



# Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal Asphalt Spill

**Forest View, Illinois  
Cook County**



# Initial Incident



# Facility to Canal

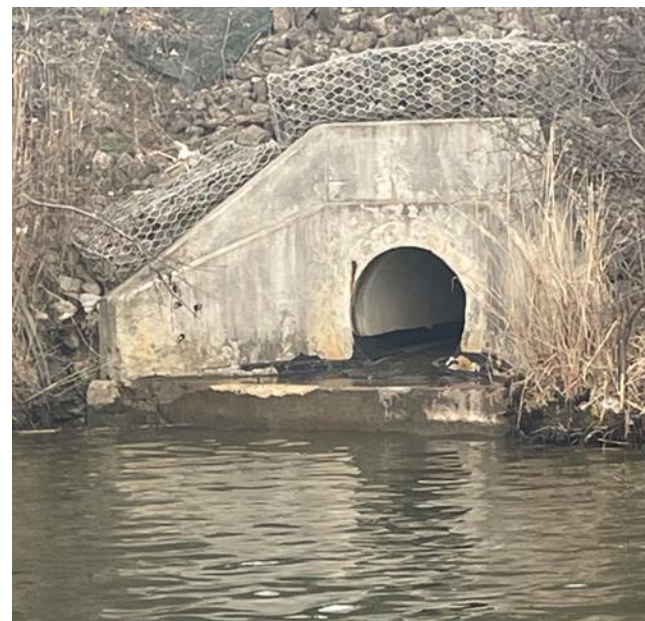
- **February 4, 2025, 1030 CDT**, A reported 6,000 bbl of asphalt material was discharged at Petroleum Fuel & Terminal with approximately 1,000 bbl reaching the CSSC, in Forest View, Cook County, Illinois.
- Incident took place over the weekend but canal impacts weren't discovered until two days later.
- Discharge originated from an AST pipe
- Conduit to the canal: Village of Forest View stormwater conveyance line and associated manhole within secondary containment.





# Facility to Canal

- Asphalt is an oil, CWA/OPA90
- CSSC is a navigable waterway in the inland zone (per boundaries jurisdictional boundary in RCP)
- PF&T facility is a complex FRP facility, spill occurred in the EPA regulated portion.
- During transfers, the asphalt is heated to ~300 degrees F so it flows with the same consistency as water.
- Roofing asphalt specific gravity is 1-1.1 @ 39 degrees F, lowers as temperature increases (starts to float).
- H<sub>2</sub>S is air concern



