DOE Bioenergy Technologies Office (BETO) 2021 Project Peer Review

## Structure – property relationships for bioblendstock identification

WBS: 3.5.1.5 11 Organizations: PNNL, NREL, ORNL, SNL, LBNL, LANL, INL Presented by: Vanessa Dagle, PNNL March 15th, 2021



#### CO-OPTIMIZATION OF FUELS & ENGINES

better fuels | better vehicles | sooner



EPARTMENT OF Office of ENERGY EFFICIENCY & RENEWABLE ENERGY

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### **Project Overview**



### Goal

 Identify bioblendstocks with enhanced fuel properties to be evaluated by the broader Co-Optima effort

#### Approach

• Tie fuel properties to chemical structure to enable bioblendstock selection for the generation-analysis cycle

#### Relevance

 Identification of performance-advantaged biofuels to increase the bioblendstock value proposition → BETO's goal to accelerate biofuels deployment



### **1. Management** SPR Team interfaces with the other Co-Optima teams to advance bioblendstocks





SPR efforts integrated within Co-Optima

### 1. Management

Comprehensive integration and collaboration across national labs and universities



### National Laboratory task leads

### HPF Team Lead: Derek Vardon (NREL)



Magdalena Ramirez Corredores



Andrew Sutton, Cameron Moore, Bill Kubic



Eric Sundstrom, Taek Soon Lee



Derek Vardon, Tom Foust, Dan Ruddy, Seonah Kim, Teresa Alleman, Jon Luecke, Gina Fioroni



Mike Kass, Todd Toops

HPF Deputy: Vanessa Dagle (PNNL)



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Anthe George, Joey Carlson, Ryan Davis, atories Alexander Landera, Bernard Nguyen, Eric Monroe

### University collaborators







A. Agrawal

J. Martz





Experienced researchers from national labs and universities with complementary expertise in fuels and properties

### **1. Management** Communication & coordination are critical for SPR activities



#### Regular scheduled meetings



#### SPR-BI findings regularly shared with HPF, broader co-Optima & EAB members

### **1. Management** SPR activities address the major risk factors when evaluating bioblendstock fuel properties

SPR: structure-property-relationship

### **SPR Major Risk Factors**



Time-line for determining relevant fuel properties for light-duty and medium/ heavy-duty incompatible with **SPR** workflow

### **Risk Mitigation Strategy**



Work with Co-Optima Fuel Property and Advanced Engine Development to triage the most critical fuel properties



Computational modeling for single molecules or simple mixtures does not reflect complexity of "real" bioblendstocks



Work with **Blendstock Generation** & Testing team to apply the latest experimental tools to validate structure-property relationships with neat and blended bioblendstocks

A mitigation strategy is in place to minimize risk impact

### **2. Approach** Foundational technical questions frame approach



What fuels do engines *really* want? What fuel options work best?

# What will work in the real world?











Computational methods used to quickly screen candidates Experimental methods validate screening

### 2. Approach SPR address both light-duty and medium/heavy-duty combustion modes





Performance: CN, Sooting, Flash point, LHV

Operability: M<sub>p</sub> η, solubility,

Light Duty: moved from SI to MM

Medium/Heavy Duty: Accelerated MCCI effort

### **2. Approach** Critical success factors and barriers to overcome



#### **SPR Success Factors**

Discover underlying science that links properties to chemical structure

Define combustionappropriate blendstock candidates for further evaluation by Co-optima

#### **SPR Barriers to overcome**

Relevant properties for advanced combustion approaches not fully defined

Computational tools developed for single components, simple mixtures reduce their reliability

#### **SPR key activities**

Regularly engage with engine and fuel properties teams to (re)define most relevant fuel properties

Experimental tools validate SPR for complex mixtures

Developed tools to predict mixture properties

SPR integrated approach and workflow (computational + experimental validation) reduce barriers to success



#### **SPR Demonstrated Ability**

- SPR completed 7 milestones in FY20 related to Light Duty and Medium/ Heavy Duty bioblendstocks
- SPR identified blendstocks scaled up by Blendstock Generation & Testing

