COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

IN RE: ROULETTE OIL & GAS COMPANY, LLC'S APPLICATION
FOR THE CLARA FIELD #20 INJECTION-DISPOSAL WELL,
CLARA TOWNSHIP, POTTER COUNTY

BEFORE: MEGAN LEHMAN, Hearing Officer
        TOM DONAHUE, Program Manager
        KURT Klapkowski, Acting Deputy Secretary
        SUSAN G. PRICE, PG.P.

HEARING: Tuesday, July 25, 2023
         5:37 p.m.

LOCATION: F.W. Gunzburger County Office Building
          1 North Main Street
          Coudersport, PA 16915

SPEAKERS: David Saulter, Deborah Janci, Barbara
          Laxon, Laurie Barr, Steven Mehl, Erick Duzick, Frank
          Weeks, Mary Ann Heston, Diane Weeks, Margaret Henry

Reporter: Noelle Gair

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APPARENCES

ALSO PRESENT:
JAMES W. REYNOLDS, Owner - Roulette Gas & Oil Company, LLC
Carrie Kuminitz, Project Consultant
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDEX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OPENING REMARKS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Hearing Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Mr. Donahue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISCUSSION AMONG PARTIES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUBLIC COMMENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Mr. Saulter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Ms. Janci</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Ms. Barr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Ms. Laxon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Mr. Mehl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Mr. Duzick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Mr. Weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Ms. Heston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Ms. Weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Ms. Henry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISCUSSION AMONG PARTIES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PROCEDINGS

HEARING OFFICER: I'm the Regional Communications Manager for the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's Northcentral Regional Office in Williamsport, and I will serve as the Hearing Officer this evening. Thank you all for coming, and thank you to the Potter County Commissioners for their use of the building this evening.

I'd like to introduce my colleagues from DEP. At the front table we have Tom Donohue. He is the Environmental Program Manager in the District Oil and Gas Operations. Kurt Klapkowski, he is the Deputy Secretary for the Bureau of Oil and Gas Planning and Program Management. And we have Susan Price, Professional Geologist Manager in Oil and Gas Management. And we actually have several other members of our Oil and Gas staff and other support staff from our Regional Office here tonight as well.

Our purpose tonight is to hold a formal public hearing for DEP's Oil and Gas Program staff to hear your testimony about the Roulette Oil and Gas Company's Application for the Clara Field
Number 20 Injection Disposal Well located in Clara Township, Potter County.

If you have not already, please pick up a copy of our Fact Sheet, which is at the front table. It has more information about the Application, the review process, and how you can submit a written comment as part of that review process. Now, if you would like to speak tonight and have not already done so, this is your final opportunity. We have the sign-in sheet for speakers at the front-left there, and at this time we have eight people signed up. We were planning to do about three minutes person, but with the number of people we're going to go ahead and extend that to five minutes is the maximum. So if anybody is prepared to speak, you may go up to five minutes, but we will be firm with that timeline - time limit, sorry. So if you'd like to register, please go ahead and do that. Your name has to be on the list before we start the hearing in order to be one of the testifying parties this evening.

In addition to this evening, I mentioned we also have opportunity for written comments. You can send those via email or written mail and those must be received no later than 4:00
p.m. on Tuesday, August 8th. If you would like to submit written testimony, again, be sure to take home the Fact Sheet that has the details of the deadline, where to send it, and all that.

Another important note, not everybody's comfortable with public speaking. DEP does give equal consideration to all public comments. It doesn't matter if that comes in verbally tonight or in written format, equal consideration. So those who speak tonight, you may also submit written comments. So if you decide you have more that you'd like to say than the five minutes allows, you absolutely may submit at any length in written comments.

So please note that our purpose here tonight is to listen to your comments and gather input as part of DEP's review of the Permit Application. DEP staff do not directly answer questions or respond to individual comments during this formal proceeding. And I should also mention we do have a Court Reporter here tonight that's recording all of the comments. They are all recorded into our official record with this Permit, and they will be provided a response after the close of a public comment period along with the written
comments, and that's called a comment and response
document. So that's actually something that we will
publish. And if you signed up, even if you're not
speaking, there's a separate sign up if you'd like
to receive that, we will provide that as well after
that's issued.

Okay?

