INL Institutional Biosafety Committee Annual Meeting Agenda & Minutes

Meeting held by Team Virtual on December 9, 2025 - 1:30-2:15 pm

Agenda:

2024 Annual Meeting Minutes Approval
NIH Training Updates – David
Biosafety Program Assessment – Karin Adams
Scientific Presentation – Bill Smith
Conclusion: Questions or Comment and Meeting Adjournment

INL IBC Committee Members:

David Reed, Chair-Microbiology david.reed@inl.gov
Karin Adams, Biological Safety Officer karin.adams@inl.gov
Keri Martin, Human Health keri.martin@inl.gov
Jeffrey Lacey, Plant Biology jeffery.lacey@inl.gov
Karen A. Kubiak, DOE ID kubiakka@id.doe.gov
Troy Nelson, Idaho State Health District tnelson@eiph.idaho.gov
Gary Billman, Idaho State Lands gbillman@idl.idaho.gov
Gabriella Morales, Environmental Engineering gabriella.morales@inl.gov
Gregg Losinski, Wildlife Gregg.Losinski@inl.gov

INL IBC Supporting Staff:

Troy Bodily, Occupational Safety & Health IH troy.bodily@inl.gov
Sandra Fox, Biolaboratory Manager sandra.fox@inl.gov
Cheree Lynette Vestal, Safety & Health Programs (H105), Cheree.Vestal@inl.gov

Committee Members Attending:

David Reed
Gabriella Morales
Jeffrey Lacey
Karin Adams
Keri Martin
Gregg Losinski
Gary Billman
Troy Nelson

Staff Attending:
Troy Bodily
Sandra Fox
Bryon Marsh
Vicki Thompson
Anthony D'Andrea
Rey Keyfauver
Jeremy Sabo
Bradley Wahlen
Kastli Schaller
William Smith
Rebecca Brown
Angela Daniels

Meeting Notes:
The 2025 Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) agenda began with a review and approval of the 2024 minutes, noting the presence of 23 attendees, including eight of the nine committee members. Key updates included Karin Adams from INL discussing strain inventory and hazard risk assessment, and Jeremy Sabo presenting microbiology applications for seaweed, recycling, and critical materials. David Reed, serving as IBC Chair,

emphasized NIH updates on institutional decision-making processes, which now place greater responsibility on institutions, as well as oversight of CRISPR, recombinant research, and large-scale projects.

A new member, Karen Kubiak from DOE-ID (not in attendance), replacing Linda McCoy, was introduced. Karin Adams provided an overview of a recent biosafety program assessment, and Bill Smith reported on biomass stability characterization.

David Reed Annual Training:
Transparency is a central mandate under NIH guidelines, as highlighted by Lyric Jorgenson, Associate Director for Science Policy. NIH requires institutions to ensure safe and responsible research practices while promoting maximum transparency. This includes publicly posting rosters of all active IBCs, listing members by name and role, and providing contact details for the IBC Chair and Biological Safety Officer. Beginning June 1, 2025, all IBC meeting notes must be posted on institutional websites for five years, with prior notes available upon request.

IBC meetings must occur in person or virtually, as email communication alone is insufficient. A quorum, defined as a majority of members (e.g., five of nine), is required for official proceedings. Meeting minutes should document assessments of biocontainment, practices, training, methodologies, and the researchers involved. They must include details such as date, time, location, attendees, whether the meeting was open or closed, major motions, and approvals. These records serve as a rationale for committee decisions while protecting proprietary information. Additional guidance is available through NIH resources.

The NIH has launched a Biosafety Modernization Initiative, led by NIH Director Dr. Jay Bhattacharya, to address evolving risks from rapid scientific and technological advancements. The initiative aims to uphold a gold standard of biosafety alongside high-quality science through a phased approach, including regional engagements from September 30, 2025, to February 26, 2026. It emphasizes transparency, open dialogue, and inclusivity, encouraging challenges to the status quo and actively seeking input from experts and the public through multiple engagement methods.

Karin Adams Biosafety Program update
The INL biosafety assessment identified that INL LWP-14621, *Managing and Controlling Biological Hazards*, requires revision to clarify requirements and terminology. For example, some samples or materials received in the Biomass Feedstock National User Facility at the Energy Systems Laboratory are not fully characterized for biological hazards. These were previously classified as “potential Risk Group 2 (RG2)” organisms, which may be inaccurate.

The revised LWP now classifies these organisms, samples, or materials as “uncharacterized” and specifies that a documented hazard assessment is required for them, as well as for those previously classified as potential RG2. Uncharacterized materials present unknowns that may be of concern, particularly for employees who are immunocompromised or have reproductive health concerns. Employees are responsible for reporting such health concerns to their manager and consulting a medical professional with any questions.

Although reporting RG1 organisms to DOE and NIH is not required, laboratory management must maintain awareness of RG1 inventory and ensure that a biohazard assessment determines the risk group for all organisms, including uncharacterized ones. Additionally, a biohazard assessment is required for select agents and recombinant DNA work.

Bill Smith Research Presentation:
Maintaining biomass stability in the field presents significant challenges, primarily due to the difficulty of monitoring microbial activity and degradation under varying conditions. Water combined with oxygen

accelerates degradation, while water without oxygen supports lactic acid bacteria, resulting in silage; conversely, dry conditions with oxygen lead to no microbial activity. Monitoring large biomass stacks in the field is complicated by variability and extensive sampling requirements, so laboratory stacks have been developed to replicate field conditions with more controlled and intensive analysis of water, oxygen, and carbon dioxide. These efforts are complemented by ongoing metagenomic and metabolomic studies to better understand microbial dynamics and degradation processes.

Jeff Lacey moved to adjourn the meeting, and the motion was seconded by **Keri Martin**. The meeting ended on time.