

EMSL Quarterly Highlights Report
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The W.R. Wiley Environmental Molecular Sciences Laboratory (EMSL) is a U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) national scientific user facility located at Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) in Richland, Washington. EMSL is operated by PNNL for the DOE Office of Biological and Environmental Research. At one location, EMSL offers a comprehensive array of leading-edge resources and expertise.

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Research Highlights

Atmospheric Aerosol Chemistry

Heterogeneous Reaction of Deliquesced NaCl Particles with Gaseous HNO₃

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Reactions on atmospheric aerosol particles are known to impact atmospheric composition and chemistry, global radiative forcing and climate change, sky visibility, and public health. Understanding these processes is crucial for our ability to control and predict their effects on the environment.

Over the last few decades, a great deal of attention has been placed on the fundamental kinetics and mechanism of atmospheric heterogeneous reactions. Reactions involving aerosols are known to impact atmospheric composition and chemistry, global radiative forcing and climate change, sky visibility, and public health. Sea salt aerosols, generated by wind-induced wave action and bubble bursting of seawater, are the second largest component (by mass) of global aerosol burden. These aerosols may undergo heterogeneous reactions with trace species in the atmosphere, including OH, HNO₃, O₃, NO₂, N₂O₅, and ClONO₂. The net result is that inert halides may be converted to photochemically reactive halogen species, which lead to the production of reactive halogen species upon exposure to sunlight. There has been increasing evidence from laboratory and field studies that these halogen atoms play pivotal roles in the chemistry of the marine boundary layer. For these reasons, a quantitative understanding of the uptake and kinetics of reactive gases on sea salt particles is critical toward elucidating the overall halogen budget and tropospheric chemistry. Figure 1 shows a schematic of a mechanism to create halogens.

In this work, the authors report on the heterogeneous reaction kinetics of gaseous nitric acid with deliquesced sodium chloride particles, $\text{NaCl(aq)} + \text{HNO}_3(\text{g})$, to form aqueous sodium nitrate and gaseous hydrochloric acid, $\text{NaNO}_3(\text{aq}) + \text{HCl(g)}$, using a novel particle-on-substrate stagnation flow reactor (PS-SFR). This instrument allows the reactions to be studied under conditions, including particle size, relative humidity, and reaction time, directly relevant to the atmospheric chemistry of sea salt particles. Particles deposited onto an electron microscopy grid substrate were exposed to the reacting gas at atmospheric pressure and room temperature by impingement via a stagnation flow inside the reactor. The reactor design and choice of flow parameters were guided by computational fluid dynamics to ensure uniformity of the diffusion flux to all particles undergoing reaction. The reaction kinetics were followed by observing chloride depletion in the particles by computer-controlled scanning electron microscopy with energy-dispersive x-ray analysis (CCSEM/EDX).

Figure 2 shows a scanning electron microscope image of NaCl particles before and after exposure to HNO_3 . A series of experiments was conducted in which the particle loading, free stream HNO_3 concentration, reaction time, particle size, and relative humidity were varied for one or more types of salt particles. Results show that the variation of the apparent, pseudo-first-order rate constant with particle loading and HNO_3 concentration in the free stream is entirely consistent with a diffusion-kinetic analysis.

The authors note that micron-size sea salt particles are ubiquitous in and near the marine boundary layer. These particles are responsible for a large fraction of light scattering and backscattering. However, the particles are too large to be efficiently transmitted to single-particle mass spectrometers (SPMS) commonly used to detect chloride depletion. In

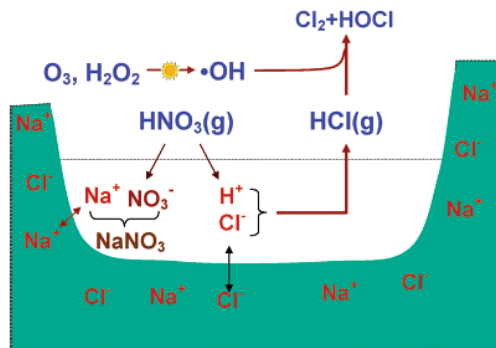


Figure 1. Heterogeneous reactions occurring in the marine boundary layer: uptake of HNO_3 onto NaCl and reaction of its product, HCl , with OH .

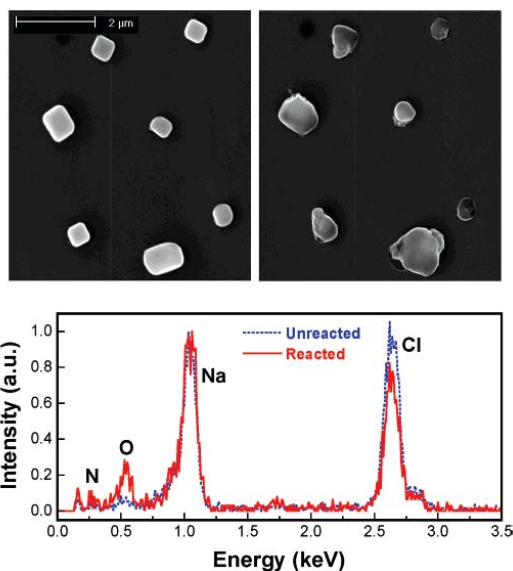


Figure 2. Top panels: Scanning electron microscope images of NaCl particles before (left) and after (right) reaction with gaseous HNO_3 of 6 ppb concentration, 80% relative humidity and reaction time of 210 min. Bottom panel: Typical energy-dispersive x-ray analysis spectra of individual NaCl particle before and after reaction.

addition, the fact that the particles must be suspended in a gas requires the reaction to take place in a flow reactor for no longer than tens of seconds, far shorter than the lifetime of typical sea salt particles in atmospheric chemistry. For these reasons, reactions of micron-size particles are not “accessible” by FR-SPMS. However, the PS-SFR experiment coupled with the CCSEM/EDX technique adopted here allows the particles to undergo exposure to a reactive gas over a considerably longer period and is well suited for particles of micron size. The technique also offers options for multi-instrumental microanalysis and is applicable to both laboratory-generated and field-collected samples. It should be noted that this approach does have one important limitation: particles smaller than 0.5 microns may not be accurately probed because of the potential damage caused from the electron beam. These considerations lead the authors to believe that a combination of FR-SPMS and PS-SFR/CCSEM/EDX would be essential to understand uptake over a wide range of particle sizes and experimental conditions. Details of this exciting research have been published as a feature article in the *Journal of Physical Chemistry A*.

