



Most moraines are formed by a combination of processes. Some rock debris is carried at the base of the ice and stacked at the ice margin. Other debris accumulates on the ice surface and slumps off the edge of the ice.

A small recessional moraine forms in front of a glacier in New Zealand. The lower part of the glacier is darker because it contains more rock debris. (Figure added to show scale.)

Recessional moraine

As climate warmed, the margin of the ice sheet began to recede. At times the amount of ice flowing to the margin would equal the amount of ice that was melting at the margin. As a result, the margin would stay in one place for a number of years and rock material from boulders to clay carried by the flowing ice accumulated to form a ridge. This ridge, a recessional moraine, marks a place the glacier paused in its general recession. You are standing on one recessional moraine. There is another recessional moraine in the park. Can you find it?