#### Selected FY20 Milestone

 Report on the Top 11 most promising MCCI bio-blendstocks identified by Co-Optima, including fuel properties, production information, and techno-economics, incorporating new information generated during FY20

#### Progress measurable with milestones in place

### 3. Impact

### SPR connects with stakeholders and the broader BETO and VTO programs



#### VTO Program **BETO Program** Interactions **Interactions** Advanced Combustion Analysis Fuel Effects Sustainability Aftertreatment Feedstocks Co-Optima Modeling Conversion Techno-economic and Scale-Up life cycle analysis Impacts analysis Bioblendstock generation and testing Inputs and Data and Structure-property requirements **Outputs** relationships Industry (biofuels, energy) • Fuel Property Database companies, OEMs) SPR tools • EAB Techno-economic and Regulatory (EPA, CARB) lifecycle analysis outputs Other stakeholders Performance-advantaged bioblendstock candidate Co-Optima Fuel Properties, lists Toolkit and Adv Engine Dev



#### SPR contributes to new market opportunities

 Identify new performance-advantage biofuels with potential to increase vehicle engine efficiency, improve fuel economy, and reduce emissions.

#### ✓ SPR outcomes leveraged by industrials:

2 new CRADA\* projects with industrials in FY20 " 100+ RON Gasoline Blendstock for High Efficiency, Low Emission Engines" in collaboration with LanzaTech

"Renewable Octane Hyperboosting Blendstock for High-efficiency Co-optimized Engines" in collaboration with Visolis

#### SPR tools made publicly available

### ✓ Software for CN, RON, MON:

https://www.github.com/sandialabs/FeatureCreature

#### Sooting web app: https://ysipred.herokuapp.com

#### 3716 page views since June 2020



#### ✓ NMR tool:

web page under development

 $\checkmark$ 

 $\checkmark$ 

 $\checkmark$ 

Technical Handoff	Stakeholder Engagement	Disseminating Results
Identified 7 blendstocks that meet MCCI Tier 1 fuel properties criteria	<ul> <li>Attend Co-Optima bi-annual External Advisory Board meetings</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>✓ Published 10 papers that incorporate SPR</li> </ul>
Identified 20 blendstocks with RON >98 and S >8	<ul> <li>✓ Conduct quarterly meetings with Cummins to share &amp; receive feedback</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Produced software and webs apps for predicting cetane &amp; sooting fuel properties</li> </ul>
Blendstocks scaled up and tested by Blendstock Generation & Testing team and evaluated by the broader co-optima effort.	<ul> <li>Arrange bi-annual presentations with industry experts for High Performance Fuels Team</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Scheduled upcoming Co- Capstone webinars and regular ACS Conference symposium</li> </ul>

### 4. Progress and Outcomes

Tools developed by SPR widely used to estimate candidate fuel properties



## Predictive and SPR tools developed prior to FY2019

- FeatureCreature software to visualize structural contributions to CN
- Machine learning to map molecular structure- sooting relationship
- Reid Vapor Pressure prediction
- NMR-based blending models to predict RON
- Machine learning framework to rapidly classify molecules by RON, MON, S, CN, melting point, threshold sooting index

## Previous work on SPR tools utilized to screen candidate blendstocks

### New predictive SPR tools relevant to MM and MCCI combustion

### New tools since FY2019

- Theoretical method to predict for phisensitivity
- Machine learning for laminar flame speed
- Cloud point and gel point prediction tools

### 4. Progress and Outcomes – MCCI







Performance: **CN, Sooting**, Flash point, LHV

Operability: M<sub>p,</sub> η, solubility, stability





Performance: RON, MON, S, phi sensitivity, HoV, Sooting

**Operability:**  $P_{vap}, B_p, M_{p}, \eta, \sigma, stability$ 



### Progress

- Innovation: software visualizes how structural differences impact cetane numbers
- Experimental validation: Strong focus on selected oxygenated compounds (mainly ethers)
   > 50 compounds tested
- Multiple structure-CN relationships experimentally validated or established
- 37 blendstocks identified with CN > 40