Citation

Liu Y, JP Cain, H Wang and A Laskin. 2007. “Kinetic Study of Heterogeneous Reaction of Deliquesced NaCl Particles with Gaseous HNO₃ using Particle-on-Substrate Stagnation Flow Reactor Approach.” *Journal of Physical Chemistry A* 111(40):10026-10043.

Biological Interactions and Dynamics

Proteomic Characterization of the *Rhodobacter sphaeroides* 2.4.1 Photosynthetic Membrane: Identification of New Proteins

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The bacterium Rhodobacter sphaeroides 2.4.1 is known for its diverse metabolic activities, including the ability to produce copious amounts of hydrogen, which could prove to be a source of renewable bioproduced energy. Many of these activities are linked to R. sphaeroides' photosynthetic apparatus that has served as a model for photosynthesis. Collaborative proteomic research being conducted at EMSL is increasing our understanding of this important link.

This study builds upon previous proteomic research conducted at EMSL on *Rhodobacter sphaeroides* 2.4.1 (Callister et al. 2006a, 2006b) and details the discovery of new proteins associated with the intracytoplasmic membrane (ICM) (Figure 1), a specialized membrane dedicated to the photosynthetic processes used by *R. sphaeroides*. Subcellular fractionation combined with multichromatographic methods was coupled with Fourier transform ion cyclotron resonance mass spectrometry to test the hypothesis that a significant number of proteins associated with the ICM have not been previously been identified. The

identification of these proteins could impact the understanding of how solar energy is used to the benefit of this organism.

To evaluate this hypothesis, EMSL's proteomic capabilities were applied to probe the ICM for potentially important structural and metabolic proteins. ICM vesicles were purified from *R. sphaeroides* cell cultures as well as surrounding sub-cellular fractions, such as the outer membrane, periplasm, and cytoplasmic membrane. Proteins extracted from the ICM and the other fractions were analyzed using a peptide-centric high-throughput liquid chromatography-mass spectrometry-based approach (Zimmer et al. 2006).

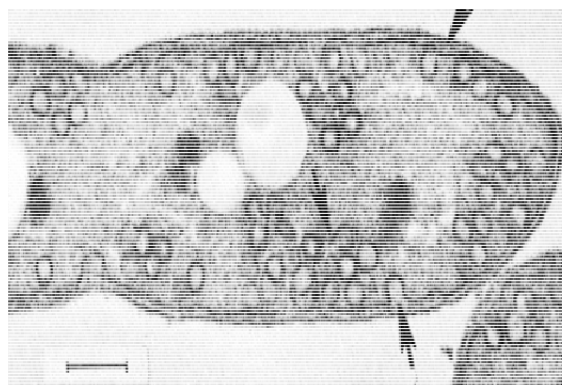


Figure 1. The Intracytoplasmic Membrane (arrows) within *Rhodobacter sphaeroides* 2.4.1 houses proteins important for obtaining energy through photosynthesis. Using EMSL's proteomic capabilities, new proteins were discovered unique to the membrane.

Purified ICM vesicles were shown to be enriched in several abundant, newly identified membrane proteins, including a protein of unknown function (AffyChip designation RSP1760) and a possible alkane hydroxylase (RSP1467). Deletion of the gene encoding for the RSP1760 protein resulted in the inability of *R. sphaeroides* to grow under conditions suitable for solar energy use, indicating the importance of this protein for *R. sphaeroides* to function as a photosynthesizing organism. Proteins necessary for other cellular functions, such as ATP synthesis, respiration, solute transport, protein translocation, and other physiological processes, were also identified to be in association with the ICM. This study is the first to provide a more global view of the protein composition of a photosynthetic membrane from any source. Results are provided in detail in the *Journal of Bacteriology* (Zeng et al. 2007).

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Making Genomes Accessible: Dealing with the Avalanche of Biological Sequence Data

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The Integrated Microbial Genome system and its metagenome extensions are software tools that provide data management, analysis, and annotation capabilities for all publicly available microbial, viral, and eukaryal isolate genomes and metagenomes. Managing this collection of several thousand genomes and metagenomes requires performing trillions of pairwise sequence analysis calculations—a job which requires several years of computational time to complete. Using the Molecular Science Computing Facility supercomputer MPP2 and ScalaBLAST (specially designed high-throughput sequence analysis software from Pacific Northwest National Laboratory), these calculations have been periodically performed, leading directly to recent releases of Integrated Microbial Genome system and its metagenome extensions.

The ability to recognize similarity in the DNA code that defines particular genes or proteins is a fundamental tool in molecular biology. When similar DNA or polypeptide sequences are observed, a biologist can infer homology, which is a family relationship based on inheritance from a common ancestor. Proteins that are homologous share a common three-dimensional structure that often allows their functions to be predicted. This type of evidence is powerful and underlies much of modern biology. The Integrated Microbial Genome (IMG) system and the metagenome extensions (IMG/M) (Markowitz 2007a, 2007b) are software resources built using homologous relationships between sequenced genomes for use by the biological research community. The IMG and IMG/M tool suites combine data management, analysis, and functional annotation capabilities based on pre-computed homologous relationships between publicly available genomes.

Two critical issues are exploding in importance in the large-scale sequence comparisons that must be performed to enable the IMG and IMG/M systems. First, building this basic map of sequence homology is becoming a significant obstacle because of the high throughput and cheap production of sequence data. The relatively few genes that have been *studied* experimentally must be projected against the majority that are *sequenced* but as yet uncharacterized. In 2007, there were about 400 microbial genomes alone that were completed, but this number is estimated to grow to 10,000 in just a few years. The scale of this dataset has outstripped various mechanisms that have been employed in the past to enhance the computational algorithm throughput of BLAST (Altschul et al. 1990), the basic method for comparing biosequences. The second issue relates to an exciting new type of analysis based on the comparison of genomes that has recently become possible precisely because there is so much data to work with. These genome comparison methods are essential for deciphering biological networks—a key step in enabling systems approach to biology. However, this more complex analysis typically consumes large numbers of sequence comparisons as raw material.

