et al., 2014). To a first order, these two processes can explain the correlation between catchment-mean slope and the discrepancy between denudation and exhumation (Fig. 3-15b), as follows.

The high denudation rates of the Big Sur river can be explained by the addition of landslide material from the expansive steep slopes above the main gorge where the river crosses the rapidly exhuming band of rock that forms the main coastal divide (Figs. 3-7 and 3-13). No other river along the coast of the Santa Lucia range crosses this band of rapidly exhuming rock, and the second-youngest apatite cooling age in the range (ID 58; Table 3-2) is from the mouth of this gorge. The addition of low-cosmogenic-concentration material from these slopes may overwhelm the denudation signal from farther upstream. The lower-than-predicted denudation rates for other high-slope catchments may be related to the grain-size dependency effect (e.g. Puchol et al., 2014), whereby low-cosmogenic-concentration grains are often large. Because of this, sampling far downstream of a landslide-dominated landscape—such as our data suggest for catchments with slopes >25°—may bias the results by preferentially analyzing only the high-cosmogenic-concentration fine-grained fraction of sediment. Although this interpretation is tentative, it provides the testable prediction that high-mismatch catchments have sediment-transport processes much different than low-mismatch catchments.

CONCLUSION

We combine new and existing low-temperature thermochronometry of apatite and zircon with geomorphic metrics of erosion, deformed marine terraces, and geologic constraints to describe the Oligocene through modern history of uplift and exhumation for the Santa Lucia range in central California. Rates of long-term exhumation vary widely across the range; the NE part of the range preserves late Cretaceous apatite cooling ages, Oligocene to late Miocene apatite ages characterize the central part of the range, and late Miocene to Pleistocene apatite ages are found along the SW flank of the range. Zircon cooling ages are predominantly late Cretaceous except at low elevations directly NE of the SGHF where they are as young as 7.1 Ma. Deformed marine terraces indicate that at least since the late Quaternary, there has been a ~3-km-wide zone of localized rock uplift NE of the SGHF; within this zone, uplift is 3–5x higher than farther from the fault. A similar pattern is observed in long-term rates of exhumation along an equal-elevation coastal transect (Chapter 2). These data indicate that exhumation has been

asymmetric, with generally greater exhumation NE of the SGHF, and an especially localized zone of strain directly NE of the fault.

There was little exhumation during the Oligocene through late Miocene, when much of the central California borderland was undergoing oblique transtension and basin subsidence (e.g. Graham, 1978). The San Gregorio-Hosgri fault initiated ~11 Ma (Clark, 1998), but it was not until several m.y. later, most likely at ~6 Ma, that rapid exhumation began along the SW flank of the range adjacent to the fault. This age corresponds closely to the \sim 5.2 Ma final shift towards transpression at this latitude (DeMets and Merkouriev, 2016). Initial studies of low-temperature thermochronometry suggested faster exhumation since ~2.3 Ma (Ducea et al., 2003), but a consideration of the strong spatial gradient in vertical strain NE of the SGHF does not require such a rate change.

We develop a range-wide map of exhumation rate using the correlation between topographic relief within a 2.5-km window, distance to the SGHF, and exhumation rates from apatite (U-Th)/He cooling ages. A band of rapid exhumation—at ~0.5–0.9 mm/yr—has been located directly NE of the SGHF since the late Miocene; rates decay NE slowly in the northern half of the range, and rapidly in the southern half. These predictions agree with all known geological and thermochronological constraints, and although there is uncertainty in the exact values of exhumation, the general pattern is likely a robust result.

Metrics of erosion from *χ*-analysis of river profiles, in combination with our other results, indicate a stepwise increase in uplift and exhumation NW across the Oceanic and Nacimiento faults. We interpret these data as indicating transfer of strain from inland faults such as the West Huasana fault, to the coastal SGHF, in support of the model advocated by Hardebeck (2010). A similar pattern of strain transfer likely exists farther NW between the RRF and SGHF, but our data provide little additional constraint beyond supporting general post-mid to late Miocene exhumation in the core of the range.

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CHAPTER 4

DISCRETE MULTI-PULSE LASER ABLATION DEPTH PROFILING WITH A SINGLE-COLLECTOR ICP-MS: SUB-MICRON U-PB GEOCHRONOLOGY OF ZIRCON AND THE EFFECT OF RADIATION DAMAGE ON DEPTH-DEPENDENT FRACTIONATION

ABSTRACT

A discrete multi-pulse method for single-collector ICP-MS laser ablation systems is presented that interrogates isotopic variation as a function of sample depth. The fidelity of the method is assessed with a 183-sample U-Pb analysis session of zircons with known age. By using bursts of 5 laser pulses the method resolves integration-level ages with \sim 0.55 μ m depth resolution and ~6% 2σ age uncertainty. To avoid signal aliasing, isotopic ratios are calculated using total ion counts for each integration, instead of on a cycle-by-cycle basis. Fractionation correction is achieved by constructing a continuous-function, non-parametric 3D surface from which discrete values for any time and sample depth can be calculated. At the sample level (15 integrations for this study), average 2σ uncertainty is ~2.5% for 206Pb/238U ages; 95% of samples and ~90% of integrations overlap with their accepted age at 2σ. The data reduction software developed here is designed to be flexible and a discussion of the effects of varying method parameters is provided. Total ablation depth is measured using white light interferometry, ranges between 7 and 10 µm and is found to vary as a function of parent radionuclide concentration, measures of crystal lattice disorganization from Raman spectroscopy, and metrics of radiation damage (alpha dose). These data indicate that radiation damage exerts a fundamental control on laser ablation efficiency, although the exact physical process is unknown at present. Consequently, fractionation correction factors derived for a reference material may not be appropriate for unknowns with vastly different crystal structure.

INTRODUCTION

Ultraviolet laser ablation Inductively Coupled Mass Spectrometry (LA-ICPMS) is an increasingly common tool used to extract isotopic and chemical data from a variety of geochemical reservoir materials. Recent advances within the geochronologic community have led to the development of new methods and instrument designs that enable routine acquisition of large age and/or trace-element data sets with accuracy and precision approaching the ~1-3% level (Kosler et al., 2002; Gehrels et al., 2008, Frei and Gerdes, 2009). Exact methodological details vary significantly between laboratories, but a single zircon spot analysis typically consists of 10-30 seconds of baseline data collection followed by 20-60 seconds of on-peak data collection, during which time the UV laser is pulsed continuously at a fixed rate between 5 hz and 10 hz depending on individual lab instrumentation and sample delivery methods (e.g. Jackson et al., 2004; Gehrels et al., 2008; Chew et al., 2011). The ablated and aerosolized zircon is exported from the ablation cell by helium carrier gas and mixed with argon sample gas prior to injection into an inductively coupled plasma stream. The isotopic composition of the zircon is then measured using either a single- (quadrupole or sector field) or a multi-collector ICP-MS system.

Typical analytical procedures employing continuously-pulsed laser ablation produce a single age for each targeted grain. However, accurate and precise depth-resolved data have the capacity to answer a wide range of questions which are difficult to resolve with continuous ablation, such as probing fine-scale variations in crystallization age or metamorphic crystal overgrowths (Cottle et al., 2009a), measuring chemical diffusion profiles in experimental petrology (Till et al., 2012), determining concentration gradients through mineral grains (e.g. Blackburn et al., 2011), or reconstructing paleo-ocean temperatures using the micro-stratigraphy of calcareous forams (e.g. Eggins et al., 2003). The reason for this difficulty is that sample aerosol produced by continuously pulsed laser ablation undergoes significant mixing with aerosol ablated during both antecedent and subsequent pulses within the ablation cell and transport tubing. As an outside case, this convolution might produce time-series data with a functional form of a diffusion profile, while the sample contains a chemical step function. Cell design advances in recent years (Eggins, 1998; Woodhead et al, 2004) have targeted improvement of washout efficiency to limit mixing and thereby improve spatial resolution. Improved efficiency, however, results in an increased magnitude of signal transients at frequencies comparable to that of data acquisition cycles, thereby increasing signal aliasing. To combat this, many labs employ some manner of signal smoothing device in the carrier gas delivery system, effectively discarding much of the spatial resolution attained with a faster washout cell.

Several workers have extracted depth-resolved data from continuously-pulsed ablation (e.g. Patton et al., 2010; Tollstrup et al., 2012) by selecting subsets of incoming data, but many difficulties remain. For example, although it is theoretically possible to deconvolve a mixed

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signal if the response function of the laser cell is known, such approaches are mathematically non-unique. This ambiguity makes assigning a given analysis (age, concentration, or otherwise) to a precise depth difficult, although depending on the analytical precision required this level of ambiguity may be acceptable. Yet other laser ablation techniques have been developed that construct isotopic maps by rastering exposed grain sections or faces (e.g. Farley et al., 2011; Cottle et al., 2009b; Gehrels et al., 2008). These maps can be combined to create pseudo depth profiles by sequentially sectioning through the grain (Farley et al., 2011). However, limitations imposed by laser spot size $(\sim 10-30 \,\mu m)$, and the desire to retain as much grain as possible for either future LA-ICP-MS sampling or thermochronometry make sequential grain sectioning an unattractive option. Secondary Ion Mass Spectrometry depth profiling has the capacity to deliver depth resolution better than ~ 0.5 µm, but can only do so over relatively shallow total depths and has lower throughput than laser ablation (Breeding et al, 2004; Vorhies et al, 2013).

To more robustly tie analyses to depth, we adopt the approach developed by Cottle and coworkers (2009a) that isolates and analyzes small, discrete volumes of material. In this contribution, their single-pulse/multi-collector approach is modified for use with more common and less expensive single collector ICP-MS systems, and contains additional treatment of laser-induced down-hole fractionation. For this type of analysis the use of a single-collector ICP-MS introduces additional complication over a multi-collector system. During short laser activation analyses, the pulsed nature of aerosol delivery and 'plasma flicker' result in signal aliasing and highly variable cycle-by-cycle ratios. One solution is expeditious cycling through the analysis table in order minimize the time delay between subsequent data points. However, rapidity comes at the expense of noise quantization in low count rate signals. Single-collector data acquisition strategies must therefore compromise between rapid sampling to limit signal aliasing and increased dwell times to reduce noise quantization. Multi-collection mitigates these issues to a significant extent; however, the differential response times of mixed mode (faraday – ion counter) collector arrays during very short (single pulse or low-volume) analyses also requires alternate data handling procedures (e.g. Johnston et al, 2009; Cottle et al., 2009a; 2012). One solution that minimizes the inevitable signal aliasing cause by short-period transient signals is to integrate the total counts for each aerosol wave and calculate a single ratio (e.g. Johnston et al, 2009; Cottle et al., 2009a; 2012). Here, this method is generalized for use with a single collector LA-ICP-MS to demonstrate the feasibility of high depth-resolution zircon U-Pb geochronology. While specifically applied to U-Pb analysis, it is important to note that the concept, methods, and software are appropriate for depth resolved analysis of other chemical systems, particularly when coupled to single collector ICP-MS system.

DISCRETE MULTI-PULSE DEPTH PROFILE METHOD

INSTRUMENTATION

Sample ablation is achieved with a PhotonMachines Analyte 193H, a 193-nm ArF excimer laser system fitted with a Helex 2-volume sample chamber for improved washout of analyte aerosols (after Eggins et al, 2005). Material is ablated in a He-gas atmosphere, mixed with Ar carrier gas after exiting the sample chamber and transported through a ten-conduit, \sim 1.5 m - long tuned-length Teflon 'Squid' signal smoothing device. The Squid effectively attenuates peak signal intensity and lengthens delivery time of the analyte resulting in a well-mixed and smooth signal. For high concentration ions such as ²³⁸U, the attenuated signal lowered peak count rates below the threshold for the digital/analog cutoff in this study. We use a spot size of 34 μ m, energy stabilized laser fluence of 4.0 Jcm⁻², and repetition rate of 10 hz, which are the standard operating parameters for the Plasma Analytical facility at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

Isotopic data were collected with a ThermoScientifc ElementXR single-collector magnetic sector ICPMS; analytical parameters and conditions are summarized in Table 4-1. For U-Pb analyses the ElementXR is operated in electrostatic mode allowing rapid peak-hopping within the range of collected ions. Data are collected on ²⁰²Hg, ²⁰⁴Pb, ²⁰⁶Pb, ²⁰⁷Pb, ²⁰⁸Pb, ²³²Th, 235U, and 238U for a total run cycle time of 120 ms, 102 ms of which are on-peak; the remainder represents total dead time during peak hops between ions. Approximately half of this settling time is required to shift from 238 U back to 202 Hg, so although a small amount of settling time reduction could be gained by eliminating 202 Hg, 208 Pb, 232 Th, and 235 U the proportional change would not necessarily balance losing the ability to independently measure ²³⁵U, Th-Pb ages, or to perform a ²⁰²Hg correction if necessary. However, the needs of each analyst will vary and for some types of determinations, this may be an acceptable trade-off; the choice of ions and dwell times for this study is intended only to represent one of many possible parameter selections.

ThermoScientific ElementXR single-collector magnetic sector ICPMS				
Isotopes (ms dwell time)	202Hg (15), 204Pb (15), 206Pb (15), 207Pb (30), 208Pb (15), 232Th (3), 235U (6), and 238U (3)			
Collection mode	Electrostatic peak hopping			
Collector type	Discrete-dynode electron multiplier with automatic digital/analog cutoff			
Carrier gas and flow rate	0.75 L/min He gas to Helex cell, 0.75 L/min Ar gas upon exit from Helex			
Auxillary gas flow rate	\sim 1 L/min			
Cooling gas flow rate	18 L/min			
Forward RF power	1200 W			
Baseline data acquisition	30 seconds			
On-peak signal acquisition	82.5 seconds			
Sample washout time	20 seconds			
Burst cycles per sample	15			

Table 4-1. ICP-MS and laser ablation analytical parameters used in this study.

Topography of ablated laser pits was measured with a Zygo NewView 7200 white-light vertical-scanning interferometer—a non-contact 3D surface mapping tool that utilizes sophisticated image acquisition hardware and processing software to extract topographic maps from complex surfaces. The optics are such that interference fringes appear only on those parts of the surface that are in focus. A vertical-scanning piezoelectric stage system with 1nm vertical reproducibility is used to change the focal plane elevation. For a given elevation, a subset of the pixels will reflect fringes, which are registered as in-focus. A sequence of images, gathered at different elevations, is then processed to create a nm-resolution topographic map of the target. All measurement was carried out with a 100X Mirau objective and 0.5X field zoom lens resulting in a horizontal resolution of 224 nm and a sub 1 nm vertical resolution.

Raman spectra for each ablated grain were collected using a Horiba Scientific LabRAM HR Evol over a range of wavenumbers from 900-1200 cm-1 with a 633 nm green diode laser. Measurements were calibrated by analyzing the M146 zircon standard of Nasdala et al (2004) who showed that for zircon, increasing alpha-dosage results in a systematic shift and broadening of the diagnostic Raman spectra peak related to the v_3 Zr-SiO₄ stretching bond and is indicative

of increasing amounts of crystal lattice disorganization. Zircons with little disorganization have sharp, narrow peaks at 1007 cm⁻¹, whereas zircons with high levels of disorganization have much broader peaks near 997 cm-1 (Nasdala et al, 2004; Guenthner et al, 2013).

SAMPLE PREPARATION AND ANALYTICAL METHOD

Individual zircon grains and grain fragments were mounted on 2" double-sided sticky tape and fixed with Struers Epofix epoxy using a 1" internal diameter ring form. After curing, samples were polished just enough to expose most grains in successive steps with 600- and 1500-grit paper, and then with 9-, 3-, and 1-µm diamond suspension on a Struers LabPol polishing station. In this study, grains were sectioned and polished to demonstrate method performance under idealized mounting conditions. Mounting euhedral grains directly on double-sided sticky tape or indium would facilitate analysis of chemical gradient at grain margins and allow their removal for other subsequent analyses. Prior to installation in the Helex 2 cell, the 1" round was washed in 1% $HNO₃$ and rinsed with MilliQ water to remove surface contaminants. No scanning electron microscopy or cathodoluminescence imaging was performed prior to analysis and no laser pre-ablation passes were performed prior to data acquisition.

