**Geography.** The Otter Creek watershed covers north-central Madison County. The land is in the outer subregion of the Bluegrass physiographic region, characterized by undulating terrain, moderate to rapid surface runoff, and moderate rates of groundwater drainage. Parts of the watershed lie over interbedded shales and limestones (these are 20% limestone; water conduction is poor because of the clay content of the shale). Other areas are underlain by interbedded limestones and shales (>20% limestone, allowing groundwater flow where the clay content is low enough).

**Waterways.** Otter Creek empties into the Kentucky River at Ford. Among the creeks that feed it are Hicks Branch, Tribble Branch, East and West Forks Otter Creek, Lost Fork, and Stony Run.

**Land and water use.** Land in the watershed is about 85% agricultural; the rest of the land is divided roughly equally among commercial, residential, and rural wooded categories. Six 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 (East Fork Otter Creek) that only partially supports its designated uses, based on biological and/or water-quality data. Excess nutrients contribute to the impairment of the stream. See the 2000 Assessment Report or 2000 305(b) list and the 2002 303(d) list of impaired streams for full details.
Watershed Highlights

Watershed covers 65 square miles.
Part of source water protection zones 1, 2, and 3 for the Richmond water system.
Richmond discharges treated sewage into the watershed (Dreaming Creek sewage treatment plant).
Aquatic life partially impaired by overenrichment in the East Fork of Otter Creek from its mouth to 2.7 miles upstream (2nd priority TMDL 2002).
Groundwater is substantially more sensitive than the basin average.
The potential for agricultural erosion is substantially higher than the basin average.
Livestock density is substantially higher than the basin average.
Population without access to public sewers is substantially higher than the basin average.

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