Baseball Field

# FOREST VIEW EASEMENT

- PETROLEUM LEASE
- FOREST VIEW E-305
- DISTRICT RAILROAD

Apex Oil Company

MCP 37.04

MCP 37.04

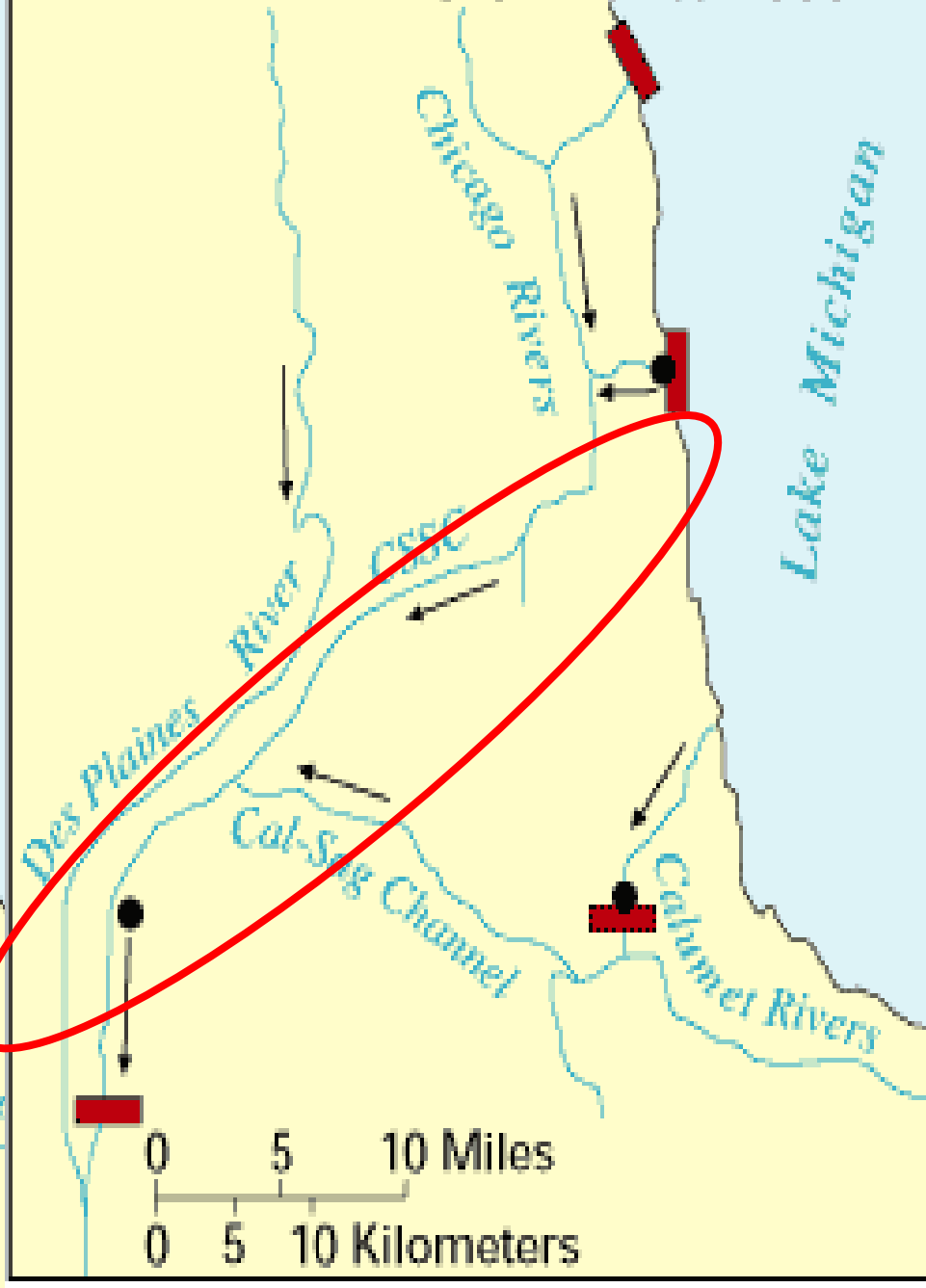
MAIN CHANNEL



# BEFORE DIVERSION



# AFTER DIVERSION- Circa 1900





# Winter Response in Canal



## Subsurface



## Floating





# Winter Response Operations



*Waste Collected:*

233 tons from facility (1,260 bbls)

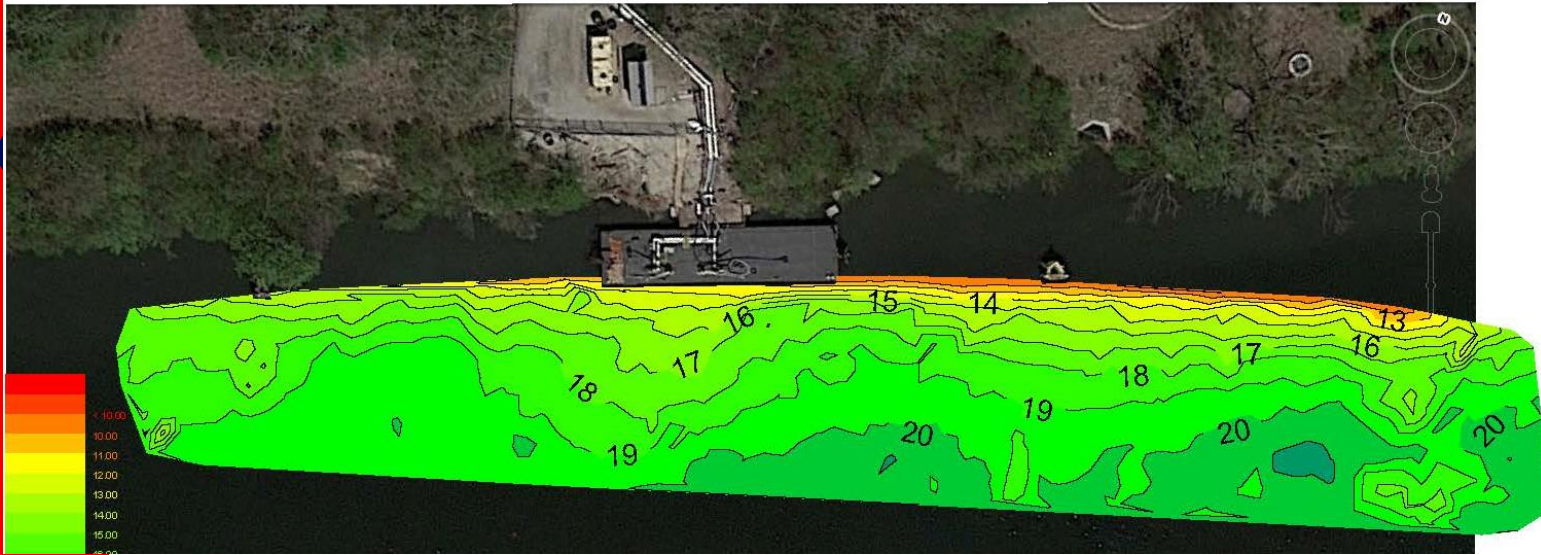
294 tons from canal (1,591 bbls)