To deal with these large datasets, the researcher employed ScalaBLAST (Oehmen and Nieplocha 2006), which is a high-performance extension to the BLAST algorithm.

ScalaBLAST was used to accelerate the throughput of BLAST sequence analysis using the EMSL Molecular Science Computing Facility supercomputer MPP2 through a Computational Grand Challenge for several large-scale sequence analysis calculations. These calculations led directly to the 2.3 release of IMG and IMG/M and were directed at (1) integrating microbial genome and available metagenome data, and (2) applying this integrated data resource for specific scientific studies like advancing understanding of biological communities in the coastal margin between the Columbia River and Pacific Ocean.

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Geochemistry/Biogeochemistry and Subsurface Science

Carbon Tetrachloride Flow and Transport in the Subsurface of the 216-Z-9 Trench at the Hanford Site

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Using a combined modeling and experimental approach, this study determined that the future threat of carbon tetrachloride contamination of Hanford groundwater comes from the interaction between groundwater and carbon tetrachloride vapor and not migration of residual carbon tetrachloride liquid. As a result, remediation strategies are being refined to target the carbon tetrachloride vapor threat.

As a result of past practices, up to 580 m³ carbon tetrachloride was discharged to waste sites at the 200 West Area of the U.S. Department of Energy's Hanford Site near Richland, Washington. Three-dimensional modeling was conducted to enhance the current conceptual model of CCl₄ distribution beneath the major disposal site (216-Z-9). The simulations, using

the STOMP code, focused on migration of dense nonaqueous-phase liquid (DNAPL) consisting of CCl_4 and co-disposed organics under scenarios with differing sediment properties, sediment distribution, waste properties, and waste disposal history. Simulation results support a conceptual model for CCl_4 distribution where CCl_4 in the DNAPL phase migrated primarily in a vertical direction below the disposal site and where some CCl_4 DNAPL likely migrated across the water table into the regional aquifer. Results also show that the lower permeability Cold Creek unit retained more CCl_4 DNAPL within the vadose zone than other hydrologic units during the infiltration and redistribution process. Because of the relatively high vapor pressure of the CCl_4 , the resulting vapor plumes are extensive and influenced by density-driven advection. Any continued migration of CCl_4 from the vadose zone to the groundwater is likely through interaction of vapor phase CCl_4 with the groundwater and not through continued DNAPL migration.

Additional simulations assessed the impacts of soil vapor extraction (SVE) as a remediation method. These simulations showed rapid CCl_4 removal associated with the assumed local equilibrium of CCl_4 between the phases. Additional efforts are needed to enhance the understanding of rate-limited volatilization to improve simulation of the SVE process and to provide a basis for refining the design and operation of SVE systems.

Plutonium recovery operations within the 200 West Area resulted in organic and aqueous wastes that were disposed of at several cribs, tile fields, and French drains. The organic wastes consisted of CCl_4 mixed with lard oil, tributyl phosphate, and dibutyl butyl phosphonate. The main disposal areas were the 216-Z-9 trench, the 216-Z-1A tile field, and the 216-Z-18 crib. These three major disposal facilities received a total of about 13,400,000 liters of liquid waste containing 363,000 to 580,000 liters of CCl_4 . The disposal site locations are shown in Figure 1, with the 216-Z-9 site situated in the middle of the site-specific model domain and the 216-Z-1A and 216-Z-18 sites located to the southwest of the site-specific domain. The Plutonium Finishing Plant is directly to the west of the 216-Z-9 disposal site. Assuming a maximum aqueous CCl_4 solubility of $800 \text{ mg}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ and an organic liquid density of $1.59 \text{ g}\cdot\text{cm}^{-3}$ (Schwille 1988), the 13,400,000 liters of liquid waste would be all CCl_4 in dissolved form, indicating that the major organic liquid.

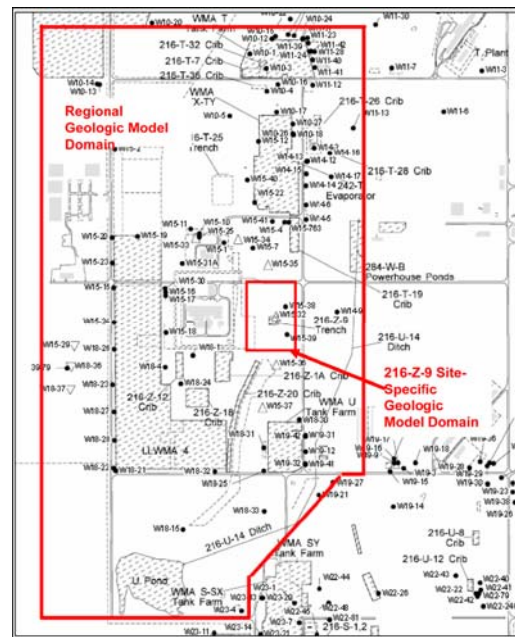


Figure 1. Outline of regional and 216-Z-9 trench geologic model domains at the Hanford Site.

In recent years, two major remediation technologies have been applied to remove CCl_4 from the vadose zone and groundwater at the Hanford Site. Beginning in 1991, about 78,000 kg of CCl_4 was removed using an SVE system in the vadose zone (Fluor Hanford 2006). In addition, a pump-and-treat system for the unconfined aquifer removed 9700 kg of CCl_4 from the groundwater beginning in 1994 (DOE 2006).

The main objective of the current study is to develop an updated conceptual model for CCl_4 behavior under the 216-Z-9 site, based on a series of multifluid flow simulations, and compare the updated conceptual model with the existing model described by DOE (2004), as shown in Figure 2. The numerical simulations focus on the 216-Z-9 site because of the three major DNAPL disposal sites, the 216-Z-9 has the smallest footprint and has received the most DNAPL waste. Because of these characteristics, it is expected that DNAPL disposed at the 216-Z-9 trench may have moved deeper into the subsurface compared to the other Hanford CCl_4 disposal sites. A series of three-dimensional multifluid flow simulations was conducted using the STOMP code (White and Oostrom 2006), including a base case simulation and 28 sensitivity analysis simulations, to examine the impact of parameter variation on the simulated migration of CCl_4 in the subsurface beneath the 216-Z-9 disposal area from 1954 to 2005. An additional objective was to investigate the impact of SVE, implemented at the site in 1993, on CCl_4 distributions and fluxes. This research was recently published in *Vadose Zone Journal* (Oostrom et al. 2007).

