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# MarkWest project manager says Ohio Utica Shale 'very, very rich'

Judie Perkowski The Daily Jeffersonian Published: July 13, 2012 1:00PM

As a relatively "new kid on the block" in the oil and gas industry, Oklahoma-based MarkWest Energy Partners, LP, formed in 2002, has made its presence known in our area because of its investment in the Marcellus Shale Play, which covers a sliver of eastern Ohio, but more importantly, its interest in Ohio's geological position in the Utica Shale Play.

"Our company's biggest investment to date is in the Marcellus," said Lee Andrews, senior project manager for MarkWest, guest speaker at the Guernsey Energy Coalition Thursday morning at the Southgate Hotel in Cambridge, accompanied by Niki Weber, construction planner/routing supervisor for MarkWest.

But, that could change now that the sprawling Utica Shale Formation has emerged from its Marcellus cocoon. [According to the experts, the Utica Shale Formation is beneath the Marcellus]. The Marcellus is rich in dry gas, Utica is rich in wet gas.

"MarkWest is a leading provider of midstream services in the natural gas industry and the largest processor of natural gas in the Marcellus Shale Play, with fully integrated processing, fractionation, storage, and marketing operations," said Andrews.

"The oil producers are the first ones to come to an area which is [reportedly] on the cusp of an oil and gas bonanza. We are generally right behind them. Ohio has very, very rich gas in the Utica Shale with components of methane, butane, propane and natural gas with very high BTUs, also known as wet gas," said Andrews. "That is why everyone is here.

"We don't drill or process wells. Our primary business is gathering, processing and transporting natural gas, and the gathering and transportation of crude oil and natural gas liquids (NGLs). One of our key components is to get the gas to its final destination in the safest and most economical way possible."

Andrews said the gathering process refers to the transportation of natural gas and natural gas liquids (NGLs) via steel-coated pipelines, made domestically. The pipeline is smaller in diameter with less pressure than transmission

lines, which is why compression stations are needed to facilitate transportation of the NGLs. Construction of pipelines is regulated by the Department of Transportation.

Andrews said, "In all facets of our operation, MarkWest is committed to meet or exceed DOT standards. And we follow the procedure to the letter. We don't make a move until we have permission. We want to do everything right the first time.

"Our job is design and build and operate gas gathering pipelines ... We are going to need a lot of people. We are very interested in hiring local talent. Anyone interested in a job should visit our website (MarkWest.com) for job listings in Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

"We are in the process of negotiating with Ohio contractors to include union workers and to ensure 50 percent of the labor pool is local. We may have to hire some out-of-state contractors, because we are not the only ones [company] doing this in Ohio. We are looking for people for many different jobs and we need to be on the same page."

MarkWest recently announced an agreement with Gulfport Energy Corp. to build and operate gathering pipelines and a processing facility for NGLs in Cadiz in Harrison County.

[jperkowsk@daily-jeff.com](mailto:jperkowsk@daily-jeff.com)