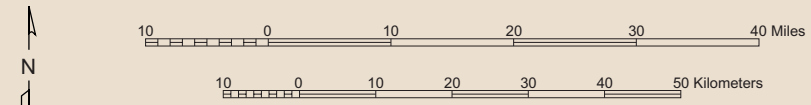


KARST OCCURRENCE IN KENTUCKY

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EXPLANATION

- Areas underlain by bedrock with high potential for karst development
- Areas underlain by bedrock with moderate potential for karst development
- Areas underlain by bedrock with limited or no potential for karst development

This map was compiled from a digital version of the 1:500,000-scale geologic map of Kentucky (Noger, M.C., comp., 1988, Geologic map of Kentucky: U.S. Geological Survey). The areas of potential karst development were delineated using stratigraphic units mapped on the geologic map. The classification of the potential for karst development was based on the field experience of the authors and other data. A number of isolated carbonate units that would not have otherwise been differentiated on the geologic map were newly digitized for this map.

This karst map should not be used for evaluating karst geologic hazards or hydrogeology at scales larger than 1:500,000. The base geologic map was digitized at 1:500,000 scale and is limited in precision to that scale. Because of the small scale of the original geologic map, lithostratigraphic units were consolidated into thicker chronostratigraphic units to create an area large enough to delineate on the geologic map. In some cases, the consolidation resulted in carbonates (limestone or dolomite) and noncarbonates (sandstone or shale, for example) being grouped; these rocks are not redivided on this map. Although the potential for karst development can be predicted from lithology, other factors such as relief and length of time the rock is exposed are also important and were not considered in the making of this map. Finally, areas where the near-surface bedrock is insoluble and closely underlain by soluble rock are common, particularly in the Eastern Pennyroyal. Conduits that pirate drainage commonly extend through ridges capped with insoluble rocks. Therefore, some areas mapped as having limited potential that are adjacent to areas of higher potential are actually karst, but cannot be differentiated on this map.

Karst is a terrane that is generally underlain by limestone or dolomite, where the topography is formed chiefly by the dissolving of rock. Karst landscapes are commonly characterized by sinkholes, sinking streams, closed depressions, subterranean drainage, large springs, and caves.

Karst regions are susceptible to unique problems such as sinkhole collapse, sinkhole flooding, and rapid groundwater pollution. Springs in karst areas are an important, productive source of groundwater. Rare biologic communities and endangered species can be found in the fragile underground environments developed in karst landscapes.

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