

Gas Drilling Experience

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I, Ron Gulla, 29 Gulla Lane, Hickory, Pennsylvania, an individual with six years past work experience in the oil and gas industry, thought I understood the business; but I was wrong and therefore deceived along with everyone else. When landowners and I signed our leases in 2002, no one knew of any exemptions (ex. exempt from Safe Drinking Water Act). When the exemptions went into place in 2005 property owners with leases should have been informed. If I had known, I would never have signed a lease. The leases should have been rewritten or even voided.

All deceit began with the leases. Bill Capouillez, Consultant for Geological Assessment Leasing wrote and gathered the leases and made money as the "middle man." This was a conflict of interest as he works for the PA Game Commission and is privy to information. He also promoted himself as a consultant for the people but whenever I or anyone else called upon him in this capacity he didn't return calls or when he did he didn't accomplish anything. No one was impressed with him or his efforts.

Mt. Pleasant Township saw the beginning of horizontal drilling (Marcellus Shale) in 2005. We (landowners) were never informed of this form of drilling, until we saw it happening all around us. No one was made aware of this at the time of lease signing.

I witnessed so many issues that I was unfamiliar with, even with my background experience ( ex. storm water control: they turned the 2.5 acre pond on my property into their sediment pond). Whenever I questioned these issues and practices, Range Resources and DEP personnel were extremely rude and unaccommodating. Range Resources operates on intimidation. They have intimidated everyone and have taken advantage of this rural area. I thought the DEP was going to help.

The following are issues and experiences on my property and how they were handled by the DEP:

February, 2006

I met Sherman Richardson (SR) of the DEP on my farm. (SR) was doing his inspection from his vehicle. While standing in mud I told him of the problems, past and current:

1. Equipment operators, service rig hands, and others expelled feces on my property numerous times. At one point I was cleaning up garbage left behind by Universal crew people. 8 ft away from my garage building I picked up paper that I discovered had fecal matter after it got on my hands. Other property owners complain of the same.
2. Silt run off, lack of silt fences on Gulla #1 and #3, and the existing silt fences were flattened down.
3. Mill slag dumped on the property.
4. Location roads were not seeded, limed and fertilized.
5. Lack of soil and erosion plan in place.
6. Water and mud was running from the location of Gulla #3, down the location road, down the stream and directly into the pond. The silt was very deep,

approximately 20 inches deep on the location road. I said that the fish in the pond would die due to the extreme soil run off and pollution coming from drilling location # 3. (SR) made no comment to this.

7. Water ran down to the house by way of location road off Gulla #1. The asphalt driveway is now washed out and well water muddy when it rained.

(SR) agreed that the location road was a real mess and difficult to drive through. (SR) complained to me that he was over worked and the DEP was under staffed. (SR) said he would look into these problems, yet the results and his efforts were appalling.

July, 2006

All the vegetation in the 2.5 acre pond died. Even the cattails turned yellow and died. While fishing, a friend and his daughter noticed the devastation. I observed that the color of the pond water wasn't right. The pond water turned dark and black. Then the bottom of the stream, that comes from the pond overflow, looked like black velvet. It covered the whole bottom of the stream. I showed this to DEP and Range Resources personnel. No one had any answers for me.

Walked and tracked water influence, as far as the golf course, to look for causes.

On location site Gulla #3 and #6 I saw blackish water coming from the toe of the locations. The water was running directly into the pond. The water in the flow pits on #6 was leaking and the flow pits remained full for several weeks before they were pumped out. Called a Range Resources personnel to ask what they did to the pond and asked if they tested the pond water. The response was "what are we going to compare it to." He told me then that they didn't do a pre-drilling water test of the pond. A water test should have been done as a baseline since the pond is approximately 300 yd. from a well site. He did admit that he thought the liner leaked.

The locations for #3 and #6 were never keyed in either. I told (SR) about all of these issues when he returned to work, but again to no avail. When the pond became contaminated I called the DEP. Mark Keil was Richardson's replacement while (SR) was recovering from a heart attack. I walked around the pond with Mark Keil and told him how disgusted I was about my property being destroyed and not getting any relief. I met with (MK) several times on the farm after the pond incident. He told me he couldn't determine where the contamination was coming from. He did tell me that my farm "was a text book case of what not to do." He said that he had an album full of photos of my farm of which the DEP reviews in their meetings. Mark also said that my name has been brought up numerous times during DEP meetings. He agreed with me that the roads and locations were poorly constructed. Every time it rained locations # 3 and #6 slid down the hill and into the field causing extreme erosion. The poor construction of these locations also caused a circle failure in the field, which still

stands to this day. I showed (MK) where acid from Universal Frac trucks spilled all around the property.

September 2006  
pond water sampled by (SR) DEP

Jan 2007  
Received letter by mail from (SR) which states that the pond contamination did not result from drilling practices.

May 2007  
There was a fish kill in the pond from all the silt and contamination. Up to this point I had gone to Mt. Pleasant Twp Supervisors and the local agriculture extension office to complain. Everywhere I went I was told the same thing: "call the DEP."

July 2007  
Spoke with (SR). I was on Gulla #9 taking pictures of the mess after Patterson drilling moved out their rig. (SR) happened to drive onto the location. I spoke to him about the letter I had received regarding the pond. (SR) typed the letter and it stated that the pond contamination wasn't the result of the drilling practice. I felt that I needed to get to the bottom of this situation and I told him that I wasn't going to be insulted or lied to anymore. (SR) tested the water but wouldn't test the mud at the bottom of the pond. I told (SR) that whatever had contaminated the pond would be at the bottom. (SR) said that he was not authorized to get a mud sample. (SR) seemed very nervous and said that the letter was written under the direction of his boss. After I told (SR) that I want a meeting with his boss, he said he would organize such a meeting. This meeting never occurred. This was the last time I spoke to (SR).

