



2006

Generalized Geologic Map for Land-Use Planning: Fleming County, Kentucky

Daniel I. Carey

University of Kentucky, daniel.carey@uky.edu

Joseph Buckles

University of Kentucky

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The Grange City covered bridge over Fox Creek is one of several such bridges in the county, survivors from a time of slower pace. Photo by Dan Carey, Kentucky Geological Survey.

Fleming County, an area of 351 square miles in the Outer Bluegrass Region, was formed in 1798. Western Fleming County is characterized by gently rolling hills and mild local relief. East of a line between Hillsboro and Mount Carmel is an escarpment. Slopes are steep. The highest elevation in the county is over 1,400 feet, a knob on the Fleming/Rowan county line about 3 miles southeast of Plummers Landing. The lowest elevation is 590 feet where the Licking River leaves the county. The 2004 county population of 14,480 was 5 percent greater than the population in 2000. Photo by Dan Carey, Kentucky Geological Survey.



A growing population is spreading across the county. This residential development is north of Flemingsburg off Ky. 11. Photo by Dan Carey, Kentucky Geological Survey.

Agriculture
This reservoir is a source of water for the Flemingsburg Utility System. A local resident reports that it also provides habitat for bluegill, crappie, small-mouth bass, and catfish. About 80 percent of Fleming County residents are served by public water and 30 percent are on public sewer. Photo by Dan Carey, Kentucky Geological Survey.

Water Resources
This reservoir is a source of water for the Flemingsburg Utility System. A local resident reports that it also provides habitat for bluegill, crappie, small-mouth bass, and catfish. About 80 percent of Fleming County residents are served by public water and 30 percent are on public sewer. Photo by Dan Carey, Kentucky Geological Survey.

Groundwater
This reservoir is a source of water for the Flemingsburg Utility System. A local resident reports that it also provides habitat for bluegill, crappie, small-mouth bass, and catfish. About 80 percent of Fleming County residents are served by public water and 30 percent are on public sewer. Photo by Dan Carey, Kentucky Geological Survey.

Additional Resources
Listed below are Web sites for several agencies and organizations that may be of assistance with land-use planning in Fleming County. ps.ca.uky.edu/fleming/ University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service. www.bradco.com/Buffalo_Trace_Area_Development_District/ www.franklincountykentucky.com/development/development%20information%20system/ www.ky.gov/KentuckyAtlas2009.html Kentucky Atlas and Gazetteer, Fleming County. kgwsc.uky.edu/downloads/planning.htm Planning information from the Kentucky Geological Survey.

