

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

historic name Wolfe County High School

other names/site number WO-C-5

2. Location

street & number 166 Wolfe County Elementary School Road

| |
|----|
| NA |
| NA |

not for publication

city or town Campton vicinity

state Kentucky code KY county Wolfe code 237 zip code 41301

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Signature of certifying official/Title Lindy Casebier, Acting SHPO Date _____

Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

5. Classification

Wolfe County High School
Name of Property

Wolfe County, Kentucky
County and State

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | private |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | public - Local |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | public - State |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | public - Federal |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | building(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | district |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | structure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | object |

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 1 | 3 | buildings |
| | | district |
| | | site |
| | | structure |
| | | object |
| 1 | 3 | Total |

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

NA

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION/SCHOOL

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT/MODERNE

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE

walls: STONE

roof: UNKNOWN

other: _____

Wolfe County High School
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Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

The historic Wolfe County High School (WO-C-5) is prominently situated atop a hill overlooking the town of Campton, seat of Wolfe County, Kentucky. It is visible from most locations within the small community. The building was constructed from 1937-1942, the WPA Moderne style from locally-quarried sandstone. The building stands south of Plummer Street, north of the Mountain Parkway Spur (KY 15), and west of Johnson Street, which defines the western edge of Campton's commercial district. The building is being interpreted for its educational values.

Site Description:

Wolfe County High School sits atop a hill, overlooking the city of Campton to the East. The site grants the building a commanding presence, being visible from most locations in the small county seat. Known locally as "the school on the hill," the building is prominently visible from Kentucky 15, a major arterial roadway connecting the Bert T. Combs Mountain Parkway at Campton to the county seats of Jackson in Breathitt County, Hazard in Perry County, and Whitesburg in Letcher County.

The campus is accessed by a steep drive off Plummer Street. The site is an approximately 1.5-acre flattened area at the top of the hill, and is clearly bounded by dense overgrowth and steep slopes. The campus is made up of the main school building, and three non-contributing smaller accessory structures. Most of the site is paved in asphalt and little vegetation or landscaping remains.

Exterior Description:

The Wolfe County High School building is a three-story structure with a primary façade of 29 bays. The façade is rock-faced ashlar masonry of locally quarried sandstone. The foundation and first story are laid in broken range work, while the second and third stories, along with the parapet, are laid in regular courses. The building displays characteristics of the Art Moderne style, evident in other WPA buildings, with the exception of the primary entrance. The central bay of the primary façade projects slightly from the adjacent plane, and features a Greek revival portico surrounding the main entrance doors. Six steps lead from ground level to the entry, which is flanked by pairs of engaged pilasters to the outside and engaged ionic columns to the inside. A frieze is engraved with the words Wolfe County High School. The double doors are recessed within the entry. The original doors were of a two panel design, with 12 lights in the upper panel, beneath a transom divided into six lights.

The building originally had wooden six-over-six sash windows on the first story and nine-over-nine sash windows on the second and third stories. All of the original windows have been replaced with metal ones. The windows have limestone sills and the lintels are formed by limestone belt courses on each story. The building is capped by a simple limestone cornice below a stone parapet. Concealed by the parapet, the shed roof is pitched slightly from front to back.

The gymnasium projects from the center of the rear elevation. The gym features large historic windows and architectural features consistent with the original building. Secondary entrances are located at each end of the building, at the intersection of the main mass and gymnasium, and on the primary (rear) façade of the gymnasium.

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Interior Description

The building is generally symmetrical in plan, with the main entrance on a split level between the first and second story and classrooms arranged along a double loaded corridor. Many of the building's original architectural features, including doors and trim remain. Classroom doors are typically a four panel design, with a large light in the upper panel. The original hardwood floors remain and are in good condition.

Changes to the Building after the Period of Significance

The doors and transom have been replaced with aluminum storefront type units.

[Description of the 3 buildings included in the nominated area]

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION

Period of Significance

1942-1963

Significant Dates

1942

1954

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

NA

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Architect/Builder

Period of Significance

The site of the Wolfe County High School building has been a seat of education since the Kentucky Wesleyan Academy, a branch of Kentucky Wesleyan College was constructed on the site in 1896. The current building was completed in 1942 and operated until being decommissioned in 2005. The Period of Significance begins with the building's construction in 1942 and runs to the close of the historic period, 50 years before the submission of this nomination.

Criteria Considerations NA

Wolfe County High School
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Statement of Significance

Summary Paragraph

The historic Wolfe County High School (WO-C-5) meets National Register Criterion A, significant for its role in local education. The building's historic significance is evaluated within the context, "Education in Wolfe County, Kentucky, 1896-2005." The building's site served as a seat of education in Wolfe County in changing auspices for over a century. The building's prominent location on a high hill overlooking the county seat of Campton makes it a significant landmark and symbol within the community. Any living resident educated in Wolfe County likely was educated on the site. The building's WPA construction by teams of local laborers and locally sourced materials grant the Wolfe County High School the distinction of being built by and from the very rock of the community.

