

Middle & South Forks of Red River watershed (051002-04-140)

Geography. The Middle & South Forks of Red River watershed covers the western tip of Wolfe County and part of eastern Powell County. The land is in the escarpment area of the Eastern Coal Field physiographic region, characterized by hilly terrain and very high rates of surface runoff and moderate groundwater drainage. The watershed is underlain by coals, sandstones, and shales: this geology generally is conducive to productive wells, although water quality may be low for wells that draw from coal layers. Parts of the watershed lie over sandstone aquifers. Other parts lie above interbedded clay shales and siltstones.

Waterways. The Middle Fork of the Red River drains the eastern part of the watershed via numerous tributary creeks and flows into the South Fork of the Red River close to Lombard. The South Fork of the Red River drains the western part of the watershed and empties into the Red River at the bottom of the watershed close to Bowen.

Land and water use. Land in the watershed is primarily rural and wooded; about 5% is agricultural. The surface waters of the watershed supply the drinking water for Natural Bridge State Park. Five businesses and organizations hold permits for discharges into the creeks. See the 2000 Assessment Report for full details.

Agency data assessment. The creeks assessed in 1998-1999 in this watershed fully support all of their designated uses, based on biological and/or water-quality data. However, three streams did not support uses in past years, and TMDL plans for managing these streams have been approved. Brines released during oil well operations raised the levels of chlorides, salinity, and total dissolved solids in these streams and led to their failure to support the aquatic life designated use.

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>			
Low	Low	Low	High	Low	III

Watershed Highlights

Watershed covers 58 square miles.

Provides drinking water for Natural Bridge State Park.

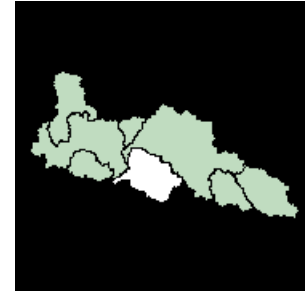
A TMDL is in place for chlorides in the South Fork Red River, Sand Lick Fork, and Stump Cave Branch. Because the oil and gas drilling that led to impairment is no longer active, DOW has requested delisting of the South Fork and Sand Lick.

USFS is trying to reduce impacts of old roads and trails on the watershed, and wants to address hazards posed by certain dams.

The Wolfe County part of the watershed is in the PRIDE service region.











Red River Region



See the color map of this region on p. 129.

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 