The drainage basin at the source of Urumqi River in the northwest of Tianshan in the province of Xingjiang contains 10 relatively well-developed, continental-type glaciers with a total glacierized area of 5.8 square kilometers. In 1959, Chinese glaciologists began, for the first time, exploring, surveying and mapping glaciers in this region using terrestrial photogrammetry, and they complemented their work with plane-table surveys in 1962. As a result, glacier maps were published at scales of 1:10,000 and 1:5,000 in 1973 and 1980 respectively.

The 1:5,000-map of 1980 contains information on glacier variations and ice movement. It reflects the geographical features of the glacier No. 1 near the Tianshan field station at the source of Urumqi River, the form of the glacier and recent changes in glacier margin. It is hoped the map will serve as a reliable reference for glaciologists, geographers, visitors and tourists.