Historic Context: Education in Wolfe County, Kentucky, 1896-2005

Wolfe County, the state's 110th county to be created (out of 120), was established in 1860 from parts of Morgan, Breathitt, Owsley, and Powell counties. The county was named in Honor of Senator Nathaniel Wolfe from Louisville. It is believed that the county seat of Campton is located at the site of Swift Creek Silver Mine camp. The location of the reportedly rich mine is now lost (Wolfe County Woman's Club, p.3).

One of the first high schools established in Wolfe County was the Hazel Green Academy in 1880. The missionary religious/educational residential academy offered the first formal education to residents of the area. The academy was operated by the United Christian Missionary Society of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) from 1920 until closing in 1983.

In 1896 the Kentucky Wesleyan Academy was established in Campton on the site of the later Wolfe County High School. The school was a branch of Kentucky Wesleyan College, originally located in Winchester, and later moved to Owensboro (Wolfe County Woman's Club, p.28). Other branch preparatory schools of the Wesleyan College were established at Brunside in Pulaski County and London in Laurel County. These academies were accredited institutions, meaning graduates were able to enter college without taking entrance exams.

Land for the academy was donated by Christopher Columbus Hanks. The school was built by G.T. Center, builder of several other Campton structures, including the surviving Campton jail, now a senior citizens' center. Center constructed a kiln and fired bricks from clay gathered at the site. A prominent member of the community, Center also served as sheriff and county judge. The Reverend W.L. West was founder and served as the first president of the academy. The school's first principal, E.E. Bishop and his wife, also a teacher at the school, operated a boarding house for students who lived too far to commute. The school had an average enrolment of between 150 and 200 students. The Wesleyan college withdrew support for the school around 1912, following a dispute between the principal and some local residents, which resulted in an attempt to oust the principal from office.

After the Wesleyan Academy closed, the school was operated on a subscription basis for the next two decades, reportedly with tuition of four dollars per month per child. The independent school was renamed Campton Graded School (Wolfe County Woman's Club, p.4). In 1934 the school was renamed Wolfe County High and Grade School.

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Construction of the existing school building began in 1937, funded by Works Progress Administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal. New Deal programs funded the construction of a number of schools across Kentucky and "built hundreds of classrooms, gymnasiums, libraries, and laboratories that otherwise would not have existed until after World War II" (Ellis, p.215). New Deal programs like the WPA construction and literacy projects, Civilian Conservation Corps vocational camps, and National Youth Administration programs "At the very least,...kept Kentucky from falling further behind, no mean achievement in the 1930s" (Ellis, p.216). The construction of the Campton School was planned to provide work for as many as possible, with jobs being rotated biweekly to ensure an even distribution of labor and wages. As many as 143 men were listed on the work ledger. Sandstone was quarried nearby and brought up the hill on mule-drawn sleds. Construction was completed and the first students welcomed to the new Campton High School in 1942.

Wolfe County's schools were consolidated under this roof in 1954 and the school was renamed Wolfe County High School with busses transporting students from remote corners of the county. The building was damaged by a fire in the mid 1960s, originating from faulty wiring to electric ranges in the home economics classroom. Students were temporarily relocated to a nearby Methodist church until repairs could be completed. The building served as the county's public high school until it was replaced with a new building in 1968. The building then became a combined middle and elementary school until 1991, when a new middle school opened, and served as Wolfe County Elementary until decommissioned in 2005.

Evaluation of the Historic Significance of Wolfe County High School within the context of Education in Wolfe County, Kentucky, 1896-2005

The site of the school on the hill served as the seat of education in Wolfe County for over a century. From the establishment of the Wesleyan Academy in 1896 until the decommissioning of the existing building as Wolfe County Elementary in 2005, generations of Wolfe County children were educated on the site. The progression of school institutions in Wolfe County follows similar trends in rural development in the state. From the establishment of the religious academies at Hazel Green and Campton, through the independent subscription period, the WPA construction of the new school, consolidation, and replacement and decommission of the site and school, "the school on the hill" has evolved with the state of education over time. The building is an example of the benefit rural communities like Campton saw from the WPA, providing work amidst the Great Depression, and leaving the community with a lasting landmark.

Evaluation of the Integrity of the Significance of Wolfe County High School and its Physical Condition

If a historic school in Wolfe County, said to meet National Register Criterion A, retains an integrity between its historic significance and its physical plant, then it retains sufficient the integrity of **associations** needed for eligibility. Integrity of associations becomes the primary factor in the eligibility determination, following from the wording of Criterion A: it is a property that "is **associated** with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history." Wolfe County High School maintains a high level of its important associations due to its retention of these integrity factors: location, design, setting, and materials.

