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Kentucky Geological Survey

I began working in the eastern Kentucky coal fields in 1975. One of my first assignments was to manage a core drilling program. Dr. John Ferm had developed a new core logging system partially funded by Bethlehem Mines Corp. I had the good fortune of being one of his "Guinea Pigs". He said if he could teach an engineer to log core, he could teach anyone.

In 1975 much of the state had been mapped and there were many geologic quadrangles (GQs) available for the area I was working in. I was amazed at the detail. After walking the mountains, I marveled at the amount of work it took. And this was in a time when most of the geologic work would have been without benefit of modern electronics.

Throughout the years in my consulting practice, I have accumulated literally hundreds of copies of GQs from various sources. They are still an invaluable resource in our day to day work. Now we can download them online and print them at will, use them as backgrounds, and incorporate them into our reports.

I have always been proud to tell people across the country that Kentucky was the first state (1978) to have every quadrangle geologically mapped. I believe Rhode Island is the only other state to reach this milestone. I am also quick to point out that the Kentucky Geological Survey, in my opinion, is the best in the nation. I suppose I have been spoiled. When I go to other states and attempt to do the types of projects that we do, the first thing I try to get is geologic maps. Many times I am surprised to find that they are not available or what is available is not as accurate or detailed as what we have here in Kentucky.

Steve Gardner, P.E.