Questioning Coalbed Methane Development

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In this show, we highlight some of the current issues around coalbed methane development. Coalbed methane (or CBM) is uncoventional natural gas trapped in coal deposits. It is the same type of gas you might burn in your furnace. However, coalbed methane extraction tends to involve more extensive development and more serious water risks than conventional natural gas. Across North America, coalbed methane development has garnered a bad reputation. In this show we showcase different activists and community members who have been raising questions about coalbed methane in British Columbia.

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Karen Campbell of the Pembina Institute begins by addressing seven questions a community should ask before proceeding with coalbed methane development. Next Randal Macnair, the Mayor of Fernie, BC, explains why his town opposes coalbed methane development. Another community in Northeastern BC, Hudson Hope, has been experiencing the impacts of coalbed methane development. Hudson Hope landowner, Steve Metzger discusses how the concerns of local landowners have been routinely ignored by government and industry. Finally, Andy George of the Wet'su'weten Nation introduces some of the concerns of Aboriginal peoples in regard to extensive resource extraction on their territories. Coalbed methane development has been proposed in Wet'su'weten territories by a Calgary based company called Outrider Energy .

These speeches were recorded at a community forum in Smithers, BC, hosted by Citizens Concerned about Coalbed Methane on Sept 28th, 2006. For more information, including a powerpoint version of Karen Campbell's presentation, you can check out their website at www.concernedaboutcbm.org.