Planning Guidance by Rock Unit Type

Rock Unit	Foundation and Excavation	Septic System	Residence Basement	Highways/Bridges	Access Roads	Light Industry and Malls	Intensive Recreation	Extensive Recreation	Reservoir Areas	Reservoir Embankments	Underground Utilities
1. Clay, silt, sand, and gravel (alluvium)	Foundation material easy to excavate. Seasonal high water table. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Severe limitations. Refer to water table. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Severe limitations. Seasonal high water table. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Severe limitations. Seasonal high water table. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Severe limitations. Seasonal high water table. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Severe limitations. Seasonal high water table. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Slight to severe limitations, depending on type table. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Slight to severe limitations, depending on type table. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Previous analysis. Favorable. Fair to good. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Fair stability. Fair to good. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Slight limitations. In general, except for seasonal high water table. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).
2. Clay, silt, sand, and gravel (terrace deposits)	Fair foundation. Seasonal high water table. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Average to slight limitations. Seasonal high water table. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Moderate to slight limitations. Seasonal high water table. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Slight limitations. Seasonal high water table. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Slight limitations. Seasonal high water table. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Slight limitations. Seasonal high water table. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Moderate to slight limitations, depending on activity and topography. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Slight to moderate limitations, depending on activity and topography. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Not recommended. Previous analysis.	Severe to slight limitations. Seasonal high water table. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Slight limitations. Seasonal high water table. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).
3. Limestone, shale	Good to excellent foundation material, difficult to excavate.	Moderate to severe limitations. In general, easy to excavate. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Moderate to severe limitations. In general, easy to excavate. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Moderate to severe limitations. In general, easy to excavate. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Slight to moderate limitations, depending on activity and topography. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Slight to moderate limitations, depending on activity and topography. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Slight to moderate limitations, depending on activity and topography. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Slight to moderate limitations, depending on activity and topography. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Moderate to slight limitations. Reservoir may leak where rocks are fractured. Sinks possible.	Moderate to severe limitations. Reservoir may leak where rocks are fractured. Sinks possible.	Moderate to severe limitations. Rock excavation likely.
4. Limestone	Good to excellent foundation material, difficult to excavate.	Moderate to severe limitations. In general, easy to excavate. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Moderate to severe limitations. In general, easy to excavate. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Moderate to severe limitations. In general, easy to excavate. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Slight to moderate limitations, depending on activity and topography. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Slight to moderate limitations, depending on activity and topography. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Slight to moderate limitations, depending on activity and topography. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Slight to moderate limitations, depending on activity and topography. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Moderate to slight limitations. Reservoir may leak where rocks are fractured. Sinks possible.	Moderate to severe limitations. Reservoir may leak where rocks are fractured. Sinks possible.	Severe limitations. Rock excavation likely.
5. Black shale*	Floor foundation. In general, easy to excavate. Low strength and stability. May contain debris clays.	Severe limitations. Low permeability. Low strength and stability. May contain debris clays.	Severe limitations. Low permeability. Low strength and stability. May contain debris clays.	Severe limitations. Low permeability. Low strength and stability. May contain debris clays.	Severe limitations. Low strength, slumping, and seepage problems.	Severe limitations. Low strength, slumping, and seepage problems.	Moderate to severe limitations, depending on activity. Slight limitations for forest or nature preserve.	Slight to severe limitations, depending on activity. Slight limitations for forest or nature preserve.	Slight limitations for small ponds.	Severe limitations. Poor strength and stability.	Moderate limitations. Poor strength. Wetness.
6. Shale*, limestone	Is to good foundation material. Slumps when wet. Avoid steep slopes.	Slight to severe limitations, depending on activity and topography. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Severe to moderate limitations. Rock excavation likely. Local drainage problems. Sinks possible. Drainage required.	Severe to moderate limitations. Rock excavation likely. Local drainage problems. Sinks possible. Drainage required.	Severe to moderate limitations. Rock excavation likely. Local drainage problems. Sinks possible. Drainage required.	Slight to moderate limitations, depending on activity and topography. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Slight to moderate limitations, depending on activity and topography. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Slight to moderate limitations, depending on activity and topography. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Moderate to slight limitations. Reservoir may leak where rocks are fractured. Sinks possible.	Slight to moderate limitations. Reservoir may leak where rocks are fractured. Sinks possible.	Moderate to severe limitations. Rock excavation likely.
7. Shale*	Floor foundation. In general, easy to excavate. Low strength and stability. May contain debris clays.	Severe limitations. Low permeability. Low strength and stability. May contain debris clays.	Severe limitations. Low permeability. Low strength and stability. May contain debris clays.	Severe limitations. Low permeability. Low strength and stability. May contain debris clays.	Moderate to severe limitations, depending on activity. Slight limitations for forest or nature preserve.	Moderate to severe limitations, depending on activity. Slight limitations for forest or nature preserve.	Slight to severe limitations, depending on activity. Slight limitations for forest or nature preserve.	Slight to severe limitations, depending on activity. Slight limitations for forest or nature preserve.	Slight limitations. Reservoir may leak where rocks are fractured. Sinks possible.	Severe limitations. Poor strength and stability.	Moderate limitations. Poor strength. Wetness.
8. Sandstone, siltstone, shale	Good to excellent foundation material, difficult to excavate.	Severe limitations. This soil.	Severe limitations. Rock excavation. Steep slopes.	Severe limitations. Rock excavation. Steep slopes.	Severe limitations. Rock excavation. Steep slopes.	Severe limitations. Rock excavation. Steep slopes.	Moderate to severe limitations, depending on activity and topography. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Slight to severe limitations, depending on activity and topography. Subject to flooding. Refer to soil report (Jacobs, 1993).	Not applicable.	Not applicable.	Severe limitations. Rock excavation.

*Shales and clays in these units can shrink during dry periods, and swell during wet periods and cause cracking of foundations. On hillsides, especially where steep and springs are present, they can also be susceptible to landslides.

