

Tina Del Prete and Mirijana Beram

Interviewer: Carrie Kline
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Carrie Kline: **0:00:02.3** Somehow or other this is the fourth of November. I don't know how that got to be, but here we are in beautiful Doddridge County. And I'm Carrie Kline. Would you introduce yourself?

Tina Del Prete: Tina Del Prete.

CK: Okay. Spelled?

TDP: D-E-L P-R-E-T-E.

CK: And your date of birth, just for some perspective.

TDP: 07/22/1954.

CK: Okay. And tell me a little bit about your people and where you were raised.

TDP: I was brought up in Penns Grove, New Jersey, which is right at the bottom of the Twin Bridges—the Delaware Bridges and Memorial Bridges in DuPont Chemical Valley in **0:00:49.2** (s/l Montsanews). And at the age of 20, moved to Delaware for a few years, and then 36 years ago moved here to West Virginia, mostly because it was the only place we could afford to buy a farm and live the kind of lifestyle we wanted to live. And we've had a great run of it, but it seems to be over now, with all this fracing.

0:01:20.7 (end of audio A)

(start audio B)

CK: **0:00:05.0** Tell a little bit more about your people and where you were raised, if you wouldn't mind.

TDP: Well, both of my parents are Italian. My mother's family was here for a while, but my father was first generation. He was born right after they got to Atlantic City off the boat. You know, it was a nice company town with the DuPont, always a lot to do when I was a kid growing up. There were stores and movie theaters and this and that. But once DuPont started moving

operations out of that area and they first moved to Puerto Rico because it was cheaper for them and they didn't have regulation—as that went, then the town died and is now a total ghost town.

It was the Garden State, of course, so in the southern part of Jersey it's all the gardens. We always had a garden growing up. Our parents always grew vegetables, and we canned, so it was just like kind of a natural thing. I thought that's what you did when you had your own property. So when we moved to—well, I met Stump, and he was already living in Delaware, and we got a place together. I just started gardening. He was thinking about moving to upstate New York or New England when I first met him, but we moved some friends of ours to Maine and experienced black flies, so I told Stump, "If you want to move up here, I'll write you letters." (laughs) So we started looking elsewhere, and we found West Virginia that had very cheap, affordable land prices and taxes.

0:02:17.7 And something we'd never heard of and really didn't know what it meant until we'd come down here was free gas. Of course, that was interesting because the freeze in Delaware was costing us \$200 a month for gas. But once we moved here, we realized it's not really free. It's kind of a hassle, with the company can come and go whenever they want, ruin your driveway. But we could buy a piece of property. We bought us 30 acres here. We could never have bought anything like that in Jersey without having three or four jobs just to pay the taxes—on an acre is amazing up there.

But as soon as we moved here, I knew this is where I belonged. It was pretty instant. We didn't know anybody. A lot of people we know moved here because they knew somebody else, but we didn't know anybody. And in short order became friends with a lot of people that actually moved in the area the same time. Met a lot of musicians, and that's where—well, first it was the Stump Saturday Night Band, and then it was Muddy Hollow, and then it evolved to Steve Mulligan, that's still playing to this day. You know, we met a lot of great folks and just have had a great life. I can't imagine—well, I couldn't imagine living anywhere else, but now I keep trying to imagine where could I go. This stuff is really bad. Although it's not here in my yard, it's all around me, and I see the effects that it has on individuals, on communities, on health, on the air, on the water. That's about where I'm at now.

CK: So you say even when you got here you quickly learned that it wasn't exactly free gas.

TDP: Well, like I said, you had to put up with the gas companies that owned the minerals, because we didn't own the minerals. That didn't come with the property. And they would drag in their trucks to pump out the oil and blow off the crude into the creeks. That part really didn't make it seem all that worthwhile, although we did still use it and still use it, but don't overuse it, I guess. A lot of people are—you can walk around barefoot in shorts all winter long because they've got the gas cranked and the windows open. We don't do that. And the gas leaks, it took us 20 years of calling the gas company to fix all these leaks we had before somebody finally told us about calling the Public Service Commission. And we called him. The next day he was out here, and the day after that the gas—I'm not even sure what gas company owned the lines at that time—they were out here, and they had to run plastic pipe through the old metal pipeline. Because they would come out, and they'd put a saddle over the hole of this iron pipe, and then within two days another hole would pop out right past the saddle. So right by the barn there was

just a whole row of saddles, where they just—that’s how they were fixing the problem. And when we moved here, Pennzoil, they were the original—well, they weren’t the original owners, but they were the ones that bought the mineral rights from the Ashes that had this farm. And they were doing some project over the hill, going out towards Ohio, where they were going to flood the fields to bring more production. So they started trading and selling off leases over here for leases over there. So we’ve had several companies that have owned our minerals. Right now it’s Mike and Ike, I think. That’s a name out of Glenville. And so far, they haven’t sold out, but just the anxiety of wondering what day you’re going to wake up and there might be a well. Maybe there isn’t any shale under here. That I don’t know. But it’s everywhere. So just that anxiety of wondering what day one’s going to be right there—or even just right across the road, that’s not our property. But you saw coming in here how close it’s coming. Right back here is Beth (s/l Crowder), where they’ve got a big well site. You can’t see it from here, but I’ve been starting to hear it from here now that the leaves are down.

0:08:08.8 But yeah, there’s folks that they’ve been living with it for a long time, had a couple of explosions right next to their house. It’s just—I can’t express enough how distraught this practice is. Bad water, that’s happening all over. And I found out—I had a water problem last year. Had our water tested, and the conductivity was 153, and the total dissolved solids was 184. This year, just with a meter testing conductivity, it was like 585.

CK: What does that mean?

TDP: Well, it means there’s metals in water, and the conductivity is the electricity. But not knowing what that was caused from, I started calling DEP. So after calling DEP 33 days in a row, they finally came out and tested my water. And conductivity was 585. Total dissolved solids was 310. But they said, “Eh, that’s natural.” You can’t—yeah, there’s no way I can pinpoint it to any of these fracing wells because they’re not quite close enough to here. And that could be true; maybe it doesn’t have anything to do with that, but there’s just so much activity, they really have no idea what’s going to happen when you’re 8000 feet under the ground, blowing it up. There’s no way to control those fractures. And if you do any studying out in the Dakotas where whole towns, their water aquifers are polluted—they can’t use anymore—from leaking well casings or just whatever—from the frac fluids getting up into the aquifers. You know, the industry will tell you, “Oh, we go way below the aquifers. When we drill down through the aquifers, we put this cement casing around it.” Well, we’ve got a lot of concrete or cement, whichever the term is around here, and it doesn’t last very long. It cracks and chips. You know, why they think that’s going to hold up for however many years. They get people to believe that, that it’s totally safe. And even though there’s many, many records of bad water being affected by all this, the industry, they’ll supply you with water buffaloes and water and stuff like that, but they will never admit that it was because of what they’re doing. And then they make you sign confidentiality agreements so you can’t tell anybody that you got bad water.

CK: **0:11:34.1** You’ve been made to sign something?