The discrete multi-pulse method presented here differs from conventional continuously-pulsed laser sampling approaches and thus the nomenclature differs from typical studies. One analysis 'session' is composed of all the individual 'samples' analyzed for a given purpose. In this study, our session contains 183 samples of either idiomorphic grains or fragments of larger gem-quality zircons and includes both reference materials and unknowns. Each 'sample' is composed of many 'integrations' which are discrete analyses that increase in depth from first to last. The number of integrations for each sample ultimately defines the total depth, is a free parameter to be chosen by the analyst, and will vary depending on the specific needs of the session. The choice of 15 integrations per sample for this study was motivated by achieving depths of 8-10 µm, but is only meant to demonstrate one possible parameter choice. Each 'integration' is achieved by operating the laser for a set number of pulses, followed by a washout delay before the next sequence is initiated (Fig. 4-1). The number of pulses that comprise a single integration is another free parameter and determines the overall depth resolution of the technique; fewer pulses (up to a single pulse) yield finer resolution but sacrifice total counts and the ability to effectively quantify the shrinking amount of aerosol. For multi-collector systems which can

Figure 4-1. A) The ²⁰⁶Pb and ²³⁸U isotope spectra for an entire sample (first SLM reference zircon analysis): 30 seconds of baseline collection followed by 15 integrations of five laser pulses each, each with a five second pause before the subsequent integration; traces are scaled to show total counts. B) Expanded spectra of first five integrations diagraming the beginning and end of each cycle, the total counts used for each area (using ~4.5s of time), the cycle-by-cycle $206Pb$ / $238U$ ratio, and the ratio calculated for each integration by summing the total counts of each isotope and correcting for dwell time. C) Expansion of the first integration to highlight the effects of signal aliasing on cycle-by-cycle ratios for short-duration analyses and the greater stability of the integrated counts approach. Faster cycling (and more ratio data points) could be gained by decreasing dwell times, but this leads to excessive noise due to quantization in low count-rate ion channels.

capture data on all ion channels simultaneously, a single pulse is enough data to produce results with acceptable uncertainty (e.g. Cottle et al., 2009a; 2012). However, for single-collector systems which must cycle through an analysis table, the comparable time scales of signal transience and ICP sampling for single-pulse analysis severely limits ratio precision. Thus, for this study we balanced the need for analyzing a broad range of concentrations against ultimate depth resolution with five pulses/integration. This choice resulted in acceptable uncertainty for all but the lowest count rate signals $\left(220 \text{ ppm}\right)$ and reasonable depth resolution. A could increase the pulses/integration at the expense of depth resolution. Conversely, if ultimate depth resolution is of greatest importance, a careful optimization study must be performed to determine the necessary parameters. In any case, our choices for the free parameters of total number of integrations and pulses/integration are only meant to represent one possibility and to document a baseline case for future analysts.

The required delay between subsequent bursts of the laser, i.e. between integrations, varies as a function of cell and transport tubing geometry. For the UCSC Helex 2 with a Teflon Squid, the rise time to peak ion intensity is \sim 0.6s and background levels are reached by \sim 3s of initial signal in-growth. For all ion channels >99% of the integrated signal occurs within ~4.5s; we thus use a 5 second delay after ablation ceases to allow all of the signal to pass through the system prior to initiation of the next laser burst (integration). Baseline data acquisition is acquired by triggering ElementXR data collection 30 seconds prior to laser activation. For this experiment session, each sample consisted of 15 integrations, each with five laser pulses (0.5 s) and a five second delay for a cumulative signal acquisition time of 82.5 s followed by a 20 s washout prior to the subsequent sample baseline collection (Fig. 4-1). With a 34 µm spot size, this method resulted in discrete analyses with approximately 0.5 µm depth resolution (see below for detailed discussion of depth data).

To assess the precision and accuracy of the method and our choice of parameters, we performed a 183-sample round-robin analysis with a variety of zircons of known age and radiogenic parent concentrations (Table 4-2). A sample-standard bracketing approach is used to enable correction for mass bias and fractionation that occurs during the ablation, transport, ionization, and detection processes. We advocate the use of a primary and secondary reference material (RM) located after every five unknowns in order to assess the precision and accuracy of the corrections being applied. Additionally, several analyses of primary RM at the beginning and end of an analysis session is prudent as many data reduction packages use smoothing or averaging functions, which can be highly sensitive to outlier data near end points. Our choice of primary RM was motivated by the need for a readily available and homogenous zircon of known concentration. The 564.1 ± 1.4 Ma Sri Lanka zircon 'SLM' has been analyzed at the Arizona LaserChron center (n>150) in reference to the nearly identical aged 'SL2' zircon RM of Gehrels et al. (2008) by M. Grove (Stanford University, written commun., 2012). Although the

Sample	Accepted $Age \pm 2\sigma$	Method	238 U(ppm)	$232Th$ (ppm)	Source
SLM	564.1 ± 1.4	LA-ICPMS	-750	n.a.	M. Grove (Pers. Comm)
M ₁₄₆	567 ± 4	IMP	923 ± 17	411 ± 9	Nasdala et al (2004)
Plesovice	337.1 ± 0.4	ID-TIMS	$465 - 1106$ (755 avg)	37-188 (76 avg)	Slama et al (2008)
VP10	1198.4 ± 7.7	ID-TIMS	n.a.	n.a.	J. Wooden (Pers. Comm)
AS3	1099.1 ± 0.2	ID-TIMS	\sim 200-1600	\sim 140-1100	Paces and Miller (1993); Schmitz et al. (2003)
Mud Tank	732 ± 5	ID-TIMS	$6 - 36$	n.a.	Black and Gulson (1978)
WF1	n.p.d.	O-ICPMS	26 ± 8	15 ± 7	In house Sri Lanka megacryst
WF ₂	n.p.d.	O-ICPMS	1755 ± 61	775 ± 11	In house Sri Lanka megacryst
WF ₆	n.p.d.	O-ICPMS	588 ± 6	58 ± 7	In house Sri Lanka megacryst
WF10	n.p.d.	O-ICPMS	287 ± 4	276 ± 2	In house Sri Lanka megacryst

Table 4-2. Ages and concentrations of zircons used in this study.

Notes: Accepted ages are a combination of 206Pb/238U, Concordia ages, and 207Pb/206Pb ages. LA-ICPMS-Laser ablation inductively-coupled plasma mass spectrometry; IMP-Ion Microprobe; ID-TIMS-Isotope dilution-thermal ionization mass spectrometry; Q-ICPMS-Quadrapole-inductively coupled plasma-mass spectrometry

use of a reference material dated by LA-ICPMS is less ideal than a reference material dated by ID-TIMS, it is adequate for the purposes of our method development. This assertion is validated by ages of well-characterized secondary reference zircons within uncertainty of their accepted values, i.e. if the age of 'SLM' were incorrect, it would be unable to produce correct ages for the secondary RMs. Analysts applying this method to geological questions should use a well characterized (ID-TIMS) primary RM as this decreases the external uncertainty of each analysis.

DATA REDUCTION—ICPMS DATA

Existing data reduction software packages typically calculate isotope ratios on a cycle-bycycle basis, which contributes to signal noise because of aliasing effects related to periodic sampling of a highly transient signal (Fig. 4-1). Recent methods which calculate ratios from integrated total counts also require new data reduction techniques (e.g. Johnston et al., 2009; Cottle et al., 2012) as previous software is unable to make these calculations. Although our methods are similar to those of Cottle and coworkers (2012), the addition of robust down-hole fractionation corrections which are not necessary for single-pulse techniques and the automation of integration selection necessitated development of a new data reduction software package. Further, we operate within a multi-use analytical facility and wished to design a program with the flexibility to work with any sampling strategy (continuous or discrete) and for any type of isotopic inquiry. Thus, the LabVIEW-based data reduction program detailed below is a highly flexible process with peak- and edge-detection algorithms, multi- or single-cycle

integration capability, and statistically rigorous uncertainty propagation. LabVIEW is a userfriendly programming environment with easily-deployable and intuitive graphical user interfaces, visualization tools, and mathematical models. Furthermore, LabVIEW code can be compiled as an executable that runs with a free runtime engine for ease of distribution. Data are stored in a proprietary streaming binary file format (*.tdms) for efficiency; these files can be opened in Excel with the TDMS file add-in. The software is available from the authors upon request.

INTEGRATION SELECTION AND PROGRAMMATIC 'EDGE' DETECTION

Our data processing approach utilizes programmatic detection of the start of 'parcels' or waves of ablated aerosol in the intensity time series. Alternative approaches could use absolute timing between integrations, or even couple ICPMS time-stamps with the laser log file, if available. However, slight fluctuations in the timing of the laser system can occur, which, for continuously-pulsed operation are insignificant, but for tightly-spaced methods such as this, slight fluctuations can result in systematically analyzing the wrong section of the time series. Also, although coupling laser log files and time-stamps is a robust means of defining when laser pulses are delivered (when these files are available), there are slight stochastic fluctuations in the transport of the aerosol which could be on the order of single analysis cycles and possibly result in 'missing' the first cycle of incoming data. Thus, although it represents an additional step in the processing of the data, simply detecting when each packet arrives is perhaps a more generalized and flexible procedure for assigning integrations.

Single-channel algorithms can produce spurious 'edges' as a result of random background counts in low dwell time channels. We therefore use an algorithm based on signal gain across multiple ion channels. A potential sample start is generated when the $238U$ signal is either above a user-specified rate-of-change compared to the running average of the five previous data points, or greater than a user-specified threshold value. Start position is confirmed if three of the four other isotope channels (206Pb, 207Pb, 208Pb, 232Th) are greater than limits of detection (any on-peak signal that exceeds 3 standard deviations of the mean background signal). Remaining starts are filtered based on a user-set minimum distance between integrations (5.5 s for this study). The resulting start locations are displayed and the user can adjust parameters as necessary to optimize the automatic detection algorithm. Occasionally, the user may have to manually select the start location for a difficult-to-detect parcel.

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Once sample starts have been selected, background lengths and offsets are applied based on user settings and individual samples are shown with automatically calculated integration starts and ends. Because of the discrete data cycles with a single-collector ICPMS, selection of the entire 5.5s integration window could double-sample data at the start or end with a neighboring integration. Thus, the user is able to choose what percent of the integration cycle is used for the calculation of ages, but this value is not allowed to vary throughout the session in order to maintain consistency. For this session, >99% of all counts occur before 4.5s and so we use this as our analysis window. This choice results in the software analyzing 39 to 41 cycles of data for each integration, with slight variations due to quantization of individual data cycles. All programmatically detected integration windows are visually inspected to ensure they capture the data correctly. For the 2745 individual integrations of our round-robin analysis <1% of calculated integration starts had to be changed and the entire process from raw data to selected and checked data took about 10 minutes.

BACKGROUND SUBTRACTION, COUNTING

UNCERTAINTY, AND RATIO CALCULATION

After automated selection of background and integration time slices, the average per-cycle baseline for each isotope $\,\hat{B}_{jk}\,$ is calculated by dividing the total background counts by the number of run-table cycles over the baseline acquisition, n:

$$
\hat{B}_{jk} = \sum_{i=1}^{n} (r_{ij} \times t_j^{dwell}) / n \Big|_{j=1}^{q} \Big|_{k=1}^{r}
$$

Where r_{ij} , is the count rate of the i^{th} cycle of the j^{th} isotope, and $\,t^{dwell}_j\,$ is the per-cycle count time for the *j*th isotope evaluated over all samples k \rightarrow r (see Table 4-3 for equation definitions). Total baseline corrected on-peak counts for each integration, $C_{\,\,\mu}^{bc}$ are evaluated over all isotopes, $j \rightarrow q$, all integrations $l \rightarrow s$ for each sample, and all samples $k \rightarrow r$:

$$
C_{jik}^{bc} = \sum_{i=1}^{n} \left(r_{ij} \times t_j^{dwell} - \hat{B}_{jk} \right) \Big|_{j=1}^{q} \Big|_{k=1}^{s} \Big|_{k=1}^{r}
$$

Variable Notation	Definition
$i \rightarrow n$	ICP-MS run cycle over which data is collected
$j \rightarrow q$	Range of isotopes over which data is collected
$k \rightarrow r$	Samples of the analytical session
$l \rightarrow s$ $m \rightarrow v$	Integrations of each sample
	Isotope pairs (e.g. j_1 =206Pb, j_2 =238U)
\hat{B}_{jk} t_j^{dwell}	Per-cycle background intensity
	Dwell time for each isotope
	Time during analytical session
r_{ij}	Count rate for ith cycle of the jth isotope
C_{jlk}^{bc}	Background-corrected total counts
E^{bc}_{jlk}	Poisson counting error for background-corrected counts
R_{mlk}^{obs}	Observed ratio of isotope pairs j_1 and j_2
R_{mlk}^{exp}	Expected ratio of isotope pairs j_1 and j_2 for primary standards
f_{mlk}	Fractionation correction factor for primary standards
$f_m(l,t)$	Discrete-value fractionation correction function for primary standards
$\Phi_m(l,t)$	Continuous 3-D fractionation correction surface
$\Phi_{\textit{mlk}}$	Discrete value fractionation correction for all samples
$\Psi_{\textit{\text{mlk}}}$	Fractionation-corrected isotopic ratios
$E^{\scriptscriptstyle R}_{\scriptscriptstyle mlk}$	Poisson-based error of each isotope ratio
$\hat{\theta}_{\scriptscriptstyle{mk}}$	Goodness-of-fit function for Ψ -induced error
δ_{mlk}	Cumulative internal uncertainty for all samples, integrations, and isotopic ratios

Table 4-3. Definition of variables used.

Internal count uncertainty for background-corrected counts E_{jk}^{bc} is estimated by summing in quadrature the Poisson counting uncertainty from the baseline and on-peak signals:

$$
E_{jlk}^{bc} = \sqrt{\left[\sum_{i=1}^{n} (r_{ij} \times t_j^{dwell})\right] - n\hat{B}_{jk}}\bigg|_{j=1}^{q} \bigg|_{l=1}^{s} \bigg|_{k=1}^{r}
$$

Background-corrected isotopic ratios R_{mlk}^{obs} are evaluated over all isotope pairs, *m*, comprising total counts on isotopes j_1 and j_2 , for each integration and sample with:

$$
R_{mlk}^{obs} = C_{j_1kl}^{bc} / C_{j_2kl}^{bc} \Big|_{m=1}^{v} \Big|_{l=1}^{s} \Big|_{k=1}^{r}
$$

The 207Pb/235U ratio was calculated using the measured 207Pb and calculating 235U using the canonical 238U/235U ratio of 137.88 (Jaffey et al, 1971) because of high analytical uncertainty associated with the low count rate 235U signal.

