

August 22, 2016

Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

My name is Sarah Ellison Lewis. Proud Texan, advocate for Far West Texas.

I'm speaking today on my own behalf for the majestic land that we locals call Far West Texas. It sits in the high plains between great mountain ranges, buffering it like a special jewel from the sprawling modern world just beyond.

I'm also speaking on behalf of Rainer Judd, friend and colleague, co- President of Judd Foundation and filmmaker.

My father, the artist Donald Judd, spent two decades working in New York City as a critic and an artist before he finally made money to afford himself a Land Rover. He went looking for the most beautiful desert he could find. He looked in Baja, Mexico, Arizona, and California. He even considered Australia. He chose the small town of Marfa, Texas. I first traveled there when I was 2. I attended Marfa Elementary School from 2nd grade to 7th grade. Raised by the gentle people of Marfa and Presidio, Brewster, and Jeff Davis Counties I have respect and admiration for the life they make there. My father built what is now Judd Foundation and it's sister organization, Chinati Foundation. He bought ranch land. He raised us to take long walks, to look at rocks, to read for hours, to dialogue and wonder, to look at the stars, to defend the natural world. He instilled in us the connection between nature and a life of making art. He showed us, by example, that speaking up for nature, for peace, for basic rights was part of the role of the artist. That the artist took time to think, to write, to make work, to play a part in shaking the boat of apathy, the status quo, mendacity, and injustice.

There are bulldozers today making way for a pipeline through the very heart of Far West Texas. This is against the will of 35 plus ranchers, many of whom have cared for the land for generations. They have no recourse. There have been no checks and balances. The only check has been the one that Energy Transfer Partners made in the small box for "Common Carrier" of the Railroad Commission T-4 Application.

As Austin Attorney Rex White points out, "a careful look at the permit granted by the Commission to Energy Transfer Company, L.P. and Trans-Pecos Pipeline, LLC fails to disclose facts that qualify the proposed Trans-Pecos Pipeline for the status of 'common carrier'. The Railroad Commission has not made that determination."

This 143 miles pipeline is a project commissioned out of Mexico, hiring a consortium of companies to construct and operate it. There has been no environmental review on the entire project. The endangered species, archaeological sites, Big Bend National Park, McDonald Observatory, internationally recognized art foundations, and the critically important ranchers all have an interest in the land and water of this region. In the big picture, here is a pristine region, untouched by the multi-faceted blight of oil and gas, that is being bulldozed with no word to the people as to why. We feel like there is no government. At the state or national level. No one to answer our questions as to why eminent domain can be used when there is no public service apparent to the people of Texas or the United States.