

Black Shale—Knobs and Shale Region



Slopes of black shale erode quickly and become unstable when exposed, as seen in this roadcut on the AA Highway in Lewis County. The shale contains pyrite, which causes it to shrink when dry and swell when wet. The shale contains enough organic matter to burn, and the extraction of shale oil may someday become economically viable. Photo by Dan Carey, Kentucky Geological Survey.