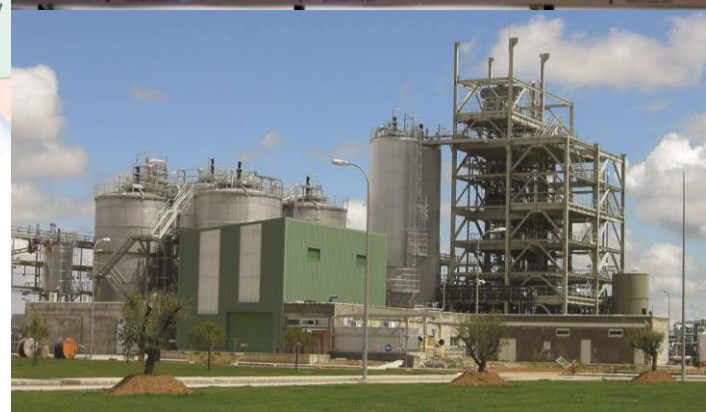


# 2015 DOE Bioenergy Technologies Office (BETO) Project Peer Review

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF  
**ENERGY**

Energy Efficiency &  
Renewable Energy



**2.3.1.315- Biomass  
Deconstruction: Catalyst  
Development and Testing**

**March 24, 2015**

**Kim Magrini**

**Program Mission:** *Transform U.S. renewable biomass resources into commercially viable, high-performance biofuels, bioproducts, and biopower through targeted research, development, demonstration, and deployment supported through public and private partnerships.*

**Task Goal:** Seek/develop/evaluate and characterize ex-situ upgrading catalysts with biomass pyrolysis vapors at the DCR small pilot scale to produce **refinery compatible intermediates of:**

- **Oxygen content < 10%**
- **Coking < 10%**
- **Carbon efficiency > 43%**
- **2022 Cost Target : \$3.31 (with feedstock)**

**Task Objective:** To design and test catalysts, understand their impact on catalytic biomass deconstruction and upgrading, and then tailor their activity to produce fungible hydrocarbon fuel intermediates at laboratory to small pilot scales (g-kg) using a coupled pyrolyzer/FCC reactor.

# Project Quad Chart Overview

## Timeline

- Project start date: 10/2012
- Project end date: 9/2022
- Percent complete: 24%

## Barriers

- Tt-E. Liquefaction of Biomass and Bio-Oil Stabilization
- Tt-G. Fuel Synthesis and Upgrading
- Tt-E. and Tt-G. Conversion and Conversion Enabling Technologies

## Budget

Total Costs FY10 – FY12	FY13 Costs (\$)	FY14 Costs (\$)	Total Planned Funding (FY15-end) (\$)
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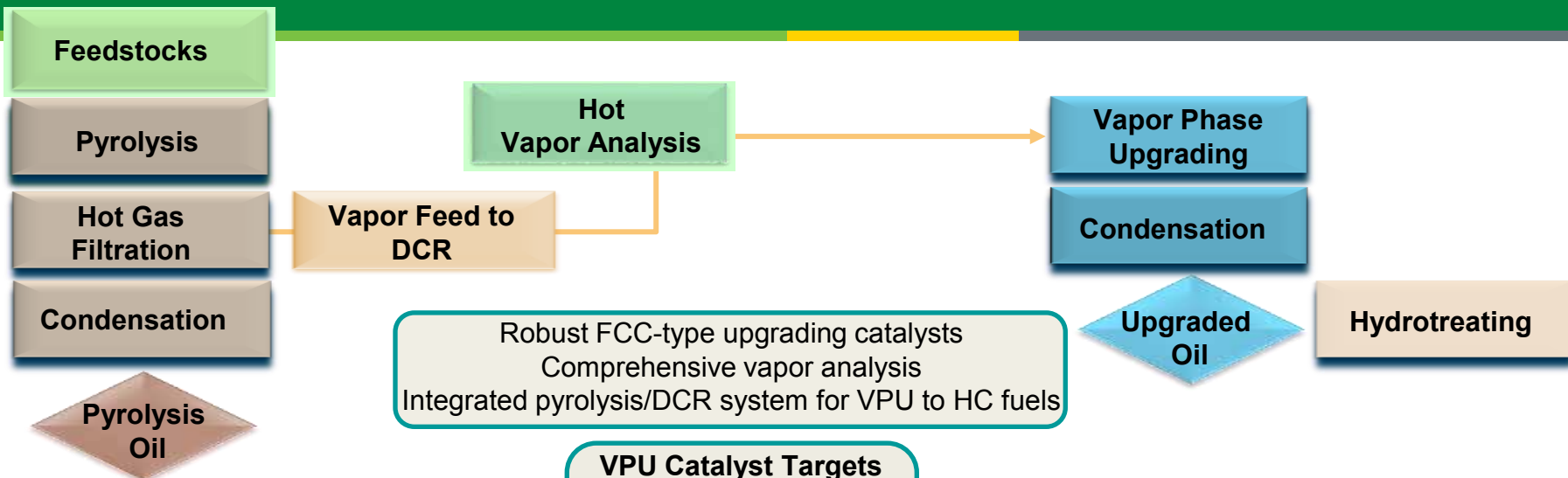
DOE Funded	0	1,728,910	2,058,441	2,377,649
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## Partners & Roles

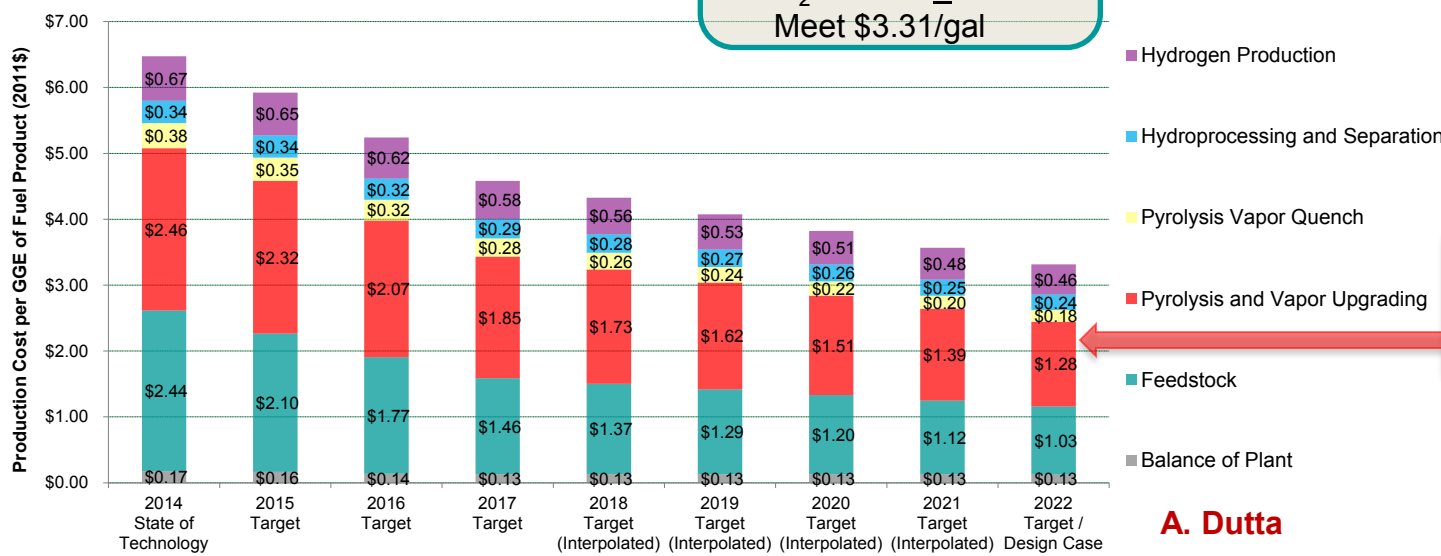
- NREL: catalyst development, evaluation and characterization
- Johnson Matthey: VPU catalyst development
- NexCeris – modified catalyst preparation
- Equilibrium Catalysts – FCC ECAT and additives



# 1 – Project Overview



**VPU Catalyst Targets**  
 Coking  $\leq$  10%  
 Carbon<sub>eff</sub>  $\geq$  43%  
 O<sub>2</sub> content  $\leq$  10%  
 Meet \$3.31/gal



**Project rationale:**  
 Vapor phase upgrading a significant process cost component

A. Dutta

# 2 – Technical Approach

## Task Structure

### 1) Pyrolysis vapor phase upgrading (VPU)

- Coupled pyrolyzer/DCR operations to produce HC fuel intermediates
- Process and CFD data to TEA, pilot plant, modeling tasks
- Product analysis to assess fungibility, incorporation extent

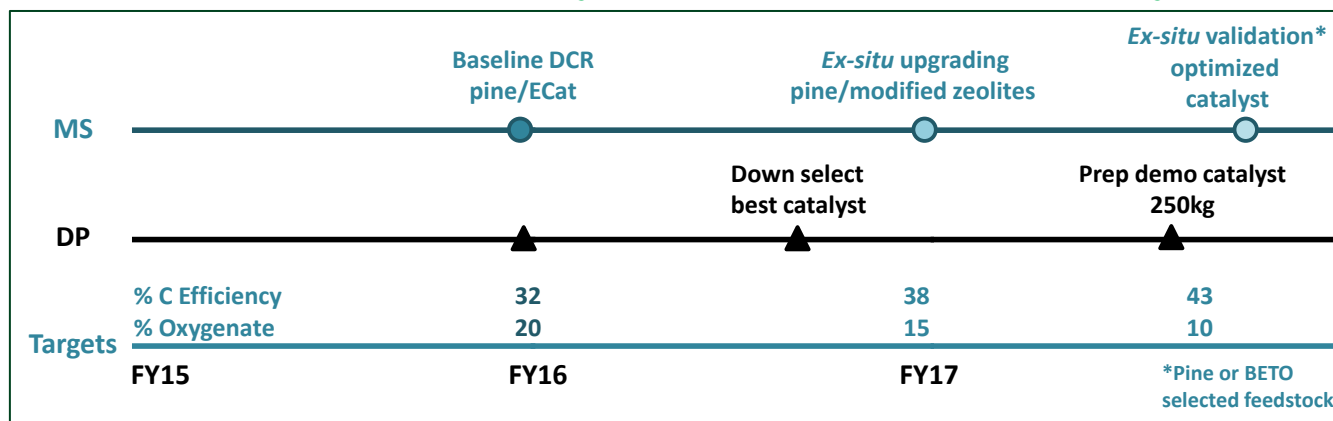
### 2) Ex-situ catalyst development, testing, characterization