\*Material is ~8.8 lbs/gallon (227 gallons/ton – 5.4 barrels/ton)

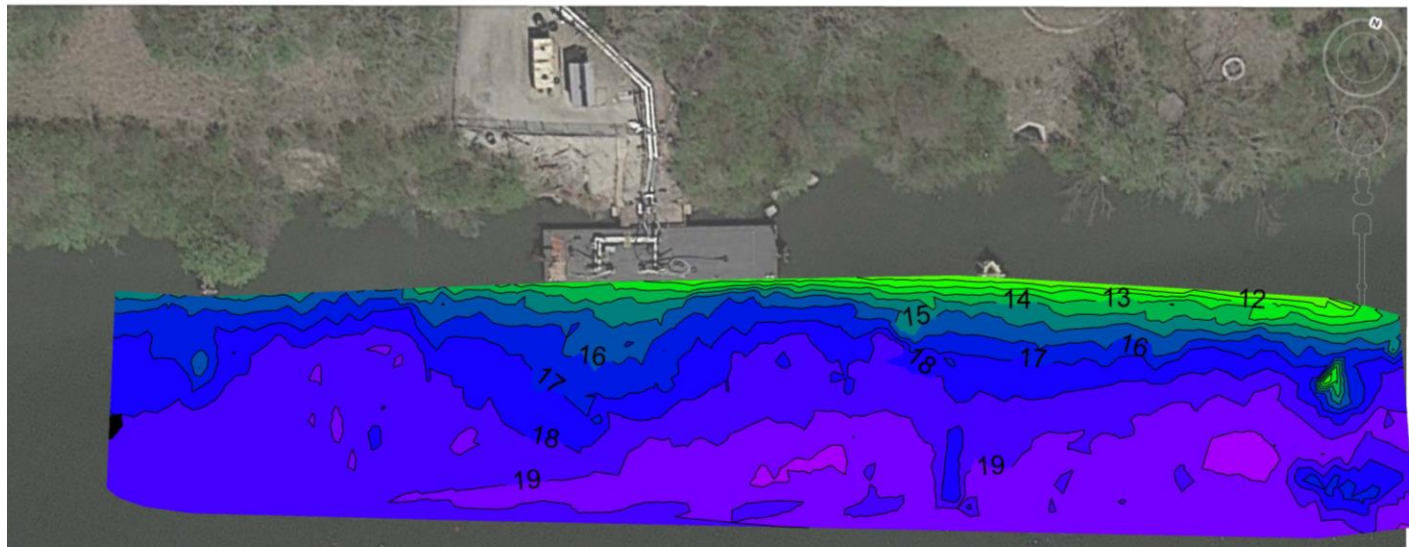
# Soundings



Petroleum Fuel & Terminal Company Dock  
Sounding Date: 6/21/2016  
Performed by: Lakes & Rivers Contracting, Inc.  
Project Number: 16018



Sounding Date: 3/28/2025  
Performed by: Lakes & Rivers Contracting, Inc.  
Project Number: 25999-06





# AOC Signed May 1, 2025

- Agreement between EPA & facility to:
  - Characterize and cleanout storm sewer
  - Fix regulatory compliance issues with facility's Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasures (SPCC) Plan
  - Continued response to spill

UNITED STATES  
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION 5

IN THE MATTER OF:

Petroleum Fuel & Terminal Company

Respondent.

DOCKET NO: CWA-1321-5-25-001f

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER ON CONSENT  
FOR REMOVAL ACTIVITIES

Proceeding Under Section  
311(c) and (e) of the Federal  
Water Pollution Control Act,  
as amended, 33 U.S.C.  
§ 1321(c) and (e).

## I. JURISDICTION AND GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. This Order is issued pursuant to the authority vested in the President of the United States by Section 311(c) and (e) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, 33 U.S.C §1321(c) and (e), as amended ("CWA"). This authority has been delegated to the Administrator of the United States



On May 9, 2025....