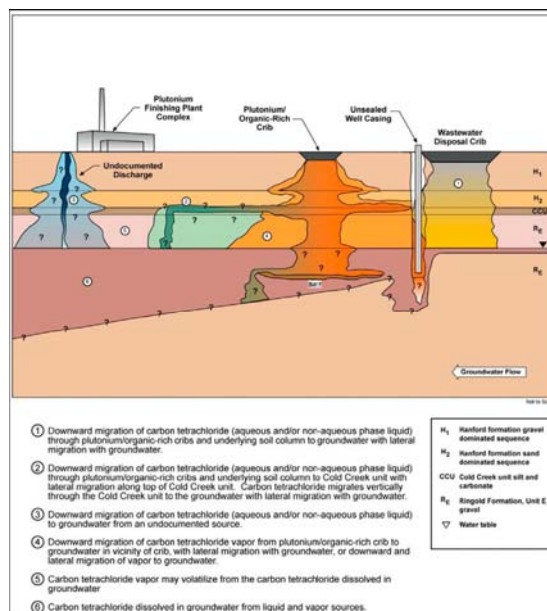


Figure 2. Current conceptual model of subsurface carbon tetrachloride behavior (after DOE 2004).

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Geochemical Controls on Contaminant Uranium in Vadose Hanford Formation Sediments at the 200 Area and 300 Area, Hanford Site, Washington

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(c) Environmental Molecular Sciences Laboratory, Richland, Washington

(d) Argonne National Laboratory, Argonne, Illinois

Using combined experimental analysis and electron microscope imaging, this study determined that secondary mineral formation is the dominant control of uranium contamination of Hanford Site groundwater.

Long-term historic spills of uranium at the Hanford Site's 300 Area fuel fabrication site (58,000 kg of disposed uranium over 32 years) and at the 200 East Area BX tank farm (7000 kg of spilled uranium in one event), both within the Hanford formation near Richland, Washington, were investigated by subsurface sampling and subsequent microscale investigations of excavated samples. The 200 Area sediments contained uranyl silicate mineralization (sodium boltwoodite) in restrictive microfractures in granitic clasts, in the vadose zone over a narrow range in depth. Well logging and column experiments indicated that tank wastes migrated deeper than observed in core samples. The 300 Area sediments included metatorbernite and uranium at low concentrations associated with detrital aluminosilicates, along with other mineral phases that could accommodate uranyl, such as uranophane and calcium carbonate. The association of contaminant uranyl with Hanford formation sediments provided a persistent source of uranium to groundwater. The results of both studies suggest that the formation of secondary solid uranyl-bearing phases influences the subsequent release of uranium to the environment and that our understanding of these processes and individual waste sites is incomplete.

The Hanford Site produced plutonium from 1943 until 1989 for weapons applications. The Site occupies about 1500 km² in an arid environment, bounded by a broad bend of the Columbia River to the east and by Rattlesnake Mountain to the west. Fuel fabrication occurred at the Site's southern extremity (300 Area); fuel was irradiated near the Columbia River to the north (100 Area); and the rods were processed in chemical facilities on the Site's central plateau (200 Area). Each of the manufacturing components had a characteristic waste stream or streams, and while some streams were disposed directly onto the ground surface, others were retained for long-term storage or isolation. Materials research and fabrication at the 300 Area generated wastes that were sluiced into process ponds (Figure 1, top), constructed and maintained to avoid contamination of the nearby Columbia River.

The ponds received constant and intermittent releases of a broad variety in composition and volume, including caustic alkaline and acidic fluids and slurries containing uranium, aluminum, and copper. After irradiation, the chemical processing steps in the 200 Area included dissolution of irradiated fuel rods and subsequent industrial-scale chemical manipulations to form distinct compositional streams that were managed to extract useful materials and to isolate wastes. The storage of chemical process intermediates and the disposal of unwanted wastes presented (and continues to present) a significant challenge. During the years of plutonium production, highly radioactive and hazardous wastes were disposed in underground tanks (Figure 1, bottom), which were initially of single-wall construction.

The unintended release of uranium and other wastes to the environment produced contaminated zones in the vadose sediments. This study focused on two distinct contaminant events: (1) a historic, episodic leak of alkaline uranium wastes to the thick and deep 200 East Area vadose zone, and (2) the long-term seepage of acidic or neutral uranium wastes to the thin and shallow 300 Area vadose zone. Both released uranium into the same surficial sedimentary deposit, and each represents the source or potential source of uranium to groundwater.

The mobility of uranium is a complex function of the chemical and physical properties and the geological and lithological variations in the subsurface. The present-day geochemical behavior of the wastes appears to be controlled by the composition and morphologic character of the secondary waste-bearing solid phases, which in turn result from the composition and reactivity of the original aqueous waste, which migrated through the vadose environment. The results of these investigations also illustrate the uncertainties and difficulties in understanding the geochemical factors controlling potential environmental hazards of long-resident contaminants in the vadose regime. More detail is provided in *Vadose Zone Journal* (McKinley et al. 2007).

Citation

McKinley JP, JM Zachara, J Wan, DE McCready, and SM Heald. 2007. "Geochemical Controls on Contaminant Uranium in Vadose Hanford Formation Sediments at the 200 Area and 300 Area, Hanford Site, Washington." *Vadose Zone Journal* 6(4):1004-1017.

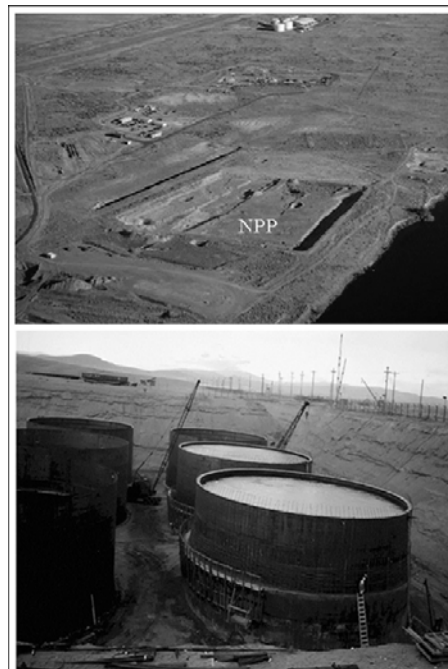


Figure 1. Top: Aerial photograph of the 300 Area North Process Pond, in 2003, after excavation of the residual pond wastes. Samples described here were removed from the site after this photo was taken. Bottom: Photograph of the 200 East Area BX tank farm under construction, 1944.

