

CN Perryville Incident and Response Panel

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Chicago, Central and Pacific (CC&P) is presenting a panel presentation at the 2015 Railroad Environmental Conference on a very unique derailment and subsequent negotiation and closure. On June 19, 2009, a CC&P freight train carrying ethanol derailed near Rockford, Illinois. A total of 14 railcars derailed, 12 of which caught on fire, with the majority of the product being consumed by the blaze. It was estimated that 55,000 to 75,000 gallons of denatured ethanol were released onto the ground surface from the remaining two tanker cars, and it was also assumed by many agencies that the majority entered the adjacent unnamed tributary to the Kishwaukee River and ultimately to the Rock River. This derailment was the first major derailment involving ethanol in Illinois history and occurred at the time of a historical flood event. These conditions presented unique challenges to the response efforts as well as the assessment of one of the largest fish kills in Illinois history that occurred a couple of days after the incident on the Rock River approximately 40 miles downstream of the derailment. After the response efforts, CC&P completed several detailed studies to examine the potential for the fish kill to be linked to the derailment site. This included a fish tissue study, evaluation of toxicity as well as state of the art water modeling. The derailment also included strenuous negotiations with state agencies to develop an equitable consent decree. Almost six years later (2015), this incident is coming to a closure after the creative approach that the railroad used with its team of consultants. We feel that this incident and the presentations that stemmed from it would be of great value to the audience that attends. It will be presented in a 2 hour block of time with a panel discussion and open questions and dialog from the audience on all aspects of the incident which build upon each other. Topics will include a description of the incident and response, toxicity and fish tissue study, water modeling and the final Natural Resource Damage Assessment negotiation.