- Deoxygenation
- Carbon coupling
- Hydrogenation

### 3) Condensed and vapor phase chemistry

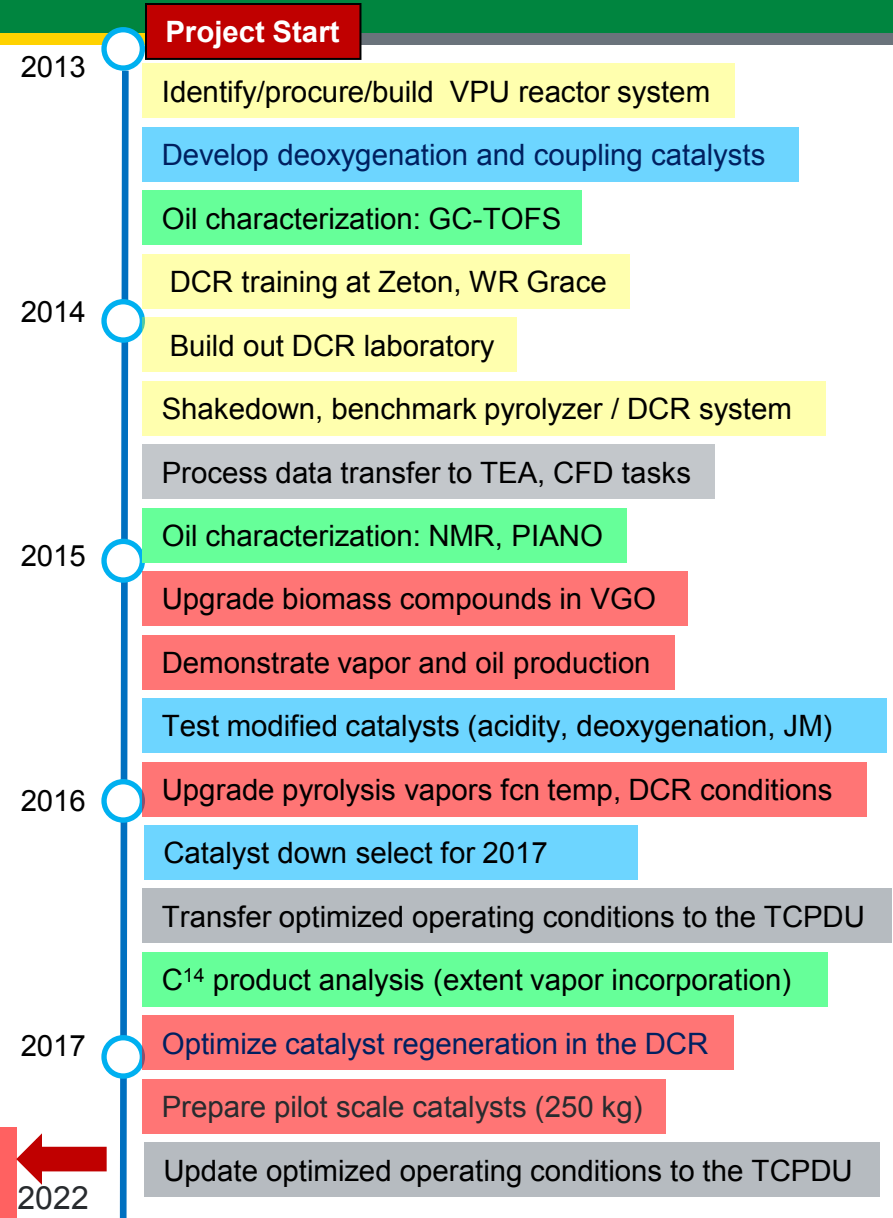
Liquids - GCTOFS, SIM DIS, GC, NMR, TAN, [Carbonyl]

Gases - On line vapor analysis with mass spectrometry



# 2 – Technical Approach

- **Identify and benchmark** the state of the art in FCC conversion catalysts for biomass vapor phase upgrading (VPU) to hydrocarbon fuels or intermediates
- **Modify** candidate catalysts for improved performance (HC production, deoxygenation)
- **Provide performance information** for technoeconomic and CFD modeling of VPU processes
- **Validate** catalyst performance and product fungibility at the DCR small pilot scale
- **Down select/demonstrate optimized** VPU process for 2017 pilot scale HC fuel production



# 2- Management Approach

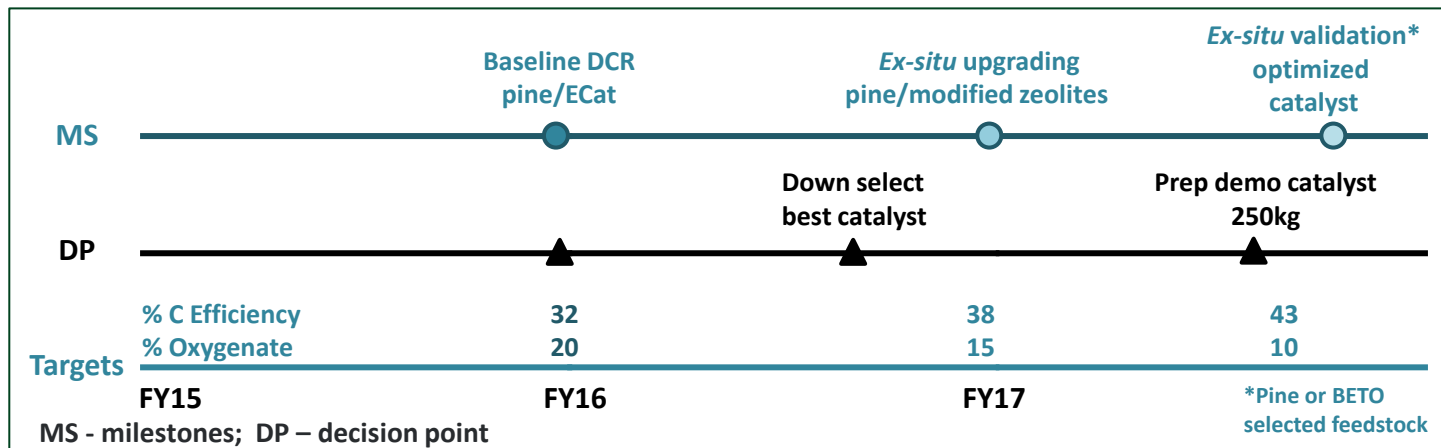
## Critical Success Factors

**Technical:** Develop/identify/evaluate deconstruction and deoxygenation catalysts that are selective for fungible hydrocarbon intermediate production at (g-kg scale):  
**<10% oxygen, <10% coking, >43% C efficiency**

**Market:** Produce bio-oil or intermediates that can be processed in a conventional refinery with acceptable cost (**\$3.31/gal**)