Science of Interfacial Phenomena

Direct Synthesis of Nanoceria in Aqueous Polyhydroxyl Solutions

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One-step synthesis and stabilization of cerium oxide (ceria) nanoparticles is a most important challenge in order to efficiently use them in applications such as sensors, catalysis, and biomedical materials. This study proposes an efficient, low-cost, green chemical route to synthesize nanoceria in saccharides, while simultaneously retaining the regenerative, oxidation state switching (Ce^{3+} to Ce^{4+} and back) property of ceria nanoparticles. These nanoparticles are expected to have potential use in future biomedical applications such as preventing retinal damage, preventing radiation damage of healthy cells during cancer treatment, and UV absorption.

Nanoceria has potential applications in catalysis, sensors, and biomedicine, including protecting cells against reactive oxygen species and radiation. These applications stem from cerium oxide's ability to switch oxidation states between +4 and +3, depending on the ambience (oxidizing and reducing environment). This renders nanoceria an important biomedical property for radical quenching. A whole new world of biological applications of nanoceria is opening with several interesting findings.

However, nanoceria needs to be stabilized in aqueous or non-aqueous media for all practical applications in biology. Thus, it is imperative to find a suitable delivery medium for carrying nanoceria to specific locations as an alternative route to intravenous administration. In this study, synthesis and redox chemistry of nanoceria in the presence of polyhydroxyl groups such as glucose and dextran are reported.

The effect of both acidic and basic medium on the synthesis and oxidation-state stability of nanoceria in the absence of buffer was examined using UV-visible spectroscopy and transmission electron microscopy (TEM). The basic and acidic mediums show differences in the synthesis of nanoceria in terms of size and structure without interfering with the redox chemistry. Pure and aqueous saccharides suspension of nanoceria in acid/base media undergoing redox transformation were also compared in this study.

The vital points in the mechanism for engineering functionalized nanoceria are as follows:

- $Ce(IV)$ is reduced to $Ce(III)$ in the process of oxidation of glucose to arabinose.
- Polysaccharides have stronger tendency to complex $Ce(IV)$ than the monosaccharides.
- Reduction of $Ce(IV)$ to $Ce(III)$ takes place in only highly acidic mediums ($pH < 2$), and at this concentration no colloidal particles were detected by light-scattering photometry.

Both dextran and glucose can be used efficiently to synthesize nanoceria with enhanced stability in dextran. No significant differences were observed with respect to particle size in both dextran and glucose suspensions. However, the acidic media was found to induce higher agglomeration tendencies as compared to the basic media. Some representative TEM images are shown in Figure 1. A possible mechanism of ceria-saccharides superstructure formation by cross linking of groups due to further complexation of free hydroxyl groups of glucose with cerium(IV) is shown in Figure 2. This study clearly demonstrates that nanoceria can be synthesized directly in mono/polysaccharides by oxidizing the species in both acidic and basic environment

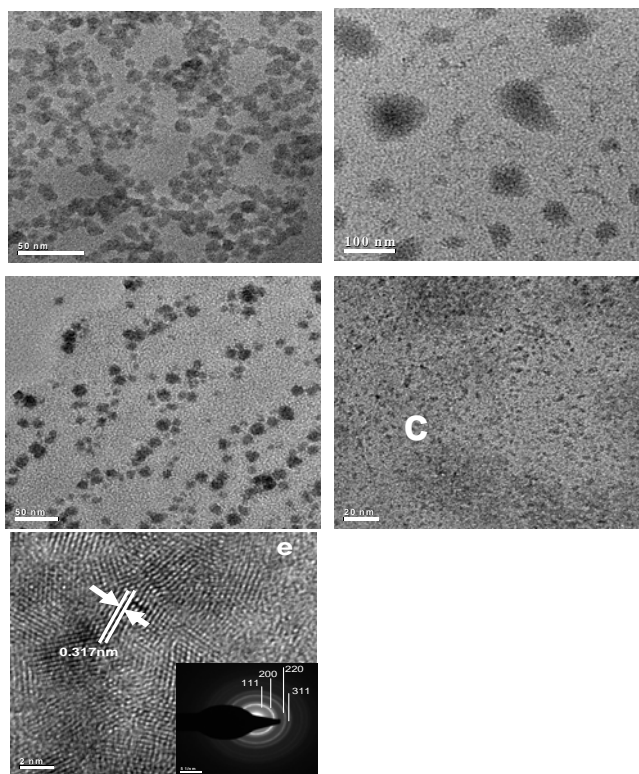


Figure 1. Transmission electron micrographs for ceria synthesized in different conditions. Ceria synthesized in glucose using (a) 20-mM glucose/acid; (b) 20-mM glucose/base and in dextran; (c) 5-mM dextran/acid; and (d) 5-mM dextran/base. (e) High-resolution transmission electron microscope image and diffraction confirming the fluorite structure of ceria.

Importantly, the initial complex formed between cerium and sugars does not hinder the property of ceria to switch its oxidation state based on the environment. The kinetics of switching of oxidation states in solution specifically regenerated from the Ce(IV) to Ce(III) oxidation state was slower in basic medium compared to acidic medium. Moreover, from UV-visible light spectroscopy results, it is clear that the +IV oxidation state was retained in the basic medium for more than 2 months as a stable suspension, which proves the tunability of nanoceria with respect to ambience and aging. The extended stability range of ceria in saccharides over a pH range from 2.0 to 8.0 is illustrated in Figure 3.

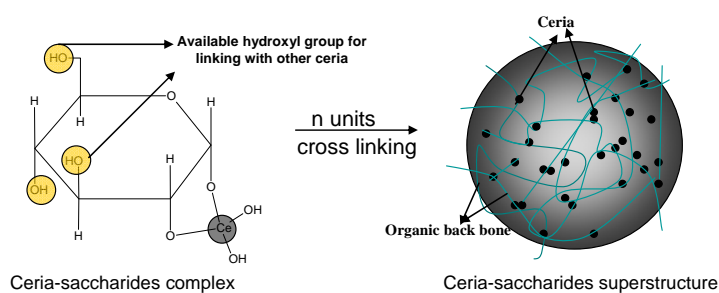


Figure 2. Possible mechanism for complexation and ceria-saccharide superstructure formation.