Generalized Geologic Map for Land-Use Planning: Fleming County, Kentucky

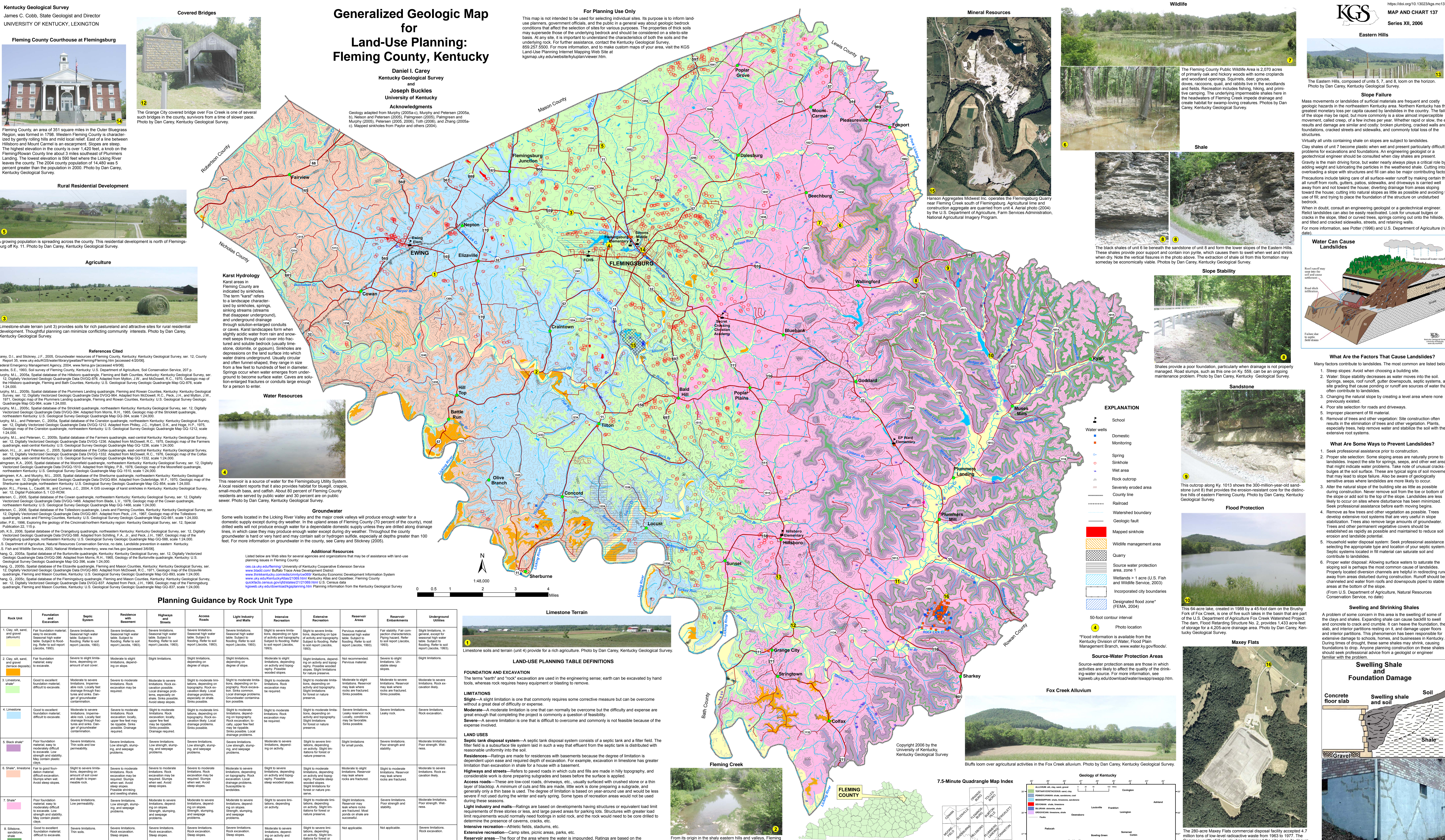
Daniel I. Carey
Kentucky Geological Survey

Joseph Buckles
University of Kentucky

Acknowledgments
Geology adapted from Murphy (2005a-c), Murphy and Petersen (2005a, b), Nelson and Petersen (2005), Palmgren (2006), Palmgren and Murphy (2005), Petersen (2005, 2008), Toltz (2008), Toltz (2008), and Zhang (2005a-c). Mapped sinkholes from Paylor and others (2004).