CORRECTION FACTOR CALCULATION

An isotope ratio correction factor, *fmlk,* is calculated for each isotopic ratio *m*, of each integration *l* for the primary standards as the ratio of the observed to expected values. For the round-robin data described below, each primary reference material (RM) analysis yields *fmlk* values for each of the 15 integrations over all isotopic ratios:

$$
f_{mlk} = R_{mlk}^{obs} / R_{mlk}^{\exp|V_{mlk}|} \Big|_{n=1}^{s} \Big|_{k=1}^{primary-stds}
$$

Because analyses are unevenly spaced during the analytical session we chose to convert the discrete fractionation correction values into a functional form with two variables (analytical session time, *t,* and integration, *l*) that is valid over all discrete observations of the primary RM for each ratio, *m*:

$$
f_{mlk} \rightarrow f_m(l,t)\big|_{m=1}^{\nu}
$$

This conversion is essential to correctly smooth observed values and interpolate values to be applied to intervening 'unknown' samples. These discrete correction factors from primary RMs are then mapped into a continuous three dimensional estimator of fractionation correction, $\Phi_m(l,t)$:

$$
f_m(l,t)\big|_{m=1}^{\nu} \to \Phi_m(l,t)\big|_{m=1}^{\nu}
$$

We use a three-step smoothing method applied to the discrete primary RM correction factors to construct this surface. First, all integrations and ratios for an individual RM $f_m\big(t\big)\Bigr|_{l=1}^s$ are smoothed using a 7-term Henderson filter. Second, smoothed fractionation correction values for each integration are smoothed across the entire analytical session $\left. f_m\left(l\right) \right|_{k=1}^{primary_{-}}$ $f_{_{m}}\!\left(l\right) \! \! \left\vert \begin{matrix} p r_{\mathit{imary}\,-\mathit{stds}}\ k=1 \end{matrix} \right.$ with a 15-term Spencer filter. Finally, a 2-D cubic spline of all smoothed discrete primary RM *f* values is used to construct the interpolated fractionation correction surface. The resulting three-dimensional surface is a non-parametric estimator of fractionation over all integrations at any time

during the analytical session (Fig. 4-2). We then assign discrete fractionation correction values for each analysis based on its location on the surface:

 $\Phi_m\left(l,t\right) \Big\vert_{m=1}^\nu \to \Phi_{mlk}$

The fractionation-corrected isotope ratios, $\Psi_{_{mlk}}$, are calculated from these discrete values and the observed ratios with:

$$
\Psi_{mlk} = R_{mlk}^{obs} / \Phi_{mlk} \Big|_{m=1}^{v} \Big|_{l=1}^{s} \Big|_{k=1}^{r}
$$

Figure 4-2. Left-side plot shows calculated correction factor mesh (*fmlk*) as a function of integration and session placement for our reference zircon, SLM. The closest corner of the mesh is the first integration of the first standard analyzed, and the farthest corner is the last (deepest) integration of the last standard analyzed. Note the high variance in the first integrations of all samples, and the general down-hole trend towards unity. Right-side plot is the smoothed 3D fractionation correction surfaceΦ*^m* (*l t*,) for 206Pb /238U. Cross-section lines at integrations 1, 7, and 13 are shown below to visually asses the fit between the f_{mlk} values (triangles, circles, and squares) and the resulting smoothed surface. Although there is a higher degree of variance in the early integrations, our smoothing method appears to adequately capture the longer-wavelength variations. Longer gaps in data near Std-12 and Std-26 are the result of programming the next batch of analyses. Lowest plot is the relative uncertainty for each sample from fractionation correction. These values are calculated for each RM sample and then a 1D cubic spline allows interpolation for intervening unknown samples (see text for discussion). In essence, samples have low uncertainty where measured ratios agree with the smoothed correction surface and high uncertainty where they differ more.

Correction factor values for the $206Pb/238U$ and $207Pb/235U$ systems show the greatest degree of depth-dependent fractionation, as typically reported (Patton et al, 2010). The $207Pb$ / $206Pb$ system is usually assumed to have no depth dependency, which our data corroborate, although the magnitude of the correction is slightly less than unity and likely reflects instrumental mass bias.

The combination of moving average and 2-D cubic spline methods described above minimizes the uncertainty residual for secondary reference materials (M146 for this study). Furthermore, these methods are non-parametric and make no assumptions about the functional form of down-hole fractionation, only that it varies smoothly. Many alternative smoothing models exist, but a rigorous statistical analysis of these approaches is beyond the scope of this contribution. Data reduction and statistical treatment of laser ablation ICP-MS is the focus of substantial interest and debate at the present time (Jackson, 2009; Cottle et al, 2009; Patton et al, 2010; Horstwood et al., 2010; McLean et al., 2011). A key feature of this data reduction user interface is the flexibility to implement improved mathematical and statistical models of fractionation as the science progresses.

COMMON PB CORRECTION

Zircon can incorporate small amounts of common (non-radiogenic) Pb isotopes at the time of formation or during subsequent recrystallization or metamictization which results in an apparent age that can vary significantly from the true age. Several methods are available to estimate the contribution of this initial common Pb. All, except a ²⁰⁴Pb-based correction, rely on the assumption of concordance of at least two of the decay systems and are therefore less preferred (Anderson, 2002). However, if the measured 204Pb signal is not statistically above background levels, a correction using this method only serves to add noise, and may bias the data. Therefore, we implement a logical algorithm based on signal strength relative to the limits of detection to determine which correction is most appropriate for each sample (Fig. 4-3). For all common Pb corrections, the starting Pb composition is estimated by calculating two-stage Stacey and Kramers (1975) Pb composition at the uncorrected ²⁰⁶Pb/²³⁸U age. Both ²⁰⁷Pb- and $208Pb$ -based corrections utilize the uncorrected $206Pb/238U$ age as an initial age and iteratively solve for common Pb components until the change in age is << 1*g* uncertainty of the age, usually less than 5 iterations. Uncertainty in the common Pb composition is propagated in quadrature and included in the final external uncertainty.

UNCERTAINTY PROPAGATION, FINAL AGE

CALCULATIONS, AND STATISTICAL MEASURES

The fundamental basis of our uncertainty propagation method is the Poisson counting uncertainty on the summed total counts for each isotope, $E_{\,\,\!ik}^{\,bc}$, which is added in quadrature to form the absolute uncertainty of each ratio, E_{mk}^{R} :

$$
E_{mlk}^{R} = R_{mlk}^{obs} \times \sqrt{\left(\frac{E_{j_1lk}}{C_{j_1lk}}\right)^2 + \left(\frac{E_{j_2lk}}{C_{j_2lk}}\right)^2} \Bigg|_{m=1}^{v} \Bigg|_{l=1}^{s} \Bigg|_{k=1}^{r}
$$

Figure 4-3. Algorithm workflow for the correction of common Pb used in this study. Although the correction methods are not equivalent, each has distinct criteria that must be met for appropriate use. Limits of detection (LOD) are defined as any signal greater than the 3σ uncertainty band of the background value.

Fractionation correction introduces a significant source of uncertainty due to the smoothing and interpolation process and must be included in the total uncertainty budget. We estimate its magnitude by calculating a goodness-of-fit function using the root mean square deviation, $\theta_{\scriptscriptstyle mk}$ which, for unbiased estimators is equivalent to the standard error:

$$
\hat{\theta}_{mk} = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{l=1}^{s} (\Phi_{mlk} - f_{mlk})^2}{s}} \bigg|_{m=1}^{y} \bigg|_{k=1}^{primary_stds}
$$

This formulation is valid for primary standards where $\,f_{\mathrm{\it mlk}}\,$ is defined, and provides an uncertainty estimate for each sample based on the goodness-of-fit between the final smoothed and interpolated fractionation correction surface and the values which perfectly transformed the observed ratio to the expected (Fig. 4-2). In a similar manner to that employed for Φ*mlk* values, the discrete values for primary standards are mapped into a continuous time-series, smoothed with a 9-term Henderson filter, and values for intervening 'unknown' samples are interpolated with a 1-D cubic spline. Total relative internal uncertainty, $\delta_{\scriptscriptstyle mlk}^{}$ is calculated by adding in quadrature the fractionation correction uncertainty of each sample to each integration's ratio uncertainty from Poisson counting statistics:

$$
\delta_{mlk} = \sqrt{\left(\frac{E_{mlk}^R}{R_{mlk}^{obs}}\right)^2 + \left(\frac{\hat{\theta}_{mk}}{\Phi_{mlk}}\right)^2}\Bigg|_{m=1}^v \Bigg|_{l=1}^s \Bigg|_{k=1}^r
$$

Sample-standard bracketing and the use of moving averages introduce correlated uncertainty, which if unaccounted for can produce spurious underestimation of weighted mean uncertainties (Mclean et al, 2011). For continuously-pulsed laser ablation methods which typically do not treat correlated uncertainty, new data reduction protocols have been developed that minimize this effect and are available at www.plasmage.org. The method presented here fundamentally differs from typical data reduction packages and intrinsically captures and propagates much of this uncertainty correlation by employing multiple time-series smoothing and interpolation methods and distributing the goodness-of-fit uncertainty function to unknown samples. In effect, locations where RMs have large uncertainties from counting statistics or excessive variance in correction factors at the sample level, those large uncertainties are propagated to the nearby unknowns over a reasonable length window in the smoothing process. However, as
our understanding of the underlying processes which govern data point variation during laser ablation analyses improves, refined uncertainty models can be incorporated into existing data reduction packages.

For most zircons in this study, the internal uncertainty budget is dominated by correction factor uncertainty with the remainder from ion counting statistics (Fig. 4-2C). For low concentration (\leq 20 ppm 238 U) or young (Miocene) samples, isotope counting statistics can play a sub-equal role in the total uncertainty (Table 4-4). Final ages are calculated using the decay constants of Jaffey et al (1971) and the corrected Ψ_{mlk} isotope ratios. External age uncertainties propagate the uncertainty of the reference zircon, decay constants, and uncertainties from common Pb corrections when applied, typically resulting in an additional ~0.2-0.4% 2σ. This amount is propagated in quadrature with internal uncertainties and provided as a separate estimate.

At the sample level we calculate a weighted mean age using each sample's 15 integrations weighted by their inverse-square uncertainty, and a sample-level Reduced *χ*2 statistic (MSWD value). The Reduced χ^2 assesses the degree that observed scatter about the weighted mean is consistent with the ascribed uncertainty of individual data; sample-level values near unity indicate that the majority of 1σ uncertainty envelopes for each integration overlap the weighted mean of that sample. The average for all samples in our round-robin session is 1.2, indicating to a first order that individual integration uncertainties are adequately estimated by our uncertainty model. The ability to assess this metric for each of our samples provides a built-in check that correlated error is being adequately propagated, and is a unique feature of this discrete depth-profiling method. However, session-level Reduced *χ*2 for each sample type (15 samples) averages 7.5 and indicates that the typical standard error formulation for weighted means is significantly underestimated (Table 4-4). Although the exact cause of this underestimation is unclear at the present time, it is a common observation (Gehrels et al, 2008; Patton et al., 2010) and may be due to unaccounted uncertainty correlation in the typical standard error calculation (Mclean et al, 2011). Therefore, we employ a method similar to Patton et al (2010) and apply an additional uncertainty, added in quadrature to the standard error calculation that captures and propagates correlated uncertainty from the integration-level to the sample-level. We calculate this additional uncertainty by iteratively adding uncertainty to our primary RM

Weighted session-level mean $\pm 2\sigma$	Original session- level MSWD	Added sample-level error $(^{0}/_{0}1$ $\sigma)$	Amended MSWD	level error (%26) Average sample-	Average sample- level MSWD	integration-level error $(^{0}\!/_{0}2\sigma)$ Average	accepted value at 20 % integration overlap with	with accepted value % samples overlap at 2σ
$535.8 \pm 0.45\%$ $1155.6 \pm 1.63\%$ $1137.5 \pm 0.96\%$ 539.1 $\pm 0.61\%$ $528.6 \pm 1.10\%$ $333.4 \pm 1.96\%$ $564.3 \pm 0.91\%$ $18.2 \pm 1.88\%$ $585.6 \pm 0.98\%$	2.00 17.88 5.36 2.06 8.35 36.11 4.95 1.20 1.65	1.02 1.02 1.02 1.02 1.02 $1.02\,$ 1.02 $1.02\,$ $1.02\,$	0.26 2.96 0.98 0.39 1.39 4.19/2.84 0.80 0.66 0.58	2.44 2.49 2.79 2.55 2.49 2.60 2.51 7.54 3.50	0.68 0.72 1.43 0.86 0.82 $1.01\,$ 0.89 3.38 1.76	6.01 6.12 5.94 6.22 5.87 6.00 5.82 13.61 7.98	91.9 74.8 66.7 94.8 90.5 81.4 93.8 79.0 86.7	100.0 100.0 73.3 86.7 100.0 100.0 $80.0\,$ 100.0 93.3 100.0 100.0
$563.2 \pm 0.31\%$ $537.3 \pm 0.53\%$ $1173.7 \pm 1.23\%$ $1123.2 \pm 0.56\%$ $542.8 \pm 0.72\%$ $530.7 \pm 1.06\%$ $342.6 \pm 1.02\%$ $567.5 \pm 0.83\%$ $18.1 \pm 10.21\%$ $585.9 \pm 1.46\%$ 753.5 ±4.96%	2.32 2.54 19.89 3.34 1.67 9.35 2.85 4.50 2.36 1.37 3.33	0.65 0.65 0.65 0.65 0.65 0.65 0.65 0.65 0.65 0.65 0.65	1.00 0.56 3.71 0.67 0.61 2.28 0.59 1.27 2.06 0.86 2.82	1.79 1.93 1.79 1.89 2.57 1.90 2.60 2.00 39.56 5.20 15.61	0.18 0.20 0.09 0.26 0.27 0.32 0.50 0.32 1.24 8.19 0.47	9.45 10.74 14.57 9.79 14.84 8.09 11.05 8.91 38.83 36.72 77.55	100.0 93.3 95.7 99.5 100.0 98.6 98.6 99.5 54.3 100.0 98.6	93.9 93.3 53.3 46.7 92.9 66.7 66.7 $80.0\,$ 53.3 100.0 73.3
$558.6 \pm 0.63\%$ $520.9 \pm 0.93\%$ $1138.7 \pm 2.04\%$ $1109.1 \pm 1.76\%$ $527.0 \pm 0.92\%$ $528.9 \pm 1.11\%$ $333.4 \pm 2.95\%$ 560.6 ±0.97% $18.1 \pm 3.99\%$ $566.0 \pm 1.53\%$ $698.9 \pm 6.23\%$	2.95 2.76 15.40 8.07 3.58 4.98 7.47 4.29 3.08 1.30 2.53	1.45 1.45 1.45 1.45 1.45 1.45 1.45 1.45 1.45 1.45 1.45	1.00 0.50 2.39 1.61 0.55 0.79 0.81 0.59 1.75 0.50 1.98	3.73 3.62 3.63 3.95 3.45 3.44 5.07 3.51 10.45 6.24 17.55	0.40 0.40 0.45 0.63 0.31 0.32 0.97 0.34 $1.80\,$ 3.03 4.21	10.64 10.37 10.35 9.85 10.37 9.99 13.63 10.35 18.86 14.86 27.71	97.6 85.2 85.2 88.6 93.8 98.6 85.2 95.7 73.8 84.3 66.7	90.9 100.0 40.0 80.0 100.0 86.7 $80.0\,$ 93.3 86.7 93.3 80.0
207Pb/206Pb system								
$556.7 \pm 0.99\%$ 528.8 ±1.84% $1203.4 \pm 0.78\%$ $1100.7 \pm 0.71\%$ $531.3 \pm 4.78\%$ $530.9 \pm 2.43\%$ $340.3 \pm 9.53\%$ 575.8 ±1.94% NA 408.1 ±19.25%	0.97 0.84 1.41 1.52 2.72 2.92 6.37 1.61 NA NA	$0.00\,$ 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 NА NА	0.97 0.84 1.41 1.52 2.72 2.92 6.37 1.61 NA NА	5.54 7.80 2.84 2.36 12.20 5.51 16.00 5.53 NA NA	9.44 17.23 2.06 1.75 28.54 10.24 54.01 10.15 NA NА	6.53 6.86 6.71 6.11 8.06 6.21 7.54 6.35 NA NA	49.4 39.5 82.9 86.7 34.3 46.2 15.7 46.2 NA NA	100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 93.3 93.3 100.0 NA NА NA
	$206Pb/238U$ system $562.9 \pm 0.42\%$ 729.7 ±2.38% 207Pb/235U system 208Pb/232U system NA.	4.90 2.67 NA	1.02 1.02 NA	1.00 1.30 NА	2.35 5.94 NА	0.54 2.65 NA	5.85 12.59 NA	98.9 74.8 NA

Table 4-4. Average session-level ages, uncertainties, and metrics for each zircon type and isotopic system.

sample-level means until the session-level Reduced χ^2 value becomes unity; this resulted in an additional 1.02% 1σ uncertainty for sample-level means (Table 4-4). Reduced *χ*2 values for each sample type after application of the additional uncertainty are near unity and result in mean 2σ uncertainties of ~2.5% for each weighted sample mean.

