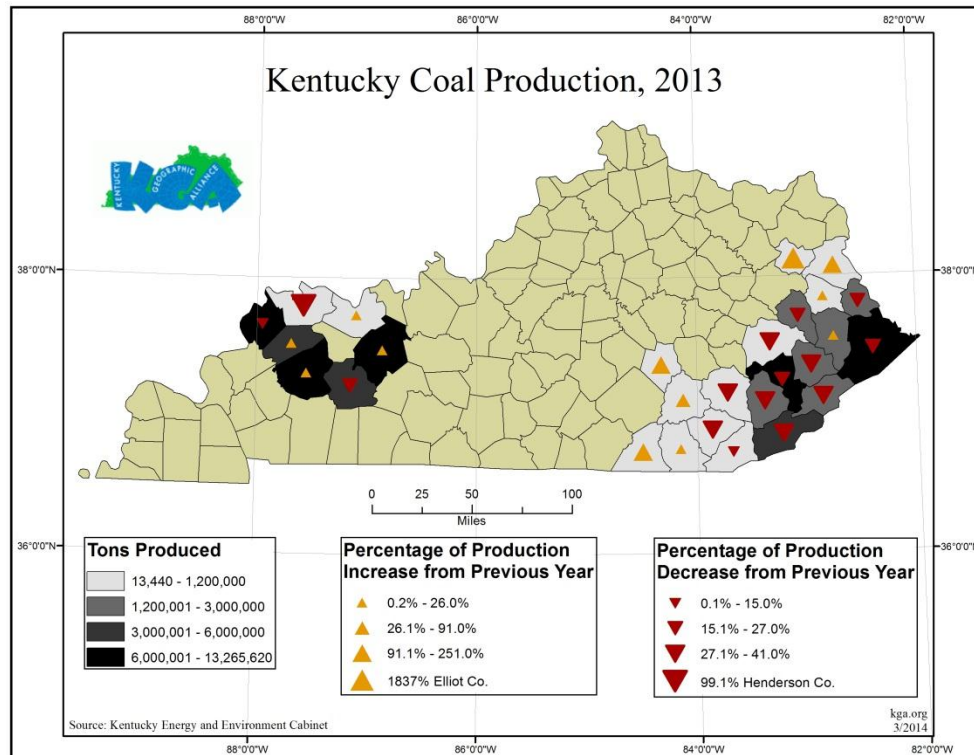


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# KENTUCKY IN THE NEWS

The Kentucky Geographic Alliance – March 2014

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Coal is a major resource in Kentucky and has been used for over [250 years](#). Coal mining production (see map above) has decreased in parts of both the eastern and western coal fields of Kentucky over the past year. Of the counties that decreased, Harlan County saw the largest change in tonnage produced, a decrease of 2,443,634 tons, while Elliot County saw the largest percentage increase of 1,837% from 2012 ([Kentucky Coal Facts](#)). This [geographic](#) issue highlights economic, historic, political, environmental, and cultural variability over space and time.

Recently, the central [Appalachian](#) coal industry has faced an economic downturn that has left many Kentuckians unemployed. In December 2013, the Shaping Our Appalachia Region ([SOAR](#)) summit in Pikeville focused on how to move forward during these hard times. Most recently, the Kentucky House Appropriations and Revenue Committee gave [initial approval](#) to provide economic tax incentives that reward job creation and investment.

Kentucky is in a state of transition with regards to energy. Coal is still an important resource for Kentucky and will be for years to come, but other energy sources are becoming more viable. [Natural gas](#) as an energy source is currently booming in Eastern Kentucky. A [hydroelectric plant](#) on the Ohio River in Bracken County is being installed by the city of Hamilton, Ohio. [Toyota](#) is making plans to use landfill gas to power its manufacturing plant. A more [controversial](#) Biomass power plant in [Hazard, Kentucky](#), illustrates how Kentucky [policymakers](#) need to address new energy sources as we build a more sustainable environment.