For Planning Use Only

This map is not intended to be used for selecting individual sites. Its purpose is to inform land-use planners, government officials, and the public in a general way about geologic bedrock conditions that affect the selection of sites for various purposes. The properties of thick soils may supersede those of the underlying bedrock and should be considered on a site-by-site basis. At any site, it is important to understand the characteristics of both the soils and the underlying rock. For further assistance, contact the Kentucky Geological Survey, 859.257.5500. For more information, and to make custom maps of your area, visit the KGS Land-Use Planning Internet Mapping Web site at kgmap.uky.edu/web/site/kytplanviewer.htm.



Wildlife

The Fleming County Public Wildlife Area is 2,070 acres of primarily oak and hickory woods with some croplands and woodland openings. Squirrels, deer, grouse, doves, raccoons, quail, and rabbits live in the woodlands and fields. Recreation includes fishing, hiking, and primitive camping. The underlying impermeable shales here in the headwaters of Fleming Creek impede drainage and create habitat for swamp-loving creatures. Photos by Dan Carey, Kentucky Geological Survey.

Mineral Resources

Hanson Aggregates Midwest Inc. operates the Flemingsburg Quarry near Fleming Creek south of Flemingsburg. Agricultural lime and construction aggregate are quarried from unit 4. Aerial photo (2004) by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Farm Services Administration, National Agricultural Imagery Program.

Shale

The black shales of unit 6 lie beneath the sandstone of unit 8 and form the lower slopes of the Eastern Hills. These shales provide poor support and contain iron pyrite, which causes them to swell when wet and shrink when dry. Note the vertical fissures in the photo above. The extraction of shale oil from this formation may someday be economically viable. Photo by Dan Carey, Kentucky Geological Survey.

Slope Stability

Shales provide a poor foundation, particularly when drainage is not properly managed. Road slumps, such as this one on Ky. 559, can be an ongoing maintenance problem. Photo by Dan Carey, Kentucky Geological Survey.

Sandstone

This outcrop along Ky. 1013 shows the 300-million-year-old sandstone (unit 8) that provides the erosion-resistant core for the distinctive hills of eastern Fleming County. Photo by Dan Carey, Kentucky Geological Survey.

Flood Protection

This 64-acre lake, created in 1988 by a 45-foot dam on the Brushy Fork of Fox Creek, is one of five such lakes in the basin that are part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Fox Creek Watershed Project. The dam, Flood Retarding Structure No. 2, provides 1,433 acre-feet of storage for a 4,205-acre drainage area. Photo by Dan Carey, Kentucky Geological Survey.

Swelling and Shrinking Shales

A problem of some concern in this area is the swelling of some of the clays and shales. Expanding shale can cause basins to swell and concrete to crack and crumble. It can heave the foundation, the slab, and interior partitions resting on it, and damage upper floors and interior partitions. This phenomenon has been responsible for extensive damage to schools, homes, and businesses in Kentucky. During times of drought, these same shales may shrink, causing foundations to drop. Anyone planning construction on these shales should seek professional advice from a geologist or engineer familiar with the problem.

Swelling Shale Foundation Damage

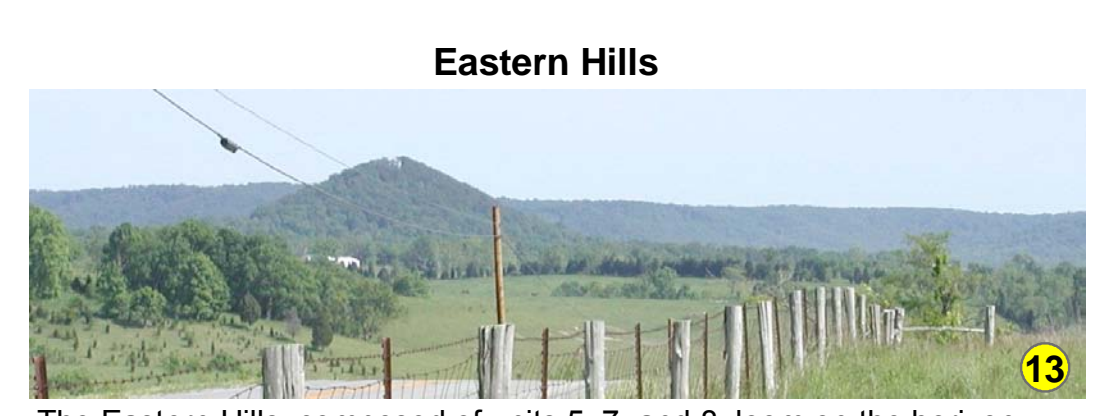
Concrete floor slab, Swelling shale and soil, Soil, Shale, Gravel.