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INCIDENT LOCATION

4805 SOUTH HARLEM AVE County: COOK  
City: FOREST VIEW State: IL Zip: 60402

PETROLEUM FUEL TERMINAL / APEX FUEL COMPANY

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POTENTIALLY RELEASED MATERIAL(S)

CHRIS Code: OCF      Official Material Name: OIL: CLARIFIED  
Also Known As: OIL: CLARIFIED (DECANT / 5 OIL)  
Qty Released: 300 BARREL(S)

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DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT

/// POTENTIAL ///

CALLER REPORTS A POTENTIAL DISCHARGE OF LESS THAN 254- 300 BARREL OF DECANT OIL (5 OIL) TO METAL, CONCRETE, AND GRAVEL. THE MATERIAL WOULD BE DISCHARGED FROM A METAL TANK. THE CAUSE OF THE TANK IMPLoding IS UNKNOWN AT THIS TIME.

CALLER STATES THE TOP OF TANK IMPLoded AND IS STEAMING AT THIS TIME. THE FIRE DEPARTMENT IS PRESENT COOLING IT DOWN. THE TOP OF THE TANK IS STILL THERE IT IS JUST DAMAGED.

CALLER STATES THERE WOULD BE NO IMPACT TO WATER.





And then on May 12, 2025....



# Report from Downstream Intake



- EPA R5 gets a direct call from a downstream intake and subsequent NRC Report
- NRC Report of unknown sheen from an unknown source but upon discussion on the phone, facility reports asphalt impacts in their intake
- PDO coordinates with USCG MSU Chicago who goes out to do preliminary investigation



# Initial May Investigation



- USCG determines that it's asphalt in the canal/intake and tracks it back to PF&T
  - EPA sends 2 OSCs out
- PF&T deploys OSRO
- Began downstream notifications of trustees, intakes, locals, etc.
- Temperature had risen significantly in previous days and continued to be hot thru the week

# Initial Observations



# Product Behavior





# Surfacing Asphalt





# Response Coordination

- Unified Command – May 15 – August 22
  - US EPA
  - IL EPA
  - Apex/PF&T
- Assisting/Coordinating Agencies
  - Village of Forest View
  - Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Chicago (MWRD)
  - USCG (MSU Chicago & AST)
  - USACE
  - IL DNR
  - USFWS
  - USDA - APHIS
  - USGS
  - IL SHPO
  - Other Facilities & Municipalities along the canal – water intakes (industrial)

