

# BNSF Ethanol Release

## Alma, WI – 11/7/2015

---





# What happened?

---

- 0845 Saturday, November 7, 2015
  - 25 rail cars derailed along the rail line on the east side of the Mississippi River in the Upper Mississippi Fish & Wildlife Refuge. *Caused by improper use of dynamic brakes.*
  - 9 derailed cars were carrying denatured ethanol w/ 1-5% gasoline denaturant. *Other cars were empty auto carriers.*
  - 5 of the 9 leaked an amount of ethanol up to approximately 20,000 gallons



# Quad Copter Photo

---





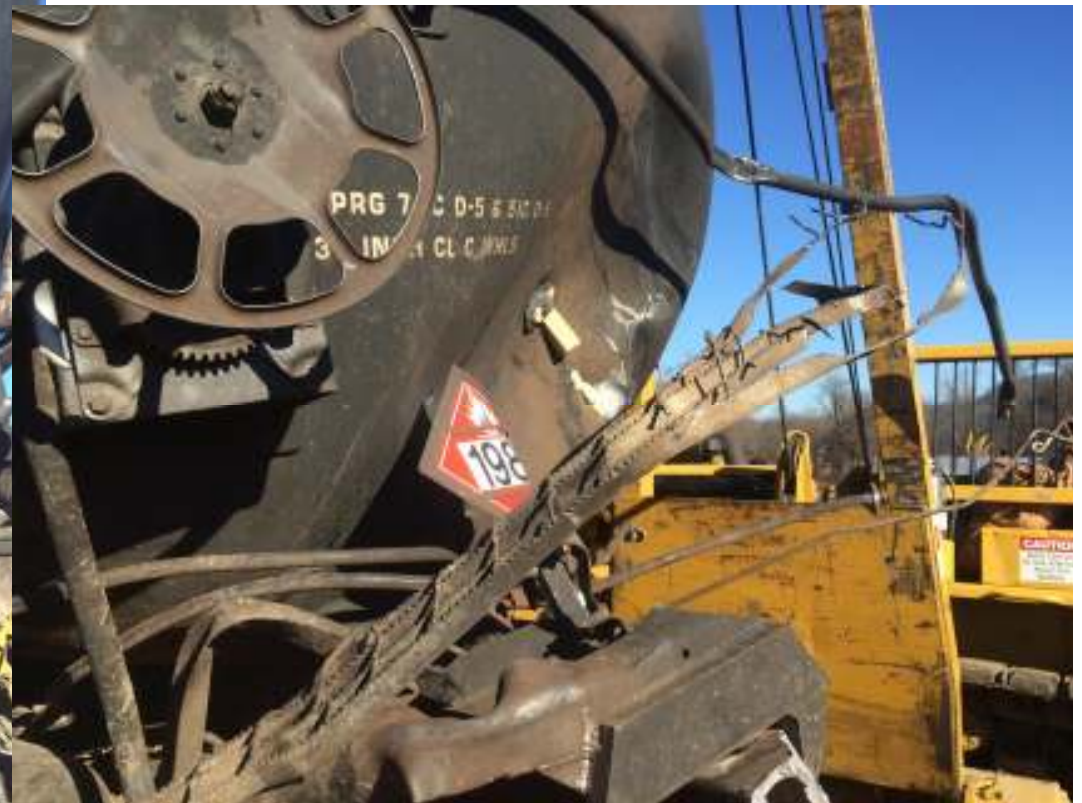
# What happened?

---

- 0845 Saturday, November 7, 2015
  - One ethanol car had a breach, the other 4 leaked out of various valves and manways. *All were older DOT 111 cars.*
  - The majority of the product leaked into the ballast, an unknown amount actually released into the Mississippi.
  - Local FD issued a voluntary evacuation as a precaution, was lifted by 1 PM. *They left after BNSF arrived.*
  - OSC Maguire dispatched early afternoon, arrived mid evening – It was dark...



# Breached tank car – Day 2





# Wreckage

---





# Wreckage

---





# Observations

---

- No sheen ever reported by responders
  - Likely very low % denaturant, closer to 1%
  - Measurable BTEX in ballast (significant) and water column (very low)
- No fish kill or DO drop.
  - Could be due to water conditions or size of system vs. size of spill
- High levels of ethanol in ballast and lower amounts in water column.
  - Could cause long term issues





# Tactics

---





# Water Monitoring/Sampling

---



# Incident Command Implementation

---



- BNSF created initial objectives on own and began producing an IAP on own before regulators got there.
- No initial meeting schedule or plans of meetings
- EPA brought in WDNR, USFWS together with BNSF for Unified Command.
- Restructured and began planning P officially on day 2

# Media

---





# Media

---

- Senator Tammy Baldwin (D)
- FRA Administrator
- FRA Regional Administrator
- BNSF from Houston
- Local Officials
- Media from Twin Cities, Madison and local areas.



# Moving Forward

---

- WDNR and USFWS involved in oversight of long term monitoring plan





# BNSF Ethanol Spill

---

- Questions?