Swelling Shale Foundation Damage

Concrete floor slab, Swelling shale and soil, Soil, Shale, Gravel.

Swelling Shale Foundation Damage

Concrete floor slab, Swelling shale and soil, Soil, Shale, Gravel.



The Eastern Hills, composed of units 5, 7, and 8, loom on the horizon. Photo by Dan Carey, Kentucky Geological Survey.

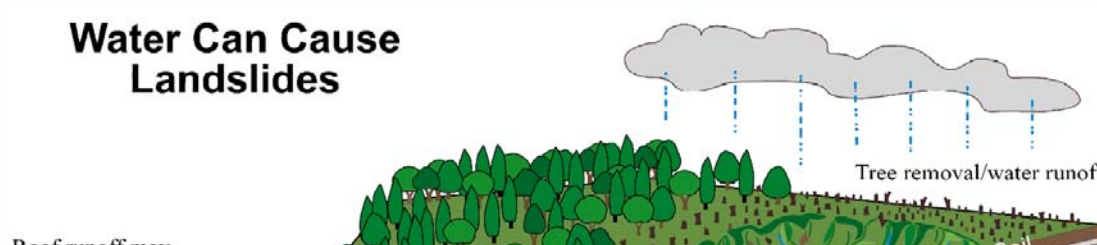
Slope Failure

Mass movements on landslides of surficial materials are frequent and costly geologic hazards in the northeastern Kentucky area. Northern Kentucky has the greatest monetary loss per capita caused by landslides in the country. The failure of the slope may be rapid, but more commonly is a slow almost imperceptible movement called creep of a few inches per year. Whether rapid or slow, the end results and damage are similar and costly: broken plumbing, cracked walls and foundations, cracked streets and sidewalks, and commonly total loss of the structures.

Virtually all units containing shale on slopes are subject to landslides. Clay shales of unit 7 become plastic when wet and present particularly difficult problems for excavations and foundations. An engineering geologist or a geotechnical engineer should be consulted when clay shales are present. Gravity is the main driving force, but water nearly always plays a critical role by adding weight and lubricating the particles in the weathered shale. Cutting into or overlying a slope with structures and fill can also be major contributing factors. Precautions include taking care of all surface-water runoff by making certain that all runoff from roofs, gutters, patios, sidewalks, and driveways is carried well away from and not toward the house; diverting drainage from areas sloping toward the house; cutting into natural slopes as little as possible and avoiding the use of fill; and trying to place the foundation of the structure on undisturbed bedrock.

When in doubt, consult an engineering geologist or a geotechnical engineer. Relict landslides can also be easily reactivated. Look for unusual bulges or cracks in the slope, tilted or curved trees, springs coming out on the hillside, and tilted and cracked sidewalks, streets, and retaining walls.

For more information, see Potter (1996) and U.S. Department of Agriculture (no date).



Water can cause landslides. Roof runoff may erode into the hillside. Tree removal water runoff may erode into the hillside. Road ditches may erode into the hillside. Failure due to fill areas.

What Are the Factors That Cause Landslides?

Many factors contribute to landslides. The most common are listed below:

1. Steep slopes: Avoid when choosing a building site.
2. Water: Slope stability decreases as water moves into the soil. Springs, seeps, roof runoff, gutter downspouts, septic systems, and side grading that cause ponding or runoff are sources of water that often contribute to landslides.
3. Altering the natural slope of a site by creating a level area where none previously existed.
4. Poor site selection for roads and driveways.
5. Improper placement of fill material.
6. Removal of trees and other vegetation: Site structure often results in the elimination of trees and other vegetation. Plants, especially trees, help remove water from the soil and stabilize the soil with their extensive root systems.