Before we begin public testimony, we
have one short presentation to go over the
Permitting process, but I'd also like to recognize
that we do have representatives from the Applicant
here tonight, and they've agreed to be available
after the hearing, as well as some of our staff will
be around. So if we have a little bit of time at
the end, if anybody has any questions or wants to
clarify anything, I do want to acknowledge, so you
know who you're looking for. We have Jim Reynolds,
who is the owner of Roulette Oil and Gas, and Carrie
Kuminitz (phonetic) who is a Project Consultant
sitting back there. Thank you. Thank you for
coming.

Now, Tom Donohue will give a brief
overview of the Permitting process.

MR. DONOHUE: Hi, everyone. Let me
explain a little bit how we're set up in Oil and
Gas. It's a little bit different than the rest of the regions in DEP. For well permitting, oil and gas well permitting, it's split up into two offices that cover the entire state. There's an office in Meadville, which covers the northern half of the state, and an office in Pittsburgh, which covers the southern half of the state. This is in Potter County, of course, so it's covered by the Meadville Office, the permitting aspect of it. We have three monitoring and compliance offices in Oil and Gas, one in the Meadville Office, one in the Pittsburgh Office, and one in the Williamsport Office, and our Williamsport Office is the office that's responsible for the monitoring and compliance for this well site. The monitoring and compliance that's the inspectors and the water quality specialists who actually go out to the site. Emergency response is also handled by the Williamsport Office for this area.

So the first thing that needs to happen before DEP even receives an Application for an injection well is that the EPA has to issue an injection well permit. They do this through their underground injection control program. The EPA is responsible for the injection, well integrity,
protection of groundwater and closure requirements; the review of all those. We could have an optional pre-application meeting with the applicant, and during the pre-application meeting, we discuss the project overview and items to be submitted with the application and -.

Sue, do you remember, did we have a pre-application meeting for this?

MS. PRICE: We did. It was last year, maybe, like, February.

MR. DONOHUE: Okay.

Thanks. Yeah, we had a pre-application meeting with Roulette about a year ago or so.

Once the EPA issues their permit and the pre-application meeting is held, then the drilling application is submitted to DEP, along with an erosion and sediment control plan, a control and disposal plan, the EPA permit, and the approved EPA application. We have multiple permitting technical staff review portions of the application to ensure that it meets the requirements of our laws and regulations.

So there's four or five basic parts of DEP's review. The first part of our review is the
drilling application review itself. And since this
well has already been drilled, we call it a Change
of Use Permit to convert the production well into
the disposal well. This application review
addresses the well location, distance restrictions,
notifications, coal mine issues, threatened and
endangered species and basically any other
locational issues that we regulate.

There's an erosion and sediment
control plan that's submitted, and this is meant to
address the prevention of runoff from the site.
There's a control and disposal plan review. The
control and disposal plan is a description of
operations, pollution prevention measures, waste
disposal methods, pollution incident response, and
an implementation schedule. And both the E&S plan
and control and disposal plan are required to be
submitted and approved as part of the application
review. And this is different than a typical
unconventional or a conventional well, which those
two plans are required to be on-site, but not
necessarily required to be approved, but for
disposal wells, they're required to be approved as
part of the permit.

There's a mechanical integrity review
that we do, and this is typically an oil and gas
inspector that looks at the casing and cementing to
make sure that it meets our well construction and
operating requirements. Finally, there's a geologic
review, which we'll have a licensed professional
geochemist do, and this is meant to ensure that the
injection formation has integrity and there's no
pathways to fresh groundwater or to basement rock.
During the geologic review, we'll also assess the
potential for induced seismicity and potentially put
special conditions on the permit — on an issued
permit to require monitoring for any potential earth
movement.

After a well is permitted, DEP
compliance staff, this is the staff in the
Williamsport Office, they'll take over to enforce
the permit. We'll conduct periodic site inspections
for surface issues, and well integrity issues or
well issues themselves. And also the operator is
required to meet various EPA and DEP monitoring and
reporting obligations.

About this hearing itself, while
everyone is welcome to communicate environmental
concerns and feedback at any time during or after
DEP's review, formal testimony received today and
two weeks afterwards - there's going to be a two-week comment period after this, that will all be considered by our technical staff as they review the Application. At the conclusion of the review, DEP will issue a decision on the application and produce a comment response document that answers all of your comments and questions that you either wrote to us or that you're going to speak to us today.

That's about all I have. Thank you.