Citation

Karakoti AS, S Kuchibhatla, KS Babu, and S Seal. 2007. "Direct Synthesis of Nanoceria in Aqueous Polyhydroxyl Solutions." *Journal of Physical Chemistry C* 111(46):17232-17240.

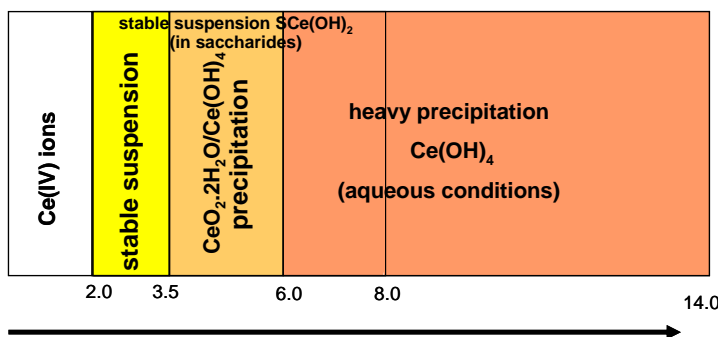


Figure 3. Precipitation behavior of cerium (IV) with respect to change in pH in oxidizing environment. The narrow stability range of ceria suspension can be extended up to a pH of 8.0 by the use of saccharides (dashed lines). Cerium is present as Ce(IV) ions (pH 0 – 2.0), stable suspension $\text{CeO}_2 \cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$ (pH 2.0 – 3.5), precipitate as $\text{CeO}_2 \cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$ (pH 3.5 – 6.0), precipitate heavily as $\text{Ce}(\text{OH})_4$ (pH 6.0 and above), stable suspension in saccharides as $\text{S-Ce}(\text{OH})\text{X}$ (pH 2.0 -8.0).

Transient Mobility of Oxygen Adatoms upon O_2 Dissociation on Reduced TiO_2 (110)

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The interaction of molecular oxygen with TiO_2 -based materials can affect many chemical and photochemical processes. In particular, it plays an important role in a wide range of applications such as photocatalysis, degradation of organic pollutants, and water splitting for hydrogen production.

Oxygen vacancy-mediated dissociation of O_2 molecules on TiO_2 (110) is shown to be energetically favorable by a number of theoretical investigations. On the basis of temperature-programmed desorption observations, researchers have suggested that for each O_2 molecule dissociated at the vacancy, one oxygen atom fills a vacancy while the other oxygen atom resides on the surface as an adatom, bound to the nearest-neighbor five-fold coordinated titanium site in the adjacent titanium row. The oxygen adatoms are found to significantly perturb the surface chemistry of adsorbed water, ammonia, and methanol, and may as well alter the surface chemistry of other adsorbate species on the TiO_2 (110).

Recently, using *in-situ* scanning tunneling microscopy, the researchers studied at the atomic level the initial stages of O_2 dissociation at room temperature by tracking the same surface area before and after oxygen exposure. The results confirm that O_2 molecules dissociate only at the bridging oxygen vacancies, resulting in the healing of a vacancy by one oxygen atom, O_v , and the deposition of the other oxygen as an adatom, O_a , on a neighboring five-fold coordinated titanium site as shown in Figure 1.

After dissociation, the majority (~81 %) of O adatoms were found to separate from the original vacancy positions by up to two lattice constants along [001] direction. The majority of the adatoms (~74 %) were one lattice constant apart along [001] direction from the original vacancy positions shown as configuration B in Figure 2 (published as cover of *The Journal of Physical Chemistry C*). Other O_a atoms were separated by two lattice constants (~7 %, configuration C in Figure 2) or bonded at the nearest-neighbor titanium sites (~19 %, configuration A in Figure 2). Studies showed that a limited nonthermal, transient mobility resulting from energy release during O₂ dissociation, rather than thermal diffusion was accounted for the observed distribution. Effect of the hyperthermal transient mobility of the oxygen adatoms may lead to an enhanced reactivity, which could be of a general relevance for the chemical and photochemical processes involving oxygen interaction with TiO₂-based systems.

Citation

Du Y, Z Dohnálek, and I Lyubinetsky. 2007. "Transient Mobility of Oxygen Adatoms upon O₂ Dissociation on Reduced TiO₂ (110)." *Journal of Physical Chemistry C*. In press.

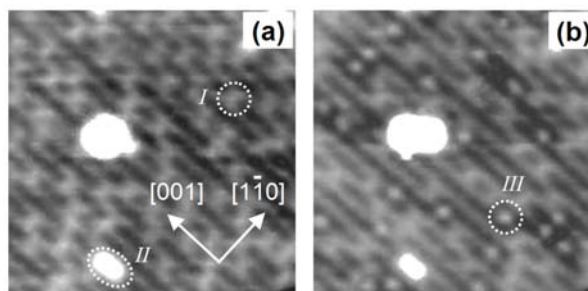


Figure 1. Scanning tunneling microscopy images of the same (11 × 10) nm² area of the TiO₂ (110) surface (a) before and (b) after adsorption of 0.03 ML of O₂ at 300 K. One of the oxygen vacancies, double hydroxyl group, and oxygen adatom are labeled with I, II, and III, respectively.

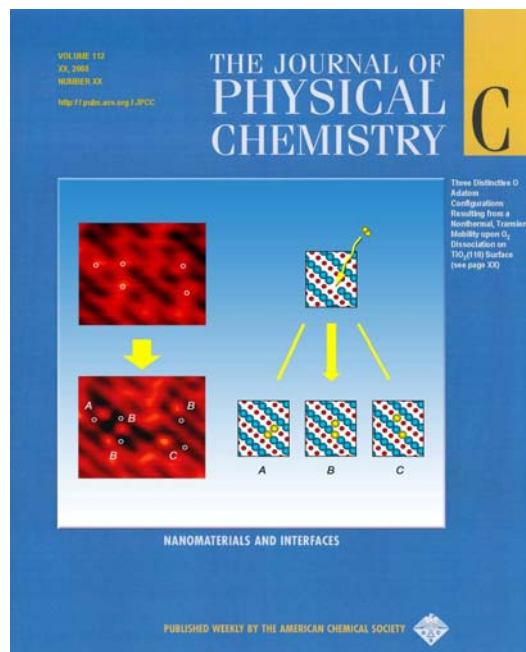


Figure 2. Three different oxygen adatom configurations resulting from a nonthermal transient mobility upon O₂ dissociation on TiO₂ (110) surface.