August 2007  
While Gulla #9 was being frac'd there were approx. 15 frac tanks parked alongside the stream. They had been backed in off the driveway. One day my mother and I noticed fluid coming out of a pipe as we drove up the driveway in the vehicle. Someone had unscrewed the plug at the end of the flow pipe on a tank. What my mother and I witnessed was the back flow from Gulla #9 running out of the tank and directly onto the soil and into the stream. I guess this is where the exemption of the Clean Water Act comes into play. I called (SR) on his cell phone number and left a message. I called again for 2 days and left messages with no return call. I found out later that he had died, but I was unaware at this time. I called (MK) on his cell phone but with no response. Found out later that his phone had been stolen and that it took 8 weeks for him to get a new phone.

September 2007

I spoke with (MK) when he brought Richardson's replacement, Vince Yenko out to the farm and introduced us. This is when I learned of (SR)'s death and of (MK)'s stolen cell. When (MK) arrived with (VK), (MK) said to (VK) "wait until you see this place" and after this there is another location messed up on Gulla #5 at Alexander's farm. (This is where Gulla #5 spilled fluid from flow pits into a stream that flows into a neighboring property. DEP didn't help with this situation either). Mark, Vince and I walked around the pond and up the location road to # 3 and 6. (VK) said to me that these are the worst group of people he has seen in the oil and gas field. I agreed that this was the worst nightmare I have ever experienced and that my property and family have not been respected. I have never had so many lies told by so many people. (VK) just shook his head while walking around and observing all the problems. He saw where the pipeline crew threw garbage in pipe ditches. I told (VK) that I couldn't get any relief from (SR). (VK) said that he would help me as much as he could. At this point (VK) informed me of the background of (SR). He said that (SR) was a convicted murderer with a nickname of "Hatchet Jack."

I called (VK) several times following this meeting due to continuing problems on the property. (VK) said that there were so many problems created by Range Resources contractors that he had a difficulty time keeping up with all the phone calls. All the problems on my property are still existing to this day. The pond vegetation has never grown back since it was contaminated. Garbage was buried on location #6, by a contractor. Why should my farm be treated like a landfill? Also, Range Resources pumped contaminated water from my pond to a neighboring pond for fracing purposes. The DEP told a concerned neighbor that the water was being pumped into a plastic lined pond. This was not true. So many issues with no resolution. What was going on? My property, pond and life have been destroyed. It's outrageous that someone can come onto your property and do all this destruction. There have been so many instances of insult to the property and me, personally. One includes a break-in of the garage with the removal and destruction of my equipment by a rig hand.

My wife and I are currently in litigation with Range Resources because of these lies. We were deceived and baited with a different piece of property in Hickory, Pennsylvania. Obtaining legal representation has been difficult and not without trials and tribulations. When I retained Burns, White & Hickton, attorneys at law, Pittsburgh, Pa over these matters, I was treated rudely, unprofessionally, overcharged and lied to numerous times. After my assigned attorney left the firm ( to work for an Oil and Gas Co.), I was badgered by the replacement. I was told that I didn't stand a chance against Range Resources. Overall, they didn't represent me as a client as they should have done. Additionally, during a meeting I learned that White of Burns, White & Hickton, attorneys at law, was personal friends with Range's attorney, Lambert. I am quite sure that this influenced how the firm treated me.



Once the case went to court, it was assigned to Judge Mark E. Mascara, Washington County, Pa. I wanted this judge to be recused off my case and/or felt that he should recuse himself due to a conflict of interest. The reason for this is that in the late 1980's Mascara was involved with my grandparents' estate, as an attorney. During that time he came onto the property more than once with a pistol in a shoulder holster, while in my presence.

Overall, I could never understand what was going on. Nothing was getting resolved and I was puzzled and frustrated. After learning of the exemptions the puzzle all came together and many questions were answered. Questions of how I couldn't get help, relief, support from attorneys, DEP, Range Resources personnel and even judges. Learned that Mark Keil, of the DEP, went to work directly for Range Resources. How do you as a landowner stand a chance legally when the industry wrote the Oil and Gas Act? And yet, the burden of proof is upon the individual landowner against the powerful company. The industry is polluting our air, land and water. I knew that one day other problems would surface and now it is beginning. There are many issues to speak of, but the most important is that water wells are now contaminated.

Deborah Goldberg, Managing Attorney from Earth Justice has visited and toured the community. She was appalled at what she saw.

The corruption and lies are out of hand. There are many other situations other than mine. There are other unhappy property owners who have experienced the corruption and lies and cannot get relief. Our local township officials have been lied to by Range Resources and Atlas Energy from the very beginning. Range Resources is "lining pockets" every step of the way. A local representative has received monetary contribution. It is getting out of hand. They throw money around to convince all that it is safe, when in truth it is not. Evidence is around to prove it. Trying to seek legal help and representation is impossible. No one wants to help or fight.

We need help as soon as possible. Our children are exposed to danger. Their health, home, and the water they bathe in is jeopardized. Our children, our future, our country are at risk. Where will we be without water and air?

cc: Administrator Lisa Jackson, EPA  
Senator Robert P. Casey, Jr., PA  
Senator Arlen Specter, PA  
Bill Early, Regional Administrator, EPA Region 3  
Congresswoman Diana DeGette, CO  
Congressman Maurice Hinchey, NY  
Congressman Jared Polis, CO

References:

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