RESULTS

ACCURACY AND PRECISION OF U-PB AGES

We conducted a round-robin analysis of 10 zircon types selected to cover a wide range of ages (\sim 18 Ma to \sim 1200 Ma) and uranium concentrations (\sim 10 ppm to >1500 ppm) (Table 4-2). Each zircon type was analyzed 15 times throughout the session, and the primary RM was analyzed prior to every 5 'unknowns'. Each sample-level analysis contains a 15-age depth profile as the laser ablates successively deeper layers of the zircon grain. In total, 225 individual ages were collected for each 'unknown' zircon type and 495 ages for our RM. Combining all 225 integrations for each zircon type and calculating ages using Isoplot (Ludwig, 2003) results in better than 2% precision and accuracy for zircons with known ages (Fig. 4-4) and have Reduced *χ*2 values significantly less than unity. Discordance is generally absent throughout our samples, however, three anomalously young Plesovice samples are clearly discordant (colored black on Fig. 4-4), and 1-2 samples in both VP-10 and AS-3 are also discordant. The Mud Tank samples appear generally concordant, but due to very low concentration of radiogenic nuclides Isoplot was unable to generate an age from these data. Two samples of the Unknown-1 zircon account for all of the observed discordance and suggest possible inheritance.

At the integration level, ²⁰⁶Pb/²³⁸U ages nearly all overlap with their respective weighted mean at 1σ confidence and for Phanerozoic-age samples, also overlap with the accepted age (Fig. 4-5). It is noteworthy that the first integration of each analysis is typically aberrant in age, falling outside of both sample and session variance. Because most samples are shards of zircons and not whole grains, it is unlikely this observation is due to chemical diffusion as we drill through outer to inner zones, but instead, is most likely caused by early-stage ablation processes or surface contamination; therefore, ages from the first integration are excluded from sample means and Reduced *χ*2 statistics. The calculated internal uncertainty for each integration-level ²⁰⁶Pb/²³⁸U age is typically ~6% 2σ (Fig. 4-5; Table 4-4) but increases when analyzing low-concentration and/or young grains; individual integration uncertainties for the

Figure 4-4. Concordia plots for all integrations of each sample type. Grains which displayed entirely discordant ages are in black. Uncertainty ellipses depict 1σ confidence limit.

Figure 4-5. Whisker plots of 206Pb /238U age for each sample type. Shaded outline represents individual integration ages at 1σ uncertainty and dashed vertical lines are the first integration of each sample. Sample weighted means (thick horizontal lines) and 1σ uncertainty (shaded box) do not include the first integration of each sample. The dashed black line through the entire session represents the session weighted mean of all samples and its value is indicated in bold with 2σ uncertainty. Note that two samples of our primary reference zircon do not overlap the session mean at 2σ ; this is discussed in the text. Reduced χ^2 values for each sample shown across top axis do not include the first integration; session-level Reduced *χ*2 using weighted sample means in lower right. G1...G2...G3 on SLM refer to the grain ablated for that sample and correspond to Raman spectra labels in Figure 4-7. Y-axis scales are constructed such that major divisions are 2% widths of the known age which is indicated in italics. Because no reference ages were previously determined for the WildFish zircons, these plots do not have this feature.

Figure 4-5, continued. See previous page for full caption.

Miocene-age Unknown-1 zircon and the <30 ppm uranium Mud Tank and WF1 zircons are ~8-12%. Integration-level uncertainties for the 207Pb/206Pb system vary but are typically ~5-7% 2σ for Proterozoic samples, and 6-8% for Phanerozoic samples depending on radiogenic nuclide concentrations. Average ages and uncertainties for each zircon type and isotopic system are shown in Table 4-4.

The primary reference zircon is included in Figure 4-5 because the ability to accurately and precisely reproduce ages at the integration and sample level for these zircons provides a bounding limit to the accuracy and precision of unknowns. Excluding the first integration of each sample results in an average Reduced *χ*2 value for each sample of 0.54 indicating this method

may actually overestimate the uncertainty at this level. Aside from two samples (18 and 27) that do not overlap the session-level mean at 2σ, sample-level weighted mean ages overlap the accepted age of the standard within 1σ uncertainty. Including these two outlier samples, all individual integration-level ages overlap the accepted value of the reference material at the 2σ level, and 85% at the 1σ level. Although this level of agreement is expected from the RM, it still provides a first-order check that the data reduction method is capable of reproducing meaningful ages. The two aberrant samples were not discarded in this analysis, but a 2σ-outlier removal protocol can be employed by the software.

Average internal uncertainties for each 206Pb/238U weighted sample mean (14 integrations) are thus about 2.5% 2σ, except for the Miocene-age sample (~7.5%), Mud Tank (~6%), and WF1 (~3.5%). Aside from Plesovice and VP-10, all weighted sample means overlap with accepted values at the 2σ level, and many within 1σ. Our method of assigning additional correlated uncertainty to the weighted sample means is validated by session-level Reduced *χ*2 values near or below unity for each sample type (Fig. 4-5). Two exceptions to this are Plesovice and VP-10, both of which have noticeable discordant grains or zones. For Plesovice the Reduced χ^2 value drops from 4.19 to 2.83 if the three discordant grains (PLES-11, -14, and -15) are excluded from analysis; the still-large Reduced χ^2 value is puzzling but might reflect the presence of two age populations. Overall, the precision and accuracy of individual sample ages using this method is near the low side of standard laser ablation protocols (~1-3%; Kosler et al., 2002; Gehrels et al., 2008, Frei and Gerdes, 2009) or single-pulse/multi-collector methods (e.g. Cottle et al., 2012) but with the added benefit of capturing discrete depth-resolved ages at the sub-sample level.

SURFACE METRICS

DATA REDUCTION

Typical 193nm excimer laser ablation pits display a 'top-hat' profile with steep pit walls and flat pit bottoms. However, because surface metrics are obtained with the epoxy disc resting on its bottom face whereas ablation occurs with the top face horizontal, surface tilt is introduced. To correct this tilt and calculate pit depths and volumes, a custom code was written in LabView. Unlike an SEM, vertical-scanning interferometers have difficulty measuring steeply-dipping features which results in data for the upper surface and the pit bottom but not always the intervening pit walls (Fig. 4-6a). All of the 183 imaged ablation pits displayed a narrow rim of

concavity near the outside edge indicating an abrupt change in slope from the flat bottom to steep walls. We therefore measure the average pit bottom depth in a \sim 300 μ m² area near the center and exclude the narrow rim of steeper topography around the edges. Total volumes for each ablation pit are calculated using the radius of the surface aperture (R), the radius of the pit bottom to the edge of flat topography (r), and the depth of the sample (d) (Fig. 4-6d).

The uncertainty of our depth measurements is calculated using the typical standard error formulation with N=number of observations (pixels) in the \sim 300 μ m² area that we average for the pit depth. This formulation results in 2σ uncertainties of ~4-6nm (<0.1%) which seems reasonable for relatively flat-bottom pits of equal elevation and sub-nm vertical precision of the instrument. Uncertainty for volume calculations must include the uncertainty in defining the

Figure 4-6. A) Depths measured by interferometry for 8 zircon grains to determine linearity of ablation rate with depth. Data were collected using the same instrument parameters in Table 4-1, with the exception of laser fluence set at 5.1 Jcm⁻², resulting in pits which are slightly deeper than those of the round robin analysis. Shaded relief plots of ablation pits document the evolution of pit morphology and the increasing difficulty of the interferometer to measure the steeply-dipping pit walls. Regression statistics for the depth data are found in Table 4-5. B) Volume data also show a relatively linear relationship but are more scattered. This may be due to the greater sensitivity of volume to the aspect ratio of the ablation pit. C) Misfit is calculated as the absolute value of the per-cycle misfit normalized to the predicted depth and suggests that some, but not all, grains appear to have early-stage non linearity followed by relatively linear ablation rate that is reasonably characterized by the long term average. D) Model depicting the idealized geometry and variables used to calculate total ablation volumes. Because the area of the pit bottom is less than the area of the top, volumes decrease as a function of ablated depth.

edges of the surface aperture and the exact size of the pit bottom. Based on our experience measuring these parameters, we assign a nominal uncertainty of ± 2 pixels (0.448 μ m) in both the top and bottom radii. With these values, our uncertainty budget for volume calculations is clearly dominated by the uncertainty in radii, yet still yields an average 2σ uncertainty of ~15% for each sample. Individual integration volume uncertainties vary as a result of their changing surface areas but range between ~12 and 18%.

LINEARITY OF ABLATION DEPTH WITH TIME

In order to characterize the functional form of ablation depth with time, we ablated and measured successively deeper pits from 1 burst of 5 pulses (one integration) to 15 bursts of 5 pulses (15 integrations) on eight different zircon grains. These data are shown on Figure 4-6 and indicate generally linear relationships between depth, volume, and number of integrations, with fit coefficients (R^2) for ordinary least squares regression all >0.98. Because these data are an autocorrelated time-series, a generalized least squares regression of each sample type is used to evaluate the probability that the y-intercept is non-zero, a result which may indicate non-linear behavior (statistical measures are located in the Supplementary Material). All of the regressions yield statistically significant non-zero intercepts (p values <0.001), but the removal of the first integration from the analysis results in 3 of the 5 regressions being indistinguishable from zero (p values >0.3). These results suggest that some amount of non-linear behavior occurs in the first 1-2 bursts. An analysis of the residual between the observed depth and that predicted by a simple average of the 15-integration total (Fig. 4-6c) supports an interpretation of slight non-linearity during the first few bursts. Overall, however, these data show that calculating an ablation rate from the final depth is a reasonable approximation unless additional data are acquired to improve the fit (such as depth measurement between each laser burst). For some, but not all samples, this will slightly underestimate the 'true' depth of the first integration by up to ~35%, and by less than ~20% for the subsequent 1-2 integrations; integrations from 2-15 are generally <10% different than predicted.

SAMPLE DEPTHS AND VOLUMES

Average depth after 15 integrations for all samples is 8.3 μ m (2 SD = 1.6 μ m) and average volume is 7770 μ m³ (2 SD = 1636 μ m³), but these values vary significantly by sample type such that samples with higher concentrations of radionuclides are generally deeper. This correlation

Sample	$depth + 2SD$ Average	per integration depth Average	$\pm 2SD$ Average volume	Average 238U $\pm 2\sigma$ (ppm)	238 _U $\pm 2\sigma$ Range (ppm)	232Th $\pm 2\sigma$ Average (ppm)	(ppm) 5	age $(U-Th)/He$	alpha dose $\pm 2\sigma$ Average (a/g)
WF1	7.26 ± 0.63	~10.48	$7697 + 838$	$35 + 5$	24-54	$23 + 4$	41 ± 6	~1440~2	$6.1E+16 \pm 15.5\%$
UNK-1	7.52 ± 0.29	~10.50	7233 ± 638	$242 + 57$	71-449	$367 + 117$	$329 + 83$	18.2	$2.0E+16 \pm 24.8\%$
Mud Tank	7.59 ± 0.96	~10.51	7004 ± 657	8 ± 1	$6-10$	4 ± 1	9±1	-3003	$8.9E+15 \pm 10.0\%$
WF ₂	7.85 ± 0.77	~10.52	7916 ±774	1350 ± 37	1230-1476	$707 + 19$	1516 ± 41	~1440~2	$2.3E+18 \pm 2.7\%$
M146	8.11 ± 0.48	~10.54	7981 ± 566	894 ± 34	806-993	364 ± 14	$980 + 37$	443 ± 20 ¹	$1.5E+18 \pm 3.8\%$
Plesovice	8.2 ± 0.75	~10.55	7645 ± 535	573 ± 60	371-837	52 ± 8	586 ± 62	Unk.	NA
WF10	8.39 ± 0.27	~10.56	7509 ± 704	245 ± 8	220-271	224 ± 8	298 ± 10	~1440~2	$4.4E+17 \pm 3.3\%$
VP10	8.64 ± 0.57	~10.58	7424 ± 2438	$352 + 143$	66-1086	$225 + 87$	405 ± 163	Unk.	NA
WF ₆	8.92 ± 0.18	~10.59	$8271 + 837$	$504 + 23$	410-563	166 ± 7	$543 + 24$	~1440~2	$8.1E+17 \pm 4.5\%$
SLM	8.95 ± 0.73	~10.60	8402 ± 1403	$729 + 70$	444-908	$138 + 14$	761 ± 73	~1440~2	$1.1E+18 \pm 9.6\%$
AS3	9.4 ± 1.56	~10.62	9296 ± 2321	$719 + 241$	310-1413	$428 + 138$	$819 + 273$	\sim 900 4	$2.8E+18 \pm 33.4\%$

Table 4-5. Depth, volume, concentrations, and thermochronometric ages and metrics for each sample type.

1 (U-The)/He age for M146 is average of four individual dates from Nasdala et al. (2004).

2 Other Sri Lanka zircons were assigned a representative date consistent with the compilation of Sri Lanka (U-Th)/ He ages in Nasdala et al. (2004).

3 (U-Th)/He age estimated from biotite Rb/Sr and apatite fission track data reported in Green et al. (2006).

4 Cooling through ~175° C at ~900 Ma is estimated from forward modeled date-eU correlations in Guenthner et al. (2013) .

is discussed in greater detail below. Assuming relatively constant rates of ablation, the average depth per integration is ~ 0.55 µm using a nominal 34 µm spot size and 4 Jcm⁻² laser fluence (Table 4-5). Average volume of ablated material per integration changes systematically with depth as a function of the different surface area of the pit opening and the pit bottom (Fig. 4-6d). The average ratio of top radius to bottom radius is 1.5:1 (pit walls of \sim 50 $^{\circ}$ for average depth) equating to \sim 735 μ m³ for the first integration and \sim 340 μ m³ for the last integration. This change in volume results in a systematic decrease from \sim 3.4 to \sim 1.5 ng of zircon per integration from top to bottom (4.65 g/cm³ density), and an average of \sim 36 ng of ablated zircon per sample.

EFFECTIVE URANIUM AND ALPHA DOSE

We calculate an approximate 238 U concentration for each sample by dividing total measured isotope counts by the calculated volume and scale this relative concentration using a value of 750 ppm for our average SLM zircon data (M.Grove, Stanford University, written commun., 2012); ²³²Th concentration is calculated using the measured ²³²Th/²³⁸U ratio. Effective uranium (eU) is calculated as [U] + 0.235[Th] which weights each isotope for its overall contribution to 4 He production. Average values of $[U]$, $[Th]$, and eU are shown in Table 4-5 and in general there is good agreement between our calculated values and accepted values.

The depth measurements collected in this study indicate that depth does not vary uniformly amongst all analyses but instead carries a strong dependence on eU (Fig. 4-7). The reason for this is not entirely clear, but recent work has also shown that artificial annealing of radiation-damaged zircons reduces age dispersion in the U-Pb system (Allen and Campbell, 2012). Radiogenic 4He that accumulates when zircon or apatite are below their closure temperatures as the result of parent nuclide decay (alpha dosage) is one proxy for accumulated radiation damage and has been shown to have complicated effects on the crystal lattice of these minerals (Meldrum et al., 1998; Nasdala et al., 2004; Shuster et al., 2006; Guenthner et al., 2013). Thus, in order to evaluate how radiation damage may affect ablation depth, alpha dosage is calculated for each sample.

$$
\alpha / g = \frac{8(C_{238})(e^{\lambda_{238}t}-1)+7(C_{235})(e^{\lambda_{235}t}-1)+6(C_{232})(e^{\lambda_{232}t}-1)}{V_z \times \rho_z}
$$

Where (1.55136*10-10yr-1), (9.8485*10-10 yr-1), (4.9475*10-11 yr-1), C_x are the parent nuclide contents in total atoms, t is thermochronologic age when the sample passed through the zircon closure temperature (~175-220° C; Reiners, 2005), V_z is the volume of the zircon, and ρ_z is the density of zircon (assumed to be 4.65 g/cm3). Values of t are known or reasonably estimated for all of the samples but VP-10 and Plesovice and are found in Table 4-5. In short, because of the varying effects of eU on measured zircon (U-Th)/He dates for a population of grains that have all experienced the same thermal history (Guenthner et al., 2013), we choose to use the 'average' thermochronologic age (~440 Ma; Nasdala et al., 2004) for all of the Sri Lankan zircons used in this study instead of measuring individual (U-Th)/He ages. Individual ages for these grains would vary substantially because of their radically different radionuclide concentrations and would be unrepresentative of experiencing a similar thermal history. Despite these drawbacks, each sample type occupies a relatively narrow range of depth-dosage space (Fig. 4-7) and as

Figure 4-7. A) Raman spectra for all analyzed grains of each zircon type. Vertical long dash is the crystalline 1007 cm-1 peak and vertical and horizontal short dash lines are each sample's primary peak and Full-Width Half-Max (FWHM), respectively. For SLM, grains G1 and G2 have similar spectra and correction factors but differ from G3 in both of these measures. B) Effective Uranium (eU) for each sample as a function of ablation depth. Note the positive correlation in the population and within many zircon types. C) Approximate alpha dosage as a function of ablation depth. Although data are scattered, there appears to be a marked break in slope near a dosage of \sim 10¹⁸ α/g and may correspond to changes in damage accommodation and annealing observed at these dosage levels by others (Guenthner et al., 2013). D) Range of Raman spectra peak shifts for each ablated grain (increasing lattice distortion from top to bottom). The range of depth values result from multiple ablation pits on a particular grain.

an entire population have a Spearman rank correlation of 0.62 (p<0.001) indicating a relatively high degree of correlation between total ablation depth and production of 4He.