TDP: I haven’t been, no, because they’re not on my property. And like I said, I don’t have any proof that all this activity around me, in one short year, has changed my water so much. But say they were drilling right close, like right out front or right across the road, if in fact I was able to make them supply me with water, they would make me sign a confidentiality agreement. And for

people who refuse to sign them, then they don't get nothing. They don't get no water buffalo or no help with getting water to bathe in. You know, from what I was told, once your conductivity reaches 500, it's not safe to drink. And then there's a certain number where it's not safe to bathe in or breathe when it's heated. Like arsenic will vaporize, and arsenic is something natural here. But because they're drilling down so far, it makes it even more intense. So if you're taking a hot shower, you're actually breathing the arsenic. So I don't remember what that number was for not being safe for—

Mirijana Beram: Above 10.

TDP: Above 10?

MB: I forget what the units were, but when it reaches above 10, that's when it becomes a concern.

TDP: Now, the people that live right in that trailer right next to that well pad that you passed coming here—what was that? Twelve thousand?

MB: Their conductivity was 2500.

TDP: Twenty-five, theirs was.

CK: I probably need you to sit closer if you're going to talk.

TDP: Yeah, it was like 2500, which is totally unsafe for drinking or bathing, but these folks rent that trailer. They're afraid to say anything, because they don't have no place to go.

CK: And even your place, you're over 500. It's not safe to drink.

TDP: Right.

CK: Are you being compensated in any way?

TDP: No. Oh, no, because I can't—once the DEP said there's no proof that it has anything to do with gas and oil, it's just something natural that can happen—the 500 is in the parameters for West Virginia, apparently. There actually is no EPA standard for conductivity, because that's just a signal that something is wrong—the conductivity. But we did buy a reverse osmosis water system, and that has really worked well for our drinking water. It brought the conductivity down to 79 from 585. It brought the total dissolved solids from 310 down to 40 and salinity from 210 to 20.

CK: **0:15:05.3** What did that cost you?

TDP: Well, with shipping and everything, it was about \$450, which we really didn't have, but we figured buying water—which I did buy water at first and then tested that, and the conductivity was 495 on bottled water you buy in the store. So then I started getting it from my friend

Mirijana, and she's been gracious enough to let me do that, and a neighbor up the road. But when you consider if you're buying water or running out to get it anywhere, the \$450 was cheap for what it's doing. It's really—I don't know how long these filters and all are going to last, how often I'll have to be replacing them, but I still, for my own peace of mind, that I can drink this water and cook with it. Now, I still use just the regular water for doing dishes, because what are you going to do? Take your dishes to the neighbors and take a shower and do your laundry? I mean, I just don't know. And a lot of times these companies will bring in those water buffalos, is what they call them, just big plastic containers, and then they haul in water from who knows where to supply you with water. They'll only do that for about a year and then take them back, and then you're on your own. That's what I've read. I don't know that for a fact, but that's what I've read.

Now, I did just hear about those folks on Cherry Camp, that they had put a water buffalo in. They had tried to do that to them, but they did end up making the company put in a water filtration system, about \$1100 or \$11,000. I can't remember what—somebody else told me that. But for the most part, the industry won't take any blame. They're just being good neighbors by supplying you with some water. They didn't have anything to do with making it bad. That's how they spin it.

CK: What was it like when you moved here? I mean, I hate to say this, but this mike, while it didn't pick up over there, it's super sensitive. It's crazy. I'm sorry. It will be over in a while.

TDP: Well, it was nice and quiet. I mean, you did have the well tenders come around once a week to pump the wells and stuff like that, but basically it was just quiet. It was just a really pleasant, beautiful place, hardly any traffic on the roads. You could almost go all the way to Jersey and hardly pass a car until you got to the Baltimore Beltway. Now it's your life going out, with all the water trucks, the sand trucks, the chemical trucks, the dump trucks, the cement trucks, and it just goes on and on and on. When you need a couple million gallons of water to frac one well, and each hole only shoots one leg.

CK: One leg?

TDP: Yes. Vertical—it's at the vertical. You know, they do a horizontal, straight down, to however many thousands of feet they need to go, and then they curve this vertical. That goes for about a mile. Some of them are perfecting doing 2 miles now.

MB: **0:19:09.2** It's the opposite. The vertical is the hole going down, and the horizontal is the hole—the pipe that's going sideways.

TDP: I can't keep those straight. Yeah. And then they fill your couple millions of gallons of water plus all the chemicals, all carcinogenic stuff, volatile compounds, they shoot down in the earth to blow up the shale to release this gas. And it's just incredible. I mean, there's going to be—I don't think there will be an area in West Virginia untouched if they continue to do what they have planned. And Doddridge and Ritchie, from here to the Ohio River, is all this wet gas, which is a lot of propane, butane, and—what are some of the other “tanes?”—all the volatile ones. (laughs) But that's where they're making their money. And for the most part, they're storing a lot

of the other gas, because they want the legislators to pass all these ports on the east coast so they can ship the liquid natural gas to China and Europe where they pay a lot more than we pay here. So although they keep telling you about energy independence, it has nothing whatsoever to do with our energy independence; it's the bottom line for the industry.

CK: Amazing.

TDP: Yes, it is amazing. And it's not worth it. You know, the children whose immune systems haven't quite developed yet, and the elderly whose immune systems are going down because of age, are the worst affected health-wise, although there's a ton of health effects that are being documented all over the country from just the air pollution. And the DEP, when they pass permits, they just do it for that one particular well. Now, each pad will drill anywhere from 2—it's usually never just one, because you're only doing the one horizontal—there's usually anywhere from two to fifteen wells on a pad. But they take each pad—is it each pad or each well?

MB: Each pad.

TDP: Each pad, they'll say—and they go by the company. The company will say, “We're coming in just under the maximum we're allowed to spew out into the air.” Well, then they go a mile or so down the road, put in another well, well, that counts as something different. They don't count them both together. And it's the same with the compressor stations, which are even worse. They're like 24/7 noisemakers, really bad air pollution. And the air just kind of lays in these hollows, that kind of stuff—smoke, any kind of pollution. It's just the way the geography is here. It just lays, and nobody cares. We've got a lot of people that have interest in seeing what's going on here, but we don't have a lot of people helping us, and it's hard to get help from the local people because the majority of them, if they don't already work for the oil and gas industry, their parents did or their grandparents, and they'll talk privately, but they will not talk openly about it. So it's just really hard.

0:23:34.4 There's a good group of people in this county fighting it and trying to do what they can, but without the numbers—you know—like New York, they've got a lot of people fighting this, and they've been able to keep this moratorium on it, and you just can't get that here. Or I haven't been able to tap into it. I've been trying, but—I've been trying for years and years—I mean—when I heard about it a long time ago, but people hadn't heard about it. They didn't want to hear about it. And then when it moved into Wetzel County it was like, “Well, it's not in my backyard.” Well, now it's in your backyard, and they still don't want to hear it, so I don't know what we do. Like I said, we've got a lot of friends that want to move or they're hoping the gas company will buy their properties, but the gas property will buy your property if they want to put a compressor station on it. Other than that, they just want your minerals, because they don't have to pay anything for the land. You still have to pay the taxes on that ground, even though you'll never be able to use it again. And then in a couple years, they've got to come back and refract these wells, because the production is nowhere near what they're claiming, so every couple years it's sand trucks, water trucks, all diesel equipment. It's like it'll be never ending. And I—you know—I don't know what it's going to take, besides everybody moving away or dying.