What Are Some Ways to Prevent Landslides?

1. Seek professional assistance prior to construction.
2. Proper site selection: Some sloping areas are naturally prone to landslides. Inspect the site for springs, seeps, and other wet areas that might indicate water problems. Take note of unusual cracks or bulges at the soil surface. These are typical signs of soil movement that may lead to slope failure. Also be aware of geologically sensitive areas where landslides are more likely to occur.
3. Alter the natural slope of the building site as little as possible during construction. Never remove soil from the top or bottom of the slope or add soil to the top of the slope. Landslides are less likely to occur on sites where disturbance has been minimized. Seek professional assistance before earth moving begins.
4. Remove as few trees and other vegetation as possible. Trees develop extensive root systems that are very useful in slope stabilization. Trees also remove large amounts of groundwater. Trees and other permanent vegetative covers should be established as rapidly as possible and maintained to reduce soil erosion and landslide potential.
5. Household water disposal system: Seek professional assistance in selecting the appropriate type and location of your septic system. Septic systems located in fill material can saturate soil and contribute to landslides.
6. Proper water disposal: Allow surface waters to saturate the soil. Remove as much water as possible from the site. Properly located diversion channels are helpful in redirecting runoff away from areas disturbed during construction. Runoff should be channelled and water from roofs and downspouts piped to stable areas at the bottom of the slope. (From U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, no date)

Limestone Terrain

Limestone soils and terrain (unit 4) provide for a rich agriculture. Photo by Dan Carey, Kentucky Geological Survey.

FOUNDATION AND EXCAVATION

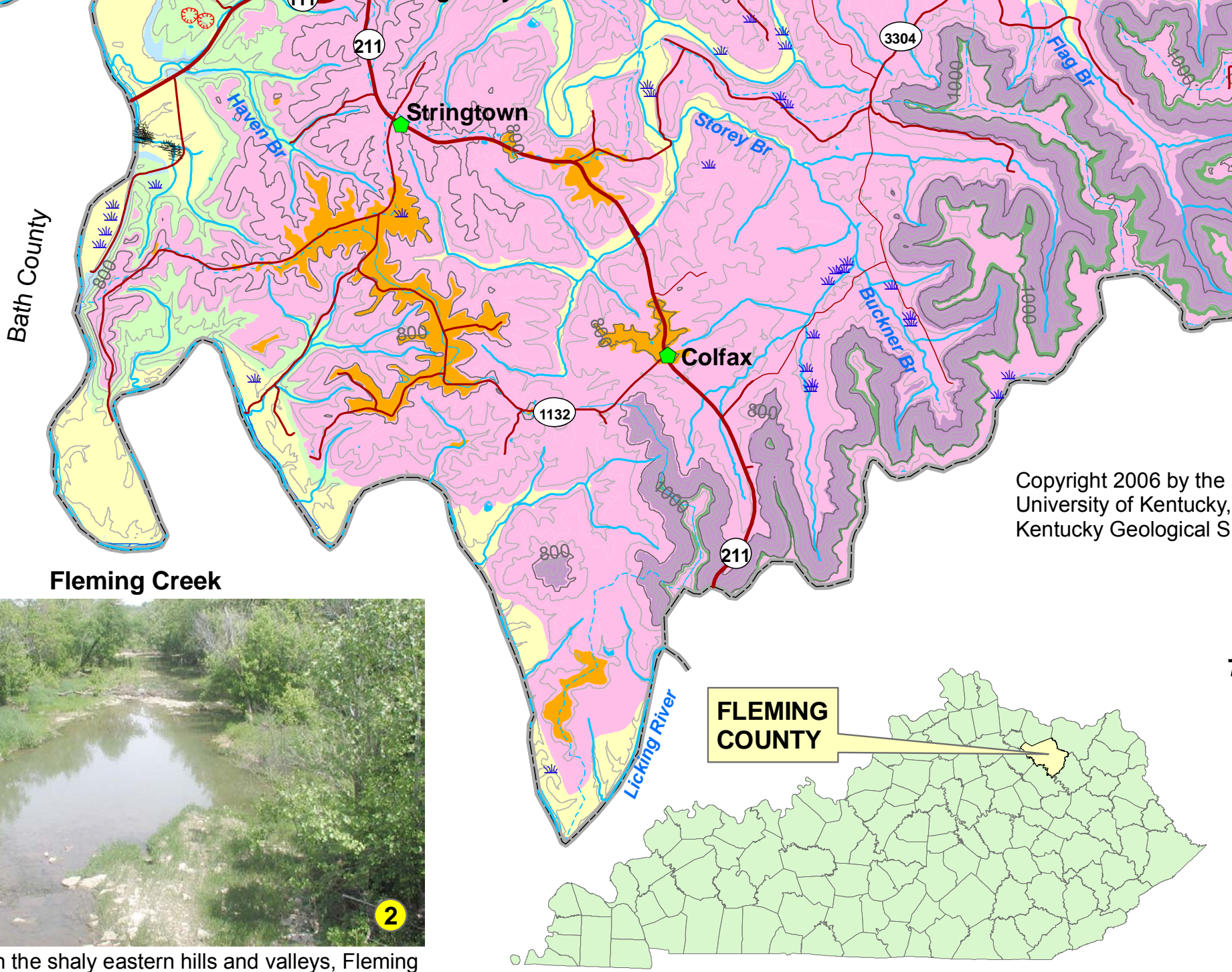
The terms "earth" and "rock" excavation are used in the engineering sense; earth can be excavated by hand tools, whereas rock requires heavy equipment or blasting to remove.