### Key findings

- Increase of alkyl chain length results in CN increase for n and iso-ethers, dioxolanes, myrcenes
- Increase of C chain length leads to higher CN for n and iso-ethers, dioxolanes, myrcenes
- Higher number of [0] leads to higher CN for POMEs



Outcome: CN prediction tool complemented by experimental measurements have led to identification of 37 blendstocks with CN > 40 for MCCI combustion mode

### 4. Progress and outcomes – MCCI

Molecular structure impacts on sooting used to identify promising



#### Progress

- Innovation: machine learning links sooting tendency to molecular structure
- **Tool heavily used** since FY19 to identify promising functional groups
- Experimental validation for 8 functional groups and > 40 compounds (long chain alcohols, (poly)-ethers, branched cyclohexanes, iso-alkanes, dioxolanes, oxetanes, ketones, esters )
- 25 blendstocks identified with YSI <100

### Key findings

- Increase of alkyl or C chain length typically results in YSI increase
- Addition of O to C<sub>x</sub>H<sub>y</sub> compounds typically results in lower YSI
- Increase of  $\{O_{i}\}$  in POMEs leads to a very slight decrease of YSI



YSI			
Predicted	39	52	65
Measured	37	49	63

Outcome: Sooting predictive tool complemented by YSI experimental measurements have led to identification of 25 compounds with YSI < 100 for MCCI combustion mode

### 4. Progress and outcomes – MCCI

Seven new blendstocks identified through structure-property relationships



#### MCCI Tier 1 Fuel Property Criteria

Property	Limit	
Boiling point or distillation curve	<338°C	
Flashpoint	> 52°C	
Melting point (pure compound) or cloud point (mixtures)	< 0°C	
Solubility in water	< 20 g/L	
Toxicity: OSHA category 1 or 2 for acute toxicity, carcinogenicity and reproductive toxicity excluded		
Autoignition metric (CN)	≥ 40	
Corrosion (ASTM D3672)	TAN < 0.3 mg KOH/ g	



#### Outcomes:

- Combined computational and experimental structure-property relationships contributed to identification of 7 blendstocks meeting MCCI Tier 1 fuel property criteria
- 7 more promising classes identified; experimental validation in progress

### 4. Progress and Outcomes – MM







**Performance:** CN, Sooting, Flash point, LHV

**Operability:**  $M_{p,}\eta$ , solubility, stability





Performance: RON, MON, S, phisensitivity, HoV, Sooting

Operability: P<sub>vap</sub>, B<sub>p</sub>, M<sub>p</sub>, η, σ, stability



#### Progress

- Innovation: a software that visualizes how structural differences impact RON and MON
- NMR model predicts RON for blends : a newly developed web page under completion
- Experimental validation: Strong focus on blends and mixtures

5 functional groups (Olefins blends, alcohols blends, olefinic alcohols blends, esters, ketone blend )

> 20 blendstocks with RON >98, S\* >8

### Key findings

- Mixtures of alcohols trend:
   RON: C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>7</sub> odd numbers alcohols > C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> even numbers
   S: C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>7</sub> odd numbers alcohols < C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> even numbers
- Olefinic esters: Structures with internal C=C bonds and > 1 C=C bond present highest S



 $S^* = RON - MON$ 

Outcome: Combined computational and experimental SPR tools led to identification of > 20 blendstocks with RON > 98 and S > 8

### 4. Progress and Outcomes

Structure- $\phi$ -sensitivity relationship for MM combustion



### New: SPR Tool for φ-sensitivity

- φ-sensitivity is a change in ignition delay time in respect to a change in fuel-to-air ratio
- **State-of-the-art**: φ-sensitivity measured in engines requiring large volume of fuel. Inadequate for new blendstock identification
- Innovation: Use kinetic simulations
- Evaluated 7 functional groups: n-alkanes, iso-alkanes, ketones, ethers, esters, cyclics