Myself, all our money, all our blood, sweat, and tears are in this farm. We don't have any money. Property values go way down when they're doing this Marcellus. Banks don't want to lend money for people to buy, and who wants to live with it? So you're stuck with property you can't get any money from, so you're stuck here. And then there's just no place to go, because it's everywhere. If they get those ports built on the east coast, they'll be drilling everywhere they can dry gas to because they can liquefy it and ship it overseas, unless people wake up all of a sudden.

And we've had plenty of accidents—well sites blowing up. Car and truck accidents have been phenomenal. These guys driving these water trucks, they think they own the roads. They come speeding down—most of these back roads are one lane, barely. In Clarksburg, a water truck flipped over on this person's car. Her kids were in the backseat; killed them. In Pennsboro—

MB: Ellenboro.

TDP: Ellenboro, same thing, or maybe just smashed in the car.

MB: The water truck that was being driven by a female driver ran through a stop sign and killed a mother and her daughter. It was instant. And I think from what somebody said, it pretty much decapitated the two of them. And the first responders on that scene were actually family members. Okay? And apparently whoever was driving the vehicle was apparently either on their cell phone or something related to that, but they just ran through a stop sign.

CK: In that little community of Ellenboro? I mean, they're all little communities.

MB: Yes. Well, they were—I think the truck was—whatever. There's a lot of truck activity in the Ellenboro region because Antero and Hall have an injection well where they are putting some of the waste there. So there's a lot of truck traffic with them bringing the frac fluids and the waste from the drilling process that's being injected in a couple of wells in that community, which is really, really sad because that particular site sits at an elevation of approximately 1200 feet, and directly below it is a trailer park. Okay? And I'm not really sure if the folks in the trailer park have a municipal water supply or they're dependent on wells.

CK: **0:28:54.9** Where is all this water coming from?

MB: The water, which is something that I feel very, very strongly about, it's coming from the "waters of the state," which any of the streams or waterways are owned by the state. Now, the drilling companies that are extracting water from our creeks and streams do not pay anything for the water that they are withdrawing. And a drill site—it takes pretty much—I think the figures that I've heard is 4 to 6 million gallons of water to frac a well. So if you have a situation—we have one location outside of West Union, which is on Middle Island Creek, which is upstream of the municipal water supply for the town of West Union. It's about a mile upstream or less. There is signage posted there because the companies have to identify their water withdrawal sites. And there are 53 Marcellus Shale wells listed that they can withdraw from at this site that's upstream from municipal water supply. And mind you, they pay zip. They pay nothing. If they're on private property, for some of these withdrawal sites, the private property owner can charge them to use their property, like collect rent for them to use it. But as far as the water that's coming out

of our creeks, which belong to the people of this state, the companies don't pay anything, if it's coming out of the creeks. Some of the companies have agreements with some of the municipal water supplies, where they are actually buying water from a municipal water supply, but water that's withdrawn from the creeks in the region is completely free.

And people need to realize that, for this area, we have been below our—we're sort of in a semi-drought kind of a situation, and the DEP—actually, their Water Resources Division has a website, or they have things set up where they'll tell these companies it's okay for you to withdraw or you can't withdraw because the water levels are so low. So there are water monitoring devices in different regions throughout the state. The region for Doddridge County, or for Middle Island, the gauges are close to the Ohio River in a town called Little, so they base what the readings in Little are for what the withdrawals can be done in the Doddridge County area. Now, there's an issue with that because of how things work in this region. We have localized flooding situations. We have downpours that it can be pouring and flooding here, but a few miles over the hill there's nothing. So they're real localized kinds of situations going on.

The other aspect is the more water they withdraw from creeks like Middle Island or Toms Fork or any of our major waterways—Doddridge County is—the only water Doddridge County gets, it's a watershed—the only water we get in this region is from the sky. We do not have any other rivers or anything that are feeding into our community. Everything we get in this region comes strictly from the sky. So if water is getting sucked out of our creeks, it will no doubt, in my mind, affect the water tables, because all the water aquifers are underground rivers, and that's what people's wells are tapped into. Stuff percolates down, etc, so the more water you're pulling out the more potential there is for people's water wells going dry. And that has also occurred in this area. It's occurred—I've heard, I think, of three or four separate incidents. A couple of them have been very close to a water withdrawal site that Antero had on Route 18, where they were withdrawing from the creek there.

0:34:17.6 It is also incredibly difficult to monitor where they're pulling water from. People have been reporting them and trying to do stuff, but there is actually the way the DEP—the West Virginia DEP—has stuff set up, there really is no enforcement. Then you have the issue with these water bottles or the water trucks that have signs. On one side it will say fresh water. On the other side it will say brine, or it will say residual waste. So if the same truck is hauling fresh water, using the same hoses, and they're putting it into our creeks, there's the potential also of the pollution aspect from the frac fluids. Okay?

The other issue we have in this county with the excessive pulling of the water out of our creeks is the fact that in this area, in Doddridge County, there are recognized and identified sites of endangered mussel and clam species. So as water is getting pulled out and stuff, the more the water goes down it strands these mussels and clams and stuff so that you've got populations of them dying, because they need to be submerged. And they're a real good indicator species. I mean, they clean—they clean our creeks. They filter through and stuff like that. I mean, it's one of nature's water filtration systems. So that's—

CK: One of nature's what?

MB: Water filtration systems. You know, Tina's got the reverse osmosis, but for our creeks and stuff you have the bivalves pretty much do that because they're sucking stuff in, and whatever they're spewing out—I mean, they pick up a lot of different stuff—you know—different pollutants and stuff like that. And in some of these creeks, I've seen clam shells that are 4 to 5 inches, so they've been here for a while. That's pretty old.

CK: Pretty old.

MB: I mean, if you've got a clam that's 4 or 5 inches from side to side, it's been here for a—it's not just a couple of months old. You're talking years. So we're losing—we're losing that. But it just blows me away that these companies can just do these water withdrawals and it's completely free. It's just completely and totally free. They do not pay anything for the water that they are withdrawing.

Now, people that are allowing them to come on their property and to withdraw, fine, they might be making some money. But the point is the water in the state belongs to all of the citizens in this state, and there's just something wrong with that picture. We were discussing before, or Tina was mentioning, as far as polluted water wells and that situation, there is absolutely no help for a person who may lose the quality of their water or the quantity. There is no assistance at all. Our health departments aren't dealing with it. So if you're living in a region where the majority of the population is dependent on private water wells—and Doddridge County is a relatively poor community. People can't afford to go out and re-drill the well, or we don't have the option of tapping into a municipal supply. To bring in water or to carry it in, those are all additional expenses.

CK: **0:38:44.8** You don't have a municipal supply?