Chicago Sanitary Ship Canal Asphalt Spill  
OPERATIONAL PERIOD # 14



June 27, 2025

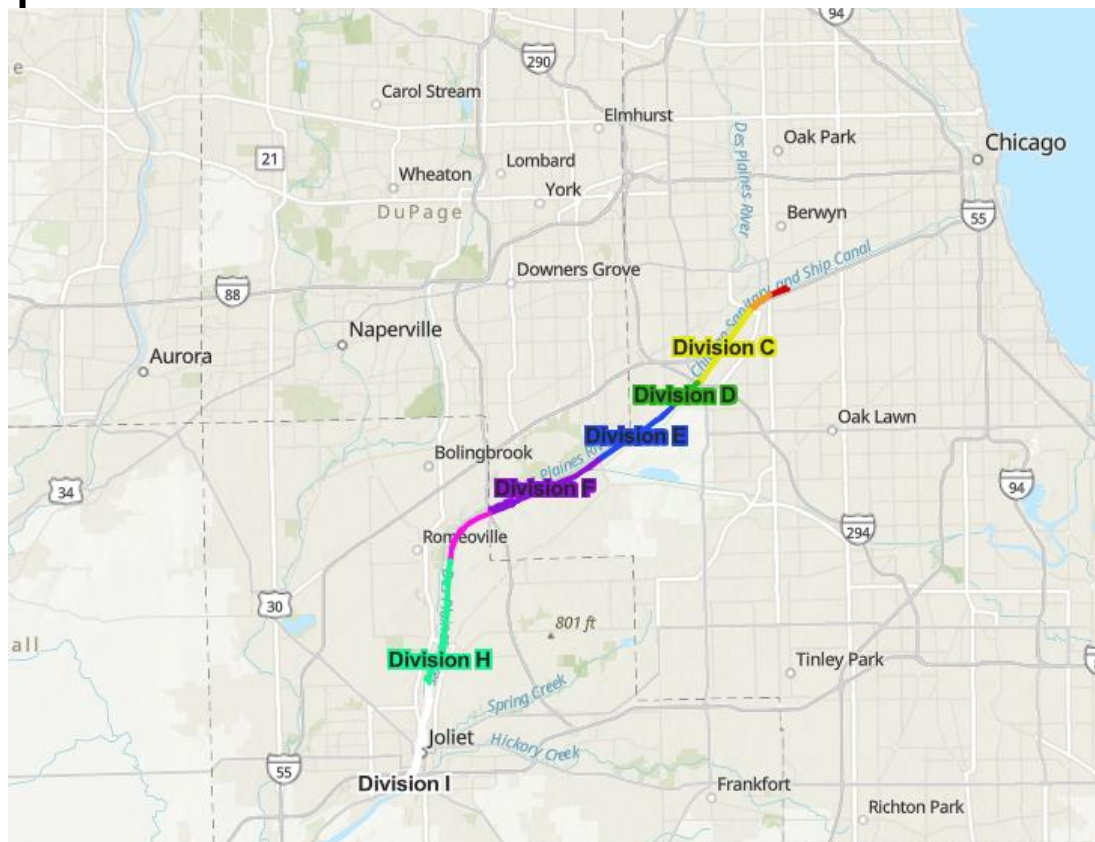
to

July 11, 2025



# Operational Footprint

Asphalt observed 30+ miles downstream



Divided into 9 divisions/2 branches

# Operations



# Operations





# Containment Boom





# Terminal Operations

- USCG stopped barge transfer operations at the terminal after the re-emergence of asphalt
- Large IDOT infrastructure projects in need of spec asphalt from PF&T
- Coordinated with MSU Chicago to allow for overnight transfers.
  - Requirements included:
    - No impact to cleanup operations
    - Development of an overnight transfer ICS 204 with response procedures for collection of asphalt during transfers
    - Advance clearance process

1. Incident Name Chicago Sanitary Ship Canal Asphalt Spill		2. Operational Period (Date/Time) From: 11 JULY 2025 0600 To: 25 JULY 2025 0600		Assignment List ICS 204-CG	
3. Branch NORTH		4. Division/Group/Staging Division: <b>ALPHA – OTT BARGE OPS</b> Staging Area: Summit Boat Launch			
5. Operations Personnel					
Name		Affiliation		Contact # (s)	
Operations Section Chief: <u>Grant Cummings</u> 219-713-3460					
Deputy Operations Section Chief: <u>Zack Cross</u> 616-295-5575					
Branch Director: <u>Brian Kolachny</u> 314-853-8639					
Deputy Branch Director: _____					
Division/Group Supervisor/STAM: _____					
Strike Team/Task Force/Resource Identifier		Leader	Contact Info. #	# Of Persons	Reporting Info/Notes/Remarks
2 Land techs				2	Summit Boat Launch <input type="checkbox"/>
7. Work Assignments					
Location: APEX 4805 S Harlem Ave Forest View, IL 60402 (Proceed through APEX gate at the end of drive and sign in with Security). The dock is through the terminal and take right, cross the railroad tracks and park in designated areas.					
1. Containment and recovery of product as a result of transfer ops, as needed.					
2. IMO will implement their OTT transfer plan, deploy containment and begin transfer.					
3. Monitor and report any product observed to Operations.					
8. Special Instructions					



