

**Statement by Lisa Bracken
Western Colorado Congress
September 15, 2009**

Benzene continues to infiltrate the aquifer of West Divide Creek five years after remedial measures were implemented to correct the seep, which began in association with fracturing activities. Remedial measures amounted to re-cementing the wellbore.

A moratorium was put in place shortly after the 2004 seep event but later lifted. Since then, over 40 new wells have been drilled within a mile or so of our home.

In 2008, another seep emerged, but over a year later, we are still asking the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission to sample the ground water in the vicinity of the new seep. It took 3 months for the state to even gather surface samples.

Propane has been found in the ground water of our property. Propane is sourced from thermogenic, or deep formation gas. If natural gas is coming up from production, then we are obviously concerned that fracturing chemicals may also be infiltrating West Divide Creek which is our source of domestic drinking water.

In the summer of 2008, we again experienced a great exodus of wildlife from West Divide Creek, and I found a number of dead crustaceans, mammals, birds and even a partially paralyzed frog swimming in an area of creek bubbling. But to this day, we have no idea what to look for in our drinking water, and the state is not interested in sampling the bubbles.

The oil and gas industry doesn't appear interested in federal involvement unless it means securing for themselves inappropriate exceptions. We've all heard the phrase: 'money talks'. We've seen how far industry's lobby dollars go toward deregulation and the corruption of oversight. We've seen how effective the industry is at silencing and dividing communities. This poll very loudly confirms that people expect protections of vital water resources and human health and safety.