**Business:** Technology that is technically and economically superior to other biomass conversion processes

**Challenges:** Develop efficient 1) catalysts and 2) biomass vapor conversion to products



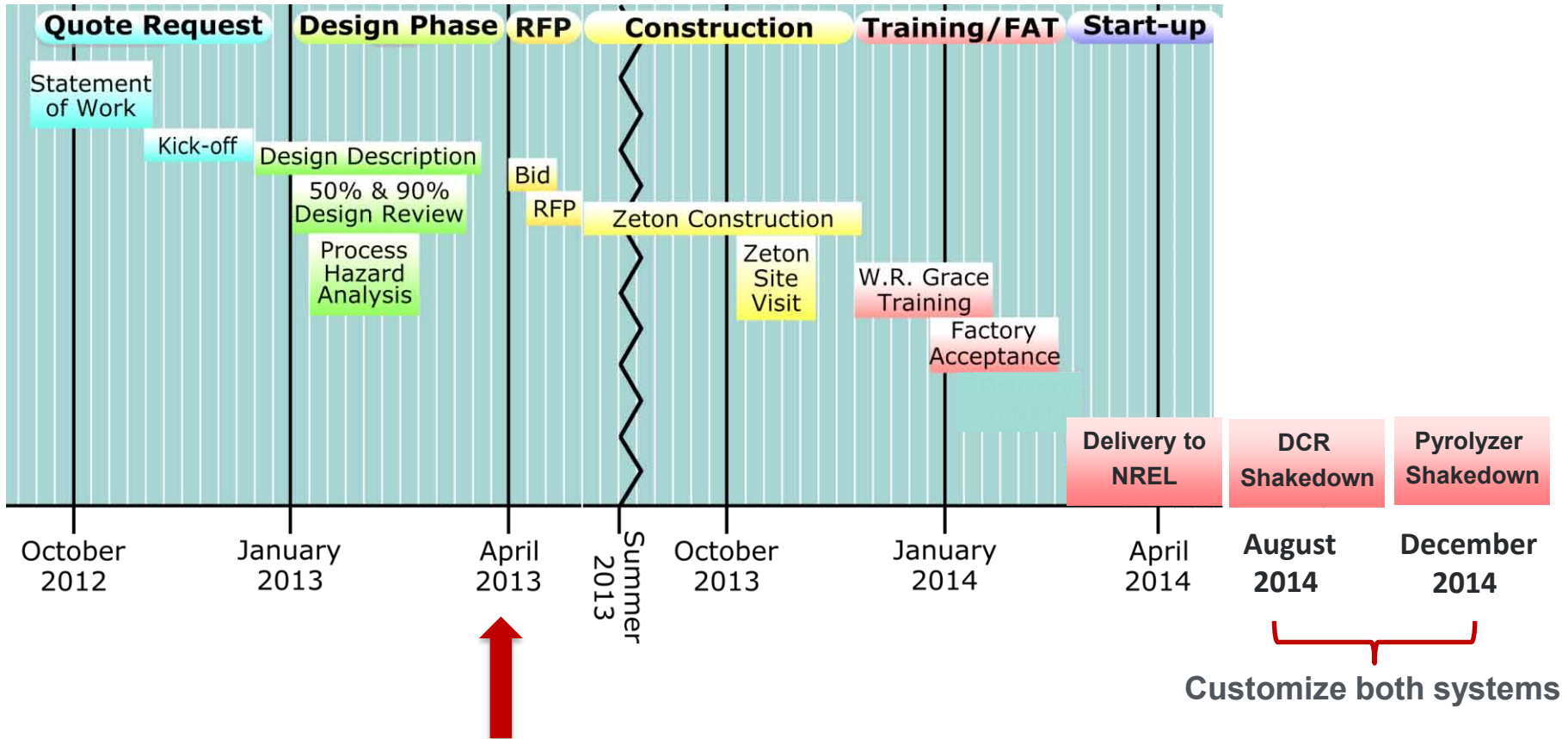


# 3 – Progress

## Task 1: VPU System

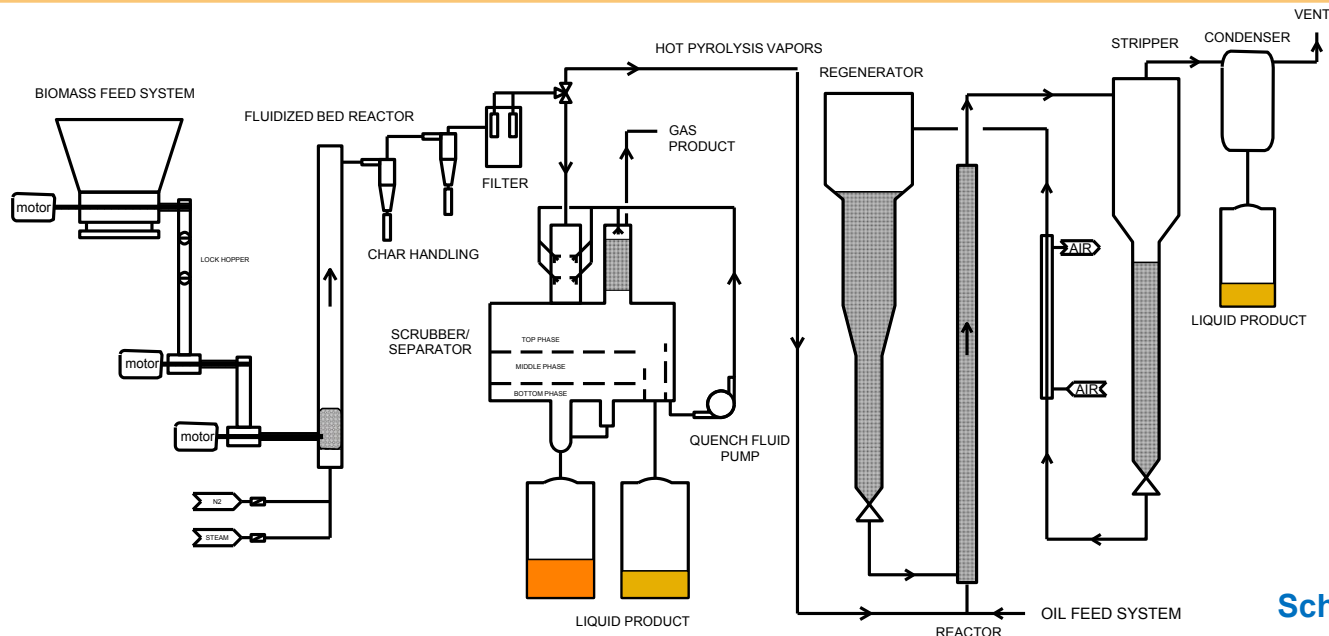
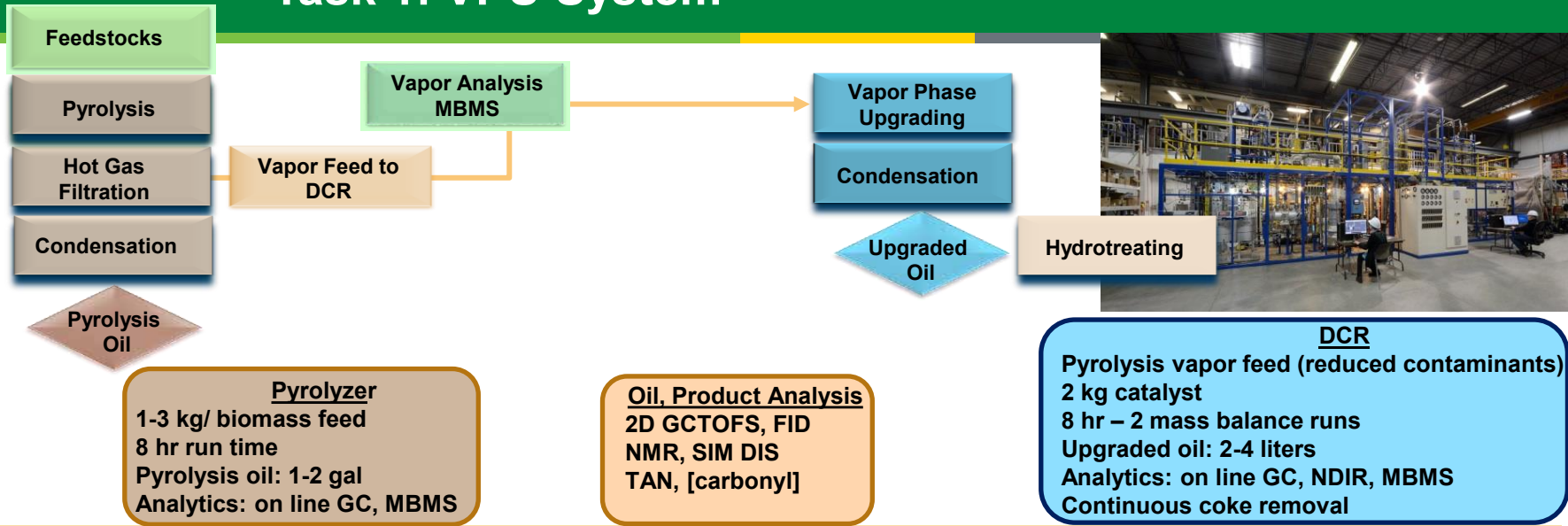
### Pyrolyzer-DCR Timeline

- DCR system ready for baseline operation June 2014
- Pyrolyzer system ready for vapor production February 2015



# 3 – Progress

## Task 1: VPU System



Schematic: M. Jarvis

# Davison Circulating Riser (DCR)

Regenerator

Riser

Stripper

Stabilizer

Flue

Gas Product

Liquid Product

## DCR Advantages

- Pyrolysis vapor feed (less contaminants)
- Provides mass balance runs
- Upgraded oil: 2-4 liters
- On-line hot vapor analysis
- Continuous coke removal

- System is operated adiabatically
- Pressure 10-45 psig (25 nominal)
- Riser Feed: 0.5-2.0 kg/h (1 nominal)
- Riser Temp: 525 °C
- Stripper Temp: 500 °C
- Regenerator Temp: 700 °C