RAMAN SPECTROSCOPY

Increasing amounts of crystal lattice disorganization in zircon occur when the grain can no longer anneal and results in a systematic shift and broadening of the diagnostic Raman spectra peak related to the $v_3 Zr-SiO_4$ stretching bond (Nasdala et al, 2004; Guenthner et al, 2013). Therefore, to further characterize the relationship between radiation damage and ablation depth representative Raman spectra were collected for each ablation pit over between 900 and 1200 cm-1. Spectra within each zircon type (Fig. 4-7) are relatively similar and indicate consistent levels of crystallinity with a primary peak between 995 and 1007 cm-1 and a variable but broader secondary peak near 970 cm⁻¹. Two exceptions are the reference zircon, SLM, and Plesovice, which each appear to display a range of primary peak Raman shifts. Between zircon types, however, there are systematic variations in primary peak Raman shift and peak width that correlate with increasing alpha dosage as expected from previous results. Zircons with low alpha-doses display sharp and narrow peaks centered at 1007 cm-1 and those with the highest relative alpha-doses have broad peaks near 995-997 cm-1, or in the case of the most extreme alpha-dosage AS-3 samples, no discernible peaks at all. These results are similar to other studies which more clearly link radiation damage and alpha dose to systematic changes in crystallinity (Meldrum et al., 1998; Nasdala et al., 2004; Guenthner et al., 2013). However, our data also show that ablation depth is correlated with both changes in Raman spectra and alpha dose, (Fig. 4-7), although the causal relationship is unclear at the present time and is the focus of current inquiry.

DISCUSSION

ANOMALOUS INITIAL ANALYSES

Similar to many laser ablation studies, our data indicate that early-stage isotopic ratios are anomalous even after fractionation correction (Fig. 4-5) which leads most workers to discard the first several seconds of on-peak data (Gehrels et al., 2008; Frei and Gerdes, 2009; Patton et al., 2010). At typical laser repetition rates, removal of five seconds of analysis time eliminates between 25-50 laser pulses which is as much as 2/3 of each sample's integrations. This work confirms the work of Cottle and coworkers (2012) that only the first several laser pulses (<5) generally yield anomalous data and should be excluded. However, in a typical constant-rate analysis, signal convolution makes eliminating just this small fraction nearly impossible. Methods which either raster the sample area prior to analysis (e.g. Chew et al., 2011) or apply several 'pre-ablation' laser pulses to each site appear to reduce this problem (e.g. Cottle et al., 2009a). The trade-off between material lost for a 'pre-ablation' cleansing pass versus simply discarding the first integration should be systematically evaluated if maximum depth resolution is required.

Several potential hypotheses could explain anomalous early integration isotopic ratios: 1) surface contamination; 2) differential ingrowth of isotopic signals, or; 3) initial laser ablation processes. Our discretized method explicitly treats ingrowth and decay of transient signals by calculating ratios based on total counts and effectively eliminates the highly variable isotopic ratios that occur as a result of aliasing. Most workers, ourselves included, carefully wash and prepare epoxy resin discs prior to analysis, thus making surface contamination unlikely, but not improbable. Furthermore, surfaces contaminated with common Pb in great enough abundance to significantly affect isotopic ratios would consistently produce ages too old, a feature that our data do not corroborate. Consequently, we favor the idea that initial ablation processes are responsible for anomalous behavior during the first few laser pulses of each analysis, perhaps related to scattering of incident photons off the polished surface. Other studies have correlated unstable laser energy with these early periods of anomalous ratios (Cottle et al., 2012), but the laser used in this study contains a fluence monitor feedback loop that samples a portion of each laser pulse and adjusts energy levels accordingly, so this explanation seems less likely but cannot be ruled out.

FACTORS AFFECTING PRECISION AND ACCURACY

These results demonstrate the ability of this method to determine U-Pb ages from ~1.5-3.4 ng of ablated zircon with an average depth resolution of ~0.55 µm and 2σ uncertainties of ~6% for the ²⁰⁶Pb/²³⁸U system. Although we must ablate more zircon than single-pulse methods designed for multi-collector instruments (e.g. Cottle et al., 2009a; 2012), final precision and accuracy is comparable at the sample-level and depth resolution could be enhanced by increasing spot size and decreasing pulses/integration to maintain adequate ion signal. The predominant source of age dispersion in this method arises from fractionation correction and thus, the two main factors that influence the precision and accuracy of our analyses are the homogeneity of the reference zircon and the applicability of correction factors derived from that reference to unknown samples. Fundamentally, the accuracy and precision for unknown samples cannot supersede the ability to reproduce accurate and precise ages for the reference zircon and these characteristics bear directly on its homogeneity.

A close inspection of Figure 4-3 shows that Φ*mlk* varies substantially between analyses of our reference zircon (as much as ~8% for the first and second integrations). To a first order, this high-frequency session variation results from systematically analyzing three different grains of SLM (G1, G2, G3 in Figs. 4-5 and 4-7). Two of the grains G1 and G2 have similar correction factors and similar Raman spectra, whereas G3 consistently has slightly different correction factors and noticeably less shifted Raman peaks (Fig. 4-7). The smoothing of these variations in the interpolation process results in values which adequately correct the 'average' reference zircon, but still show some residual high-frequency variation in age (Fig. 4-5) and may contribute to the over-dispersion of data about the known age which must be subsequently corrected for. This heterogeneity in reference behavior would have presented a serious challenge (or been misinterpreted as long-term instrumental drift) had the different grains not been relatively scattered throughout the analysis session and highlights the need for consistency in reference zircon behavior.

The second factor that controls the precision and accuracy of our method is the applicability of correction factors from a reference zircon to unknown samples. For example, age discrepancies between samples analyzed by laser ablation and those analyzed by ID-TIMS are commonly observed (e.g. Gehrels et al, 2008) but can be significantly, although not entirely, reduced by thermal annealing of zircons prior to ablation (Allen and Campbell, 2012). Similar matrix effects, correlated to high levels of uranium (and thus radiation damage), are also observed during SIMS analysis (White and Ireland, 2012). Our depth data, alpha-dosage, and Raman spectroscopy indicate that ablation depth generally increases with crystal lattice disorganization and provides a simple explanation for observed age biases, ie, if the pit depth of an 'unknown' sample is significantly deeper or shallower than the pits of the reference zircon, the reference-derived fractionation correction values may be a poor match for the unknown. This phenomenon would only be noticeable when a mismatch occurs between the damage profile of reference zircons and samples of known age. Thus, if primary and secondary standards share a similar damage

profile the derived correction factors may appear to perform adequately, but for 'unknowns' with substantially different damage profiles ages may be over-dispersed, inaccurate, or have unrealistically low uncertainty estimates.

For our samples with known ages, M146 is the most reproducible sample and has nearly identical Raman spectra, relative alpha-dosage, and ablation depth to our reference zircon. However, Mud Tank, Plesovice, VP10, and AS-3 all differ significantly in two or more of these three variables and all have greater dispersion of integration-level ²⁰⁶Pb/²³⁸U ages, or have mean sample ages different than accepted values (Figs. 4-5 and 4-7). Although no ID-TIMS data yet exist for the Wild Fish zircons, WF6 is very similar in character to the reference zircon and has the lowest session-level Reduced χ^2 , suggesting that the derived correction factors are well matched for this sample. In contrast, WF1 is most similar in character to Mud Tank and displays similarly high magnitude integration-level age dispersion. These results seem to indicate a strong correlation between the accuracy and precision of ages and the degree of similarity in ablation depth/crystal lattice disorganization between sample types and the reference zircon. An alternative explanation is that increased discoloration resulting from high levels of parent radionuclides causes greater coupling of the laser to the zircon and leads to higher ablation efficiencies. However, because it is radiation-damage induced crystal lattice defects which create discoloration in zircon, and we cannot at present discern between these two processes, it is largely irrelevant which is ultimately responsible for the correlation with ablation depth. Overall, it is clear that parent nuclide concentration plays a fundamental role in determining laser ablation efficiency and consequently may ultimately control the accuracy and precision of any laser ablation method.

Several method improvements could potentially alleviate or lessen these age biases: 1) anneal both unknown and reference zircons in an attempt to ensure similar damage profiles and ablation characteristics (e.g. Allen and Campbell, 2012); 2) use multiple reference zircons with variable damage profiles and ablation characteristics and match these characteristics to unknowns, or; 3) use one reference zircon of a known damage level and scale the correction factors to match the damage profile of 'unknown' samples. The annealing method is by far the easiest to employ and has clearly demonstrated reductions in age bias (Allen and Campbell, 2012). However, double-dating methods (U-Pb and (U-Th)/He) typically first obtain a U-Pb

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age before 4He-extraction (Reiners et al., 2005) and would clearly have to be modified since the annealing process (\sim 850° C for 48 hours) would undoubtedly release most, if not all ⁴He from the grain. Both the first and second methods require independent knowledge of the level of crystal lattice disorganization, either by using Raman spectroscopy, or measuring ablation pit depths and alpha-dosage. For samples in a double-dating application, the effective alpha dosage can be accurately determined in conjunction with the (U-Th)/He age, but further work is needed to robustly assess these last two methods. Clearly, a fourth alternative is to accept the precision and accuracy limitations of current methods and is a reasonable option where utmost age resolution is not required.

CONCLUSION

A discrete multi-pulse depth-profiling method for single-collector ICP-MS laser ablation systems is presented that is applicable to any arbitrary geochemical system that seeks to interrogate isotopic variation as a function of sample depth. This study uses U-Pb analysis of zircon as a case study and resolves ages at the integration-level \sim 0.55 μ m depth resolution and ~6% 2σ age uncertainty) using five laser pulses and calculating ratios from total integrated counts. The total count approach provides better stability and accuracy than cycle-by-cycle ratios, especially when signal transience is high. At the sample-level (15 integrations) depths are 7-10 µm and average 2 σ uncertainty is ~2.5% for ²⁰⁶Pb/²³⁸U ages. Fractionation correction is achieved through iterative smoothing and interpolation of a continuous-function, non-parametric 3D surface from which discrete values for any time and sample depth can be calculated. This method offers a high degree of flexibility and is validated by Reduced *χ*2 values near unity for both sample- and session-level weighted mean ages.

We identify several previously unrecognized factors which appear to contribute to the accuracy and precision of laser ablation U-Pb zircon ages by combining surface topography of ablation pits, Raman spectroscopy, and metrics of radiation damage. High positive correlation exists between measures of radiation damage (alpha dosage), crystal lattice distortion (shifted and broadened v_3 Zr-SiO₄ spectra peaks) and ablation pit depths. We interpret these results to indicate that ablation efficiency is controlled by the accumulation of radiation damage in the zircon crystal lattice. Consequently, significant damage variation within a reference zircon can potentially translate to excessive variance in fractionation-correction values and will decrease

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accuracy and precision. Additionally, fractionation-correction values derived from a reference material will either over- or under-correct intervening 'unknown' samples if their damage profiles are significantly different. This second issue is undetectable if primary and secondary reference materials have similar damage profiles, yet contributes significantly to age dispersion.

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SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL FOR CHAPTER 4

STATISTICAL MEASURES OF ABLATION RATE

Eight ablation rate experiments were conducted on four different types of zircon grains. For each experiment an increasing number of bursts of five laser pulses (up to 15) were delivered to the grain in a sequential order. The 15 ablation pits for each experiment were then measured by vertical scanning interferometry. Ordinary and generalized least squares regression analysis were performed on the combined depth data from two experiments on WF1, WF6, and WF10; WF2 was treated as two distinct regressions due to significantly different behavior for each of the experiments. The results are summarized below. A second analysis was performed in which the depth of the first integration was subtracted from all subsequent data points for each experiment and the number of bursts was reduced by 1. A regression of this modified data set helps to determine whether linear behavior occurs after the first integration regardless of its (potentially non linear) behavior. Four data points were removed from WF10 (first four of second experiment) because the laser energy was observed to be highly variable during these analyses and resulted in abnormal depths. For all other analyses the laser energy was stabilized at 4 ± 0.1 J cm⁻².

ORDINARY LEAST-SQUARES REGRESSION

WF1

WF2B

Coefficients:

Multiple R-squared: 0.9988, Adjusted R-squared: 0.9988 F-statistic: 2.285e+04 on 1 and 27 DF, p-value: < 2.2e-16

WF10

Coefficients:

GENERALIZED LEAST-SQUARES REGRESSION

WF1

WF2A

WF2B

WF6

WF10

GENERALIZED LEAST-SQUARES REGRESSION AFTER

SUBTRACTION OF THE FIRST INTEGRATION

WF1

WF2A

WF2B

WF6

WF10

APPENDIX A. DETAILED METHOD DESCRIPTIONS

This section is divided into two parts: Part 1 provides the detailed method for our measurement of marine terraces, uncertainty calculations, and compares our results with previously published terrace elevations near Santa Cruz, CA to evaluate the validity of the method; Part 2 provides the detailed method and uncertainty calculations for our low-temperature thermochronometric analyses. Detailed analytical data can be found in Appendices B and C.

PART 1—MARINE TERRACES ALONG THE CENTRAL CALIFORNIA COAST

OVERVIEW

Flights of wave-cut marine terraces have been cut into the rugged Big Sur and Santa Cruz coastline over the past several hundred ka (Alexander, 1953; Bradley and Griggs, 1976; Lajoie et al., 1979; McKittrick, 1988; Weber, 1990). The elevation of contiguous terrace levels was presumably similar during their formation but now varies considerably. These variations provide an opportunity to examine the latest Pleistocene to recent time-integrated record of vertical deformation.

This study was undertaken to document the height of the lowest-emergent marine terrace from near San Simeon at the south end of the Big Sur coast northward through Santa Cruz to Point Ano Nuevo. The lowest terrace level was chosen specifically because reconnaissance work in Big Sur revealed that only a single marine terrace is preserved in most locations and it can be continuously tracked and correlated with the first emergent terrace near Monterey. The first emergent terrace near Santa Cruz and Monterey was resurveyed owing to advances in surveying techniques since the 1950s and 1970s when it was last measured (Alexander, 1953; Bradley and Griggs, 1976), and also to help validate our method. Additional constraints and elevation data are provided by continuous lidar coverage along the California coast through the California Coastal Conservancy Coastal Lidar Project (http://coast.noaa.gov/dataviewer) and the 3DEP program at the U.S. Geological Survey.

The elevation of the bedrock terrace surface was measured from Point Ano Nuevo through Aptos on the northern side of Monterey Bay (February, 2016) and from downtown Monterey

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through Ragged Point at the southern end of the Big Sur coastline (September, 2014 to March, 2015). Altogether this resulted in the collection of 1,025 elevation measurements of the bedrock surface (Fig. A-1). An additional ~3,500 measurements of the terrace surface elevation along its front edge (nearest the ocean) were made using lidar; these measurements are a maximum

Figure A-1. Focused zones of surface uplift and exhumation are found along the San Gregorio-Hosgri fault (SGHF) in central coastal California. Oblique mercator projection is rotated so that the long edge of the map is parallel to the N41°W trace of the main San Andreas fault (SAF). Ovals are the youngest (U-Th)/He ages found along the SGHF or SAF outside of this figure; blue (apatite) and red (zircon); D_CONE_1 from Cone Peak (CP) transect of Ducea et al. (2003); GAB5 from Spotila et al. (1998); remainder from this study. Blue rectangle is pooled apatite fission track age from Bürgmann et al. (1994). Slip history constraints are from Weber (1990), Clark (1998), Dickenson et al. (2005), and d'Alessio et al. (2005). Terrace elevations are from this study (n=1,025), Alexander (1953), n=26; Bradley and Griggs (1976), n=151; Lajoie et al. (1979), n=15; and Hanson et al. (1994) n=6. Faults are from the Quaternary fault and fold database (USGS, 2006). General outcrop of Coast Ridge Belt (CRB) shown with light shading, after Kidder et al. (2003). Relative plate vector and rate is from DeMets and Merkouriev (2016). NF-Nacimiento fault; OF-Oceanic fault; RRF-Reliz-Rinconada fault.

estimate of the bedrock surface because they include the colluvial or alluvial deposits above the bedrock surface and were not used in our analysis.