TDP: Not out here.

MB: Not out here. The only municipal—the municipal water supply is the town of West Union, and I think Greenwood, and the prison—we also have a regional prison in Doddridge County—they have the option of a municipal water supply, but for the rural areas—I mean—being away from West Union, we don't have that option. We don't have that option. So it's really—you know—a lot of people say you can't drink money. Well, water is life, and it's something that no one can do without, and it's just not right. It's not right.

CK: You both speak beautifully. I didn't get you to introduce yourself. Can you introduce yourself?

MB: Sure. My name is Marijana Beram, and I am a 61-and-a-half-year-old retired female.

CK: Your date of birth?

MB: I don't really want to put my date of birth on. I don't know if you're going to use it, but I really—I am 61.

CK: That's fine. And tell us about your people and where you were raised in your past.

MB: My people—I am actually what I would consider one of the original boat people. I was born in Croatia, or Yugoslavia, as it was known then. I was born at a particular time when Yugoslavia was behind the Iron Curtain. And my mother and a group of people left that country illegally in 1957 and made their way, or tried to make their way, across the Adriatic into Italy where there were refugee camps set up for people. So we ended up there for a few years. My mom was able to get sponsorship, or whatever, to come into the US, and we arrived, I guess, at Ellis Island in 1959. And I pretty much grew up in the—in Manhattan in the New York metropolitan area. As I got older, I moved to south Jersey and went to college there at Pomona, which is 13 miles west of Atlantic City. Ended up in West Virginia when Atlantic City was getting inundated with the casinos there. So for whatever reason, I ended up in West Virginia along with all the other folks that were moving here during the—back to the land movement and have lived here for the last 32, 33 years.

I retired a couple of years ago from a gas company, which was one of the older ones in the area. And so having had experience working in the industry, I know that there's a right way and a wrong way to do things. The company that I worked for was very proactive as far as safety was concerned—very, very proactive. With some of the accidents, especially the loss-of-life accidents that have occurred in this region—and they all seem to be centered pretty much around one company, which is Antero, which is—it's an out-of-state company. I think their headquarters are based in Colorado. And they are—they have become a large, large presence here. But it appears that the pipelines that they're putting in, as well as their well pads, it's all contract workers. So the accidents that have been occurring, when investigations are going on, they try to pawn it off that it's the contractor's fault. Well, from my training and my experience, if that company owns that well pad, the responsibility falls on them.

The company that I worked for, the contractors that worked for us were just as responsible as far as following the safety protocol the company had, because ultimately, it's the company drilling or that owns the pad that is responsible for what happens on the pad. Some of these folks working on these well pads or these sites—some of them are working ridiculous hours—24, 36 hours straight. You're working in one of the most dangerous industries, and yet these poor guys—and women, if they have them—are working ridiculously long hours. And to me, once you get past a certain point—and it's not like you're just sitting. I mean, it's physical, intensive work—your safety aspect has to drop dramatically. You make more mistakes, etc. But the mere fact that these companies—that some of these companies are trying to pass the blame onto their contractors is totally, totally absurd.

The other issue, too, that I have serious concerns about is our West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection, the Oil and Gas Division. The amount of well inspectors they have for what's going on is ridiculously low. These folks cover a large territory, and they can't be everywhere at once. The other aspect that we're having some issues with is the fact that they're not really writing up violations when the violations are seen. If the company says they'll take care of it, sometimes they just say okay. And if that practice continues, it leaves the door open for these companies to do whatever the heck they want to do. The only thing that I feel some of these companies, where it really hits them bottom line is money, and if they're doing something

that's in violation of the laws that are there, they should be shut down. They should be shut down. That's just—because they're pretty much getting sort of a free ride as far as some stuff goes.

CK: They're not even fined?

MB: Sometimes they are, but it takes a long time for that to happen.

CK: For what to happen?

MB: For the fines. And then sometimes they'll clump them together. So there are—you can—people can check at the—on the DEP website. There is a listing for violations. So that can be checked, and it can be tracked. For as much stuff that goes on—I mean, the other thing is a lot of these well pads and these pipeline jobs are in remote areas, so out of sight out of mind. All right? You can have a situation where a well pad is really visible from a main road, etc., and everything will look lovely. You can go to another well pad that's on top of a ridge, that's hard to get to, that you will see things are not—you know—they're a lot—they're more lax now. To be honest with you, I'm not saying all companies do this, but the primary people that we have in this county right now that are drilling the Marcellus Shale wells are Antero, EQT, and I believe Jay-Bee Oil and Gas. Antero has—I think they're the ones that are leading the pack right now. And it's my understanding CNX, which was CONSOLE Coal, they're going to be starting in this region also because they have a lot of leases. Their track records for environmental—our DEP needs more help, needs to do more to protect the citizens in this state. Their responsibility is, or should be, to the people living in this state, not to the corporate entity.

CK: Is there a local DEP? Are there any people who are here?

MB: **0:48:55.8** We have—there are people that are here. The well inspectors are assigned territories. And to be honest with you, some of them have been pretty responsive when residents have called. They've been pretty responsive and have done stuff. But the mere fact that residents have to call to report violations pretty much tells you that they're spread kind of thin and they're not really doing site inspections as often as that needs to occur.

The other issue that we're all dealing with is the—our road infrastructure is getting destroyed. It's getting completely destroyed. Our local Department of Transportation person that's in the local area has tried to do whatever he can, but the permits for the overweight trucks and the hauls, all of that stuff is a shoot out of Charleston.

CK: Overweight trucks and what did you say?

TDP: Wide loads.

MB: The overweight and long, for some of that stuff they have to have special permits, and all of those permits are issued out of Charleston. They used to be issued—the local offices would get notification so they could check and see if some of these loads—if the loads were equipped to deal with them. So they would be dependent on someone locally that would check out the

bridges or see what the situation was. But now it's Department of Transportation out of Charleston is issuing them without really looking at stuff.

Now what happens—we had an incident several months ago where T.K. Stanley, which is a company from the south that does a lot of hauling, like hauling rigs—drilling rigs—on a road around here called Big Flint Road, had a switchback. Now, I know about this personally because I was trying to get out. They got stuck within about a mile of Route 50. This thing hauling this rig got stuck in this turn. I got there at maybe 9:30-10:00 in the morning. The company did have some of their folks along the way—they knew this truck was stuck, but only one person stopped me to tell me I couldn't get through, and that person was the closest one to where the rig was stuck. I had traveled 6 miles, all right? I asked if anybody had called 911. They hadn't. So we have a situation. That thing was stuck there from 9:00 in the morning until 3:30 in the afternoon. It was the only way—one of the closest ways to get in and out of that road, so if there had been a house fire or a medical emergency, without a local 911 or local police being notified, that puts people in the region at risk. Okay? Now, if they don't call and report it, they don't get cited for it. But how many other people in that span of time traveled that distance to try to get to Route 50 and couldn't? And the only other way is turning around and going way out of your way. So that takes—not only does it endanger local residents, it uses up people's time and gas. But the guys that were dealing with it, they were perfectly fine with it. The guy that stopped me to tell me I couldn't get through, I said, "Well, I'm going to go up there and take a look anyway." And I did. And when he said, "Well, there's no cell reception here," I go, "Yes, there is." I pulled out my cell phone and called 911 and reported , because people needed to know, you know?