O<sub>2</sub>

N<sub>2</sub>

Catalyst

Pyrolysis Vapors

Oil

H<sub>2</sub>O

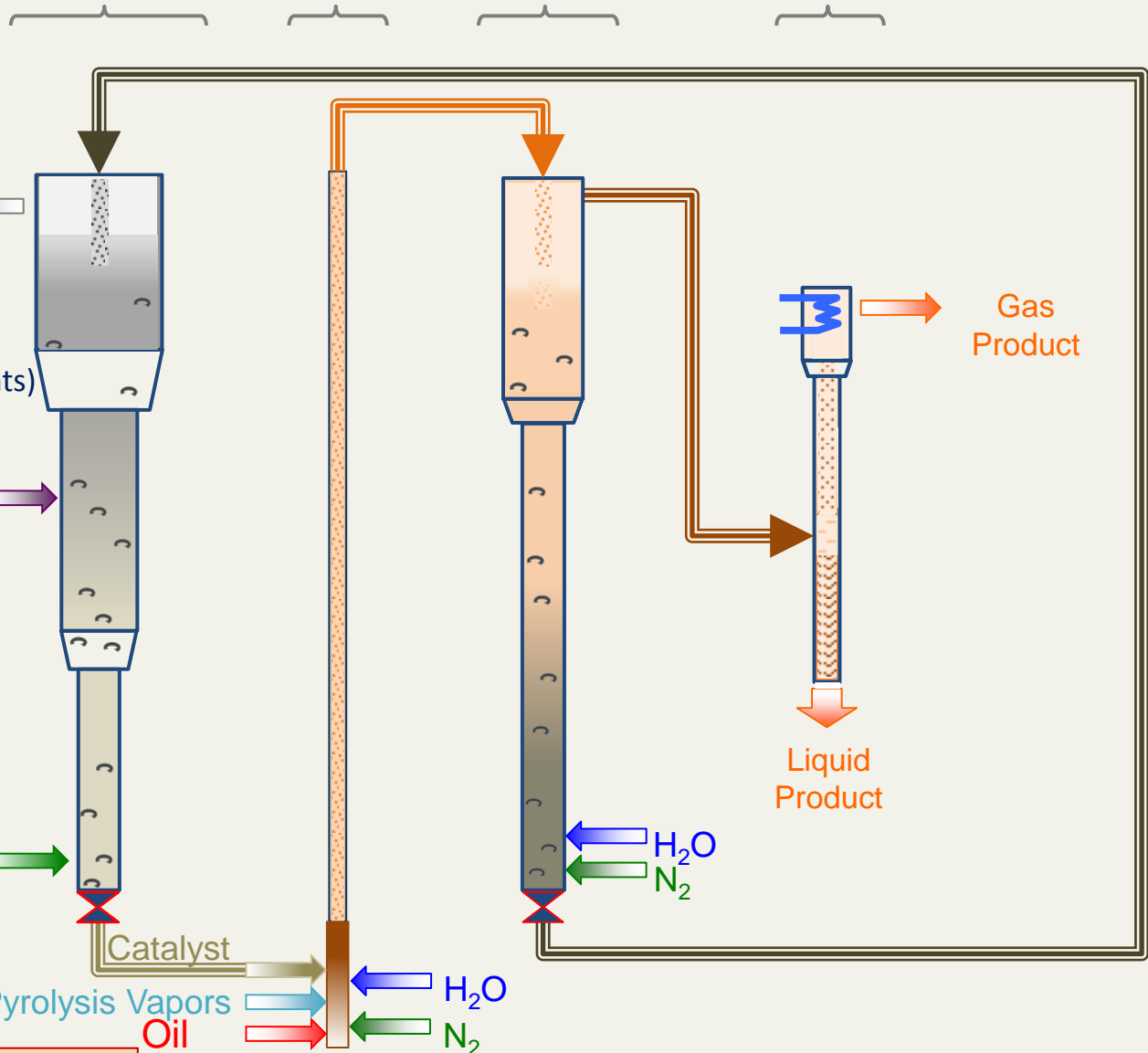
N<sub>2</sub>

H<sub>2</sub>O

N<sub>2</sub>

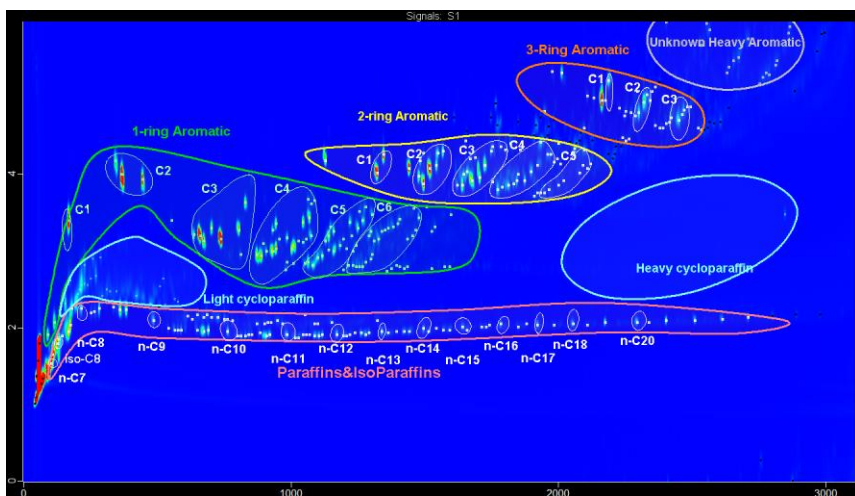
Results, products transferrable to industry

Y. Parent

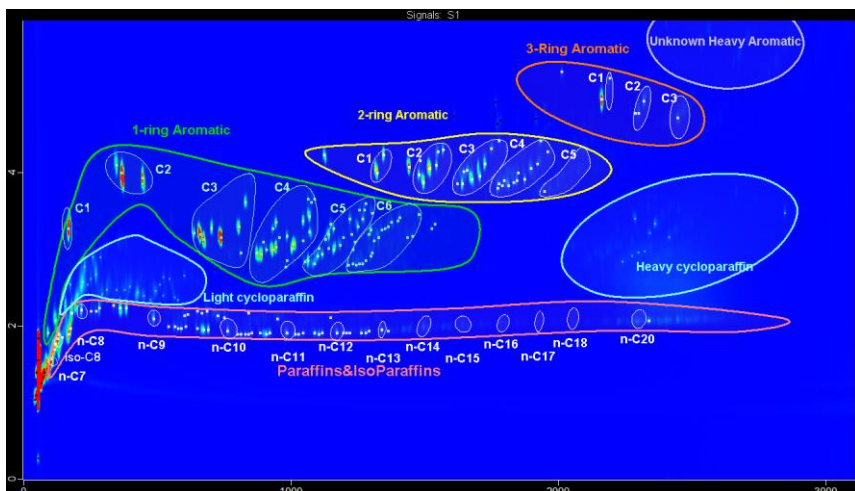


# 3 – Progress

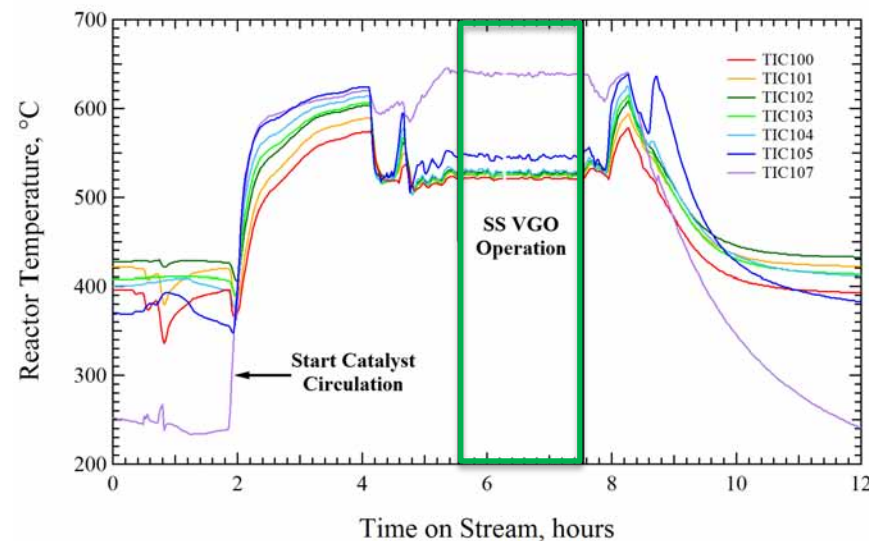
## Task 1: VPU - Baseline DCR



DCR product from VGO feed. Significant regions identified.



DCR product from mineral oil feed.



DCR riser temperature profile before, during, and after mass balance run with VGO. The mass balance experiment occurs during steady-state (SS) operation

Group	Mineral Oil	Mineral Oil	VGO	VGO	Gasoline
Paraffin	3.7	3.5	3.9	4.1	8.2
i-Paraffins	32.0	31.1	27.3	28.3	51.9
Aromatics	23.0	22.8	25.1	26.8	31.3
Naphthenes	10.8	10.7	7.5	7.2	5.0
Olefins	20.0	18.9	22.7	20.0	3.3
Unidentified	10.5	13.1	13.5	13.6	0.3

Compound class distributions (PIANO) reported in weight % of oil upgrading in the DCR:

**Reproducible results with standard feeds.**

# 3 – Progress

## Task 1: VPU - Biomass Incorporation

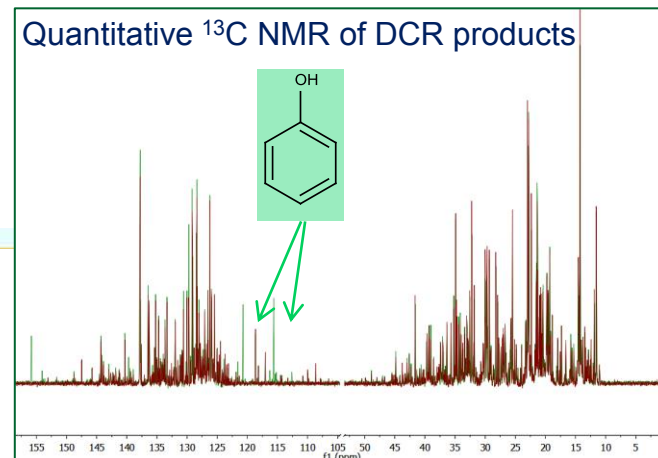
## Task 3: Oil /Vapor Phase Chemistry

### DCR - Guaiacol upgrading with Ecat and VGO:

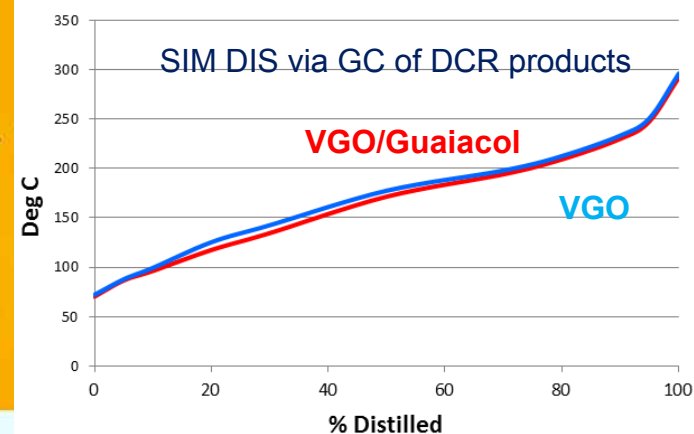
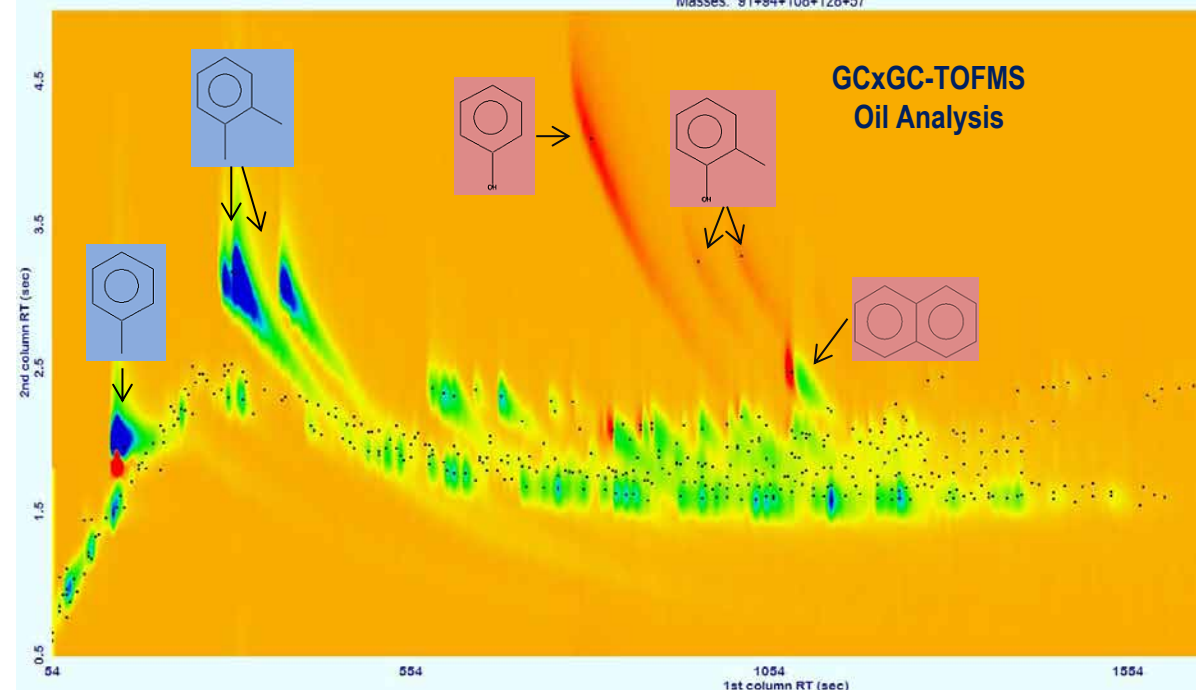
- Validate biomass compound incorporation into upgraded product
- Guaiacol enhances naphthalene and phenol production; suppresses toluene
- NMR shows enhanced phenolics and complete guaiacol methoxy group decomposition
- SIM DIS is similar to VGO – fungible product

