

Film

Texas Gold

Texas Gold: One Woman's Fight in the Most Polluted Place in America. Documentary. 2005.

Producer and Director: Carolyn M. Scott

The following synopsis, by Judith Hefland, is from the film's website: <http://www.texasgoldmovie.com/>

Texas Gold follows the adventures of one of the most dedicated—and unlikely—muckrakers of this generation. Diane Wilson—mother of five, fourth-generation fisherwoman, Public Enemy No.1 in Calhoun, County Texas.

From Wall Street to the front lawn of CEO Warren Anderson's multi-million-dollar mansion on Long Island, all the while chased by Texas Rangers charged with bringing her to justice, Diane pursues a reckless industry with a soft drawl, dogged determination and her own special brand of southern bad-ass fisherwoman humour.

When Diane discovered that her home, Calhoun County, Texas, had been named one of the most toxic places in America, she decided to take action, taking on the giants of the petro-chemical industry, who were poisoning her community and knowingly devastating the once-thriving fishing industry. These companies continue to illegally spill millions of pounds of chemicals into the gulf bays, while their hired-gun PR firms busily underplayed the chemical plant explosions and soaring local cancer rates. This was business-as-usual for Dow/Union Carbide, one of the biggest toxic offenders in Calhoun, also responsible for the now famous/infamous 1984 pesticide gas leak at its plant in Bhopal, India, killing 20,000 over the last 20 years.

In the 16 years since she began her fight, Diane has received death threats, and suffered intimidation tactics; shots were fired at her house from a helicopter and her dog was poisoned.

Texas Gold profiles the brave and ballsy actions that have earned Diane Wilson the title of “unreasonable woman”: waging multiple hunger strikes, starting up a



business bottling toxic water taken from a superfund site—which she creatively labelled ‘Texas Gold’ and sold back to the tycoons whose heedless business practices had polluted the water—sinking her own shrimp boat on top of a toxic discharge site, and being convicted for trespassing after chaining herself to an ethyl oxide tower at her local Union Carbide plant and unfurling a banner emblazoned with the words: “Justice for the victims of the Bhopal disaster!”

On 3 October 2005, District Attorney of Texas ordered Diane Wilson to begin a jail sentence for criminal trespass of the Dow plant. She jumped bail, refused to serve time for her ‘crime’ until Warren Anderson, the former CEO of Union Carbide, answers a summons from the Indian government to stand trial as the chief defendant in a culpable homicide case for the Bhopal tragedy. Diane was arrested and is serving time in the Victoria County Texas jail; when she gets out, hold on to your wild-feathered hats. The adventures of this “unreasonable woman” have just begun!