HEARING OFFICER: Grab the sign-in sheet. So now we'll begin the formal Public Hearing on the Roulette Oil and Gas Company's Application for the Clara Field Number 20 Injection Disposal. Well, and I will go over a few ground rules. So far you seem like a very polite audience, so I think this will go well. Right.

First, please turn off cell phones or put them on vibrate, and if you need to take a call, just please step outside. I will call on people to speak in the order in which they signed up. When your name is called, please come up, and I would suggest come up on this side and just be careful not to trip on the cords. Say your name and give your comments. If you - you can spell your name as well, but we also have the sign-in sheet, so -. Please
speak loudly and clearly into the microphone so
everyone can hear you, including the stenographer.
   So we are allowing each person five
minutes to offer testimony, and I will keep time.
The two of us will be keeping time, and we do have a
warning sign. You may or may not see it because
people tend to not look at us, but it's there. If
your time is up, I will stand up and approach and
give you a moment to finish to wrap up what you're
saying, but if you see me stand up, that means your
time is over. Please be respectful of everyone's
opportunity to speak and to be heard. So that means
don't interrupt while others are speaking, by
clapping, booing or speaking out of turn. Thank you
for your cooperation with these ground rules.

As a reminder, our purpose tonight is
to listen and gather formal public comments as part
of our review process. DEP does not directly
respond to comments or questions offered tonight,
but we will respond to all of them given formally,
as we both explained previously in that comment and
response document when the permit decision is
reached.

Okay?

So our first registered speaker is
David Saulter.

MR. SAULTER: Thank you, David Saulter. I'm from Hebron Township and the current President of God's Country Chapter of Trout Unlimited, which -. Can you hear me now? I'm not used to speaking into one of these things. But as a Chapter member in Trout Unlimited, we've been an organization in Potter County for 44 years now. In the mid-80s, there was another attempt to use some shallow gas wells in the fishing creek area as injection brine well recipients. I guess our biggest concern is the fact that why Well Number 20, what was the criteria or the process that Roulette Oil and Gas went through to determine that this was the best well out of, apparently, the 344 that they operate currently within the state? Per the DEP, their authorization search details here, the technical review on this well has not been completed yet, according to this.

Is that correct?

MR. DONOHUE: Correct.

MR. SAULTER: Okay.

Per the oil and gas related injection well requirements, class-II disposal wells, they
make up about 20 percent of the total number in the
country of 180,000. Per the regulations, all oil
and gas-producing states require the injection of
brine into the origin fading formations or similar
formations from where the brine came from. In that
Application, there's no designation where all this
brine is coming from. I find it kind of ironic that
if you look at Clara Township, there's only five or
six wells being operated by all that oil and gas.
Out of the 340 that they currently operate, there's
three abandoned wells under their EPA listing and
one that's plugged. How come the abandoned wells
haven't been considered? Why haven't they been
plugged? And why would you give a permit to a
company that's not in compliance with your existing
regulations?

The construction of the well, you said
it's already been drilled. When was it drilled? By
whom? When was the last time the casing was
inspected? And what process is involved in the
inspections of the casing in the existing piping
welds that are there? If I was a resident of Clara
Township, I would be appalled at the fact that they
want to use their township for a disposal of brine
generated in other townships, other counties, given
that they're not producing any gas or oil, any significant amount within that Clara Township. The construction and conversion standards and regular testing are mandated. If I understood you correctly, this isn't being classified as an injection well, but as an existing well, I forget what you -.

MR. DONOHUE: It's due to the Change of Use. It's -.

MR. SAULTER: It's the Change of Use.

MR. DONOHUE: The Permit Application, as to change the use to a disposal well.

MR. SAULTER: So everything hasn't been reviewed and approved as of yet?

MR. DONOHUE: Correct.

MR. SAULTER: The last review was in September of '22. The technical review is still pending. The applicant has been issued a deficiency letter, but there was no - thank you. No listing of what the deficiency was. Is it just in the review process or the completeness? Has the company put up the bond necessary for this well and what other -? I guess the biggest question I have, how did you determine Clara Number 20 was the best site out of all the wells that you operate?
I think my time is probably pretty close. Thank you.

HEARING OFFICER: You did a great job on the time. Thank you very much, sir. The next person registered to speak is Deborah Janci. And then I typically will just say the next few names to remind people where they're at so they're ready when it's their turn. So after that is Barbara Laxon and Laurie Barr. So first we have Deborah. For those speaking, feel free to adjust this if you need it. It says it's best that this is kind of pointed towards your chin.