Model Compound	Wt % in Kerosene
Acetic Acid	14.1
Guaiacol	16.5
Sorbitan Monooleate	42.9
3 Compound Mix	84.7*

\*Approximately 28 wt% of each compound

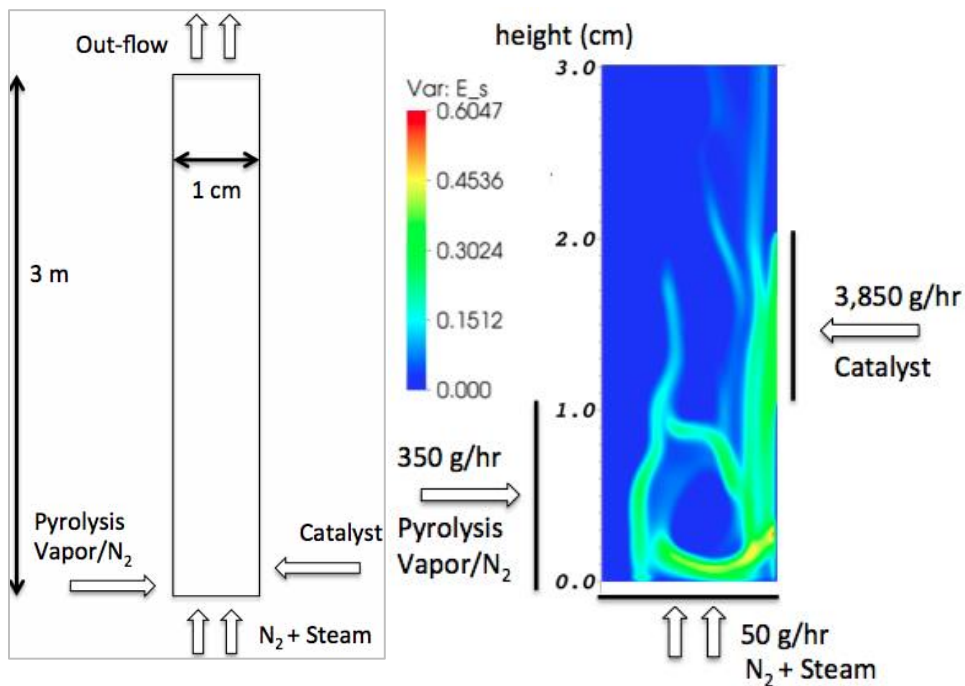


Masses: 91+94+108+128+57



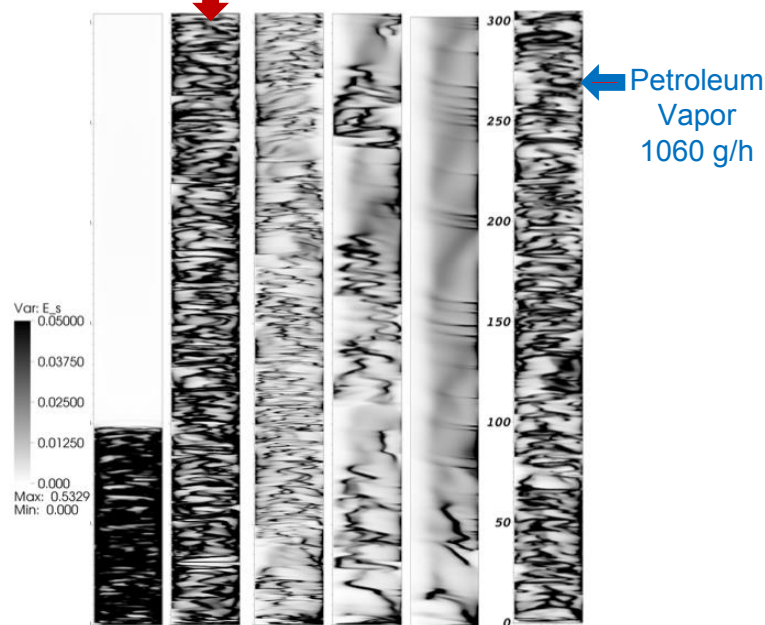
# 3 – Progress

## Task 1: VPU - DCR CFD



Vapor mass flow rate (g/hr)	Mass & energy balance "Engr. Approx."	Mean	Std. Dev.	10-90% width	Mass Inv. (g)
700	2.1	2.09	1.74	0.43	13.0
530	2.7	4.19	2.49	3.26	12.8
350	3.8	6.88	4.59	3.36	13.8
175	6.3	16.9	13.6	35.1	28.3

DCR Pyrolysis Vapor  
80, 175, 350, 530, 700 g/hr



Watch for asymmetries at high vapor flow rates



J. Ziegler

# 3 – Progress

## Task 1: VPU - Biomass Incorporation

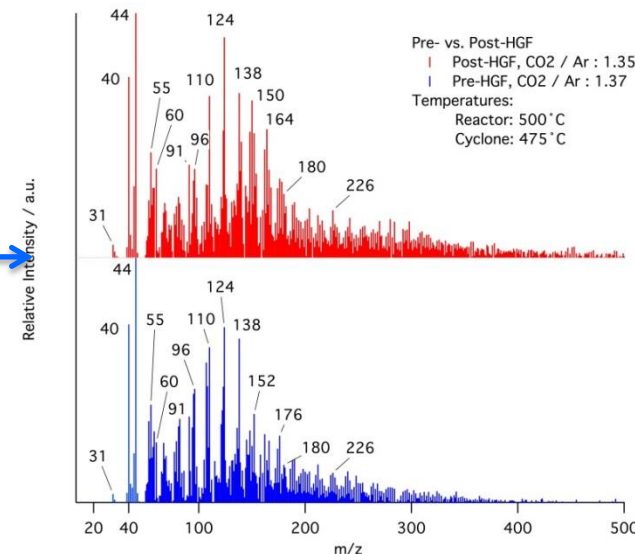
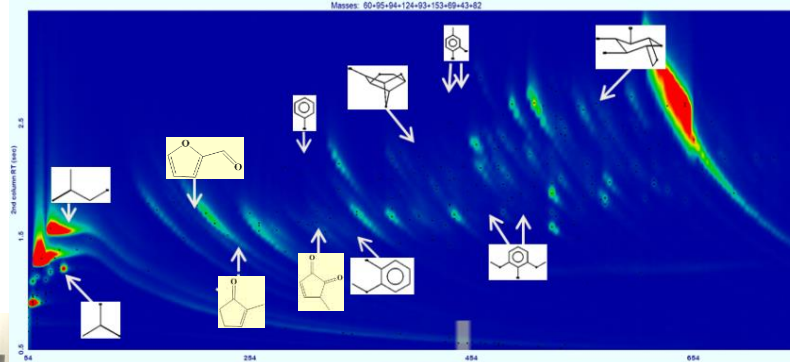
## Task 3: Oil /Vapor Phase Chemistry

### Pyrolyzer systems shakedown during continuous biomass feeding

- Biomass feeder - added variable frequency drive to deliver consistent biomass feeding and vapors
- Validate steam mass balance
- Hot vapor analysis – MBMS, NDIR added to sample vapors pre and post hot gas filter
- Hot Vapor delivery to DCR: installing mass calibration unit for transfer line
- Shakedown pyrolyzer condenser train
- Characterize oils
- Validate vapor composition pre/post hot gas filter: no change in vapor composition (remove alkali, residual char only)
- Deliver vapor to DCR June 2015: evaluate vapor co-feeding with VGO (9.15 MS)

500 °C Pyrolysis, Vary Pyrolyzer Feed to DCR

N <sub>2</sub> (kg/hr)	Biomass (kg/hr)	Biomass /N <sub>2</sub>	Pyrolysis Vapor (g/hr)	VGO/kero (g/hr)	Ratio
4.5	1.50	0.3	102	898	8.8
4.5	1.50	0.3	255	255	2.9
4.5	1.50	0.3	500	500	1.0
4.0	2.00	0.5	102	830	8.8
4.0	2.00	0.5	255	745	2.9
4.0	2.00	0.5	500	500	1.0
3.5	2.50	0.7	102	898	8.8
3.5	2.50	0.7	255	745	2.9

