

Middle Fork Kentucky River mouth watershed (051002-02-040)

Geography. The Middle Fork Kentucky River mouth watershed extends from northwest Perry County across western Breathitt County into southeastern Lee County. The southern part of the watershed is in the Eastern Kentucky Coal Field physiographic region, characterized by mountainous terrain, rapid rates of surface runoff, and moderate rates of groundwater drainage. The northern part of the watershed is in the plateau area of the coal field region, characterized by rolling terrain, medium to rapid rates of surface runoff, and slow to medium 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. Unconsolidated silts, sands, and gravels occur along the flood plain of the river in Lee County.

Waterways. This watershed includes the section of the Middle Fork between Buckhorn Lake and the confluence with the North Fork east of Beattyville. Among the creeks that feed it are Squabble Creek, Puncheon Camp Creek, Upper Twin Creek, and Long Shoal Branch. Water from the Freeman Fork and Middle Fork Kentucky River near Buckhorn Lake watersheds also flows into this watershed.

Land and water use. Land in the watershed is rural and wooded, with less than 10% agricultural use. Four 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 include one (Upper Twin Creek) that only partially supports its designated uses, based on biological and/or water-quality data. 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 or 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	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	IV

Watershed Highlights

Watershed covers 136 square miles.

Part of source water protection zones 1, 2, and 3 for the Beattyville water system.

Aquatic life partially impaired by unknown causes in Upper Twin Creek from its mouth to Keen Fork (2nd priority TMDL 2002).

Watershed is in PRIDE service region. PRIDE identified 35 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 