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The building possesses integrity of **location** in that it still occupies its original site. The site has conferred a great deal of significance to the building in that it served as a seat of education in Wolfe County for over a century. The prominent location of the site on a hill overlooking the town of Campton the building has become a local landmark, a symbolic place of education for members of the entire community.

The building possesses integrity of **setting**. The building and site completely occupies the prominent hilltop location overlooking Campton as it always has. The building is visible from most locations within Campton and is one of the town's few surviving significant architectural edifices, and certainly the most prominent. The building is a focal point and symbol of the community.

The building possesses moderate integrity of **materials**. All of the building's locally quarried sandstone masonry is intact and in good condition. All of the exterior doors and windows have been replaced in the name of maintenance and modernization, regularly performed on the building over its sixty three years of service. The interior spaces are mostly in their original configuration and condition, with nearly all of the interior doors and trim intact. The interior is in very good condition, as the building was occupied and maintained until 2005.

The building maintains integrity of **design**, as its present-day appearance resembles its original design. The building still exhibits its Moderne style and interesting Greek revival portico entrance. The structure is identifiable as New Deal-era construction. The most substantial change to the building's design has been the replacement of exterior doors and windows. It is difficult to find other schools of the same vintage elsewhere which have escaped similar changes. *Schools as a class of structures* have suffered design changes as their managers have sought to provide modernizing changes both within and outside the classroom. The fact that most schools share these changes, and thus have relatively similar levels of design loss, does not mean that an individual school or schools in general have retained design integrity. Using a school metaphor, that would be grading integrity on the curve, which is to treat integrity as a score. The assessment of design integrity should not seek to reduce design changes to an objective score, and ask whether the school "passes" or not. Rather, the better analysis of design change should ask whether the existing design, in light of the changes made over time, renders the subject resource a good or poor candidate for telling the county's story of educational values. In other words, do this school's exterior design and interior spaces provide us the ability to know its identity and to understand how it functioned as a valuable place of local education? The historic Wolfe County High School still clearly exhibits its identity as a school, and its high retention of interior finishes and room arrangement give the viewer the ability to perceive the way that it supported the education of local children up to 1963.

Due to its retention of integrity factors of location, setting, materials, and design, the building can be said to have integrity of **associations**, the primary factor leading to the eligibility conclusion. Anyone who toured the building upon its opening in 1942, or who views its appearance in the photographic record from that period, would recognize the building today. A student who attended the school in its earliest years would have the same visual images of the school as one who attended as late as 2005. For this reason, the Wolfe County High School building meets the National Register's criteria for integrity. It therefore should be considered for preservation as a major local structure in the development of education in Wolfe County.

Wolfe County High School
Name of Property

Wolfe County, Kentucky
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

1860-1960 Centennial Celebration of Wolfe County, Kentucky. Souvenir Book Issued at Campton, Kentucky, 1960.

Booth, Allan. Personal Interview. 2 April, 2013.

Ellis, William E. *A History of Education in Kentucky.* The University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky, 2011.

Hamlett, Barksdale. *History of Education in Kentucky.* Kentucky Department of Education, Frankfort, Kentucky, 1914.

Miller, Carolyn. Personal Interview. 27 March, 2013.

Wolfe County Woman's Club. *Early and Modern History of Wolfe County.* Wolfe County Woman's Club, Campton, Kentucky, 1954.

A study of the secondary school program of Wolfe County, Kentucky with suggestions for its improvement.

Author: [Isaac Holzrichter](#)
[Thiessen](#)

Thesis at Ohio State University.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Approximately
Acreege of Property 1.5

UTM References

Campton quad

UTM Coordinates calculated by ArcGIS

UTM Coordinates expressed according to NAD 83: Zone 17; Easting 257 164.87; Northing 4179 382.98

UTM Coordinates expressed according to NAD 27:

| | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | <u>17</u> | <u>275 159.28</u> | <u>4179 178.03</u> | 3 | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | <u> </u> |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| 2 | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | 4 | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | <u> </u> |

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Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The site is surrounded on all sides by steep inclines clearly delineating its boundaries.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries chosen are dictated by the surrounding topography. The site sits atop a hill, surrounded by steep inclines. The site is clearly delineated by the boundaries of the level area.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Bruce M. Carter
organization AU Associates date March 20, 2013
street & number 159 Old Georgetown Street telephone (859) 233-2009
city or town Lexington state KY zip code 40508
e-mail bruce@auassociates.com

Photographs:

Name of Property: Wolfe County High School
City or Vicinity: Campton
County: Wolfe
State: Kentucky
Photographer: Bruce Carter
Date Photographed: April, 2013

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 1 of ____.
- 2 of ____.
- 3 of ____.
- 4 of ____.