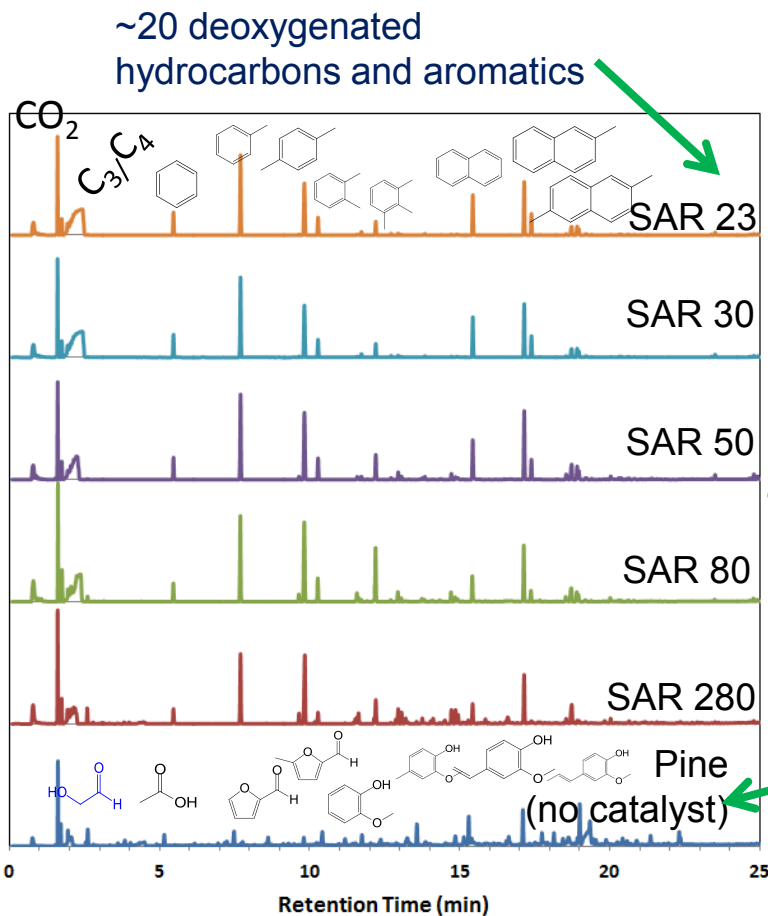


# 3 – Progress

## Task 2: Catalyst Development

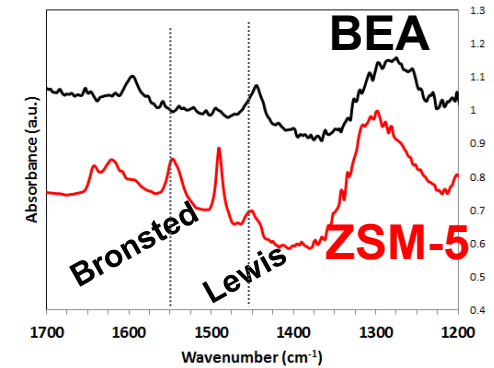
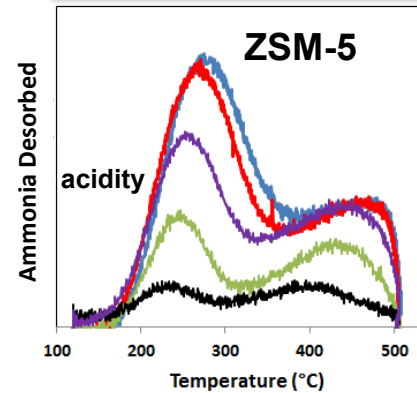
Study effects of acidity (concentration and Brønsted/Lewis ratio) on product distribution

- High acidity zeolites HC and aromatic production

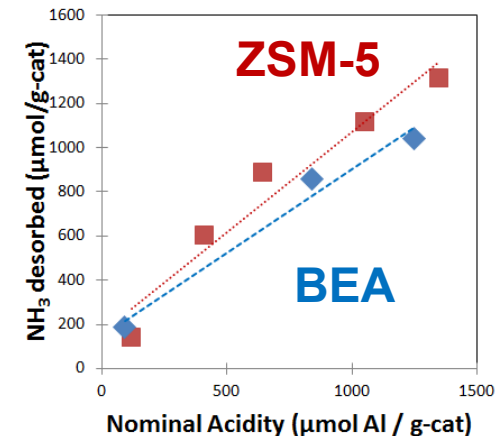


~140 oxygenated compounds

### Acid site characterization (NH<sub>3</sub> TPD and pyridine DRIFTS)



- Higher B/L ratio on ZSM-5 than BEA
- NH<sub>3</sub> TPD acidity of zeolites of varying SiO<sub>2</sub>/Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> ratio





# 3 – Progress

## Task 2: Catalyst Development

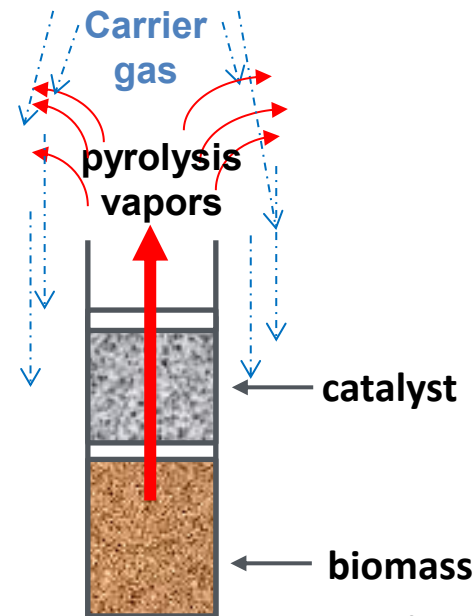
- Evaluate how catalyst composition and acid site density affects reactivity for oxygen functional groups (pine vapors and model compounds)
- Synthesis of acidic materials (zeolites and sulfated metal oxides) with incorporation of metallic deoxygenation/hydrogenation functionality
- Catalysts must meet DCR specifications (particle size, density, attrition resistance)

### Catalyst synthesis

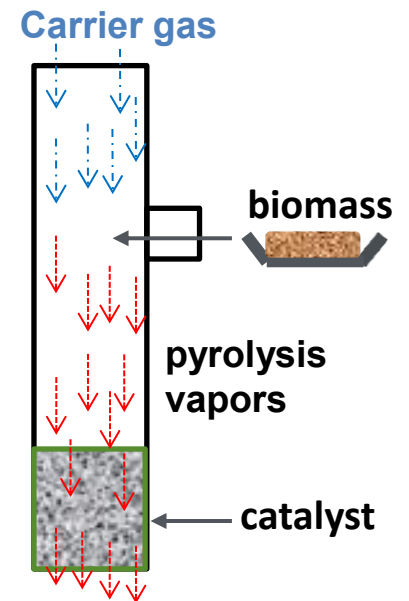


Ion-exchange and incipient-wetness impregnation synthesis of Ni, Pt, and Cu catalysts for biomass VPU

### In situ upgrading



### Ex situ upgrading



Bench scale reactors  
(0.01 – 1.0 g catalyst )

# 3 – Progress

## Task 2: Catalyst Development

Effect of composition on coke, oxygen, and aromatic yields during pine *ex situ* VPU at 500°C

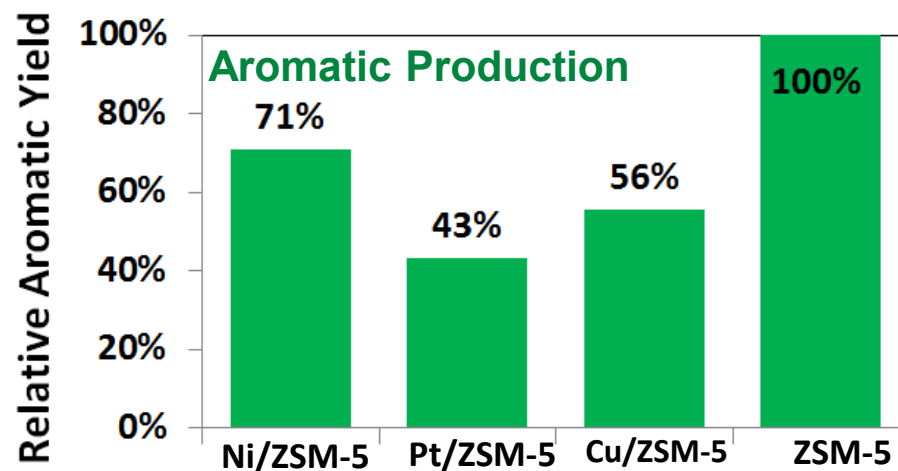
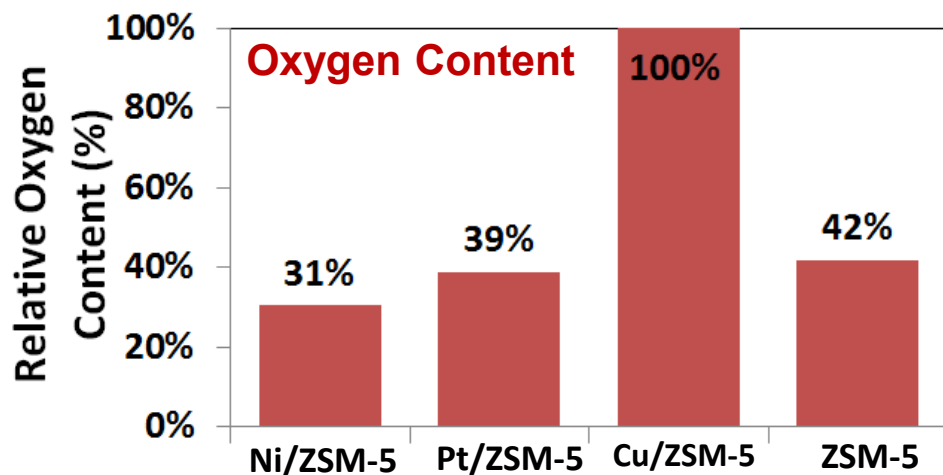
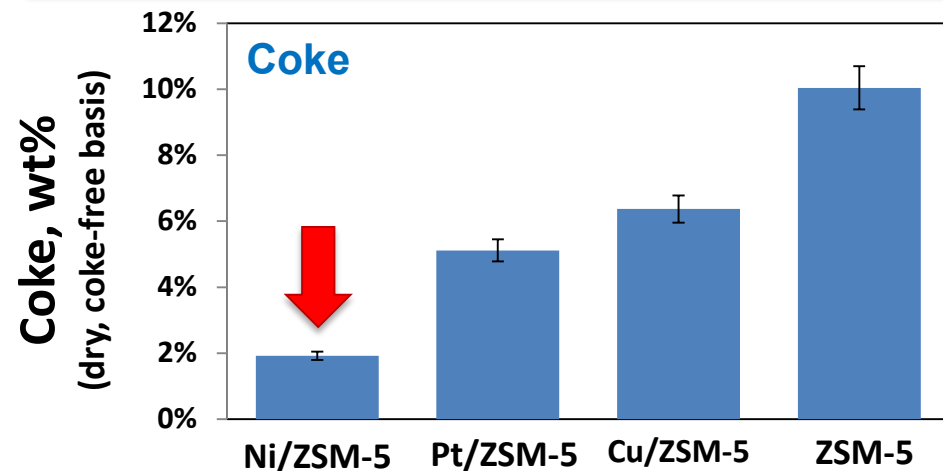
- Relative to ZSM-5, the addition of metals resulted in:

Decreased coke formation by resistance/removal of surface carbon

- Lower oxygen content in products (Ni, Pt)

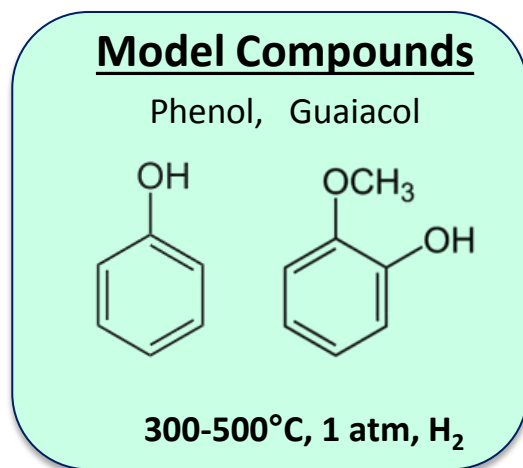
- Lower aromatic yield at low biomass-to-catalyst ratio (0-0.7) but higher stability and aromatic yield at B:C = 0.7-1.0