# Clamshell Operation



# Clamshell Operation





# Clamshell Operations





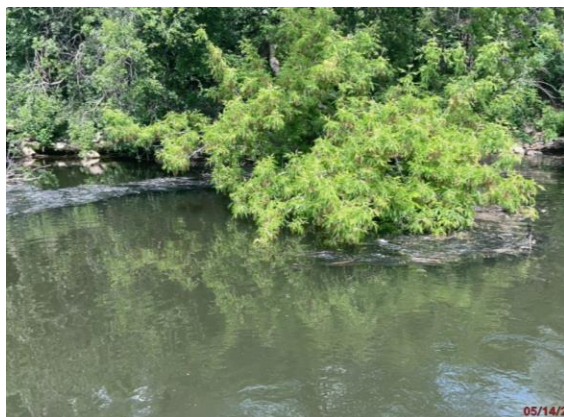
# Disposal via Barge



# Shoreline Impacts/SCAT



# Variety of Shorelines



- Gravel
- Limestone
- Sheet piling
- Boulders
- Barge  
fleeting  
areas



# Shoreline Cleanup

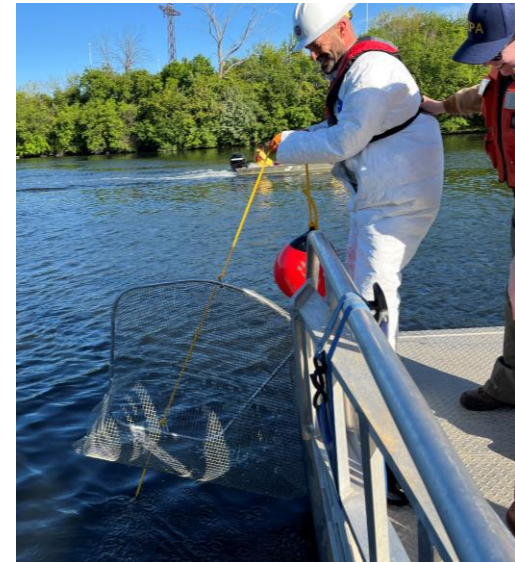


# Initial Subsurface Investigation





# Submerged Baskets



# Static Seine Nets



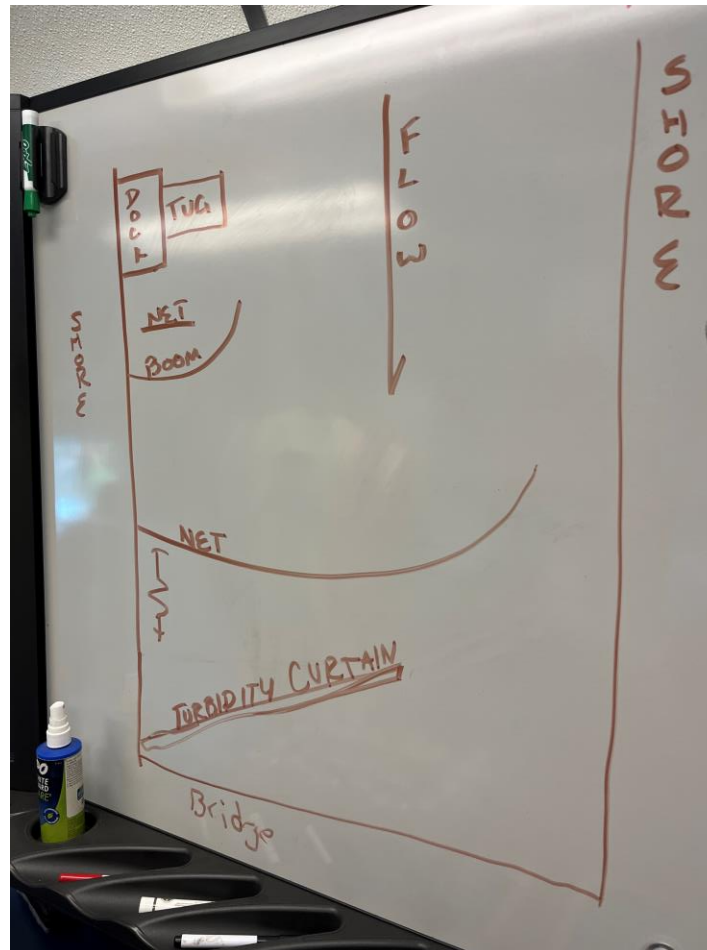
# Fishing for Asphalt



# Subsurface Agitation



# Subsurface Agitation



# Divers





# Storm Sewer Impact



# Addressing the Outfall



# Cofferdam Construction

- Nationwide Permit 20
  - Coordination with USACE





# Storm Drain Removal





# If you build a dam...

## Emergency Alert

now



National Weather Service: A FLASH FLOOD WARNING is in effect for this area until 2:45 PM CDT. This is a dangerous and life-threatening situation. Do not attempt to travel unless you are fleeing an area subject to flooding or under an evacuation order.