MS. JANC: First, I want to thank you for having this public hearing and allowing our comments. My name is Deborah Janci. I'm a citizen of Clara Township. I live on Clara Road. And yesterday I called in at 11:58., the time was 12:00 to get your name in here. I thought a whole lot of people would be coming, and I was the second person. I was shocked by that. But anyway, dismayed. And I thank the continuing advocacy of our Clara Township Commissioners and the boards of state, you know. Clara Township, we voted for Home Rule. Apparently that's an issue. I mean, how do you fight back against something like this? We're a
Township of 66 households. We don't have money. There's money galore with this just gas and exploration. I paid - and my husband, we paid real estate taxes for 44 years to Pennsylvania. And now it's a scary thing. And we finally have internet now we have Tri-Co Connections. Before we had Frontier, and they're in trouble for not providing adequate services. We don't have cell phone connection where we live.

So you go on the internet and start going down the rabbit hole and there's a lot of scary stories about injection wells on the internet. They've had all kinds of problems with contamination of aquifers in California, Ohio, Texas. It goes on and on. So it's quite frightening for the average uneducated person. And I learned a few words when I went on the Internet. Brine. When you think of brine, you think of a water softener brine. You think of saltwater. It's more than that. It has benzenes, ethylbenzene, xylene, radium. And by the way, I found out that the EPA federal government doesn't test for radium. It's up to the state, and the state hasn't done that because, of course, we're exposed to radiation every day, but not in such concentrated form. And I wondered why my Subaru got
rusty wheels after they were spraying it on the road.

Another word I learned was migration, and migration, when used in injection well, there are several ways the fluid can migrate. You have an old well. It isn't examined correctly. You have a crack at the casing. It goes into the upper areas where you don't want that water. It can go down the well, migrate to another well, shoot out that one. They can spill it all over at the site. Now, there's been accommodations for that. There's emergency plans. I looked at that. I looked how deep the well was.

I think when you repurpose a well, the casing has to be thicker. I don't know if that's right or not. And then I reviewed the response to - we had a - in 2020 we had a lot of questions for the EPA, and they addressed a lot of things, but there were some questions that I had. You know, it says Protection of springs and surface water bodies is outside the scope of the EPA UIC permitting authorities they're limited to groundwater. So the state, I understand, is responsible.

Okay.

So will the state address that? I
know I have three springs that are right behind our property, and when it rains and the water tables up, it comes like a brown snake down the yard. There's 28 wells in the Clara Field, two in the Clara tract. You're going to play Whack-a-Mole when the fluids come up. That's all I have to say. Thank you for listening. Do the right thing.

**HEARING OFFICER:** Thank you, Deborah.

The next speaker is Barbara Laxon.

**MS. LAXON:** Can I make a request? That Laurie Barr go first?

**HEARING OFFICER:** Oh, okay.

If you'd like to switch spots, that's fine. Sure.

Okay.

Laurie Barr, as long as Laurie's okay with that?

**MS. BARR:** Yeah, I'm find with that.

Thank you so much. And I have 12 pages though. I know they're going to give me the - but I'm going to read it and if I don't get to the end, I'm going to make it available. I'll make it available online, and I have a lot of links here, so you can follow the links for more information. But I'd like to start out by saying thank you for having a hearing...
and - and that I strongly oppose the proposed
injection well project and I'm requesting the DEP
deny the authorization of the permit based on the
following.

James Reynolds and Robert Benson have
a long history of abandoning wells, including
injection wells, while operating them under
authorization, EPA UIC Permit Number PAS2R940BPOT.
This has been well documented by the Department of
Environmental Resources, Department of Environmental
Protection, dating back to 1984. Officers of
Roulette Oil and Gas, LLC have operated wells in
Pennsylvania under business names of the following
four companies according to records of the DEP and
the DER. Roulette Oil and Gas Company, LLC. Benson
and Reynolds Gas Company, Potter-McKean Resources,
Inc., Potter-McKean Resources of Pennsylvania, also
identified as Potter-McKean Resources of PA, again,
in the DEP's inventory.

The companies listed above operated
wells that have been identified by DEP's database as
abandoned. James Reynolds is the managing partner
of Roulette oil and Gas, LLC according to the Oil
and Gas Operator Ownership and Control Information
form that was filed with the injection well.
Application. While doing business as Benson and Reynolds company, beginning in around 1983, the company received permits to operate eight injection wells located in Clara and Hebron Township, Potter County. I requested the Benson and Reynolds files from the DEP, and I received them and I have them online and I'll provide everybody with links to them. And I'm going to give the DEP an electronic copy of this so that they'll have live links to the records.

