KEYNOTE ADDRESS
THE HUMAN HEALTH LENS ON SOIL, SEDIMENT AND BIOAVAILABILITY

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An underlying premise of the design of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences’ (NIEHS) Superfund Basic Research Program (SBRP) is that the use of remediation, as a primary preventative strategy to protect human health, relies on a thorough knowledge of the factors that influence environmental exposure. In support of this premise, the SBRP funds university-based, interdisciplinary research that is inclusive of the environmental sciences, the health sciences, and areas that lie between the two. The Program’s structure allows for investigators to explore research questions at the interface of exposure and human health, such as bioavailability—which is the focus of this presentation. Here I will describe the SBRP’s overarching research strategy and the incorporation of research translation and community engagement as a key element, and then will focus on SBRP’s perspective on the state-of-the-science regarding bioavailability and human health. I will briefly describe bioavailability studies currently funded by the SBRP and will identify specific examples where the Program’s grantees have successfully pursued interdisciplinary approaches to bioavailability and have conducted research translation in this area. Finally, I will comment on what we, as program officials, have identified as major impediments in realizing the promise of bioavailability and its role in understanding the link between exposure and human health risks.