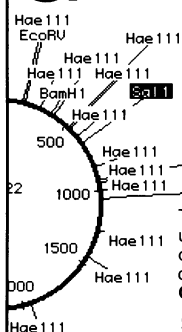


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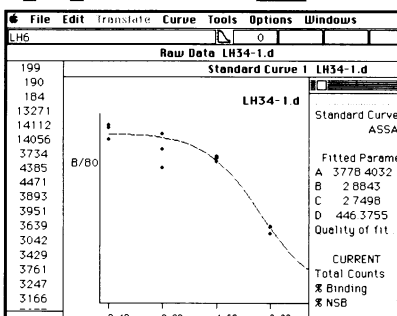
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artifact or contamination (2). Curators and researchers should coordinate efforts to ensure that repetitive sampling of specimens does not occur and that tissue samples and extracted DNA are preserved and shared by interested parties.

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Science at EPA

The 10 January ScienceScope item "Better science at EPA?" (p. 147) quoted me out of context. The invidious comparison I was drawing between the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on the one hand and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Science Foundation (NSF) on the other did not have to do with the quality of the science being performed by in-house EPA scientists, which in many cases is world class. Rather, I was referring to the processes by which these organizations seek out and make funding decisions concerning extramural science. Almost by definition, those successful scientists in the academic community, whom EPA needs to enlist in their search for the best possible science to ensure credible decision-making, have had experience with the NIH and NSF processes. These processes are generally considered to be valid, in the sense that they are usually capable of finding the best scientist to do the best science. In comparison, EPA's dealings with the academic community often seem to be characterized by ineptitude, cronyism, or politics. The only fully peer reviewed program, the External Grants Program, has never been consistently funded to any reasonable level by EPA and accounts for far less than 10% of total extramural funding. This criticism is not restricted to the Office of Research and Development, but is particularly pertinent to the wide range of scientific and technical activities performed by EPA program and policy offices. The disrespect engendered by the failure to recognize and enlist the best science affects the credibility of EPA.

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