DATA COLLECTION

Directly surveying the bedrock surface of marine terraces is challenging due to steep cliffs, varying thickness of sedimentary deposits, and limited access to coastal bluffs. Because of this, terraces were first identified on lidar and using Google Earth. Each site was visited and the elevation of the bedrock terrace surface was measured using a laser rangefinder (Laser Tech TruPulse 360B) coupled with a survey grade GPS receiver (Trimble GPS Pathfinder ProXH) and a rugged tablet computer (Trimble Yuma). These three components communicate wirelessly and determine the position and elevation of the laser rangefinder target. This is accomplished by using the sight distance, angular declination, and azimuth from the laser rangefinder and applying this offset to the GPS location of the user. Given the non-reflective character of most rock types, the functional limit of the laser rangefinder was less than about 500 m; for this dataset, the average sight distance was ~132 m. For each data point collected, two additional parameters were recorded: the vertical offset between the GPS receiver and the laser rangefinder, and the laser rangefinder sight distance.

DIFFERENTIAL GPS PROCESSING

After collection in the field, a differential correction was calculated and applied to the GPS location using the GPS Pathfinder Office software from Trimble. Base stations were selected based on their proximity to the survey and include stations P534, P231, P172, and P173 from the CORS (Continuously Operated Reference Station) network maintained by the National Geodetic Survey.

Location uncertainty for the GPS receiver is a function of many factors, including satellite coverage, number of data points recorded for each location, and the quality of differential correction. At 1σ, vertical (elevation) uncertainties average ~0.6 m (range from 0.1–3.1 m) and horizontal uncertainties average ~0.45 m (range from 0.1–2.9 m). These uncertainties do not include those introduced by the laser rangefinder offset, which is discussed below.

MEASUREMENT UNCERTAINTY

A full accounting of the uncertainties introduced by the laser rangefinder would require the addition of two 3-dimensional error ellipsoids: the ellipsoid of the rangefinder (with axis orientations determined by the inclination and azimuth of the sighting), and the orthogonal ellipsoid of the GPS receiver. In order to simplify the uncertainty estimate, it is assumed that the difference between using error ellipsoids and a simple quadratic addition is significantly less than the uncertainty itself; therefore a simpler quadratic summation is used to estimate the combined uncertainty from the GPS measurement and the laser rangefinder offset.

Table A-1. Specifications and typical values for the Laser Tech TruPulse 360B laser rangefinder.

Parameter	Value
Distance accuracy to typical targets	± 0.3 m
Distance accuracy to distant or weak targets	$\pm 0.3 - 1$ m
Inclination accuracy (typical)	$\pm 0.25^{\circ}$
Azimuthal accuracy (typical)	$\pm 1^{\circ}$
Maximum range to non-reflective targets	$1,000 \; \mathrm{m}$
Working range to bedrock targets (this project)	~ 500 m

Uncertainties for the laser rangefinder offset can be estimated from the product specifications provided by the manufacturer (Laser Tech). The provided specifications are not clearly defined as either 1σ or 2σ and no further information was available; thus, 2σ values are assumed and 1σ values are used in uncertainty calculations.

Table A-2. Parameters used in uncertainty calculations.

Parameter	Description
D_m	Measured offset distance
I_m	Measured offset inclination
Eh_a	Horizontal uncertainty perpendicular to the offset azimuth
Ez_i	Vertical uncertainty perpendicular to the sight line
Eh_{dm}	Horizontal uncertainty parallel to the offset azimuth
Ezm	Total measurement elevation uncertainty estimate
Eh	Total horizontal uncertainty estimate; average of \sim 1.2 m 1 σ
E_a	Azimuthal measurement uncertainty $(1\sigma=0.5^{\circ})$
E_i	Inclination measurement uncertainty $(1\sigma=0.125^{\circ})$
E_d	Distance measurement uncertainty (1σ =0.5 m at 1,000 m)
$E_{\textit{gps_h}}$	Horizontal uncertainty estimate from GPS measurement $(l\sigma)$; average 0.45 m
$E_{\underline{g} p \underline{s}_\underline{v}}$	Vertical uncertainty estimate from GPS measurement $(l\sigma)$; average 0.6 m

HORIZONTAL UNCERTAINTY

Horizontal uncertainty is estimated by quadratic summation of the radial GPS uncertainty and the directional components of the offset uncertainty. The azimuth-parallel uncertainty must be transformed into the horizontal plane, but the azimuth-perpendicular component does not. The uncertainty perpendicular to the offset azimuth is given by:

$$
E h_a = \sqrt{(D_m \tan(E_a))^2 + (E_{\text{gps}_a})^2}
$$

and the uncertainty along the offset azimuth is:

$$
E h_{dm} = \sqrt{(D_m E_d \cos(I_m))^2 + (E_{\text{gps}_h})^2}
$$

These formulations provide a simple estimate of the horizontal error ellipse. However, it proved difficult to extract inclination values from the Trimble software or the laser rangefinder and this information is available for only \sim 300 of the $>1,000$ survey points. Using these \sim 300 data points as a test case, the average horizontal azimuth-perpendicular component of uncertainty is ~1.5 m whereas the average azimuth-parallel component is only 0.09 m. Thus, because the azimuth-parallel component is such a small fraction of either the azimuth-perpendicular component or the GPS component, it was not used in the final horizontal uncertainty calculation, which is given by:

$$
Eh = Eh_a
$$

This results in an overestimation of the azimuth-parallel component of uncertainty which is acceptable for this analysis. Average horizontal uncertainty (Eh_a) for the dataset is ~1.2 m 1 σ .

VERTICAL UNCERTAINTY

Vertical uncertainty is estimated by quadratic summation of the GPS uncertainty and the uncertainty associated with the laser rangefinder offset. The vertical uncertainty perpendicular to the line of sight can be estimated by:

$$
Ez_i = D_m \sin(E_i)
$$

This results in 1σ vertical uncertainties of ~0.21 m/100 m of measured distance. Combined with the GPS uncertainty, the total vertical uncertainty estimate is:

$$
Ezm = \sqrt{(Ez_{\text{gps}_v})^2 + (Ez_i)^2}
$$

Average vertical uncertainty for the entire dataset is ~0.7 m at 1σ.

TERRACE BACK-EDGE MODEL

OVERVIEW

During sea-level highstands, if a coastline is not overwhelmed with sediment, a front of erosion caused by wave abrasion migrates landward to create a gently sloping bench that terminates at a steep coastal cliffline. The location of this prominent break-in-slope—called a shoreline angle, back edge, or inner edge—is important because it marks paleohorizontal along the coastline and can be tied to the mean sea level at the time of its formation. These characteristics make the back edge of a marine terrace an excellent strain marker that can be used to document patterns of deformation since its formation. As sea level changes, however, these back edges are abandoned, erosional processes begin degrading the hillslope, and the back edge and terrace are covered by colluvial material.

Many studies in coastal California have used the elevation of marine terrace back edges to infer horizontal (e.g. Weber, 1990) or vertical (e.g. Bradley and Griggs, 1976) deformation. Most all of these studies determine elevations directly at or very near the original back edge of the terrace. These studies typically take advantage of natural exposures that reveal the original elevation of the bedrock terrace surface. Without such exposures, boreholes or geophysical techniques must be used to determine the thickness of colluvial cover above the bedrock surface. The advantage of determining the elevation of the bedrock surface at or near the back edge is that elevations at this location they have their greatest paleohorizontal meaning. However, limited access because of private property and relatively few natural outcrops make these measurements difficult.

An additional concern with measuring back-edge elevations at the back edge is that the spacing between measurements is often great. Wide spacing may be acceptable for a regional study, but a higher fidelity recorder is required in order to test the history of vertical deformation across individual fault strands.

An alternative, used in this study, is to measure the elevation of the bedrock surface where it is abundantly exposed—along the modern sea cliffs. This provides the benefit of high measurement density, data can be collected rapidly, and areas difficult or impossible to reach can still be surveyed using modern equipment. The drawback to this method is that each surveyed point is located somewhere downslope of (and below) the terrace back edge; thus each measurement must be 'adjusted' to remove the change in elevation resulting from the gently sloping marine terrace surface.

The method developed in this study to provide this adjustment consists of five main steps, each of which are detailed below:

- 1) Define the terrace back edge using lidar and previous mapping, where applicable
- 2) Determine the distance between each data point and the back edge
- 3) Develop a statistically robust model of the bedrock paleoslope
- 4) Use the back-edge distance and the paleoslope model to determine a correction for each data point
- 5) Robustly propagate uncertainty

BACK EDGE LOCATION AND DISTANCE

The location of the back edge was developed using a combination of lidar from the 2009– 2011 California Coastal Conservancy Coastal Lidar Project and, near Santa Cruz, rectified geologic maps that focus on marine terraces (Alexander, 1953; Bradley and Griggs, 1976). The basic method was to draw a line in GIS at the base of the break in slope above the first extensive marine terrace. Near Santa Cruz, this correlates with the Highway 1 terrace; near Monterey this correlates generally with 'Terrace 1' of McKittrick (1988). Where there are both maps and lidar, the mapped location of the terrace back edge was always within several m of the break in slope observed on lidar. This correlation provides confidence that mapping the back edge using lidar in areas without existing detailed maps works well. Although the two different methods are in good agreement, the back edge mapped from lidar was used for all calculations because of its inherently higher spatial resolution. Once the back edge was mapped for the length of the study area, the distance to the nearest back edge was calculated for each data point needing adjustment.

MODELING THE BEDROCK PALEOSLOPE

Aside from distance, the single largest factor that affects the magnitude back-edge adjustment is the paleoslope of the bedrock surface. Paleoslopes were determined for all terrace levels along the coast north of Santa Cruz by Bradley and Griggs (1976). The data for the Highway 1 (MIS 5c) terrace (Table A-3) was analyzed to develop a robust model of the bedrock paleoslope for this time period that was subsequently applied to all survey and front-edge measurements.

Table A-3. Original bedrock paleoslope data for the 'Highway 1' terrace level from Bradley and Griggs (1976). Onshore-slope widths were provided by the original authors, but offshore widths were not and were estimated from their scaled profiles. The original authors provided unit-less slope which has been converted here to degree slope and elevation change.

Profile no.	Width (m)	Change in elevation (m)	Slope $(°)$	Offshore width (m)	Change in elevation (m)	Slope $(°)$
10	396	6.73	0.97	1029	7.20	0.40
11	427	14.94	2.00	1073	7.51	0.40
12	427	7.26	0.97	773	6.96	0.52
13	530	10.60	1.15	270	2.70	0.57
14	305	9.76	1.83	245	3.19	0.74
15	366	10.61	1.66	184	3.13	0.97
16	335	7.71	1.32	315	3.15	0.57
18	427	8.11	1.09	223	2.23	0.57
19	244	8.30	1.95	606	6.06	0.57
21	305	9.46	1.78	495	8.42	0.97
26	360	11.88	1.89	1640	11.48	0.40
18	213	3.20	0.86			
19	305	3.05	0.57			
21	213	3.41	0.92			
17	287	9.76	1.95			
20	293	8.50	1.66			
22	30	1.89	3.60			
23	11	0.59	3.09			
24	53	2.49	2.69	---		---

A two-slope model was created that divides the paleoslope into an onshore and offshore segment. The transition from onshore to offshore was calculated by using the mean onshore segment length for profiles that contained both on and offshore segments. Slopes for each segment were calculated using a mean, weighted by segment length such that longer segments contribute more to the average (Table A-4). This seemed especially important for the longer-length offshore segments which have lower slopes in general.

Table A-4. Parameters and values used in the back-edge model.

 $\overline{}$

EXTRAPOLATING THE RANGE OF BACK-EDGE ELEVATIONS

For each measurement point, the back-edge elevation is estimated using the values in Table A-4 with:

$$
z'(d) = \begin{cases} d < (d_{ol}); z + d \tan(S_{on}) \\ d < (d_{ou'}); z + (d_{ol}) \tan(S_{on}) + \frac{(d - d_{ol}) \Big[\tan(S_{off}) + \tan(S_{on}) \Big]}{2} \\ d > (d_{ou}); z + (d_{ol}) \tan(S_{on}) + \frac{(d_{ou} - d_{ol}) \Big[\tan(S_{off}) + \tan(S_{on}) \Big]}{2} + (d - d_{ou}) \tan(S_{off}) \end{cases}
$$

Uncertainty about this corrected value is estimated using the same form of the above equation but calculating an upper and lower bound using the 1σ deviation about the slope value. The difference between these bounds is the uncertainty for that point, which is then added in quadrature for each piecemeal equation.

Figure A-2. Comparison of our bedrock slope model with observed values of the 'Highway 1' terrace observed between Santa Cruz and Point Ano Nuevo, CA.

Figure A-2 shows the original data points from Bradley and Griggs (1976) and our bedrock paleoslope model. Of the original 33 data points, 22 are captured within our 1σ envelope using this method. At 2σ, 5 data points lie outside of our envelope, indicating that there is some misfit (largely a result of 3 high-slope/short-width points). Figure A-2 also contains a histogram of surveyed data points which indicates that most of the survey corrections are restricted to the onshore portion of the model.

Uncertainties introduced by the back-edge correction are substantial and largely mask the uncertainties associated with measurement. The majority of our data have back-edge distances of less than \sim ⁴⁰⁰ m, corresponding to uncertainties of less than about 5 m. Total uncertainty is estimated with:

$$
Ez = \sqrt{Ez_m^2 + Ez_s^2}
$$

ELEVATION DATA FROM PREVIOUS WORKERS

Additional constraints come from the results of previous works in the region who documented terraces near San Simeon, south of Ragged Point (Hanson et al., 1994); near Monterey (McKittrick, 1988), and from Aptos northward (Alexander, 1953; Bradley and Griggs, 1976; Lajoie et al., 1979). These data were compiled from their original sources, digitized, and used to help validate our method in areas where the data sets overlap.

Much of the previous data in the Santa Cruz and Monterey area lack georeferenced elevation points. The method used to extract data from these reports is in general similar, but varies depending on how the authors presented their data. In general, maps and terrace-elevation profiles were scanned at 600 dpi and georeferenced using QGIS. A line feature class was digitized from the back edge of terraces and terrace points were transformed from their profile plot back to their near-original location at the back edge of the terrace. The details of this transformation vary and are discussed below.

ALEXANDER (1953)

Terraces were mapped on a geologic map with abundant geographic reference lines. Terrace elevations were provided on a coast-parallel profile without a definite distance axis, but with abundant and clear depiction of drainages and relative terrace widths. The geologic map was georeferenced and the back-edge of terraces matched well with lidar terrace scarps. Because the number of data were few and the cartographic representation on the profiles was so good, elevation data from the profile could be directly added to a series of points in GIS.

BRADLEY AND GRIGGS (1976)

Terraces were mapped on a geologic map with no geographic reference lines but abundant drainages. Terrace elevations were provided on a coast-parallel plot with a defined distance axis and the locations of drainages were well marked. After georeferencing, the back edge of terraces matched well with lidar scarps and drainages were well located. The elevation profile was georeferenced with a custom reference frame such that the digitization of each elevation data point yielded an elevation measurement and a distance measurement. The profile (and its data points) were then divided into segments defined by drainages marked on the profile and geologic map. The distance between the drainages was measured on the map and this value was used to scale the distance measured between the drainages on the profile. This effectively allows the profile terrace points to have a non-uniform scaling between the profile and the back edge. Data transformed to the back edge in this way were transformed onto the mapped terrace extents and not into drainages where they were assuredly not measured. This gives us confidence that our transformation places the points in a position that is likely near their original location.