0:53:24.1 And that area, that community along that road, there are a lot of elderly people. There are a lot of people that have health issues, but there was no concern—no concern whatsoever. It's like, "Let's try to get it out of here." And they actually did not have a permit to haul. They did not. And I think the fine for not having the permit was—I can't really verify this, but I believe somebody told me it was only \$25. So what the hell? (laughs) I mean, it's total disregard for area residents, and it's a very frustrating situation to live in.

Tina was talking earlier about the air pollution permits and stuff that are issued for the well pads. They do not aggregate at all. Unless a well pad or a compressor—unless they touch each other, they are looked at as two separate air pollution entities, which they don't aggregate at all.

CK: How close are these wells?

MB: You're looking at probably seeing—oh, there are wells within a half a mile of each other. But like Tina was saying, a well pad can have anywhere from—I know there's a well pad real close to here, right over the ridge, that has 13 different well permits. Okay, 13 well permits, and they're in the process of drilling and fracing that now. So that's 13. Some pads have as little as two. Some companies originally came in just to latch on to what they wanted to do. They would drill one well, and then come back and redo, add more, because also, our Marcellus bill that was passed in 2011, which had more protections in place as far as distances from water wells or from dwellings or from creeks and springs, if a company had drilled prior to December 2011 and they came back and put more wells, those new wells they were putting on that pad were grandfathered

in under the old laws. So even though the laws are starting to improve, but if there is a well there that was drilled prior to 2011, they grandfather into the old stuff.

TDP: That's how that well that's right around the corner here right on the road, on 23, was allowed, because they applied for that permit before those new rules. And behind that little strip of property is the—help me.

MB: McElroy Creek.

TDP: McElroy Creek. And they had dug a frac water pond right on the bank of that creek, and Marijana was pretty instrumental in we got that site shut down for close to a year, right?

MB: Yes.

TDP: Mostly it got shut down because they had never applied for a floodplain permit, but they did—all they had to do was just apply for a floodplain permit. And of course, our county commissioners and the floodplain coordinators said, “Okay. We don't care that you didn't do it before.”

MB: Well, to state—I mean, one of the ploys they used was applying for it after the fact was they did threaten to sue the county. So we've had—in this region, or in this county, we've had some issues as far as floodplain permits are concerned, which to me, I thought it would be a really powerful tool because it's—the floodplain, it's a FEMA kind of a deal. You have to have a floodplain ordinance, and this is nationally. There has to be floodplain ordinances.

CK: **0:58:14.1** When you say FEMA—

MB: FEMA—Federal Emergency Management whatever. (Agency) They're the ones that come in after there's a flood and help people. Okay, flood insurance, blah-dee-dah. They will help communities to repair damage or assist people. Well, if a community or a municipality, or whatever, if you don't have a floodplain ordinance in place, FEMA can pull their funding and their help. So a couple of years ago, another resident in the county started pressing the issue because another company, EQT, had applied for a floodplain permit. That permit was granted by who was then our floodplain coordinator. And this man actually admitted on tape and during one of the county commission meetings that he didn't even know how to read a map, had never gone to the site. And fortunately, this family that has been fighting this had the wherewithal, etc., to really fight it, and it brought the whole issue of the floodplain ordinance, etc., to light. So it's been getting pressed very heavily in this region, and it is a powerful tool for communities if they are watching and are aware of what their laws are or what the ordinance states, and holding the people in charge accountable.

The one objection that I have to what's going on in our community—when a utility or one of these drilling companies applies for a floodplain permit, they are relying strictly on studies that are provided by that company. They are not looking at a bigger picture. But the one thing that our new ordinance provided for was notification of parties that might be affected if construction

occurs, so there is a more detailed—there is something detailed in place that has the potential of helping people.

CK: So you took that to a county commission meeting then?

MB: Well, I pressed an issue because when they started drilling the wells on 23, I knew they had not applied for floodplain permits. So I contacted our floodplain permit coordinator, and he did—he put a stop work order on the site. He shut them down and kept them shut down for a pretty long time. I mean, pretty responsive.

1:01:04.0 And in the process of having done that, then they gave them a permit that was real specific of what they had to do as far as the—not open pit was going to be on that well pad, which is right close to the creek. They had to line the whole site so that spills would be contained so they wouldn't go into the creek. And there was some other stuff, but we actually—a group of us went through an appeals process to try to stop them from doing it, and it being the first appeal, I think we could have done a better job, but in making calls to the county officials to try to find out what exactly was going to happen in this process, the phone calls weren't answered. So I think considering what we did, we kept that company at bay for close to a year. They originally had planned to drill five wells in that tiny spot. They opted to drop the three new ones that were permitted and are just doing the two. So that was a win, of sorts.

My heart goes out to the people that live in that valley. The noise and the proximity of the trailer that sits there, how close it is, it's probably maybe less than 150 feet to that well pad. Their water well is right at the 200-foot limit under the new regulations—or the old regulations. And actually, the property owner signed off to say it was okay to be as close as they were. Now he lives right across the road from them.

And then across from that well site—this is the other thing that really irritates me. Across from that well site is a wetlands area. It's a wetlands area. And they're going to be doing some stuff on that. Now, the way the regulations state, if there's damage done to a wetlands—and this is actually okay—whatever company is doing the damage has to pay to have a wetlands fixed or developed or something somewhere in that watershed. Doesn't mean that the one that's right at that site is going to get fixed, but any wetlands in a watershed area. So our watersheds are rather large, so it's like—it just blows me away, with the environmental destruction that is going on.

The health impacts of this—the health impacts from the air pollution and some of the water quality issues may not become immediately evident, but if you have issues like arsenic and some of the—I mean, some of these are neuro disruptors, so people are at risk. There have been people in this region, actually, with lesions, nosebleeds, just a bunch of different—and also, the whole—and I can't remember the term—but the whole—there's a psychological term when you lose your way of life. I can't remember what it is, but it's that whole loss of your way of life, and that's what's happening. I personally did not think I would be spending my retirement period doing as much as I've been doing, as far as this is—this whole situation is involved. And it's—it's been incredible to me, people that are outside of this area that are taking an interest in this community and trying to do something. Sometimes I feel like we live in a fish bowl. I've had people stay at my house that wanted to see this drilling process up close. I mean, I've had people from the west

coast, from Africa, New York state, PA, West Virginia, and I've met some incredible people. But I also definitely went out of my comfort zone when it's like, "Yeah, I don't know you, but sure, come on in." It's—that part of it's been amazing.

1:06:39.1 But we need help. We have had help. Duke University has done baseline water testing in our area, and they've been incredible, but they're a research institute, and it's not like you get your water test results back in a couple of weeks. And I've taken those folks around. It's like I just tell people, don't hold your breath. If you want immediate results, here are companies you can call, but as far as what they're doing—and actually, it's probably any other research institute—they've been incredible. But they've been—some of these research institutes and scientists are wanting to do more studies, but they're having a hard time getting grants. And you know, what we really, really need now is air quality—air quality stuff done.