Inspection reports and DEP files reflect the operators recited in 1990 and again in '94 for abandoning wells. Ownership of the eight injection wells was transferred to Potter-McKean Resources in 1994. The following is a crop of a Matson 120 Wells Inspection Report conducted in 1990. All eight wells had been abandoned at the time of the 1990 inspection, according to DEP records, and I have screen grabs of those records, and I have crops of these, and they'll be available online. So most of the pages are pictures.

In addition to being abandoned, DEP files reflect that these wells leaked and vented natural gas into the atmosphere for many years. The max in one well was last inspected on site by the
DEP in 1993. It may still be venting greenhouse
gases today. According to the Pennsylvania
Department of State, Potter-Mckean Resources, Inc.
was created in 1994, and the officers, according to
the Department of State, are James Reynolds, and
Robert Benson and Peter Matricas (phonetic). DEP
records reflect that James Reynolds and Robert
Benson are Officers of Pottery-McKean Resources,
Inc. Currently have one well in the company's
inventory that is identified by the DEP's online
database as abandoned. This abandoned well, owned
by Potter-McKean Resources, is located in Keating
Township, Potter County. Potter-McKean Resources,
Inc. well inventory is available online on the DEP's
website.

Eight injection wells, along with 70
other wells, were transferred to Potter-McKean
Resources, from Potter-McKean Resources to Potter
McKean Resources of Pennsylvania. According to the
Pennsylvania Department of State, the officers are
James Reynolds and Robert Benson Senior. James
Reynolds and Robert Benson Senior, owners of Potter-
McKean Resources in Pennsylvania currently have 20
wells in their inventory. Among them are two wells
that are identified on the DEP's database as
abandoned.

I'm going to skip - because I'm running out of time. The Matson well - the Matson 7 well in Clara Township was originally cited for violating Pennsylvania's Oil and Gas Act by the Department in 1993. For 30 years, from '93 to present, according to DEP records, the Matson 7 Well and the Matson 3 Well have been abandoned, and they were abandoned by the company owned by James Reynolds and Robert Benson in Clara Township, Potter County. The same town that's applying for the permit now. These are still abandoned wells.

All right.

Thank you. Who gets this?

HEARING OFFICER: Thank you, Lori.

Barbara, you ready now?

MS. LAXON: Uh-huh (yes.)

HEARING OFFICER: Okay.

And then the next person is Stephen Mehl.

MS. LAXON: Yeah, I could have given her my time. It's only going to take me a couple of minutes to read this, and then I'm going to show some pictures.

Okay.
So the injection well that we're here to comment on is to be maintained or not by Roulette Oil and Gas, which we have documented does not have a history of maintaining its properties properly or plugging their abandoned wells. And I'll show the pictures. These wells do not have adequate access. They do not have adequate signage. They have bushes going up through the engines, the pump jacks, the supposed containment corrosion on all parts of the wells and tanks are clearly visible. So despite any future amendments to this ejection well site, due to the nature of the materials, they will corrode or deteriorate sooner or later, especially when poorly maintained.

And I also had some questions about the transport of waste to the site and the roads that are just - they're not highways. They're back mountain roads and these are big waste trucks that are going to be on these roads and this is a danger for the trucks, the roads, danger for leakage from the trucks. Is Roulette Oil and Gas going to be responsible for all of this? Will there be an issue with the time of day that these trucks are allowed on the road? All of this kind of information?

Also, I wanted to say that the
location near the top of the hill is guaranteeing that any leakage, and it will leak eventually, will spread in all directions to contaminate nearby creeks that are all part of the Upper Allegheny Watershed and any underground water resources. And I say that because I and my family, we both kayak and fish in this watershed and let our children, and in my case, great-grandchildren play in these waters, and all of my friends that live around here also have their children playing in these waters. And I - because of all of these things, I'm asking that this well permit be denied. And I have a few pictures here. This is one picture of a Roulette Oil and Gas Well. You can see the condition of the well. Everything is all corroded and coming apart. And they just, you know, they just recently went around and stuck these little stickers because there was no signage the last time we looked at this, but they ran around and stuck little stickers on some of them. But as you can see on others, there is no stickers. There is no signage to say who they belong to. And you can see, these are - I don't know why Laurie printed these, they're not the most egregious. There are some that are rusting through
that you can almost see through the tank, and as you
can see, there is no appropriate signage to tell you
who belongs to it. And you can see that they're in
the weeds. There's weeds - some of them are a lot
worse with the weeds growing up in between the pump
jacks and the engine and everything else.