LAJOIE ET AL. (1979)

Data from this study were georeferenced and transformed onto a coast-parallel transect in Gutmonsdotir et al. (2013); and the transformed data were graciously made available by Maria Gutmonsdotir. Using the trend and location of the coast-parallel transect line from Gutmonsdotir et al. (2013) and the back-edge locations from lidar, the coast-parallel data were transformed to the back edge. Transformed data fall on terrace surfaces and gaps in data are co-located with gaps in the terrace, lending confidence in the transformation process.

MCKITTRICK (1988)

Terrace elevations were provided on a coast-parallel plot with abundant geographic and geologic annotation; no map of the terraces was provided. Similar to the Bradley and Griggs (1976) data, the elevation profile was georeferenced into a custom reference frame that allowed distance and elevation values to be extracted. The profile was then divided into segments based on faults that cross the profile as it wraps around the irregular coast near Monterey, CA. A continuous line was constructed for the terrace back edge from lidar and distances between the profile segments were measured on the map. The map measurements allowed a non-uniform scaling for each segment which was important given the complexity of the coastline. Terrace elevation points from the profile were then transformed onto the back edge. The presumed MIS 5c back edge was used for all terrace levels described by McKittrick (1988). This simplification introduces positional (geographic) uncertainty in older terrace data points since older terraces had back edges that were presumably farther inland. However, it was beyond the scope of this study to map these older terrace levels in detail and they are not the focus of this work.

HANSON ET AL. (1994)

Terrace deposits, back edges, and the elevation of terrace back edges where measured, were provided on a geologic map. However, no geographic reference lines or points were noted; the map was georeferenced using stream intersections and coastline features. After georeferencing, mapped back edges were all coincident with lidar scarps and drainages were well located. Terrace heights and locations were digitized directly from the map.
DISTANCE TO THE SAN GREGORIO-HOSGRI FAULT

The distance from each data point to the San Gregorio-Hosgri fault was the last geospatial calculation to be completed. Simplified traces of the SGHF were constructed in GIS using the USGS Quaternary fault and fold database (USGS, 2006). The distance from each point to the nearest part of the simplified fault trace was calculated, with the convention that positive values are east or northeast of the SGHF.

Figure A-3. Uplifted marine terraces near Santa Cruz, CA and their relationship to bounding strike-slip faults. Oblique mercator projection is rotated so that the top edge of the map is parallel to the N41°W trace of the main San Andreas fault (SAF). Apatite (U-Th)/He ages are from C. Baden (Stanford University, written commun., 2016); apatite fission-track ages from the upper-right portion of the map are from Bürgmann et al. (1994); apatite and sphene fission track ages are from Naeser and Ross (1976).

COMPARISON OF RESULTS NEAR SANTA CRUZ, CA WITH PREVIOUS ESTIMATES OF TERRACE ELEVATION

To validate our surveying method we compare elevations of the lowest-emergent marine terrace from Aptos northward through Santa Cruz to Point Año Nuevo (Fig. A-3). The general character of the marine terraces is evident in both our new data and previous surveys, and shows the slight uplift near the SGHF and larger uplift near the SAF described by previous workers (Bradley and Griggs, 1976; Anderson, 1990; Valensise and Ward, 1992; Anderson and Menking, 1994). The excellent agreement between our data and that of Bradley and Griggs (1976) suggests that our method of measurement and back-edge adjustment produce elevations similar to those measured directly at the back edge. This correlation provides confidence in our elevations farther south near Big Sur.

The fault-perpendicular offset between the crest of the 'Aptos Arch' in the data of Alexander (1953) and our elevation data is noticeable and most likely attributed to the significant differences in the locations of observation; Alexander (1953) measured several km farther inland and north of our coastal bluff measurements. This difference serves as a cautionary statement. Although our method appears to replicate elevations at the back edge, the presence of a horizontally varying vertical deformation field—such as that demonstrated for this stretch of coastline by many authors (e.g. Anderson and Menking, 1994)—means that terrace back edges and coastal bluffs may experience different amounts of uplift if the terrace is wide relative to the variation in uplift.

The increased resolution of our new data, and the fault-perpendicular profile transformation help to define several features of the vertical deformation field that were difficult to observe in the older data sets that used a coast-parallel or fault-parallel transformation. 1) The 'Aptos Arch' appears to be a composite feature, possibly created by two sub-parallel anticlines. This is a permissible feature in all terrace levels of the Alexander (1953) data and is noted, with much scatter, in our new data. 2) The Davenport Syncline (Brabb, 1997) is well expressed in the terrace elevations, appears to be flanked to the SW by an anticline, and is likely a developing structural feature. 3) Terrace elevations drop considerably across the SGHF zone as a whole, and do so in discrete steps across individual faults—such as the 10–15 m drop across the Coastways fault—as noted by previous workers in this area (e.g. Weber and Allwardt, 2001).

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PART 2—(U-TH)/HE THERMOCHRONOMETRY

ANALYTICAL PROCEDURES

MINERAL SEPARATION, GRAIN MEASUREMENT, AND ALIQUOT PREPARATION

Standard (U-Th)/He analytical procedures involve crushing the rock sample and separating mineral species using a variety of mechanical, magnetic, and heavy liquid techniques. The high-density non-magnetic fraction of minerals <500 μm are then placed beneath a microscope and only clear, euhedral, and inclusion free zircon and apatite grains are picked. Each picked grain is measured and photographed under 100x magnification along its width and length, then flipped on a different edge, measured, and re-photographed. The tip height of zircon grains is also recorded. Each grain is then enclosed within an \sim 1 mm-long Nb-foil tube. Each sample generally consists of 4–6 of these single-grain aliquots for each analysis type.

DETERMINATION OF 4HE CONTENT

Each foil-wrapped grain is placed on a copper planchet in the helium extraction cell and heated with a diode laser to ~1100-1300° C for 3 minutes (apatite) or 7 minutes (zircon) under ultra-high vacuum. Evolved 4He gas is spiked with a calibrated 3 He/ 4 He tracer, cooled to 16 $^{\circ}$ K in a cryogenic trap, and then re-evolved to be analyzed by a noble gas mass spectrometer, constituting an isotope dilution experiment. Re-extraction heating steps are performed on each zircon grain (at least once) until the evolved fraction is <1.5% of the total. Line blanks (background signal of the mass spectrometer), cold blanks (background signal of the cryogenic trap), hot blanks (heating of a crimped Nb foil tube, followed by analysis as if it were an unknown), and 3He/4He standards (analysis of calibrated tracer gas) are performed twice before an analysis session, once after every five unknowns, and twice at the end of the session in order to track instrument drift. Background values from the hot blank analyses are used for baseline subtraction for unknowns. Mineral grain standards for apatite (Durango apatite) and zircon (Fish Canyon Tuff) are analyzed as unknowns to document the external reproducibility of the method because measurement uncertainties are typically much lower than the uncertainties associated with geologic materials.

GRAIN DISSOLUTION

After extraction of 4He, minerals are spiked a with gravimetrically calibrated radiogenic $229Th/236U$ spike and dissolved, preceding analysis on an ICP-MS to determine bulk U and

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Th content. Apatite grains are dissolved in Wheaton vials with concentrated $HNO₃$ for ~1 hour at ~70° C; only the apatite grain is dissolved during this process. Zircon dissolution requires greater effort because of the resiliency of the mineral to chemical dissolution. However, the dissolution of the Nb foil is undesirable because it becomes a major constituent of the solution and dampens Th sensitivity in the mass spectrometer. To combat this issue, we chemically 'unpacked' each grain using a procedure modified from Seth Burgess at Stanford University. In short, each grain was placed in a teflon cap and the Nb foil tube was dissolved in \sim 10s with a mixture of HF and $HNO₃$ acid at room temperature. The acid/Nb solution was pipetted into a waste container and the remaining zircon grain was rinsed with MilliQ water 3 times. After rinsing, the grain was transferred to a 2.5 ml teflon cap using the pipette. Concentrated HF was added to the grain before it was placed in a stainless steel Parr pressure digestion vessel with 14 other packed grains, and heated at 210° C for 72 hours. The zircons were dried down, redissolved in concentrated $HNO₃$, placed back in the pressure digestion vessel, and heated to 180° C for 24 hours. The grains were then dried down again and redissolved once more in a dilute solution of HCl before analysis on the ICP-MS.

DETERMINATION OF 238U AND 232TH CONTENT

An isotope dilution experiment is performed (separately for each mineral type) that utilizes the known contents of the radiogenic tracer to calculate the content of the unknown species. A series of acid blanks (procedural blanks that underwent the same dissolution steps but without any mineral), spike blanks (several procedural blanks with different contents of calibrated radiogenic spike), and spike 'normals' (analysis with calibrated radiogenic spike and a known content of ²³⁸U and ²³²Th—the 'normal' solution) are analyzed before, during, and after a session of unknowns. The acid blank values are used for baseline subtraction and determination of instrument drift (an uncommon occurrence with our instrumentation). The spike blanks are used to construct a session-specific calibration curve between measured isotope count rates on the ICP-MS and tracer content. The spike normals are used to check that the spike calibration curve correctly calculates the (known) content of normal solution.

AGE CALCULATION AND FT CORRECTION

Once contents have been measured for both parent and daughter isotopes, initial ages can be calculated. Because 4 He is ejected up to \sim 20 µm from where it is produced, there is

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a depleted zone near the grain boundary that must be accounted for (Farley, 2002; Hourigan et al., 2005). Many methods are available to accomplish this task and vary predominantly in their geometric representations of the mineral grain. For the rapidly exhumed samples in this study, the corrected age is relatively insensitive to this choice (e.g. Gautheron and Tassan-Got, 2012). The calculation of ages and uncertainties from raw helium, ICP-MS, and grain measurement data is carried out by the HeDR program written in LabView by J. Hourigan. It uses the production-diffusion equation of Meesters and Dunai (2002) to quickly estimate ages, and the algorithms described in Hourigan et al. (2005) for the determination of Ft correction. Analytical uncertainties are determined formally for each step of the process and are added in quadrature to the estimate of uncertainty; typical aliquot uncertainty is ~1–2% 1σ.

Sample-level ages are calculated once a quality assurance check is performed for all aliquot ages and analytical data to identify spurious results. Sample level ages are the weighted mean of all aliquot ages and are weighted by the inverse square error. In this manner, analyses which have greater uncertainty than others are 'penalized' and contribute less to the final age. The final uncertainty is the weighted standard error and is ~13% 1σ for all of our samples, but varies depending on the dispersion of aliquot ages.

SYSTEMATIC BIAS AND ADJUSTMENT OF APATITE AGES

As a check, several mineral standards of known age are measured as unknowns. In this way, the reproducibility of these standards is a good indicator of the overall reproducibility of the unknowns. Typical reproducibility of Durango apatite is <2–4% at 2σ and 5–10% for Fish Canyon Tuff zircon. Replicate analyses (n=15) of the Durango apatite during the January– February 2016 analysis sessions revealed a slight 5% systematic bias in our methods. The replicate analyses have a weighted mean of 33.02 ±0.39 Ma (2σ) whereas the accepted age for the Durango apatite is 31.44 ±0.18 Ma (2σ) (McDowell et al., 2005). All sample-level apatite analyses from these sessions are thus multiplied by 0.9521 in order to correct for this bias. Additional uncertainty from this correction is 1.312% (2σ) and is added in quadrature to the total external uncertainty for each analysis at the sample level. Replicate Durango apatite during the 2009 and April 2016 session overlapped with the accepted age within uncertainty and no further adjustments were made.

DEVIATIONS AND EXCEPTIONS

The procedures and data reduction methods outlines above were employed for the majority of samples. However, several issues occurred during January–February 2016 as a result of instrumental malfunction and (or) user oversight that required deviation from standard protocol or additional calculations in the data reduction workflow. Each issue and the resulting changes to the data reduction workflow are discussed below. Affected samples in the tabular data are marked with an *.

DISAGGREGATION OF ZIRCONS DURING CHEMICAL UNPACKING

ISSUE

Whole zircons were packed into Nb-foil tubes prior to helium extraction and were then dissolved in concentrated $HNO₃$ and HF acid. After this chemical unpacking about 10% of zircons were fractured into two or more pieces. Zircons that were composed of 2–3 large fragments were easy to pipette into the microcapsule for dissolution. However, several grains were broken into smaller pieces that were not possible to migrate into the microcapsules, or it was not possible to tell if all of the constituent pieces were migrated. The loss of any amount of zircon at this stage would cause an aberrantly old age because the helium from the missing piece was measured, but the fragment responsible for that helium would remain unanalyzed.

SOLUTION

Aliquots that had multiple fragments were noted and several of these had geologically impossible ages (pre Cretaceous); these aliquots were excluded from further analysis. Most multiple-fragment aliquots had ages similar to other aliquots from the same sample and were included in sample-level averages.

OVERHEATING OF APATITE DURING DISSOLUTION IN FEBRUARY, 2016

ISSUE

Apatite grains and their Nb-foil packets are placed into a polypropylene Wheaton vial with concentrated HNO₃ and set on a hotplate for \sim 1 hour in order to dissolve the apatite. The hotplate is usually set at ~60–70% heat through the use of a variac power supply. Both sessions of apatites were dissolved on a hotplate without a variable power supply and thus were heated to a much higher temperature than is typical. Above $\sim 70^{\circ}$ C, polypropylene becomes unstable in concentrated $HNO₃$ but the typical duration in this unstable region is short. However, the duration within this unstable zone was greatly increased for two main reasons: (1) the higher temperature imposed by the unregulated hotplate, and (2) the decision to let the apatites dissolve for nearly 2 hours to ensure complete dissolution in the very tightly crimped packets. The result was that nearly all of the Wheaton vials in the February analysis session underwent significant acid attack and contained small blebs and nodules of plastic floating in solution. This occurred in a few of the January analysis session vials, but its cause was not considered until much later.

The most significant concern imposed by the floating plastic debris was accidental aspiration and clogging during analysis on the ICP-MS. Although several ideas were brought forth to combat the issue, the simplest-sounding idea was to use small wads of borosilicate glass wool to push the plastic to the bottom of the vial, thus keeping the upper part free of large particles. This plan was implemented and was largely successful at moving the plastic particles downward. Borosilicate glass, however, apparently contains trace amounts of 238U and 232Th, a fact that was unknown before using it as a filter medium. The result was that every blank, standard, spike, norm, and unknown was accidentally doped with an unknown quantity of 238 U and 232 Th. This issue was discovered after analysis of the first blank on the ICP-MS; completion of the ICP-MS analysis was suspended until a remedy was found.

A calibration experiment was performed and found an approximately linear correlation between measured amounts of ²⁹Si (an isotope of the glass wool matrix) and the amount of ²³⁸U and ²³²Th; there was no additional ²²⁹Th or ²³⁶U as a result of the glass wool. This relationship permitted quantification of the 'additional' ²³⁸U and ²³²Th in each sample that was accidentally added during the filtration step. We proceeded with the ICP-MS analysis but modified the instrumental parameters to also collect ¹¹B and ²⁹Si. Additionally, we analyzed a new set of acid blanks and a series of 12 calibration samples that had varying amounts of glass wool added to them. These calibration samples permitted quantification of 238 U and 232 Th during the analysis session and covered nearly the entire range of ²⁹Si values measured for the doped samples.

SOLUTION

Excess 238U and 232Th was calculated and removed through a 6 step process: (1) calculation of means for each isotope for each sample; (2) correction for session instrument drift; (3) baseline subtraction; (4) linear regression of 238U and 232Th against 29Si for all samples that did not originally contain ²³⁸U or ²³²Th (acid blanks, spike blanks, and the 12 calibration samples); (5) calculation and subtraction of excess 238 U and 232 Th as a function of the measured 29 Si for each sample, and; (6) uncertainty propagation. Each step is detailed below. Apatite aliquots that underwent this additional process are marked with a single * and their ɛ-value (see below) is provided.

Another complicating factor was that small particles or strands of the glass wool were apparently aspirated during analysis. Surface tension of sample solution on this detritus prolonged the time needed for sample washout and uptake. Because of this, the first few analysis runs of many samples still contained washout solution. To combat this, we lengthened the washout time (from 20 s to 60 s), but the problem persisted. In order to effectively remove these aberrant data, we removed the first 4 runs (of 15 total) for all samples.