CK: Who's in charge of air quality? You both referenced it before.

MB: The DEP—it falls under the DEP—West Virginia DEP. Well, actually, the federal EPA. But the permits that the oil and gas industry is getting here are from the state. And they had actually—the West Virginia DEP had actually contracted with Dr. McCauley out of West Virginia University. I believe it was last year. And oddly enough, the DEP was—they thought he did too much.

TDP: Don't Expect Protection—that's what we say the DEP means.

CK: What is it?

TDP: Don't Expect Protection—DEP. Instead of Department of Environmental Protection it's Don't Expect Protection. I mean, everybody you call, whether it's the DEP, the EPA, your local people, your senators, the president, it's always somebody else's job. You've got to talk to this person, and it just goes round and round and round. Everybody passes the buck, and it's—we've got these regulations, so we can't care about what happens to you. We've got to follow these rules, or I might lose my job if I say anything. And I can understand that part of it, because people have to make a living, but somebody has got to care. But I don't know who that is. I haven't found them yet.

CK: Do the guys live in the community—your monitor?

MB: Some of them, yes. Yes, actually—yeah, they live in the state, and some of them do live close to where some of this stuff is going on. And you know, some of the folks that work for the DEP have been incredible and they really, really are trying to help. But once again, their hands are tied in some respects because of the legislative—the rules and regulations that are in place. And they can't exceed that. They're doing—some of them are doing their jobs as best they can with the constraints that they have. I can honestly say I have gotten responses when I have called. I've had people come out. But it's almost—but a lot of people that live in this state have no clue as to who to call. Or even if they had a clue, wouldn't call and report if they saw a spill or if they saw something funky in their creek. They don't—people that live here need to be more active and need to report stuff. And then stick with it. We've had the two local watersheds—the Doddridge County Watershed Association—there really isn't any Doddridge County Watershed.

It's really called something else, but that's just what the group is calling itself. And then Friends of the Hughes, which is adjoining us to the west, have had some small wins. We've had—I remember I got a call from some lady that somebody else gave her my number and blah-de-da. There was orange stuff floating down the creek, and she really didn't know who to call. And we got watershed members, called it in, called 911 to report it, and then called the federal spill line and the West Virginia spill line, so it was reported to three places. Plus two of the watershed members actually went on site. They found the leak. They were out there when the DEP responded. And they pushed and pressed with the DEP to get it cleaned up correctly.

1:12:04.2 A lot of times, with the DEP, their answer is, “Oh, yeah, it's going to rain.” That elusion is the solution. But these two folks that went out, their own personal time, they traced it to the source and stayed on top of them until it was done correctly. So it's like there are people in the community that are trying to do what they need to do, but more people need to step up to the plate. It's like, don't call me if you see something going on in your backyard. I can't see it. Take pictures. Here are the numbers to call. And if you don't get a response, just keep calling.

And what's been good—I mean, I've notice over the last year and a half there is some more involvement, and I think people are starting—that live in the community—are starting to be directly affected. And I think more people are starting to speak up.

1:13:17.3 (end of audio 2)

(start audio 3)

TDP: **0:00:00.4** The only problem with that is when people are finally being affected it's already too late.

MB: Correct.

TDP: And trying to explain that to them ahead of time—you know—because I, myself, now I'm getting calls from people. “Gee, this is going on, but we can't tell anybody because my husband works for the gas company,” and it's—you know—because I learned that from Mirijana. It's like, well, here's the number of who for you to call. And most times they won't. If it's something serious enough or close enough that I can check out, then I make the calls or call Mirijana and she makes the calls. You know, you've got to have this network, because most of the people that are being directly affected are afraid to say anything. They say—what they think is, “Oh, there's been drilling going on here forever. We're all okay.” They don't realize how much different this is than the conventional wells. I mean, what was it? Five, ten years ago there was another big boom here in Doddridge for conventional wells, but it was nothing like what's going on now. And their footprint is actually tiny compared to this Marcellus drilling.

MB: An example on the footprint—an example is out of an 80-acre tract of land, 37 acres were taken for a well pad, a frac pond, and a fresh water impoundment, and then the roads to access these sites. So out of 80 acres, 37 are now dedicated to oil and gas. In the past, the footprint

would be less than a third of an acre, if that. They would be in and out—if they were drilling a conventional well, they'd be in and out in about a week. Okay? That's how long it would take.

The Marcellus stuff, it's months. It is months. And then the land grab, with how much they need to be able to do what they want and to access these sites. You have—so out of 80 acres, 37 are taken. With those 37 acres, you have to consider the fact that the roads that they put in are pretty wide, so basically they've been—all the timber has been taken off. The timber gets piled along the sides of the roads, and in some regions they use that timber as a part of their erosion control. So you've got that. So you've got all these ecosystems that are disrupted. You've got deer, you've got snakes, you've got fox, you've got birds.

TDP: Birds and coons.

MB: **0:03:07.3** I mean, hundreds of creatures that are affected. Then you have these—the fresh water impoundment—theoretically fresh water—is just—some of them are just these big pits that are lined with this plastic that the water trucks keep dumping water into, and then they withdraw from it to do the fracking on the well. But then you'll also have what they call the frac pond, where some of the fluid that's coming back up out is getting put in an open pit. Well, it's getting put in that open pit. It's liquid. It evaporates. That's where all the toxins are. So in the process of it evaporating, it's also dispersing, so it's not just staying there. It's like—

CK: It could flood as well as evaporate too.

MB: Well, those things could break. And you know, when you have them—and they've had issues I know in Wetzel County, in Pennsylvania, in West Virginia, where they flatten out these ridge tops but are not building these impoundments correctly, so the sides will break out. I mean, there's—I'm sorry.

CK: No, go on. So the property is a well and then this frac pond that at least evaporates and maybe breaks.

MB: The environmental—you know—everything's a possibility, and some companies do a better job than others. But the disruption to the ecosystems in the region is phenomenal. Plus the fact that once you take out all those trees—I mean, trees act as air filtration kind of things to help with pollution. Plus they also act in a way to help flooding, because especially in the spring and the summertime, when we get these horrendous downpours, these trees are soaking up a lot of that water. Meanwhile, some of these companies do reseed, but you've got grasses that are not going to take up as much as trees. So it creates erosion problems, pollution problems, disruption to our ecosystems.

CK: You were talking about—you were just about to talk about air and the need to monitor.

MB: **0:05:46.0** Yeah, we really need, right now—I think in the '30s and '40s in parts of PA, when people were using coal, they had some real horrendous deaths, where communities—because of the same thing—the coal—the smoke from the coal being stuck in these valleys. So I don't know if it was carbon monoxide poisoning or whatever, but I know—I can't remember

where it happened, but I know that there was one whole community in one valley that was just about wiped out from the air pollution from the coal stoves. And you have a similar situation here with the hollows. So it's all fine and good when everything can just go up, up, up, but when you start having, like in the fall, when we have our cool evenings, all it does is pushes all that stuff down, and it lays in our valleys, in our hollows. It's not like we have a direct stream, where the wind comes through and blows it through. It just sits. So you're talking about tons of BTEX chemicals, volatile organic compounds, hazardous air pollutants that are being brought back to the ground. So you have situations where people might be raising cattle or—

TDP: Gardens.

