

Kentucky River watershed above Heidelberg (051002-04-010)

Geography. The Kentucky River watershed above Heidelberg occupies central Lee County. The land is in the escarpment area of the Eastern Kentucky Coal Field physiographic region, characterized by hilly terrain, very 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. This watershed includes the Kentucky River from Beattyville west to the mouth of Sturgeon Creek at Heidelberg. Among the creeks that feed it are Contrary Creek and Mikes Branch. Water from the North Fork Kentucky River mouth and South Fork Kentucky River mouth watersheds also flows into this watershed.

Land and water use. Land in the watershed is mainly rural and wooded; about 10% is agricultural. The Beattyville sewage treatment plant holds a permit for discharges into the creek. See the 2000 Assessment Report for full details.

Agency data assessment. The assessed creek segments in this watershed fully support all of their 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	High	Medium	IV

Watershed Highlights

Watershed covers 18 square miles.

Beattyville discharges treated sewage into the watershed.

Groundwater is substantially more sensitive than the basin average.

The potential for agricultural erosion is substantially higher than the basin average.

Watershed is in PRIDE service region. PRIDE identified 4 straight pipes or failing septic systems in the watershed.



Mid-Kentucky River



See the color map of this region on p. 127.

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