## Outcome: Novel kinetic simulations tool enables to predict the structure- $\phi$ -sensitivity relationship

Structure- $\phi$ -sensitivity relationship for MM combustion



### New: SPR Tool for $\phi$ -sensitivity

 Innovation: Rapid compression machine test that requires only few ml.
 In collaboration with VTO program



- Iso-olefins blendstocks for MM: High RON & S, but little know for φ-sensitivity
- Leverage theoretical studies: iso-alkanes φ-sensitivity increases with decrease of branching

### Key findings

• φ-sensitivity of complex iso-olefins mixtures increases when the degree of branching decreases



- Blendstock scaled up under Blendstock Generation & Testing & engine tested
- New Co-Optima CRADA project will leverage these findings

Outcome: Experimentally demonstrated increase of  $\phi$ -sensitivity with decrease of iso-olefins degree of branching

### 4. Progress and Outcomes

SPR contributed to achievement of Co-Optima goals over the past 6 years



### Light Duty

- 10% fuel economy gain over 2015 baseline
- ✓ Developed merit function to determine what properties and to what level properties impact engine efficiency and fuel economy
   → RON and S are the most critical properties
- Merit function and SPR helped to identify 10 bioblendstocks with potential to increase engine efficiency by 10%



Merit function value ≥E10 premium (RON =98) when blended at ≤ 30% level

#### **Medium- and Heavy-Duty**

- Lower-cost path to reduced engine-out criteria emissions
- Up to 4% fuel economy gain
- ✓ Developed SPR tools for CN and sooting tendency
   → Utilized SPR tools to quickly screen many candidates and identified preferred blendstocks.
- ✓ LCA indicates all top 11 blendstocks have the potential to reduce
   GHG emissions by at least 60% relative to petroleum diesel



### Summary for SPR effort



Management	<ul> <li>Integrated team effort with stakeholders from other Co-optima teams provide inputs and/ or outputs.</li> <li>Collaboration between national laboratories &amp; universities</li> <li>Regular communication and coordination with HPF, broader Co-optima and EAB members</li> <li>Mitigation strategy based on integrated team effort, communication and collaboration is in place to minimize risks</li> </ul>
Approach	<ul> <li>Determine key properties for a given combustion mode with inputs from AED and FP teams.</li> <li>Define suite of chemistries and functional groups</li> <li>Computational tools utilized to screen many chemicals and establish SPR</li> <li>Identify preferred functional groups for experimental validation of the SPR</li> <li>Identify blendstock to be evaluated in generation/ testing- analysis cycle</li> </ul>
Impact	Enhanced bioblendstocks value proposition by identifying bioblendstocks that maximize engine performance, energy efficiency, and minimize environmental impacts
Technical Progress	<ul> <li>SPR computational and predictive tools developed in FY19 and prior have been heavily used to identify preferential functional groups for experimental validation of the structure-property relationship (SPR)</li> <li>Experimental validation of SPR conduced for &gt; 80 blendstocks</li> <li>A new web app for fuel property prediction of complex blends using NMR</li> <li>A new high-throughput computational tool for phi-sensitivity-structure relationship.</li> </ul>
Outcome	<ul> <li>Over the last 2 years SPR contributed to identification of: - 7 blendstocks that meet all Tier 1 MCCI criteria</li> <li>- &gt; 20 blendstocks with RON &gt;98 and S &gt; 8 for MM</li> </ul>

### Acronyms



BOB	Blendstock for oxygenated blending	
Boosted SI	Boosted spark ignition for light-duty vehicles	
Вр	Boiling point	
bRON	Research octane number for a blend of gasoline and bioblendstock	
CN	Cetane number	
DCN	Derived cetane number based on ignition delay measurements	
HoV	Heat of vaporization	
КС	Kinetically controlled ignition for heavy-duty vehicles	
LHV	Lower heating value	
MCCI	Mixing controlled compression ignition for heavy-duty vehicles	
Мр	Melting point	
MON	Motor octane number	
ММ	Multi-mode ignition for light-duty vehicles	
RON	Research octane number	
RVP	Reid vapor pressure	
S	Octane sensitivity, defined as RON minus MON	
SPR	Structure-property relationships	
YSI	Yield sooting index	
η	Viscosity	
σ	Surface tension	