One Step Closer to Hydrogen-Powered Cars

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One key technological advance needed to enable efficient widespread use of hydrogen fuel cells for transportation involves the water-gas-shift (WGS) reaction ($\text{CO} + \text{H}_2\text{O} \rightarrow \text{CO}_2 + \text{H}_2$). This reaction is a crucial step in hydrogen production from fossil fuels. There is need for a better catalyst for small-scale applications before this process can be used in hydrogen fuel cell powered vehicles. Part of an EMSL Computational Grand Challenge project on Computational Design of Catalysts focuses on uncovering the details of the WGS reaction and is led by Manos Mavrikakis at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. High-performance computing using EMSL's supercomputer is an essential tool in probing the molecular details of how a proposed copper-platinum alloy might facilitate the WGS reaction.

Scientists using EMSL's supercomputer have been running calculations on a new alloy as a potential catalyst for the water-gas-shift (WGS) reaction—a key capability in making hydrogen fuel cell vehicles a commercially viable reality. The crux of the study is to characterize the energy requirements for creating the alloy and understanding the details of how it interacts with the WGS reaction. Using computational chemistry software, the energetics of constructing a copper/platinum (Cu/Pt) near-surface alloy and its catalytic properties were analyzed. The alloy was found to have copper preferentially incorporated in the subsurface layer of platinum, meaning that creating the alloy is energetically favorable. Large-scale calculations and experimental x-ray photoelectron spectroscopy results both show copper is most stable in the first subsurface layer of a platinum lattice. A comparison between the experimental and theoretically simulated scanning tunneling microscope images (Figure 1) reveals that post-annealing, the subsurface layer of the alloy is copper-rich. Additionally, experiments on carbon-monoxide (CO) desorption from the catalyst suggest that with increasing copper coverage, the CO-desorption temperature would decrease. Using computational methods, this relationship between CO desorption and temperature holds only if copper is in the subsurface layer. These

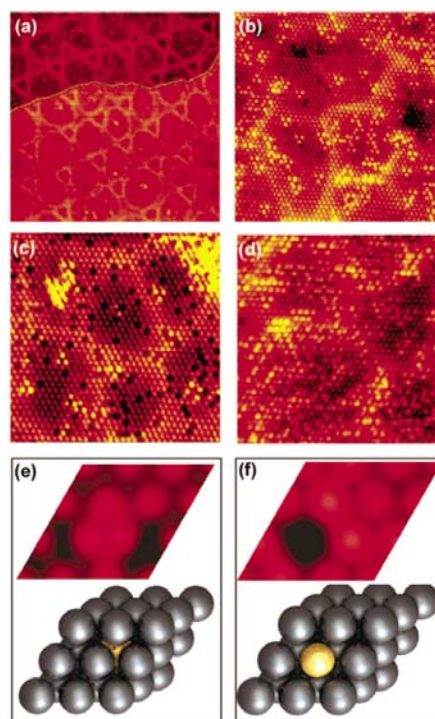


Figure 1. Experimental and density functional theory-simulated scanning tunneling microscopy images. A comparison between the experimental and theoretically simulated scanning tunneling microscopy images reveals that post-annealing, the subsurface layer of the alloy is copper-rich.

calculations and observations confirm the ideal configuration of copper and platinum can be assembled in an energy-efficient process because incorporation of copper into the platinum lattice is chemically favored at typical annealing temperatures.

The study also found that the Cu/Pt alloy has promising properties as a potential catalyst for the WGS reaction. CO binds more weakly to a special form of the alloy—Cu/Pt nitrosyl sulfuric acid (NSA)—than to a pure platinum surface. In addition, a common spectator/poison of WGS catalysts, formate (HCOO), binds more weakly than copper, suggesting that formate will not fatally interfere with this catalyst. Perhaps most importantly, Cu/Pt NSA activates water—the rate limiting step for WGS—as efficiently as copper, and yet binds the water dissociation products much more weakly than copper. This facilitates subsequent steps in the hydrogen production pathway. All these properties make the Cu/Pt NSA alloy a promising candidate for WGS catalysis, one that could be more active with a higher stability against poisoning by dominant reactive intermediates. The results were published in the *Journal of the American Chemical Society* (Knudson et al. 2007).

Citation

Knudson J, AU Nilekar, RT Vang, J Schnadt, EL Kunkes, JA Dumesic, M Mavrikakis, and F Besenbacher. 2007. “A Cu/Pt Near-Surface Alloy for Water-Gas-Shift Catalysis.” *Journal of the American Chemical Society* 129(20):6485-6490.

900-MHz NMR Enables Novel Catalysis Studies

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γ-alumina is an important material both as a catalyst and a support to bind with other materials to form a new catalyst. When barium oxide is bound to γ-alumina, it forms a catalyst that is potentially useful in preventing pollution from diesel engines. This work discovers structural details of this complex that have been unobtainable by other techniques.

The ability to tailor catalysts one atom at a time is a step closer to reality, in part, because of EMSL's 900-MHz nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) spectrometer. A research team from the Institute for Interfacial Catalysis, located at the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, used the 900-MHz NMR spectrometer to generate the highest-resolution spectra ever obtained of a common catalyst support and observed, for the first time, how the support interacts with a catalyst at the atomic scale.

To really understand catalysts, they must be studied in molecular and atomic detail. The team characterized a model system of the common γ-alumina support, γ-Al₂O₃, and the catalyst, barium oxide (BaO). γ-alumina materials serve as a support material for many catalysts, including BaO. Because BaO absorbs NO_x, a family of vehicle emissions products—the model system is a promising combination for emissions control. Despite the importance of γ-alumina materials, technology has previously not allowed detailed studies of them. The chemical properties of γ-alumina compounds are such that using traditional surface structure techniques to study them is not feasible.