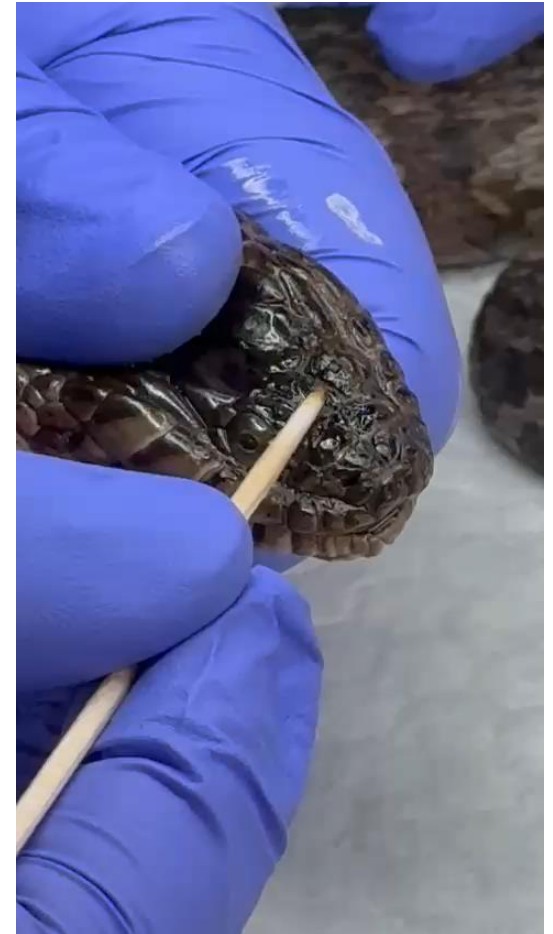
# After the storm



# Wildlife Impacts



# Snake Cleaning





Stood up Wildlife Branch:  
IDNR, USFWS, USDA, Tri-  
State, International Bird  
Rescue, DuPage County  
Rehab Center

Over 250 wildlife collected,  
137 oiled  
113 released  
138 deceased (mostly DOA, 2  
in care, 6 euthanized)



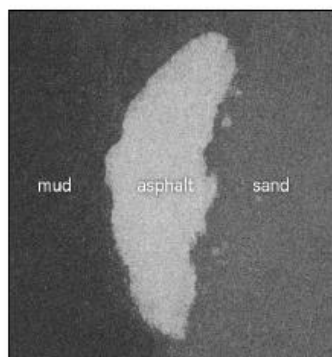
# Characterization

- Storm Sewer Assessment – Completed October 2025
- Canal Subsurface Assessment – Completed October 2025
  - Hydrographic survey (multi-beam bathymetry survey, backscatter)
    - Comparison to 2022 USGS survey
    - Agitation in targeted areas
- Water Column Assessment – Completed November 2025
  - Trawling seine net, static seine nets
- Water Surface Assessment - Completed November 2025
  - Containment boom, surface water sampling
- Final Shoreline Assessment
  - SCAT – Completed November 2025
  - Long term monitoring (Recon/Recovery over seasonal changes) - Ongoing

# Subsurface Assessment



# Characterization



Typical response from asphalt, not from CSSC Spill

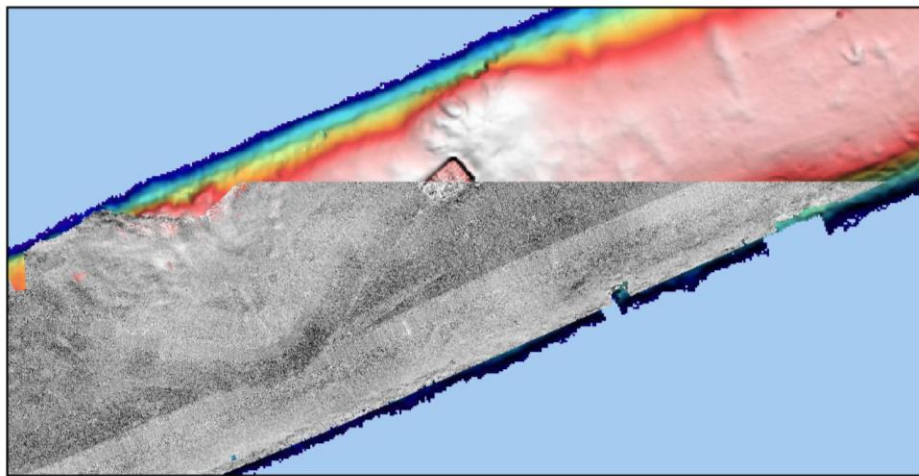
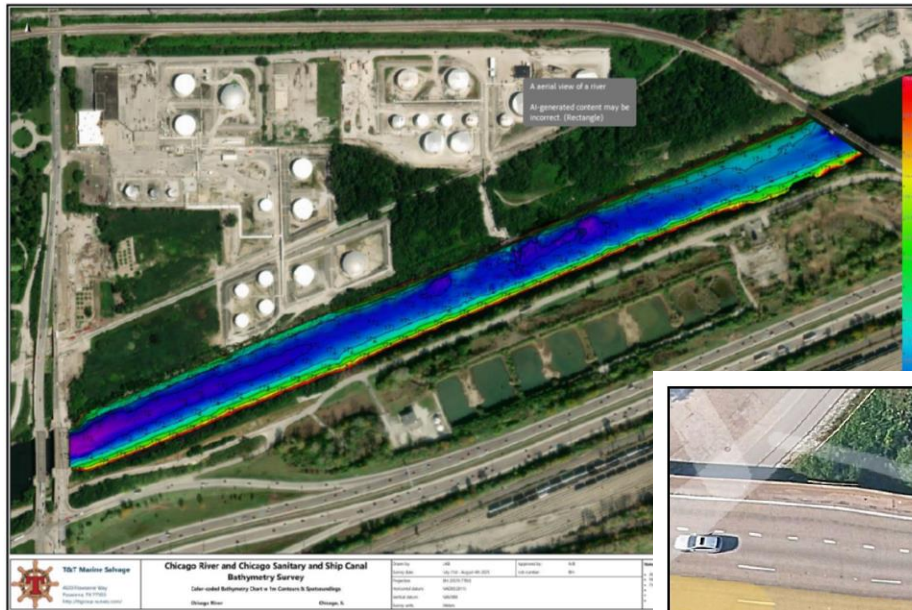