Table A-5. Definitions of variable notation.

Mean values for each isotope

A simple mean for each isotope was calculated using the last 11 analysis runs, where C_{jk} is the mean count for each isotope $j \rightarrow q$ for each sample $k \rightarrow r$ evaluated over analysis runs $i \rightarrow p$.

$$
_{jk} \sum \frac{jki}{j!} \left| \begin{array}{c} q \\ j \end{array} \right| \left| \begin{array}{c} r \\ k \end{array} \right|
$$

The standard error of the mean, E_{ik} , was calculated and forms the basis for the propagation of uncertainty:

$$
E_{jk}^C = \frac{\sigma C_{jk}}{\sqrt{p-5}} \Big|_{j=1}^q \Big|_{k=1}^r
$$

Instrument drift

Instrumental drift over the course of a long analysis session (~13 hours) is common during ICP-MS analyses. For our purposes this drift is generally neglected because we calculate ratios of isotopes that are similar in their mass/charge and are affected by instrumental drift in nearly the same way. Because the workflow for removing excess ²³⁸U and ²³²Th requires taking ratios to an isotope with drastically different properties (²⁹Si), instrumental drift cannot be neglected. For this analysis session the sensitivity of ²⁹Si changed by \sim 20% over the course of the session in the opposite sense as a similar magnitude change in 238 U and 232 Th. Unaccounted for, these changes would cause ratios to vary significantly for replicate analyses.

To correct for this drift, two acid blanks and a 'tune' solution composed of a mixture of leftover apatite samples and standards were analyzed at the start, in the middle, and at the end of the session. Instrumental drift for ²⁹Si was calculated using all of these analyses. Drift in uranium and thorium isotopes was calculated from the tune solution only because count rates were too low in the acid blanks to be useful. Initial exploration of the data suggested that the long term drift for 229Th, 232Th, 235U, 236U, and 238U were identical within uncertainty. Thus, the relative changes through time for each of the isotopes was combined into a single least-squares weighted linear regression model with 15 data points that best fits the equation:

$$
C_j = m_j^t \times t + b_j^t \Big|_{j = S_i}^{UTh}
$$

Where m^t and b^t are the linear fit parameters as a function of time during the analysis session and the equation is evaluated over isotopes j=²⁹Si and j=²²⁹Th+²³²Th+²³⁵U+²³⁶U+²³⁸U but only

for replicate acid blanks and 'tune' analyses, as discussed above. The regression model for $29Si$ contains 9 data points. The intercept of the regression at the start of the analysis session and the slope was used to form a 'correction factor' for each time point in the regression that follows the form:

$$
f_j^t = \frac{m_j^t}{b_j^t}\Big|_{j=Si}^{UTh}
$$

The result is a linear correction factor as a function of time throughout the analysis session. Uncertainty is calculated as the squared summation of the 68.3% confidence interval on the slope and intercept values by:

$$
E_j^f = \sqrt{dm_j^2 + db_j^2} \Big|_{j=Si}^{UTh}
$$

Each sample was then divided by the correction factor to remove the component of instrumental drift at the time of the analysis through:

$$
D_{jk} = \frac{C_{jk}}{(f_j^t \times t) + 1} \Big|_{j = S_i}^q \Big|_{k = 1}^r
$$

Where D_{jk} is the de-trended mean for each isotope (excluding ⁴³Ca, ⁵¹V, and ¹⁴⁷Sm) and is evaluated for all samples. Uncertainty is propagated by combining the uncertainties from the mean counts and the correction factor with:

$$
E_{jk}^{D} = \sqrt{(E_{jk}^{C})^{2} + (E_{j}^{f})^{2}} \Big|_{j=S_{i}}^{q} \Big|_{k=1}^{r}
$$

Baseline subtraction

Once all samples were corrected for long-term drift instrument drift, baseline values using replicate analyses of un-doped acid blanks (*ab*) were calculated for each isotope:

$$
\hat{B}_j = \frac{\sum_{k}^{ab} D_j}{ab} \Big|_{j=1}^{q}
$$

Uncertainty was calculated using the standard error of the mean:

$$
E_j^B = \frac{\sigma \hat{B}_j}{\sqrt{ab-1}}\Big|_{j=1}^q
$$

This baseline value was then subtracted from all samples to produce the baseline- and drift-corrected values for each isotope and sample. For those samples that did not undergo a drift correction this step produces the simple baseline-corrected value.

$$
D^{bc}_{jk}=D_{jk}-\hat{B}_{j}\left|_{j=1}^{q}\right|_{k=1}^{r}
$$

Uncertainty was propagated by combining the absolute uncertainties for the de-trended mean and the baseline correction with:

$$
E_{jk}^{Dbc} = \frac{\sqrt{(D_{jk} \times E_{jk}^D)^2 + (\hat{B}_j \times E_j^B)^2}}{D_{jk}^{bc}}\Big|_{j=1}^q\Big|_{k=1}^r
$$

Ratios of 238U and 232Th to 29Si

A simple weighted mean ratio model was developed for $238U$ and $232Th$ that used every analysis which did not contain ²³⁸U or ²³²Th before the addition of the borosilicate glass wool (doped acid blanks, doped spike blanks, and the 12 calibration samples; *k=noUTh*) with:

$$
f_j^{Si} = \frac{\sum_{k=1}^{r} \left(\frac{D_j^{bc}}{D_{Si}^{bc}} \times w_{jk} \right)}{\sum_{k=1}^{r} w_{jk}} \Big|_{j=232Th}^{238U} \Big|_{k=1}^{noUTh}
$$

The range of ²⁹Si values used in the regression was similar to the range of values for the remaining samples. This overlap ensures that regression values do not need to be extrapolated beyond the limit of the data. Uncertainty $\, df^{si}_j$ was calculated as the weighted uncertainty of the mean for each of the two correction isotopes.

Calculation and subtraction of excess 238U and 232Th

The regression model was used to calculate an amount of 238 U and 232 Th for each sample based on the measured amount of 29Si. These 'excess' amounts were then subtracted from the measured values for all samples with:

$$
D_{jk}^{Si} = D_{jk}^{bc} - (f_j^{Si} \times D_{Sik}^{bc}) \Big|_{j=232Th}^{238U} \Big|_{k=1}^{r}
$$

Uncertainty on the amount of 'excess' 238U and 232Th was propagated with:

$$
E_{jk}^{Si} = \sqrt{\left(df_{jk}^{Si} \right)^2 + \left(E_{Sik}^{Dbc} \right)^2} \left| \begin{array}{c} 238U \\ j = 232Th \end{array} \right|_{k=1}^r
$$

Final uncertainty for the drift-, baseline-, and excess ²³⁸U- and ²³²Th-correction is given by:

$$
E_{jk}^{Dbcsi} = \frac{\sqrt{(D_{jk}^{bc} \times E_{jk}^{Dbc})^2 + (D_{jk}^{Si} \times E_{jk}^{Si})^2}}{D_{jk}^{Si}} \Big|_{j=232Th}^{238U} \Big|_{k=1}^{r}
$$

A 'noise to signal' calculation is made to provide a means of screening ages that have corrections similar to or greater in magnitude as the corrected values. Values of ²³²Th are multiplied by 0.235 in order to account for differences in 4He productivity.

$$
\mathcal{E}_k = \!\frac{ \left(\mathnormal{f}_{238Uk}^{Si} + 0.235 \!\times\! \mathnormal{f}_{232Thk}^{Si} \right)\!\times\! \mathnormal{D}_{\mathnormal{Sik}}^{bc} }{ \mathnormal{D}_{238Uk}^{Si} + 0.235 \!\times\! \mathnormal{D}_{232Thk}^{Si} }
$$

After all corrections were performed, the data were returned to the 'typical' data reduction routine for completion of the remaining steps.

Validation of the solution

Each step in the process described above adds substantial uncertainty to the 'corrected' analyses. Replicate analyses of Durango apatite that underwent the correction process (33.24 ±3.9 Ma, MSWD=0.02) are nearly indistinguishable from replicate Durango apatite that did not (32.98 ±0.47 Ma, MSWD=3.9) providing confidence that the corrections produce accurate and precise ages. These analyses have an average ε value of 9.75% indicating relatively low ratios of noise (doped uranium and thorium) to signal (original uranium and thorium) when corrected for ⁴He productivity. The average ε value for all other analyses is \sim 29% and we use the value of 50% as a cutoff for rejecting ages. Aliquots with >50% ε (n=6) have corrections that are more than half of the original value and are often tens of millions of years outside the range of remaining sample ages. These aliquots are not used in sample averages.

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APPENDIX B. ANALYTICAL DATA FOR NEW (U-TH)/HE ANALYSES

Table B-1. Analytical data for new apatite (U-Th)/He thermochronometry. All data processed at the University of California Helium Thermochronology Laboratory; see Table 3-2 for sources of data. Light gray shading indicates aliquots likely affected by wildfire; italicized age is the average of remaining aliquots. Strike-through indicates aliquots not included in the final age. (*) Indicates additional lab procedures, as desribed for apatite in Appendix A. Mean ages weighted by the inverse square error.

Table B-2. Analytical data for new zircon (U-Th)/He thermochronometry. All data processed at the University of California Helium Thermochronology Laboratory; see Table 3-2 for sources of data. Strike-through indicates aliquots not included in the final age. (*) Indicates disaggregation of grain during chemical unpacking, as desribed for zircon in Appendix A. Mean ages weighted by the inverse square error. Light gray shading indicates aliquots with re-extraction values of 5–10%; dark gray shading indicates aliquots with re-extraction values of 10–20%.

Sample	Aliquot	Width $\binom{m}{n}$	\mathbf{z} Width (mn)	Length (mn)	$\binom{m}{n}$ Ťр	Sphere ER (mu)	\mathbf{H} Est. (°C)	Mass $\left(\overline{ab}\right)$	\mathbf{H}	(ppm) $\overline{}$	(ppm) fh	$(mol x 10^{-14})$ ⁴ He	Ind. cooling age ±1σ (Ma) age:	mean sample $age \pm 1\sigma$ (Ma) Weighted
	\rm{a}	103.8	94.9	213.9	29.7	61.1	182.8	7.99	0.798	1942.8	346.5	126.0	17.9 ± 0.2	15.8 ± 3.2
09DO01	b	124.4	134.8	327.0	68.0	80.5	192.3	18.50	0.845	1690.7	456.9	197.0	13.0 ± 0.3	
	$\mathbf c$	75.2	90.0	256.4	37.5	53.5	187.3	6.49	0.772	2834.1	287.2	71.40	9.0 ± 0.3	
	\rm{a}	77.1	69.4	180.5	38.7	45.2	175.8	3.21	0.731	841.6	273.3	22.70	19.6 ± 0.3	$14.9 + 7.2$
09DO02	b	63.9	76.0	158.7	32.4	42.5	181.8	2.61	0.716	113.0	32.7	1.16	9.5 ± 0.1	
	a	162.1	121.9	275.2	71.1	80.9	197.3	16.60	0.844	106.4	53.0	6.86	7.6 ± 0.1	8.0 ± 1.0
09DO04	b	150.6	133.6	273.4	64.3	82.9	196.3	17.60	0.848	77.2	38.8	6.31	9.1 ± 0.2	
	\rm{a}	68.7	74.2	154.7	33.1	43.1	178.3	2.63	0.720	804.8	181.7	12.10	13.9 ± 0.2	11.5 ± 1.5
	b	77.7	92.1	196.1	40.0	51.8	186.8	4.75	0.764	328.1	101.7	6.15	8.9 ± 0.1	
09DO05	$\mathbf c$	79.1	58.0	172.5	34.8	41.8	179.3	2.69	0.711	355.3	119.9	4.71	11.8 ± 0.2	
	d	67.5	68.4	159.5	34.8	41.6	177.8	2.43	0.709	141.7	71.2	2.03	13.7 ± 0.2	
09DO06	a	86.8	61.3	161.0	31.7	43.9	170.8	2.94	0.724	526.8	193.6	19.70	29.8 ± 0.8	23.6 ± 3.2
	b	79.6	85.7	167.4	28.1	49.9	177.3	4.11	0.756	1283.0	283.8	47.80	20.9 ± 0.4	
	$\mathbf c$	51.4	60.8	135.2	23.6	34.8	170.3	1.51	0.659	492.2	146.3	5.65	19.8 ± 0.3	
	d	64.1	68.5	171.5	30.8	41.8	169.8	2.66	0.711	948.1	313.6	31.60	30.0 ± 0.7	
	a	60.0	64.4	128.4	20.7	37.8	162.8	1.81	0.683	390.2	147.6	18.50	64.4 ± 1.3	56.8 ± 5.2
09DO07	b	69.6	60.3	159.0	29.3	40.3	164.8	2.34	0.702	378.1	143.9	18.90	51.2 ± 0.6	
	$\mathbf c$	74.6	52.5	149.6	24.2	38.6	162.8	2.14	0.689	397.5	158.4	21.40	61.3 ± 1.0	
	a	57.0	54.6	120.0	23.6	33.9	165.8	1.28	0.650	533.5	218.5	9.21	34.8 ± 0.6	36.3 ± 1.7
	b	50.7	52.6	132.0	20.7	32.7	164.8	1.29	0.639	421.5	159.1	7.46	36.1 ± 0.7	
09DO08	$\mathbf c$	60.1	58.4	157.2	24.9	37.7	165.8	2.02	0.682	467.1	197.1	15.80	41.0 ± 0.6	
	d	45.9	55.1	139.7	22.2	32.1	163.8	1.30	0.632	499.0	231.2	8.93	36.2 ± 0.4	
	e	81.4	69.8	206.1	30.0	48.2	172.8	4.39	0.747	394.0	121.9	22.60	30.0 ± 0.7	
AS004	a	81.8	86.0	323.9	60.1	55.3	165.8	7.97	0.779	486.8	69.5	142.60	83.5 ± 2.1	78.1 ± 3.8
	b	102.8	122.8	335.6	66.5	71.6	171.8	14.50	0.827	458.6	39.9	218.90	71.4 ± 1.7	
	$\mathbf c$	106.6	116.9	324.6	63.2	71.2	170.8	13.93	0.826	585.9	71.0	299.10	79.0 ± 1.3	
AS006	a	73.6	75.3	221.6	30.1	48.4	162.8	4.68	0.749	402.2	68.6	62.42	77.9 ± 1.3	86.4 ± 8.6
	b	81.1	102.5	320.9	38.3	60.3	165.8	10.43	0.796	305.6	41.2	152.70	106.4 ± 2.6	
	$\mathbf c$	94.2	107.6	281.3	42.7	64.6	167.8	10.58	0.808	511.3	100.1	227.60	91.0 ± 1.4	
	d	74.6	99.4	323.4	38.6	57.2	164.8	9.38	0.785	262.6	61.9	160.10	$142.7 + 2.8$	
	a	90.4	93.5	356.3	40.3	61.9	165.8	11.89	0.800	245.5	70.7	155.30	113.5 ± 1.7	90.6 ± 12.7
AS008	b	93.5	103.8	252.8	35.7	62.5	167.8	9.26	0.803	462.4	90.0	168.90	85.9 ± 1.5	
	$\mathbf c$	96.3	97.0	307.8	44.6	63.3	168.8	10.78	0.805	429.7	75.8	176.10	82.9 ± 2.4	
	d	98.3	99.7	262.2	40.3	63.1	169.8	9.50	0.804	1286.5	219.8	380.30	68.1 ± 1.1	

APPENDIX C. MEASUREMENTS OF MARINE TERRACES

The following tables provide the surveyed elevations, locations, and back-edge calculations for the lowest-emergent marine terrace from Point Año Nuevo, north of Santa Cruz, CA to south of Ragged Point, near San Simeon, CA. A detailed description of the method is provided in Appendix A.

Survey	Name	Date	
am	Andrew Molera	6/17/2014	
bx	Bixby Bridge	9/16/2014	
bxc	Bixby Creek	6/17/2014	
lm	Limekiln Creek	6/18/2014	
my	Monterey	3/4/2015	
sc	Santa Cruz	2/22/2016	

Table C-1. Names, dates, and survey prefixes for elevation surveys.