MB: —gardens, etc, and this is what's ending up in our region. I mean, granted, you might not be able to see it, but it's happening.

CK: Are people getting sick yet?

MB: Some people are, but once again, it's another situation where people don't talk or they don't attribute it to what's going on. I had a doctor's appointment last week, and I was asking my physician if they'd had any issues. She didn't quite get what I was asking. She was saying that they don't get many of the gas workers that are coming into that office. And I don't know. We got off point. But I really should have said I was more concerned about your regular patients. I have, I know, folks that they're real close to what's going on, and their grandson has lesions on his skin. He's also incredibly stressed out by the whole thing, so there's a psychological impact.

CK: Is he a child?

MB: He's a child. He's a 13-year-old child. There's also a case—there's a family that lives close to a extraction plant, compressor station, that live right across the road from it, and their grandchildren have been experiencing nosebleeds and some other psychological—other physiological issues.

TDP: What about (s/l Reft) and his neighbor over there from MarkWest plant.

MB: Yeah, we have—the other thing you need to realize, not only does this well drilling—it not only brings well pads, pipelines, but it's bringing in major, major industrial factory sites. We have, off of Route 50, a plant that it's called MarkWest, and they're pretty much basically dealing with gas that's coming from Antero's lines. And what they're doing on this site is there's a compressor station, which kind of pushes the wet gas through. There is an extraction plant, which takes the different components of that wet gas—the propane and all the other stuff—it splits it all out so they have the different product. And then the other thing they're doing there—it's a cryogenics plant, so they are freezing—making it liquefied natural gas—and all of this stuff is then getting trucked on Route 50. It gets trucked from that plant, goes east on Route 50, gets on Route 79, and heads north to Pennsylvania to some other facilities there. And I think, oddly enough—

TDP: Houston.

MB: **0:10:23.2** Houston and Dallas, PA. But this site, when they were originally going to only—I think they were originally only supposed to put in four—when they only had one, that thing was processing 100 million cubic feet of natural gas a day. They are expanding that plant, so it will be eight times as big.

CK: MarkWest?

TDP: Uh-hunh (affirmative).

CK: And that's in Doddridge?

MB: It is in Doddridge.

TDP: It's right on 50. You can drive on 50, and you'll see it.

MB: Yeah, you can see it. It's right off—

TDP: The new mountain removal—they're taking the mountain out so they can expand.

MB: The other—this is at Morgans Run and out 50. It's on the eastbound lane. That region—that Morgans Run, Route 50—it used to be known as, and on the maps it says, Morgansville. That region there has some real archeological history behind it—Indian mounds, the Adena Indians. And there was also—the MarkWest plant sits—there's like a bowl there, but in front of where they started doing the construction was a hill, which was really kind of nice because it hid everything. Well, the next thing you know all the trees are gone. They completely denuded the hill and then have been removing the soil to flatten it out.

TDP: Now you can see the whole plant from 50, where you couldn't when they first started it. We took a tour of it to hear the spiel about how great it was. It was only going to be 3 at that time. They were just expanding, building the other 2. But you could not see it from the road. And that used to be a really beautiful, picturesque farm when you'd drive by, you know?

MB: And that, the location of that also—the Buckeye Creek runs through that, and Buckeye Creek and Toms Fork and Meathouse Fork all merge to make Middle Island Creek. And Middle Island Creek, I think, is either the longest creek in the world or in the US. It's 70 or 80 miles, and it ends up in the Ohio River. This is all—this site is also upstream from the municipal water supply for the town of West Union.

TDP: **0:13:09.0** But now the people that live over the hill from that MarkWest plant—now, once again, it could just be a coincidence—but since it started operating have had really bad health problems, but unless you can get air quality monitors out there to see what's going on, there's really no way to say for sure that that's what's causing it or that's exacerbating it—you know—making whatever they may have had worse.

CK: What kind of health problems?

TDP: Respiratory.

MB: Respiratory, and actually, the respiratory problems, the individuals that are having these respiratory problems are—they're at home all the time. Okay, so the spouse isn't having an issue, but the person that's having an issue is at home all of the time. He's on disability, and they only have one vehicle, so he is pretty much at home all the time. And another elder person that lives there also in that same vicinity is also experiencing respiratory issues, and it's the same situation. That individual is also home most of the time, whereas other people in that community are going to work, so they're not really there 24/7. I mean, that's—and the one particular individual that we know is probably the closest physical house to the plant, which is a half a mile as the crow flies. So the plant is here, there is a hill, and the house is here. So depending on what the direction of the wind is, a lot of that stuff might be ending up there.

TDP: And when we took that tour that time, just the one plant was in operation. They were just starting on the other two. But there were three flare stacks for just that one. And most of these wells sites usually have one flare stack. It's where they're burning off all the gas until they get down to the one they want.

MB: Well, they do the flare stacks also to release pressure. It's kind of like "some sort of a safety routine," but it also releases a lot of toxic compounds into the air when they burn these things. And the way the regulations are, flaring, as it's known, can go on for 30 continuous days.

TDP: And they're hot too. I mean, ones that are far off the road, if you drive by them, you can feel the heat. People that live close to them can feel stuff raining down on them from those things. I mean, it's just—there's so much connected with this type of drilling that it's hard to even know if we know every aspect of it. We both do a lot of studying and reading about it.

CK: What about the workers at MarkWest?

TDP: Oh, hey, they're getting a paycheck. That's all they care about. Now, they might be even getting benefits at MarkWest. That I'm not sure. But the majority of these well workers and pipeline workers in our county, none of them are union, and none of them have any insurance. They get hurt; they go to the emergency room.

MB: **0:17:01.7** Well, that's another issue that affects communities, because if you have contract workers, especially if they're out of the area, and they have injuries etc, a lot of them are taxing local hospitals. They are taxing local hospitals. A lot of workers, it's kind of a denial thing. They want the job. They get told by the "company people" that it's all okay. The workers are at risk for sili—

TDP: Silicosis.

MB: —silicosis because of the sand that they use in the fracing process. There are certain safety regulations that are supposed to be in place. At some of the well pads in this area, the only way that the safety aspects were instituted was from local residents pointing it out and having the well

pads inspected. Things like respirators, some of these containers that they use, if they're not gated in or have a railing and stuff around them, the people that are working up there are supposed to be harnessed—you know—roped off so that they don't fall off. If there is certain activity going on, like I said, the respirators, they also—the other thing that occurs, some of the waste that's generated, like the drill cuttings—so when you travel these roads, there are these trucks that have these rectangular, real heavy-looking things that they are hauling, and they have all these clamps and stuff. They're kind of strange-looking. Well, those are carrying the drill cuttings, and the drill cuttings are radioactive. But there is nothing—the signage on these trucks—there is nothing to indicate that that's what it is. And these are driving on our local roads. Those drill cuttings—those radioactive drill cuttings—are being taken to a landfill in Harrison County. So I know that our local emergency response folks, they actually ended up ordering a Geiger counter for one of their units, because there's no signage, they know this is there, so whenever they respond to a vehicle accident that involves some of the oil and gas stuff related to this, they have no clue what they're walking into.