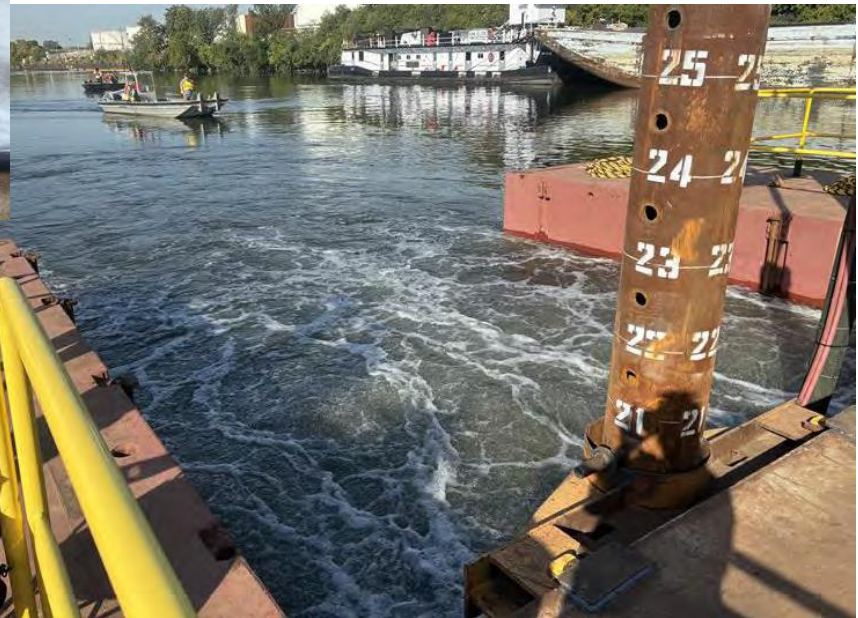
Figure 8 – Example of backscatter and multibeam cross-referencing

- Backscatter data contains the strength of the acoustic signal reflected from the riverbed
  - Varies depending on the hardness/texture of materials
- Abnormalities in backscatter data were cross-referenced and validated with multi-beam bathymetric data

# Characterization

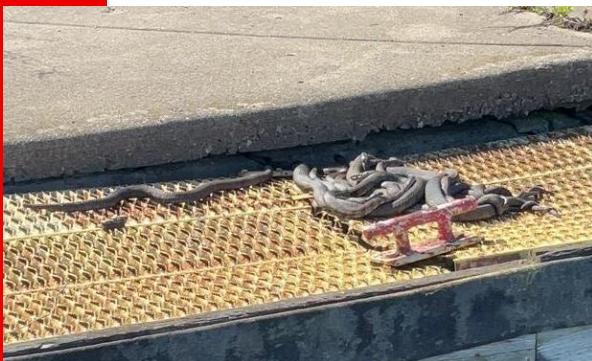


# Subsurface Agitation



# Health & Safety

- Water quality
- Snakes
- Fish barrier
- Boats





# Powerhouse

- Hydroelectric Dam
  - Owned by MWRD
- Shut down the week of re-emergence
  - Loss of revenue from electricity production
- On National Historic Register



# Turbines





# Unique Aspects/Challenges

- Product behavior
  - Unique tactics for detection/recovery
- Technology limitations on locating submerged product
- Water levels/canal controlled by MWRD & USACE
- Limited access points to canal/boat ramps/staging area options
- Limited public interest – good thing..
- Various historic aspects
  - Canal, Lockport Powerhouse
- Weather
- Commercial and recreational traffic



# Metrics

- 5,657 bbls – reported released by PF&T (mass balance
  - 237,342 gallons, 1,044 tons
- 2,290 tons waste recovered (asphalt and related incident debris – vegetation, rocks, sorbents, booms, etc).
  - Not possible to accurately report amount of asphalt recovered.



# Next Steps

- IL EPA continues to oversee scheduled shoreline monitoring – Scheduled through the summer.





# Questions?