I mean, supposedly some of these are
listed as active wells and some of them are, you
know, I don't - abandoned. It's - nothing is very
well appropriate. Some that are obviously abandoned
are listed as active, and others that are listed as
abandoned that are not maintained or doing anything.
And that's it. Thank you.

HEARING OFFICER: Thank you, Barbara.
Next is Steven Mehl, and then after him, the next
two will be Erick Duzick and Frank Weeks.

MR. MEHL: I just want to say thank
you for everyone coming out tonight. I'm sure you
could think of a number of things you'd rather be
doing than being here tonight, but this is really
important. My name is Steve Mehl. I'm here
representing Clara Township as a Township
Supervisor. I'm going to state unequivocally that
Clara Township is not anti-gas or oil.

We understand the need for America to
be energy independent and have worked closely with
the gas and oil industry. We actually live in gas
and oil country, but there's a difference between
gas and oil production and the injection well
proposed by Roulette Oil and Gas. Because many of
the landowners in Clara Township are not full-time
residents, but camp owners and township officials
work full time at other jobs. We respectfully
request a 30-day extension from the 8 August
deadline for comments and questions to be entered
into the record. I will submit this in writing
also, but I want to go on the record.

My question is this. Why did we have
to request this hearing? Why isn't the EPA and DEP
open and honest about what's going on? Projects as
consequential as this, this one deserves
transparency. Something's wrong here. The EPA
approved this Permit to inject 15,500 barrels a
month into this proposed injection well. That's 186
barrels annually. That's 1,000,860 barrels over a
ten-year period.

Well, most of us here don't have much
barrel is. So put it in perspective. We all know
what a gallon of milk looks like. There's 42
gallons per barrel. So that would be 651,000
gallons a month, 7,812,000 gallons annually, and
78,120,000 gallons over the ten-year Permit. Does
Roulette Oil and Gas have that much waste from their
300-plus wells or are other plans in store? Other
ideas?

I'm sure an approved injection well
would go at a very high price in Potter County.
Does anyone in this room, including DEP, think or
believe that injecting 78,120,000 gallons of toxic
water waste into the ground here in Potter County
would not affect our environment or our groundwater
or our surface water? According to the EPA, it is,
I quote, unlikely to contaminate our water aquifers
and our surface waters. Clara Township Officials
contend it is more than likely to contaminate
underground and our surface waters.

According to EPA's comments to our
questions and concerns last year, Potter county is a
great place for injection well. The geography and
the geology is perfect. Their engineering is
adequate and their oversight is immaculate when they
come and check once a year. The EPA considers the
geology for an injection well to be great. It's
impermeable they say. They reviewed extensive
information about the proposed injection zones,
i.e., the Cooper 5-0 Formation, the Sheffield 3-1 Formation, Kane 3-0 Formation to confirm the suitability that the injection zones can receive the volume of fluids I just mentioned to be injected without fracturing, without leaking.

They state that the geologic formations indicate an absence of faults or fractures within a one-mile radius of the injection well. And yet, we know numerous wells have leaked and fractured three, four and even five miles away, just like up here in North Hollow Road. The EPA notes that the confining shales of the Bradford and the Venango groups and trust me, I have no idea what I'm talking about.

Okay?

These are actual documents from the EPA and they like to throw a lot of good words around.

Okay?

But it's their words. Are impermeable shales that separate the injection fluids by approximately 1,150 feet of rock. They state that the shale formations have been demonstrated to serve as combining formations to many injection projects. But have some leaked? Have some fractured? The
geology in Pennsylvania is not nicely stacked
formations like many places in the country. The
lines go vertical, they go horizontal and they go
sideways. None of the aquifers are safe because in
the end, it's the pressure that wins.

The gas and oil is toxic. It's
radioactive by EPA's own study and admission. The
alpha-type, you know, the kind that cause cancer.
There are those who say and want to believe, oh,
this isn't an harmful solution, but that's not true.
And it's corrosive; so corrosive that it ends the
well casings and they will eventually fail.

