

## Personal Narrative for Ryan Graber (Protect PT)

Hi Friend,

Summertime in Southwestern Pennsylvania is really special to me. That time of year, I'm always out biking the Westmoreland Heritage Trail with my kids, kayaking, fishing, and enjoying the outdoors. Spending time in nature means more to me than I can say. That's why I'm so worried about the oil and gas companies moving into our area. I see so many orange creeks that can't be cleaned and I think about the lasting consequences the gas industry is going to leave us with like the mining companies have done.

[Will you join me in the fight against pollution by supporting Protect PT today?](#)

Gillian and I moved to Trafford because it looked like an amazing place to raise our family. Almost immediately, we found ourselves fighting to keep the air clean and safe for our kids. A neighbor was using a wood-burning furnace that threw clouds of acrid smoke into the air. It made us sick. Our daughter woke up in the night afraid the house was on fire. We made a formal complaint but the PA DEP wouldn't do anything. We had to take them to court to make them stop poisoning my family.

The same month we settled, we learned that a fracking well pad was going in nearby. We weren't allowed to speak at the public meetings, because the site was in Penn Township. But we would be less than a half mile from the site! It was clearly going to affect our community. A group of us met at the Penn Township library and decided to form an organization. We came up with the name Protect Penn-Trafford that night. Now we had a voice and a way to fight back.

My biggest concern about fracking is the negative impact on our health. I've heard from friends who live near well pads who can't sleep at night and can't concentrate during the day. The noise pollution, bright lights, and vibrations caused by fracking are more than they can take. Their kids are struggling at school. They can't sell their house because the well pad reduced their property value so much they wouldn't be able to buy anything else.

I worry that our children are being exposed to harm. I can't stand by and let these fracking companies destroy our beautiful region and the people we love.

For me, Protect PT's most important work is litigation. We fought the well pad near our house, and while we lost our initial case, we managed to cost the company a million dollars in legal fees. By filing more lawsuits, we've won requirements for air quality monitoring, sound walls, light deflectors, and limits on trucks when school buses are shuttling our kids to and from school. People aren't always aware of our work, but we keep going back to court to keep our community

safe and healthy. Together, we have diminished the impact of fracking wells. And that first well pad we started fighting nine years ago? It's still stalled. We'll keep litigating until the company finally gives up or we win.

I'm proud to serve on Protect PT's board because Protect PT never stops fighting for environmental justice. Oil and gas companies don't have my interests in mind, but Protect PT's mission is to safeguard them. Now we need to increase our membership. The more members we have, the more it strengthens our legal standing, because it tells the courts loud and clear that we are a grassroots organization with broad community support.

Will you join me by donating to Protect PT this giving season? Better yet, become a member, for only \$25 a year. Together we will ensure that no one in our community is alone when facing environmental hazards in their backyard. Invest today in our community's power to fight back.

In gratitude,

Ryan Graber, Protect PT Board Member  
Trafford, PA



**Support Protect PT!  
We never stop fighting for  
environmental justice!**