

## Middle Fork Kentucky River headwaters watershed (051002-02-010)

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**Geography.** The Middle Fork Kentucky River headwaters watershed occupies much of central Leslie County and the northern edge of Harlan County. The land is in the Eastern Kentucky Coal Field physiographic region, which is characterized by mountainous terrain, rapid surface runoff, and moderate rates of groundwater drainage. The watershed is underlain by coals, sandstones, and shales: this geology is generally conducive to productive wells, although water quality may be low for wells that draw from coal layers.

**Waterways.** The Middle Fork Kentucky River headwaters watershed includes the Middle Fork up to its confluence with Cutshin Creek at Dryhill (near the Boone Parkway). Among the other creeks that feed the river in this watershed are Greasy Creek, Beech Fork, Stinnett Creek, Rockhouse Creek, and Bull Creek.

**Land and water use.** Land in the watershed is rural and wooded. The surface waters of the watershed supply the drinking water for the Green Hills and Hyden Leslie County Water Districts. Nineteen businesses and organizations hold permits for discharges into the creeks. See the 2000 Assessment Report for full details.

**Agency data assessment.** The assessed creek segments in this watershed fully support their designated uses, based on biological and/or water-quality data. One segment of Greasy Creek is designated as threatened. See the 2000 Assessment Report or 2000 305(b) list and the 2002 303(d) list of impaired streams for full details.

**Kentucky River Basin Management Plan, 2002.** Information is from the first basin cycle (1997-2002), including the 1998-1999 monitoring effort and the 2000 Assessment Report. See [kywatersheds.org](http://kywatersheds.org) or [www.uky.edu/WaterResources/Watersheds](http://www.uky.edu/WaterResources/Watersheds) for the complete Assessment Report and Management Plan.

Watershed Restoration Ranking			Watershed Protection Rank	Overall Watershed Rank	Framework Mobilization Category
<i>Observed Impacts</i>	<i>Potential Impacts</i>	<i>Combined Rank</i>			
Medium	High	Medium	High	High	III

## Watershed Highlights

Watershed covers 243 square miles.  
Provides drinking water for Hyden.  
Hyden discharges treated sewage into the watershed.  
Hyden is completing plans for sewer regionalization to eliminate five package plants and several straight pipes or failing septic systems.  
Water supply is an issue.  
Greasy Creek is classified as threatened between Laurel Fork and Big Laurel Creek [2000 305(b)].  
DOW and EPA have agreed to delist the segments of the Middle Fork designated as impaired on the 1996 and 1998 303(d) lists. DOW has designated the Middle Fork and Exceptional Water.  
The Greasy Creek subwatershed is a Watershed Watch Citizen Action Plan watershed.  
Watershed is in the PRIDE region. PRIDE identified 322 straight pipes or failing septic systems in the watershed.











Middle Fork Region



See the color map of this region on p. 123.

### LEGEND

- Area of this watershed 
- Sewage plants 
- Public water supplies 
- Other water withdrawals 
- Locks & dams 
- Cities and towns 
- Rivers and larger streams 
- Smaller streams 
- County borders 