## Quad Chart Overview



#### Timeline

- Phase 1: October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2018
- Phase 2: October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2021

	FY20	Active Project
DOE Funding	\$3,820,000	\$12,025,000

### Partner Labs

• ANL, INL, LANL, LBNL, LLNL, NREL, ORNL, PNNL, SNL

Barriers addressed 19ADO-E: Co-development of Fuels and Engines 19At-D: Identifying New Market Opportunities for Bioenergy and Bioproducts

### Project Goal

Identify bioblendstocks with enhanced fuel properties to be evaluated by the broader Co-Optima effort

### End of Project Milestone

Identify low carbon fuel-engine combinations that increase fuel economy by 35% (light duty) or 4% (heavy duty) over a 2015 baseline, with reduced emissions

### Funding Mechanism

### **Past Reviewers' Comments and responses**



Given the importance of biodegradability and low toxicity for these blendstocks for which sustainability and improved environmental performance will be critical, it makes sense to evaluate these blendstock elements as an early screening; these should be part of the Tier 1 screening rather than waiting until Tier 3.

- Toxicity and biodegradation have been incorporated to the Tier 1 fuel property criteria table
- Activities dedicated to toxicity and biodegradation are being conducted under a task entitled "Toxicology and biodegradability assessment of bioblendstocks"

The team could consider engagement at ASTM to enable use of these predictive models to facilitate new fuel qualification under the ASTM Committee D.02

• A task under Co-optima to facilitate participation in ASTM D.02 has continued for several years; the task lead is aware of the prediction work and can raise it as appropriate

### Publications FY19-21



- Development of robust models for the prediction of Reid vapor pressure (RVP) in fuel blends and their application to oxygenated biofuels using the SAFT-γ approach A. Landera, N. Mac Dowell, A. George. Fuel. 2021. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fuel.2020.118624">https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fuel.2020.118624</a>
- Investigation of structural effects of aromatic compounds on sooting tendency with mechanistic insight into ethylphenol isomers - Kim, Y., Etz, B. D., St. John, P., Fioroni, G. M., Messerly, R., Vyas, S., Beekley, B. P., Guo, F., McEnally, C. S., Pfefferle, L. D., McCormick, R. L., Kim, S.. Proceedings of the Combustion Institute. 2020. doi.org/10.1016/j.proci.2020.06.321
- Production and fuel properties of iso-olefins with controlled molecular structure and obtained from butene oligomerization - V. L. Dagle, J. S. Lopez, A. Cooper, J. Luecke, M. Swita, R. A.Dagle, D. Gaspar. Fuel. 2020. <u>https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fuel.2020.118147</u>
- Combined Experimental/Numerical Study of the Soot Formation Process in a Gasoline Direct-Injection Spray in the Presence of Laser-Induced Plasma Ignition – F. Tagliante, H. Sim, L. Pickett, T. Nguyen, and S. Skeen. WCX SAE World Congress Experience, 2020. <u>https://doi.org/10.4271/2020-01-0291</u>
- Co-Optimization of Fuels & Engines: FY19 Year in Review R. Wagner, 2020. <u>https://www.energy.gov/eere/bioenergy/downloads/co-optima-fy-2019-year-review</u>
- Methodology for the Development of Empirical Models Relating <sup>13</sup>C NMR Spectral Features to Fuel Properties – A. Heredia-Langner, J.R. Cort, K. Grubel, M.J. O'Hagan, K.H. Jarman, J.C. Linehan, K.O. Albrecht, E. Polikarpov, D.L. King, T.D. Smurthwaite, and J.T. Bays. Energy & Fuels, 34(10):12556–12572, 2020. <u>https://doi.org/10.1021/acs.energyfuels.0c00883</u>