LIMITATIONS

Slight—A slight limitation is one that commonly requires some corrective measure but can be overcome without a great deal of difficulty or expense.
Moderate—A moderate limitation is one that can normally be overcome but the difficulty and expense are great enough that completing the project is commonly a question of feasibility.
Severe—A severe limitation is one that is difficult to overcome and commonly is not feasible because of the expense involved.

LAND USES

Septic tank disposal system—A septic tank disposal system consists of a septic tank and a filter field. The filter field is a subsurface tile system laid in such a way that effluent from the septic tank is distributed with reasonable uniformity into the soil.
Residences—Ratings are made for residences with basements because the degree of limitation is dependent upon base and required depth of excavation. For example, excavation in limestone has greater limitation in excavation in shale for a house with a basement.
Highways and streets—Refers to paved roads in which cuts and fills are made in hilly topography, and considerable work is done preparing subgrades and bases before the surface is applied.
Access roads—These are low-cost roads, driveways, etc., usually surfaced with crushed stone or a thin layer of blacktop. A minimum of cuts and fills are made. Little work is done preparing a subgrade, and generally only a thin base is used. The degree of limitation is based on year-around use and would be less severe if not used during the winter and early spring. Some types of recreation areas would not be used during these seasons.
Light industry and malls—Ratings are based on developments having structures or equivalent load limit requirements would normally need footings in solid rock, and the rock would need to be core drilled to determine the presence of caverns, cracks, etc.
Intensive recreation—Athletic fields, stadiums, etc.
Extensive recreation—Camp sites, picnic areas, parks, etc.
Reservoir areas—The floor of the area where the water is impounded. Ratings are based on the permeability of the rock.
Reservoir embankments—The rocks are rated in limitations for embankment material.
Underground utilities—Included in this group are sanitary sewers, storm sewers, water mains, and other pipes that require fairly deep trenches.



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Bluffs loom over agricultural activities in the Fox Creek alluvium. Photo by Dan Carey, Kentucky Geological Survey.

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Visit the KGS World Wide Web site at: www.uky.edu/kgs

The 280-acre Maxey Flats commercial disposal facility accepted 4.7 million tons of low-level radioactive waste from 1963 to 1977. The firm, Commonwealth of Kentucky has maintained the site since its closure. More information on the site is available at www.waste.ky.gov/gov/radmaxey/flats.htm. Aerial photo (2004) by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Farm Services Administration, National Agricultural Imagery Program.

Some shales and the soils derived from them swell when exposed to water or air. These swelling shales and soils can have severe impacts on building foundations and other structures (e.g., bridges, dams, roads). Photo by John Kiefer, Kentucky Geological Survey.