The data from EMSL's 900-MHz NMR system indicates that in addition to the internal structural tetrahedral and octahedral coordinated aluminum atoms, there are also penta-coordinated aluminum atoms on the surface of the material. These atoms have different NMR relaxation times from the bulk aluminum, which is consistent with them being restricted to the surface. As BaO is added to the catalyst, the peak for these aluminum atoms becomes smaller and changes shape, showing that they are responding to the addition of the BaO. The tetrahedral and octahedral peaks do not change with the addition of BaO. Additionally, comparison of the number of BaO molecules added to the γ -alumina with the number of penta-coordinated aluminum sites that disappear in the NMR spectrum showed a nearly mole-per-mole correlation between the penta-coordinated Al^{3+} ions consumed and catalyst deposited. This is strong evidence that the binding site for BaO on γ -alumina is the penta-coordinated aluminum sites. Research results are provided in detail in *Journal of Catalysis* (Kwak et al. 2007).

This work is possible only with the high sensitivity and resolution provided by the 900-MHz NMR spectrometer at EMSL.

Citation

Kwak JH, JZ Hu, DH Kim, J Szanyi, and CHF Peden. 2007. "Penta-Coordinated Al^{3+} Ions as Preferential Nucleation Sites for BaO on γ - Al_2O_3 : An Ultra-High Magnetic Field ^{27}Al MAS NMR Study." *Journal of Catalysis* 251(1):189-194.

Professional/Community Service

EMSL user awarded U.S. Coast Guard Achievement Medal. Environmental Molecular Sciences Laboratory's Ken Beck (Figure 1) received the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Achievement Award for enabling maritime patrols to reliably communicate in the gullies and gorges of the Columbia and Snake rivers. Beck received the award for superior performance of duty while serving as USCG Auxiliary Flotilla 85 Communications Staff Officer from February 2007 to November 2007, in direct support of USCG Aids to Navigation.

For 45 years, U.S. Coast Guard patrols have dealt with spotty communications along sections of the Columbia and Snake rivers, especially on 130 miles of the Upper Snake River and 140 miles of the Lake Roosevelt/Spokane River arm. In these areas, steep cliffs block satellite phones, and cell phone reception is intermittent at best and nonexistent at worst. So, patrol teams maintaining the navigational aids for barges and others river traffic may be out of touch with their home base for hours, constituting a dangerous situation.



Figure 1. Ken Beck testing a radio in a U.S. Coast Guard patrol craft at the Kennewick station on Clover Island.

As the newly installed Communications Staff Officer for USCG Flotilla 85, Beck took on this problem. He developed and implemented a protocol using a Near Vertical Incident Skywave (NVIS) system, developed in the 1970s. The NVIS system sends high-frequency transmissions into the ionosphere. The signal is reflected and refracted back to earth, creating a circular communication zone with a radius of 25 to 250 miles. Beck designed and assembled the NVIS and extensively field tested the prototype. Further, he modeled the radiofrequency emitted to make sure the field team's exposure was within permissible environmental exposure limits. The NVIS system that Beck designed is now a model for USCG stations where communications are blocked by the local topography.

Awards and Recognition

EMSL user receives prestigious American Chemical Society award. EMSL user Gerard F. R. Parkin, Columbia University, was awarded the Organometallic Chemistry Award by the American Chemical Society. He has focused his research career on synthetic, structural, mechanistic, and theoretical studies of organometallic complexes. An article announcing the news was published in the January 8, 2008, issue of *C&E News*.

EMSL user elected Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Nanoscientist Lai-Sheng Wang, Professor of Physics and Materials Science at Washington State University and Affiliate Senior Chief Scientist at Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, has been elected to the rank of Fellow in the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). Wang is being recognized for “distinguished and innovative contributions to the field of atomic clusters and for pioneering work on gaseous multiply-charged anions.” He will be honored at the AAAS National Meeting on February 16, 2008, in Boston.

EMSL user receives Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists. Julia Laskin, EMSL user from Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, received the U.S. government's highest honor for researchers at the beginning of their careers when she accepted the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers at the White House on November 1. Laskin was honored for her work in fundamental reaction kinetics and ion surface reactions at EMSL. Her work provides a foundation for understanding the mass spectrometry of high molecular weight compounds and preparation of novel biomaterials.

EMSL user appointed to the 2008 Editorial Advisory Board of the *Journal of Physical Chemistry*. Lai-Sheng Wang, Professor of Physics and Materials Science at Washington State University and Affiliate Senior Chief Scientist at Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, was selected for the three-year term on the journal's editorial advisory board based on his distinguished contributions to the field of atomic clusters and for pioneering work on gaseous multiply-charged anions. In this role, Wang will influence the current policies and future direction of the publication.

Visitors and Users

During the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2008, a total of 347 users benefited from EMSL capabilities and expertise. This total included 231 onsite users and 116 remote users.

Publications

Journal Articles

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Conference Papers

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Conferences and Presentations

During the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2008, EMSL staff presented on research performed at the user facility or attended conferences at the following meetings or locations:

- 2007 American Geophysical Union Fall Meeting, San Francisco, California
- 2007 Biobased Industry Outlook Conference, Ames, Iowa
- 2007 Geological Society of America Annual Meeting, Denver, Colorado
- Advanced Science Research 2007 Symposium, Tokai, Japan
- American Vacuum Society International 54th Symposium, Seattle, Washington
- Center for Environmental Kinetics Analysis All-Hands 4th Annual Meeting, State College, Pennsylvania
- Exploring Actinide Chemistry through a Combination of Computational Modeling and Experiment Seminar, Ames, Iowa
- Hanford Integrated Field Center Field Research Executive Committee Teleconference, Richland, Washington
- International Symposium on Materials Issues in a Hydrogen Economy, Richmond, Virginia
- Juvenile Salmon Tracking, North Bonneville, Washington
- Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, San Francisco, California
- National Academy of Sciences Review, Richland, Washington
- Office of Naval Research Research Tools Program, Arlington, Virginia
- Presentation to Bioinformatics and Statistics students, Texas A&M, College Station, Texas
- Presentation to CH2M HILL Hanford Group, Fluor Hanford, and Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, Richland, Washington
- Sixth International Association of Hydrological Sciences Groundwater Quality Conference 2007, Fremantle, Australia
- Supercomputing 2007, Reno, Nevada
- Washington State University, School of Chemical Engineering and Bioengineering, Pullman, Washington