### **Publications FY19-21**



- Performance-Advantaged Ether Diesel Bioblendstock by A Priori Design N.A. Huq, X. Huo, G.R. Hafenstine, S.M. Tifft, J. Stunkel, E.D. Christensen, G.M. Fioroni, L. Fouts, R.L. McCormick, P.A. Cherry, C.S. McEnally, L.D. Pfefferle, M.R. Wiatrowski, P.T. Benavides, M.J. Biddy, R.M. Connatser, M.D. Kass, T.L. Alleman, P. St. John, S. Kim, and D.R. Vardon. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America, 116(52):26421–26430, 2019. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1911107116
- Sooting Tendencies of Furans and Their Derivatives as Potential Biofuels J. Zhu, B.D. Etz, B. Hu, H. Kwon, Y. Xuan, P. St. John, S. Kim, L.D. Pfefferle, and C. McEnally. Abstracts of Papers of the American Chemical Society, 2020. <u>https://www.morressier.com/article/sooting-tendencies-furans-derivatives-potential-biofuels/5e735fe2cde2b641284a9e93</u>
- Towards Quantitative Prediction of Ignition-Delay-Time Sensitivity on Fuel-to-Air Equivalence Ratio R. Messerly, P. St. John, M. Rahimi, B.T. Zigler, J. Luecke, N. Huq, B. Etz, T. Foust, R.L. McCormick, and S. Kim. Combustion and Flame, 214:103–115, 2020. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1016/j.combustflame.2019.12.019">https://doi.org/10.1016/j.combustflame.2019.12.019</a>
- Discovery of novel octane hyperboosting phenomenon in prenol/gasoline blends E. Monroe; J. Gladden; K. O. Albrecht; J. T. Bays; R. L. McCormick; R. W Davis; A. George. <u>https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fuel.2018.11.046</u>
- Measuring and Predicting the Vapor Pressure of Gasoline Containing Oxygenates D.J. Gaspar, S.D. Phillips, E. Polikarpov, K.O. Albrecht, S.B. Jones, A. George, A. Landera, D.M. Santosa, D.T. Howe, A.G. Baldwin, and J.T. Bays. Fuel, 243:630-644, 2019. <u>https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fuel.2019.01.137</u>



### Additional slides

### Software for RON, MON, CN



## Software visualizes how structural differences impact fuel properties

- Provided a basis for visually evaluating model performance relative to known functional groups
- Focused on properties RON, MON, CN

## Nearly all blendstocks being considered by Co-optima have been evaluated

 1000s of molecules evaluated to understand impact of structure on RON MON CN



### Sooting tool



### Sooting tool maps relationship between molecular structure and sooting properties

- Machine learning using molecular structure and experimentally YSI (Yield Sooting Index) values for ~500 species
- Allows screening of a wide range of chemical functionality for blendstocks that resist soot formation

# Fuel design explores chemical space where we lack existing measurements

 Provides detailed information per each carbon type to design low sooting fuel candidates



### 13C NMR tool for RON of complex blends



- NMR-based Fuel Classification Model
  - ~200 µL NMR samples enable characterization of fuel & blendstock properties
  - Library data sets include gasoline, diesel, renewables (HTL, ETJ, ETD, algae...), Cooptima Core Fuels, BOBs, etc.
  - Proximity of user sample to fuels in library shows similarity of carbon type composition
  - Model compares 27 functional groups (carbon types) for 72 (shown) and >100 (not shown) complex fuels
  - Property predictions include DCN, Simulated Distillation (T10, T50, T90), and RVP.
  - Identifies key carbon-type differences between sample and library fuel sets, enabling users to understand origins of property differences
- Next
  - Web page for outlier assessment is nearly completed.
  - Confidence factors and further implementation of property predictions.



## Quantifying $\phi$ -sensitivity



$$\tau(T, P, \phi) = C(T, P)\phi^{-\eta(T, P)}$$