Government engineers believe that they
can create something that won't fail. But history
has proven over and over that's not true. We are
contemplating pumping a solution in the ground that
no one can observe, no one can monitor what's going
on until it's too late.

Are you chasing me out?

HEARING OFFICER: Your time has up,
sir. I was giving you a chance to finish your
sentence though. I can see you were at the end of
the page. Thank you very much.

Okay.

Erick Duzick?
Okay.

And then after Erick, we have Frank Weeks and then Mary Ann Heston.

MR. DUZICK: Hello, I'm Erick Duzick, I live in Coudersport. I'm an Engineer for the last 12 years or so for an oil and gas company. I just want to say I'm in support of this project. There are hundreds and thousands of wells in Pennsylvania right now, 400 to 500 injection wells, injecting gas into the ground in Potter County right now. We have no problems with that. There's minimal groundwater contamination in Potter County from oil and gas activities, if any, that I know of. And I think that there's a lot of hype because people see the news reports as the one person was saying, and they don't really understand geology and how it actually works.

Another thing, you know, people think steel and cement corrode. They're underground, there's no oxygen. They don't corrode like what you see on surface. On surface you do have corrosion, but thousands of feet below ground, it's a static environment. There's none of that. And basically, that's what I want to say is that if anybody has any questions, then feel free to ask me anything.
Thanks.

HEARING OFFICER: Thank you. Frank

Weeks?

MR. WEEKS: This is going to be short.

Frank Weeks. I live in Clara Township. I live there with my wife for 35 years on Fishing Creek. I want to thank the panel for coming here and listening to our comments.

Number one, there is no city public water supply in Clara Township. All of our water sources are natural. There's springs are wells.

There is no plan B. Cases of bottled water delivered to my house are just not going to cut it.

The risk of this project, however small, is a catastrophic damage to the water sources. water supplies all over the country are being threatened, and that's all we hear from government. Protect your water supply. So why are we going to allow this industry to threaten my water supply? It's just somebody can make a profit. I don't think that's a good enough reason.

Here we see, we have all the I's dotted, all the T's are crossed. It looks great on paper, but this industry has a long history of violations, infractions, failures, fines and
penalties. Drilling companies, they just look on its failures as a consequence of doing business. The public has no reason to believe that this new project is going to be any different.

We look forward to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to protect our citizens from this risky project.

HEARING OFFICER: Thank you. Next is Mary Anne Heston.

Okay.

After Mary Anne, we have Diane Weeks and Margaret Henry.

MS. HESTON: I spent some time this afternoon trying to write my comments. I've been thinking about this injection well for months, since I heard about it and I have not done the kind of work, the diligence, that Laurie Barr has put into her research. But I think, like all of you, I'm concerned. And I know that others have greater stakes here, whether they're financial or personal, and they probably have more knowledge of the issues surrounding these injection wells.

Most of us don't get motivated or actively engaged until our property or our families are threatened. That's human nature, perhaps.
However, much we wish it were otherwise.

My main concern is that whatever the outcome of this particular hearing, we remember that all sides represented must, in the end, work together for the best of all possible outcomes. DEP resisted granting this public hearing at first. They had reviewed the public comments submitted during the period that the EPA conducted its own permitting process, and perhaps they felt that they know all the concerns that were going to be given tonight. And in addition, I just want to mention that DEP, the Department of Environmental Protection, and I want to emphasize that word, because they get real opposition from different fronts, certainly from the industry.

You know, there's frustration, I'm sure, with the paperwork that needs to be filed, the inspections, the criticism from people who are fearful, rightfully so, for their property and their water, but they also get a lot of criticism from our state legislators, and they need public support and political support to do their job. Without money, without resources, without adequate personnel, they can't cover all these concerns that have been expressed tonight. There just isn't enough to do
that job well.

But there's also, I want to say, responsibility from all of us as citizens to become better informed, to not rely on a few individuals to do this kind of work, informing others of what's at risk. We all benefit from the information age, and I'm speaking extemporaneously now because I feel that without public engagement, nothing's going to change. You know, it's a political issue as well. If we don't get involved, we cannot be pointing fingers at others.

I also recognize that there is frustration and anger coming from those who have been tragically impacted by environmental pollution and degradation; those who have seen their family members sickened, their animals, their land and/or water poisoned. People who have studied and covered these stories are consequently skeptical of any sort of protection coming from the government. However, we know that finger pointing and name calling have become all too common and all too corrosive in our politics and our communities, and none of it leads to the more important work of problem-solving for long term good.