CK: How else are they protecting themselves? So they're monitoring it.

MB: Well, they have it so they can check. I don't know. I mean, they've had enough—I don't know. I know that I sat through a 6-hour class with Boots & Coots, or one of the well wildfire companies, that was held here in our county, and there is a situation at a well site, if there's a fire, one of the best things they can do is let it burn, because at least they know where it is, because otherwise the gas, if you can't see it, you don't know if it's going to be an explosive situation. This company recommends to emergency response personnel the best thing they can do until they get trained professionals in is traffic control, keep people the hell out of there, so you don't add to the injury situation.

CK: Is anyone wearing radioactive protection?

MB: **0:21:12.4** If you go to your dentist and they have the badges, I doubt very strongly—one of the things as a result of the well explosion that occurred in July, where three people died as a result of it—one of the things—I guess when OSHA, or whatever, did their inspections on the site, some of the well pad workers were wearing methane detectors. It was just basically like a badge so that if there's natural gas the thing will turn a color and they can get the hell out before something happens. The radioactive stuff, I was at a well site that took some folks up to just see what it was. I think they were people from FracTracker. They had permission from the landowner and stuff. We went up there and the supervisor on the site was really very nice, and he chatted with us for a while. I noticed the drill cutting things. I asked him, "Is that stuff radioactive?" He goes, "Nah, it's fine." So some of the workers might not even be aware of what their exposure is or what they're dealing with.

CK: Nobody's dressed for it?

MB: As far as I can see. It's pretty daunting. I mean, there is so, so much, and there actually are a lot of organizations nationwide that are putting out a lot of information for people, and that's a good thing. Information is out there if anybody wants to look for it to see what's going on or what the dangers or the effects are. My heart goes out to the people that work at these sites. My heart goes out to them because it's—where black lung was an issue with coal mining, this

silicosis and some of the other health effects from this new drilling process—it's going to have major, like for the workers and stuff and for their families—I would venture to guess that there will be major health issues for these folks. And it's not just for the people that are working on this site. I mean, they go home. The stuff is on their clothes. I mean, it's like do you use a different washing machine? It's like they're bringing this stuff into their homes, so their children and their families also have exposure. So it's not like—you kind of have to think about the whole process. It just breaks my heart. It breaks my heart to think, especially children that will be affected, because they don't have a choice. But even some of the adults, with the economic situation in this area, it's not like they really have a choice either. Have you heard enough? (laughs) More than enough.

CK: Is that as good a place as any to stop?

MB: Oh, yeah. I think we've—I think you got an earful.

CK: This was incredibly rich. You are so articulate at just looking at the whole harsh—

MB: You've got to look at the whole thing. I mean, I constantly—my big thing is—and in some respects, I've started to get involved with some of the local stuff, like attending all our county commission meetings. It's the last frickin' place I want to be, all right? But I've established some credibility with them. But the one thing I constantly say, "I'm worried about our water. I'm worried about our water." It's like I'm worried about our water. What are you going to do if my water well goes dry? It's like Tina and another neighbor that was having issues. He's still coming over to my house and filling up. He goes, "Well, what the hell am I going to do when it's winter?" I guess, Russell, you're going to be bringing those containers in the house and filling it from the sink, because right now he just uses the hose outside. But it's just heartbreaking.

CK: **0:26:20.0** What about the county commission and those meetings?

MB: It's been an enlightening experience. One of the things that I thought was really powerful, we had circulated a petition, and we got about 80 signatures, which was pretty good. But the way the commission thing works, they have a public comment period, and you've got 5 minutes on the floor. Well, I took the petition, and I read off each name and where they lived—the name and the location. And we figured out if I couldn't do it in 5 minutes, when my 5 minutes was up the next person that was there attending from our group was going to continue reading it. But they didn't do anything. They did—yeah, they didn't really—"Well, we can't do anything." Why not? You can institute zoning. You can do an ordinance. You can do a lot. You can do a lot. But their level and their backgrounds is not such that they're going to jump and take a risk. And my attitude is, well, you're all elected officials. You're getting paid X number of dollars a year. You're supposed to be there to represent us and to do what we want. But it's—but that—the floodplain ordinance, I thought that would really help us and that just turned out to be another disaster in the making.

The oil and gas companies threatened to sue. I think several of us pointed out that you shouldn't just worry about lawsuits from the industry. You might want to start worrying about lawsuits from your constituents.

CK: Are there?

TDP: No. Nobody's got any money. That's why they're not worried about lawsuits from their constituents. Who's got money to hire a lawyer? And that's what the gas company counts on too. They always use that lawsuit idea to get people to—

MB: Well, we've had help. The NRDC has been here.

CK: NRDC?

MB: Natural Resource Defense Council. There were five people from there that were here for an overnight and got to see some stuff. They've really been pretty helpful, and they have a lot of—they have a large legal staff. We've had other environmental organizations that have been kind of helping. Our West Virginia Surface Owners' Rights Organization, that group has incredible information for people and is willing to help. But it's just somebody or some group of folks is going to have to stand up and say, "We've had enough," and start either legal action and get more of an eye on what's going on. And that—I mean, the loss of life in this county, the unnecessary loss of life—so we've had three, five, seven dead people directly related to oil and gas that we know of this year. There were an additional three injuries just last week. And oddly enough, what gets me is the majority of these fatalities are directly related to one company—directly related to one company, who is not one of our local, native companies.

0:30:40.4 And the other part we have is the road traffic. You look at all these trucks and stuff, a lot of the specialists they bring in to deal with some of this specialized drilling stuff are people from the flatlands. (laughs) So it's like tell me, you're going 60 miles an hour on a 2-lane road that's hilly and curvy, what happened to the right side of the road? It's like you take your life in your hands, and it's like—and the younger—the CDL drivers, the licenses some of these people are getting, you have these kids that are in their early twenties. They are just so full of themselves. We had some floods around here. You see the older drivers pull over and wait for the water to recede. Not these young kids. "Oh, I can make it through."

CK: In the drilling rigs?

TDP: In the water trucks.

MB: Water trucks and brine trucks.

TDP: That's when you see them in a ditch on the side of the road somewhere because they can't control those things.

MB: Well, we've had trucks in creeks.

TDP: Yeah, flipped over in creeks.

MB: And anytime there's an incident, they really don't like to call it in. They like to deal with it themselves and get it. They do not want the attention. Now, if anybody sees that happening, you call it and report it, because if our emergency personnel have to go out there and respond they can charge them.

CK: This has been incredible. Do you have any parting words?

TDP and MB: Help! (at same time) (laughter)

CK: Thank you.

0:32:27.2 (end of audio)

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