

Subject: : Conservation

Topic: : We won't see profits from Shale Gas.

Re: We won't see profits from Shale Gas.

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URL:

For the most part, those oil reservoirs are still well below the water table. No?

Yes, water can theoretically come up in time. For instance, via a fault line. But keep this in mind. Most of the bad stuff in fracking fluid is natural. It wasn't added by company X. It was added by the earth. At the depths we're talking about, there's all kinds of nasties, like radium, heavy metals, etc. that you would not want in your rivers and streams. The stuff that company X added may be somewhat toxic, but it is in miniscule concentrations, and really a small part of the problem.

So deep underground, you're adding contaminated fracking fluid, to essentially, contaminated fracking fluid that nature put there. Something like a fault line, well, that fluid is likely to come up at a slow pace anyway with or without drilling. Nature has a way of handling things that happen at a slow, natural pace. For instance, the natural oil seeps on the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico, over time, add far more oil to the water than did the DeepWater Horizon. But they do it slowly and over a very large area.

Where drilling/industry make problems is when it fantastically outpaces natural pollution. Say, dumping millions of gallons of oil into the gulf in a couple of weeks, instead of a year, and from a single point, rather than over thousands of square miles. Spilling tanks of fluids on the surface which suddenly enter a small stream. Punching a hole (huge, unnatural fault!) to that deep, nasty water, temporarily pressurizing it so that it rises, and failing to seal off the surface layers. What would have naturally been a very slow seep over centuries or more turned into a geyser which unloaded all those nasties in a matter of minutes!

Consider AMD and coal. The sulfuric rock which causes AMD is natural. When water touches it it makes sulfuric acid. And adding some of this sulfuric acid to streams is a very natural process, it would happen if people never set foot on this Earth. But very SLOWLY. It turns out when you build caverns through this rock, abandon them, let them fill them with flowing water, and release that water directly to streams without being buffered, well, it might be the same contaminate, and the same process, but it's still a horse of a different color. The pace is far beyond what nature can handle, and it's very damaging.

IMO, except for maybe general "development" leading to the shrinking of habitats, I think the days of routine overt pollution are gone. The type that turn streams burnt orange as a matter of plan. Now, everyone wants to prevent pollution, and has plans to do it. Now, it's about preventing accidents. BP didn't INTEND to have a platform blow up, have it's blow-out preventer fail, and spill millions of gallons of oil into the gulf. But it happened. And that driller didn't intend to have it's cement casing fail and allow millions of gallons of frack fluid to get into the nearby stream, but it happened.

And also, keeping tabs on things that were maybe not fully considered. Maybe a relatively unkown, but still important contaminant was overlooked in the treatment plans. Sure, you did a heck of a job removing X, which

was your plan, but nobody thought Z was also a problem. Turns out it is.