Please remember that in any enterprise
involving groups of people, there are some who do
their best and some who do not. Don't assume the
entire group is at fault, and please avoid the cop-
out of cynicism, assuming the worst of others or
that nothing is to be gained - oh, I'm sorry for my
emotion. And I'll finish up.

In working with those with whom we
disagree. It's not just ourselves who have
something at stake, who will live with the
consequences of our interactions or worse, our
inactions. Our children and grandchildren, our
communities, our beautiful county, our world, all
depend on our better selves working together.

HEARING OFFICER: Thank you. Diane
Weeks. After Diane, we have Margaret Henry, and
Margaret is the final person signed up tonight.

MS. WEEKS: Hello. My name is Diane
Weeks. I live in Clara Township, fourth generation.
Hopefully fifth and sixth will come along. We have
spring water, and we're at the headwaters.
Everybody downstream from us gets their waters from
us. If this water is ruined, everybody below us is
ruined.

I don't understand, as Mr. Sautler
said, why Clara Township? Except for one reason -
two reasons. We're low income. There's not many
people. There's a lot of seniors. It's blatant
discrimination. Why are you picking Clara Township?
There's no way that the DEP or the EPA can guarantee
that you will not damage our environment. You don't
have enough staff to regulate. There's violations
constant from frackers.

You can't guarantee it, so it should
not go in. You cannot guarantee it that it won't be
damaged. So absolutely, I am appalled, Mr. Saulter.
I am beyond appalled that you would even try to jam
that in this little county, in our little township
because we don't have the money to fight it, but it
is discrimination, and it should definitely be a
violation that you should try to do that.

Once that's fractured, you have no
control over where it's going, so you cannot
promise it, so it should not happen.

HEARING OFFICER: Thank you. Margaret
Henry, our final speaker.

MS. HENRY: Everything that I want to
tell you today can be summed up in how many, how
many kids have died in the Canon-McMillan School
District because of an exceptionally rare form of
cancer called Ewing Sarcoma. More than a handful
folks and more than 67 have been diagnosed with
either Ewing Sarcoma or some other rare form of
cancer. And of course, just like cigarettes don't
cause cancer, until they did, fracking injection
wells and the chemicals that these companies are
permitted to use unbeknownst to us because of
proprietary bullshit, excuse my French.

It's absolutely ridiculous what they
expose people to. And people are dying. They're
not just sick with tremors and unbeknownst
conditions. They are freaking dying, and they're
children. How many houses do they have to explode
before they get a grip on the fact that methane and
oil and all that go together, and when they use the
force that is required to pump that disgusting
compound of fracking fluid down into those wells, it
backs up. It goes into people's homes. It goes
into the groundwater. It goes into their wells.
It's crazy. It's beyond crazy. It's inhumane, and
it ought to be illegal.

How many -? Well and you know, I can
answer this. How many people do you know that have
died from direct causes of fracking? My first
encounter with this was a guy named Terry Greenwood.
Google him, look him up. And if you want to know
about the power of companies and what they can put
you through, Google Ray Kimmel, Dimock,
Pennsylvania, Craig Stevens, and you'll find out
what they've done to people and how these people
have stood up to corporations.

And you know, I want to know what's
going on at the DEP, that stands for Department of
Energy Production because it no more stands for
Environmental Protection than WTF is a French
phrase. You guys got to get a grip on this.
You have absolutely no right to poison us. None
whatsoever.

HEARING OFFICER: Thank you. Thank
you for everybody who came out tonight and for those
who took the time to speak. This will conclude
tonight's public hearing. As a reminder, we are
accepting written comments also through Tuesday,
August 8th, and those can be of any length, so if
you wish to submit written comments or questions,
please take that handout with the details. We
appreciate everyone's time and your thoughts, your
comments, and your interest in this matter. As I
said, some of our staff and also the Applicant will
be here for a little while after if anybody has
anything as you're heading out, but otherwise, have
a safe trip home and good night.

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HEARING CONCLUDED AT 6:27 P.M.

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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing proceedings, hearing officer Lehman was reported by me on July 25, 2023 and that I, Noelle Gair, read this transcript and that I attest that this transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceeding.

Dated the 11th day of August, 2023.

[Signature]

Noelle Gair,

Court Reporter