Study uses satellite imagery to identify active magma systems in East Africa's Rift Valley

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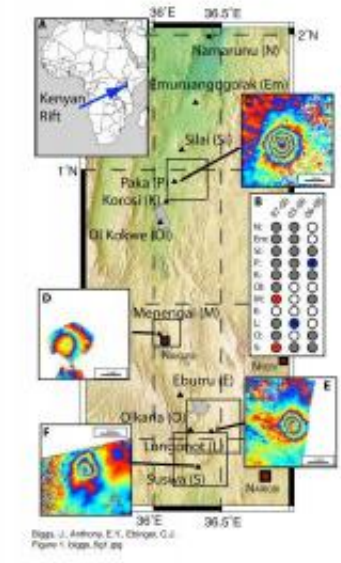

A team from University of Miami, University of El Paso and University of Rochester used Interferometric Synthetic Aperture Radar (InSAR) images compiled over a decade to study volcanic activity in the African Rift. A paper, published in the November issue of *Geology,* focuses on the section of the rift in Kenya. Surface deformation of four active volcanoes underscore possibility for human hazard, as well as the potential of geothermal resources. Credit: J. Biggs, E.Y. Anthony,C.J. Ebinger

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volcanic activity in the African Rift. The study, published in the November issue of *Geology,* studies the section of the rift in Kenya.

"The Kenyan Rift volcanoes are part of a larger Great Rift Valley complex that extends all the way from Mozambique to Djibouti; their presence in East Africa attests to the presence of magma reservoirs within the Earth's crust," said Lead Author Dr. Juliet Biggs, Rosenstiel Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Miami. "Our study detected signs of activity in only four of the 11 volcanoes in the area -- Suswa, Menengai, Longonot and Paka -- all within the borders of Kenya."

Small surface displacements, which are not visible to the naked eye, were captured using InSAR, a sophisticated satellite-based radar technique. Using images from European Space Agency satellites ERS and Envisat, the team was able to detect the smallest ((