Reaction conditions: 500°C, 1 atm, 500 mg catalyst, total biomass/catalyst = 1.0 wt/wt, by 35 mg pine pyrolysis at 500°C, 33% H<sub>2</sub>, GHSV = 50,000 h<sup>-1</sup>

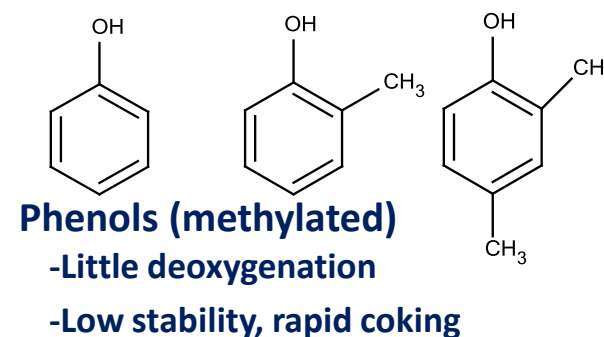


# 3- Progress

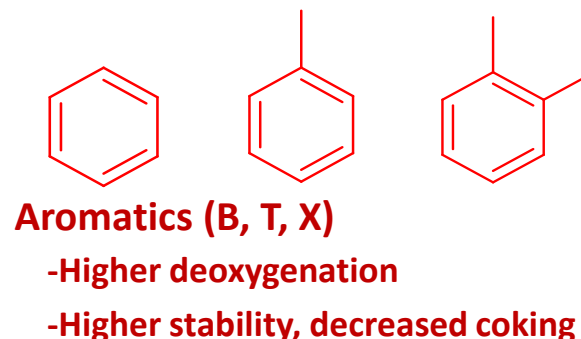
## Task 2: Catalyst Development



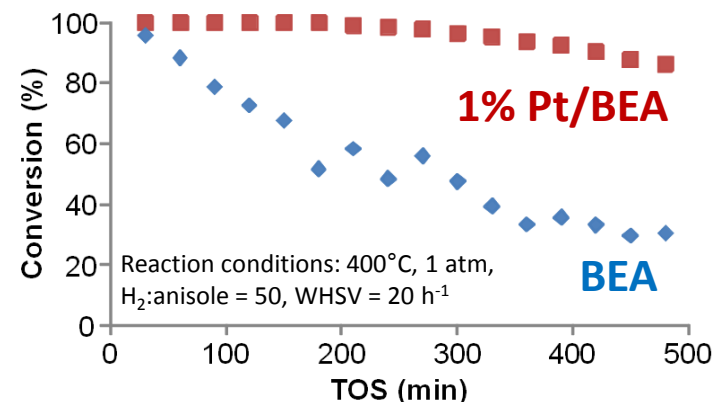
**Zeolites (BEA, ZSM-5)**



**Zeolites with Pt or Ni**



- Evaluate effects of composition on reaction products of various model oxygenates
- Incorporate deoxygenation and/or hydrogenation activity into acidic zeolite support

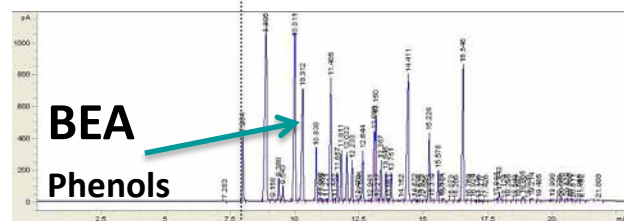
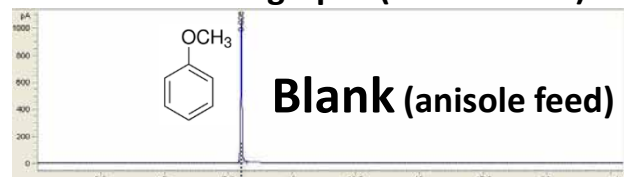


# 3 – Progress

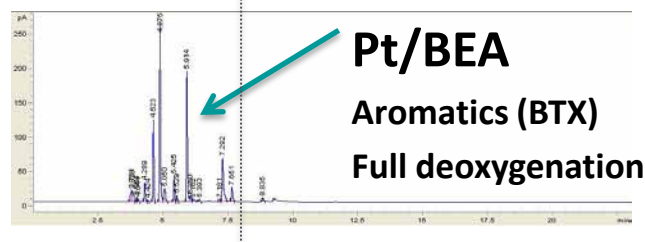
## Task 2: Catalyst Development

- Study surface chemistry and formation of intermediates
- Use *in situ* techniques to study catalysts under operating conditions (deoxygenation and coke forming reactions)

Gas chromatographs (anisole VPU)



No deoxygenation

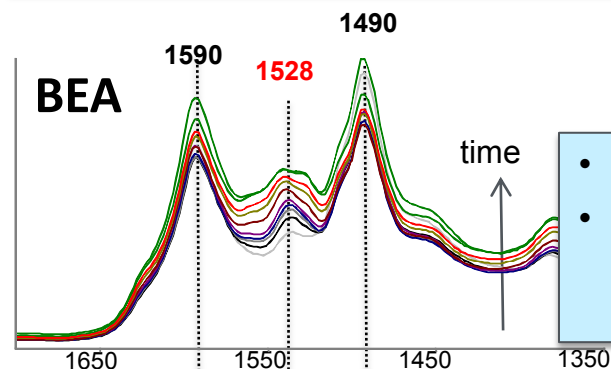


Pt/BEA

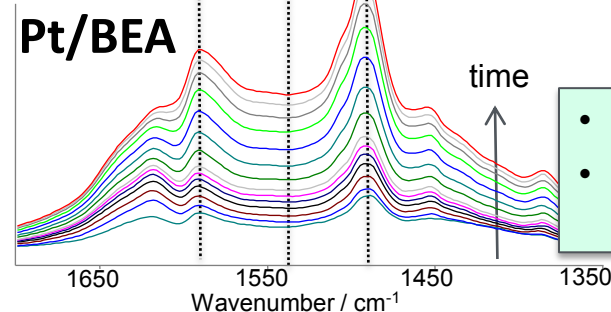
Aromatics (BTX)

Full deoxygenation

Monitoring surface species via *in situ* DRIFTS (anisole VPU)



- PAH/coking on surface (**1528 cm<sup>-1</sup>**)
- Ratio of 1590/1490 indicates oxygen attached to aromatic ring (phenol and methoxy species)



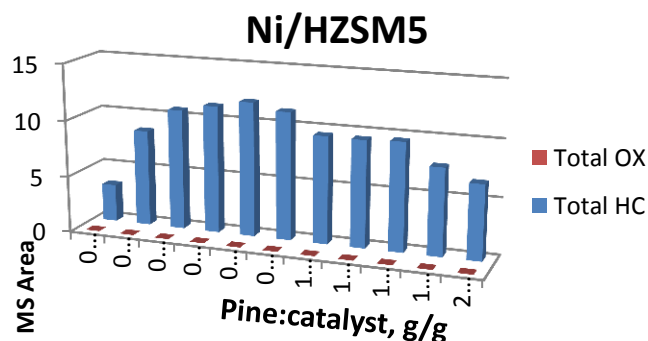
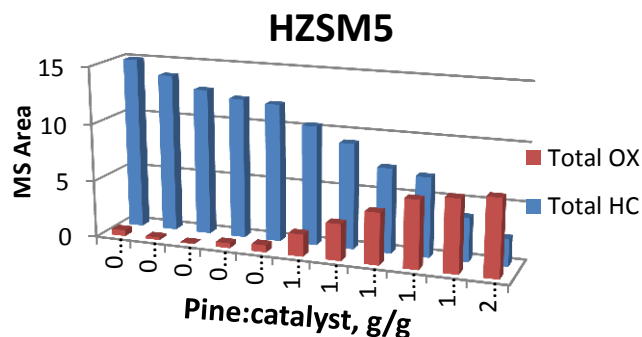
- Decreased PAH/coking at (**1528 cm<sup>-1</sup>**)
- Ratio of 1590/1490 indicates no oxygen aromatic ring (BTX)

# 3 – Progress

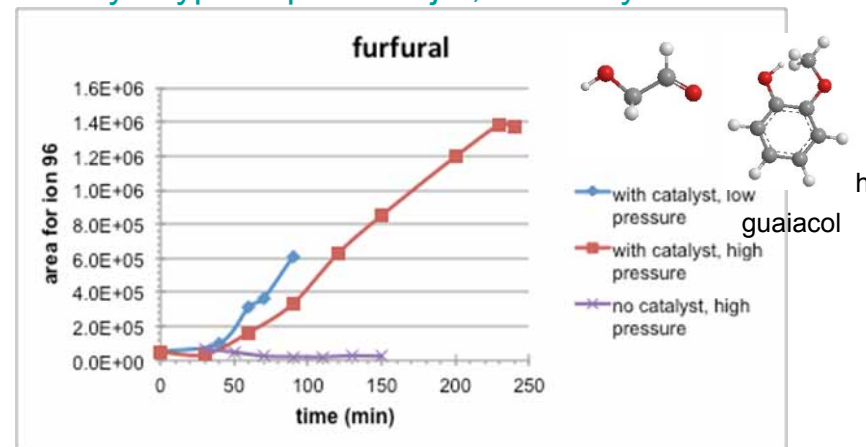
## Task 2: Catalyst Development

Understanding the impact of  $\Delta P$  and catalyst on pine vapor upgrading: catalyst performance improved by addition of metals (Ni or Pt) and  $H_2$

- Reduced catalyst deactivation due to lower [coke]
- Higher hydrocarbon formation
- Less oxygenates = lower oil oxygen content
- Active already at low pressure (5 bar)



Understanding carbon coupling reactions with biomass model compounds (guaiacol, hydroxyacetaldehyde) and catalyst type to produce jet, diesel hydrocarbons



Furfural was produced due to C-C coupling reactions of HAA.