Property Owner:

Name Wolfe County Fiscal Court
street & number PO Box 429 telephone 606-668-3040

Wolfe County High School
Name of Property

Wolfe County, Kentucky
County and State

city or town Campton state Kentucky zip code 41301





WOLFE COUNTY
HIGH SCHOOL













Teach Me!! Guide Me!! Change My World!!

CES

Wolfe County High School
Wolfe Co, KY
Zone 17

NAD 27 Easting 275 159.28
Northing 4179 178.03

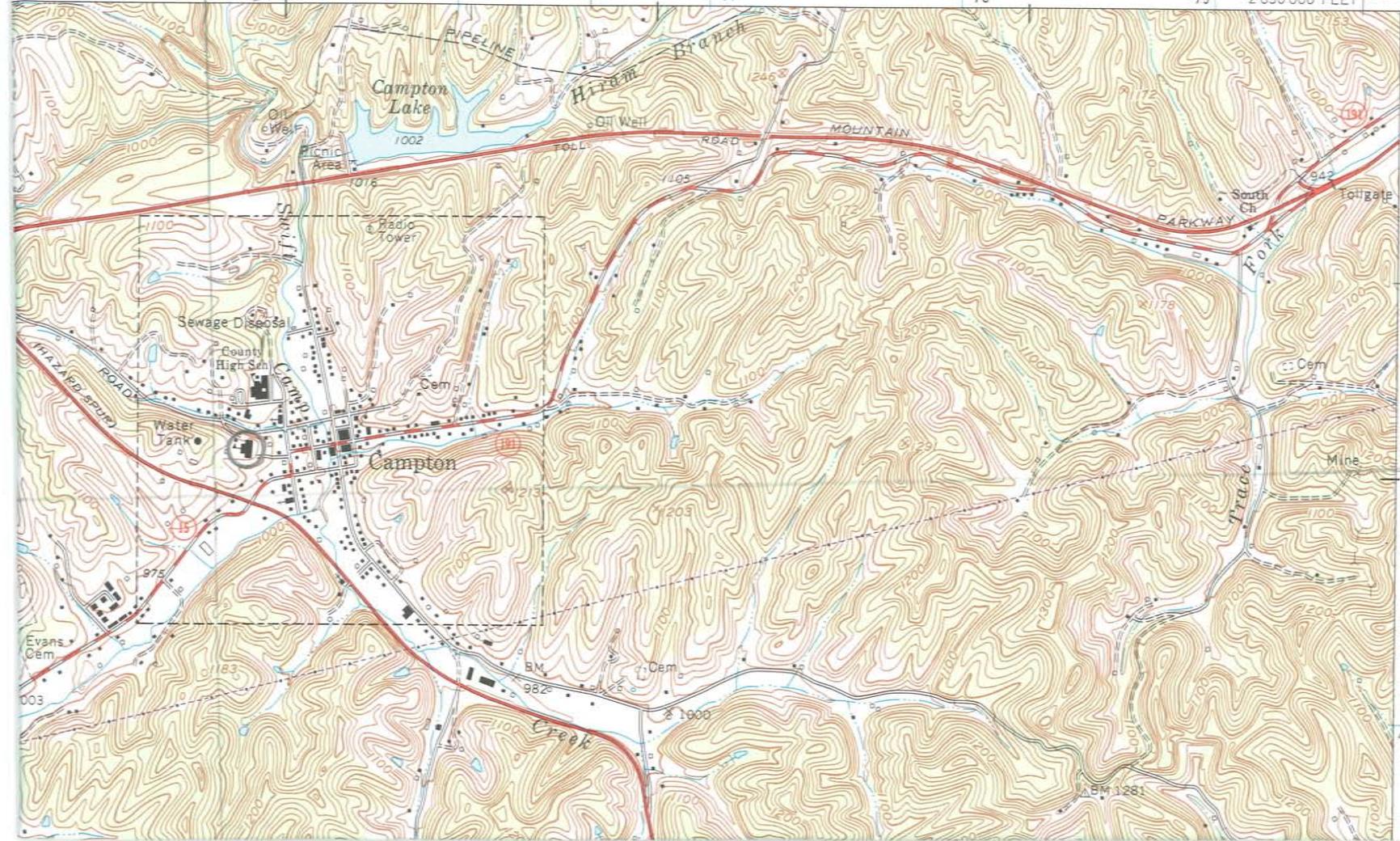
NAD 83 E: 257164.87
N: 4179 382.48

CAMPTON QUADRANGLE
KENTUCKY
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
NE 1/4 BEATTYVILLE 15' QUADRANGLE

4359 IV SW
(HAZEL GREEN)

KENTUCKY
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
OF KENTUCKY
(SEE
DYTON)

275 32'30" 277 278 279 2650 000 FEET 83°30' 37°45'



SALYERSVILLE 20 MI.

4180
520 000
FEET
4179
4178