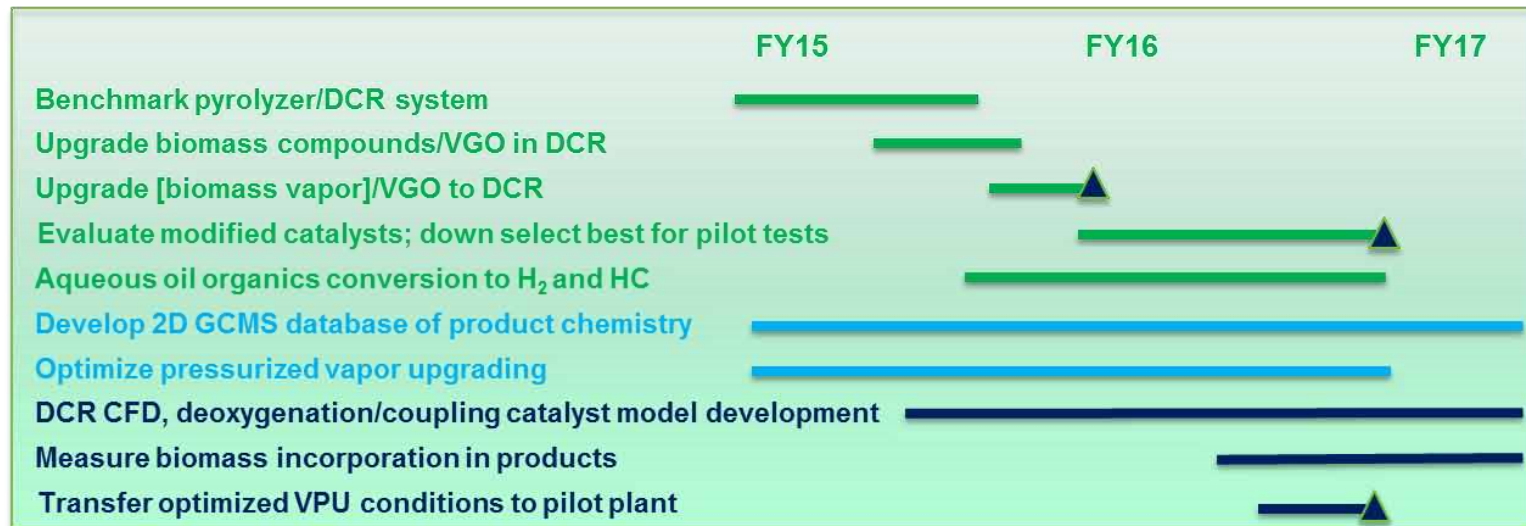
CSTR reactor for carbon coupling reactions with biomass compounds.

S. Cheah and Y. Zhao, Doped Pt and Ni catalysts for deoxygenation of biomass pyrolysis vapors, NREL Invention Record (IR) Number ROI-13-00055, May 2013.

- Project supports the development of catalysts that enable biomass pyrolysis vapor conversion to fungible hydrocarbon liquid products that can contribute towards BETO's MYPP goal:
  - *Achieve a conversion cost of \$3.31 per gallon of total blendstock via a bio-oil pathway*
  - *DCR results directly transferable to the refining industry*
- For the Bioenergy Industry:
  - *Contribute to the expansion of the biomass pyrolysis industry by developing catalysts that produce oils that can be upgraded in refineries*
  - *Working with Johnson Matthey, NexCeris to develop next generation VPU catalysts for industrial use*
  - *Develop oil characterization database to understand process induced chemical changes (GC TOFS, hot vapor analysis, NMR)*

# 5 – Future Work

- Move to 100% vapor feeding to the DCR and assess products
- Continued development of 1) reduced coking, hydrogenation and deoxygenation catalysts and 2) structure activity relationships
- Prepare/evaluate/characterize kg quantities of metal modified zeolites and JM catalyst for DCR tests
- Continue developing correlations between bio oil production and liquid and vapor phase chemistry
- Assess vapor incorporation extent in products (C<sup>14</sup> analysis)
- Down select/prepare best catalyst for VPU use in pilot tests
- Begin emerging catalyst evaluation in 2017



Project develops catalysts that convert biomass pyrolysis vapor to fungible hydrocarbon liquid products that can contribute towards BETO's MYPP goal:

- Achieve a conversion cost of \$3.31 per gallon of total blendstock via a bio-oil pathway.
- Selective catalysts being developed by NREL, Johnson Matthey and NexCeris

The coupled pyrolyzer/DCR system is operational for VPU

- Biomass compounds are incorporated into VGO during VPU
- On line hot gas analysis provides vapor feed composition
- Hot gas filtration does not change vapor chemistry
- Catalytic hot gas filtration will be assessed

Process impacts on biomass deconstruction are being understood by chemically characterizing liquid and vapor phase chemistry

- MBMS, 2D GCTOFS, NMR, SIM DIS, TAN, and carbonyl analyses characterize products



Catalyst structure activity relationships and modeling are used to understand deoxygenation, hydrogenation and coupling to develop better catalysts

- Bimetallic alloying controls acidity – controls coking
- Higher acidity improves deoxygenation and hydrocarbon yields
- Hydroxyacetaldehyde favors coupling reaction, guaiacol does not
- Ni modified zeolites combine decreased coking and deoxygenation activity

During catalytic pyrolysis, moderate pressure H<sub>2</sub>

- Reduces coking and improves hydrocarbon yields
- Reduces oxygenate content in product composition

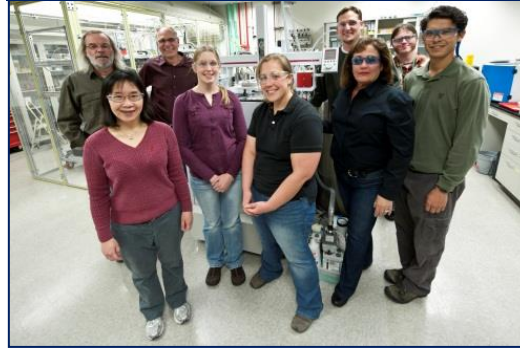
Ongoing Work:

- Complete biomass compound study with ECAT and VGO
- Assess metal modified zeolites
- Calibrate vapor mass flow to DCR
- Conduct vapor/VGO then vapor only DCR experiments
- Product characterization (composition, extent of biomass incorporation)

# Acknowledgements

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*Yves Parent*  
*Glenn Powell*  
*Mike Sprague*  
*Alex Stanton*  
*Jack Ziegler*

## NREL Catalysis, DCR and Analysis Team



*Casey Hetrick (BP America)*  
*Jeff Lewis (Equilibrium Catalysts)*  
*Matthew Seabaugh (Nexceris)*  
*Gordon Weatherbee (WR Grace)*  
*Mike Watson, Andrew Heavers*  
*(Johnson Matthey)*  
*Larry Doyle, Chris Brown, Sean*  
*Murray (Zeton)*  
*Carston Sievers (GeorgiaTech)*



## Zeton Fabrication Team



Johnson Matthey

**GRACE**

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**Comment:** Good group of collaborators, choice of reactors and catalysts. Possibly redundant with other Lab work, and potential for innovation seems limited.

**Response:** Innovation is possible from the use of emerging catalysts that can be selective for vapor phase upgrading (VPU) reactions and produce hydrocarbons other than BTX compounds from HZSM5 upgrading. Johnson Matthey is developing these kinds of catalysts through the CRADA with NREL. The overarching question is, as always, catalyst cost, selectivity, regeneration extent, and scalability. We will build on other national lab results when available. Also note that this process upgrades biomass pyrolysis vapors – no other labs are doing this to our knowledge.

**Comment:** Several potential catalyst and support providers are involved, which is good. Not entirely clear how the J-M CRADA impacts the J-M involvement in this task and the IP involved, for example the cost-sharing.

**Response:** The JM CRADA is structured to provide catalysts tailored for VPU and that target specific functional groups for VPU. The overall goal is evaluating JM catalyst activity at the laboratory scale to determine if further testing is warranted at the DCR scale. The 3 NREL tasks (Hensley, Nimlos, Magrini) work together seamlessly on the CRADA of which the cost structure is each partner funds their own activities.

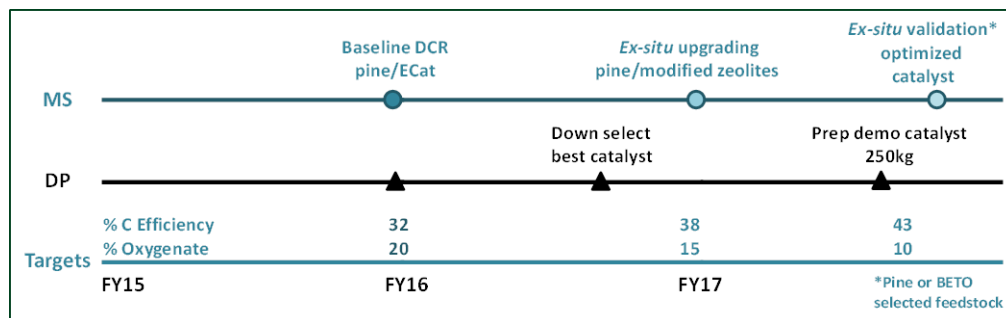
IP has been worked out and can be: 1) each party owns their own IP if developed separately and 2) shared inventions means shared IP. We worked closely with JM on the gasification platform to develop reforming catalysts and in that case they developed and own any IP around the Rh reforming material.

**Comment:** Catalyst optimization is critical to pyro upgrading. No question. Somewhat redundant with other projects studying catalyst with common goals and success factors.

**Response:** We are targeting the screening of the most promising catalysts with industrially relevant process conditions and scale and will test and characterize promising material developed by industry, other labs and academia if they are interested. Redundancy can be good and we encourage round robin testing of VPU catalysts to better understand how different reactors and process conditions impact product formation. This kind of testing is needed to transfer the technology to industry.

**Comment:** Project could be more detailed, and with more attention to G/NG decision points.

**Response:** The work plan will be revised yearly with G/NG points as soon as we have enough generated data to make these kinds of decisions. The FY14 AOP has the following decision points:



**Comment:** CSF's are not specific enough - they read more like a "fishing expedition" It could work out OK if these GET more specific as the project matures; if they stay this vague throughout, it will not drive the project very effectively.

**Response:** We agree that stringent catalyst performance targets need to be defined and will be once the process model/design case report is completed in FY13. Then we use those targets to assess progress in catalyst performance and then progress to process cost reductions. The FY14 CSF's from the SOT are:

- Catalyst coking  $\leq 10\%$
- Products Carbon<sub>eff</sub>  $\geq 43\%$
- Product O<sub>2</sub> content  $\leq 10\%$
- Products cost to meet \$3.31/gal

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