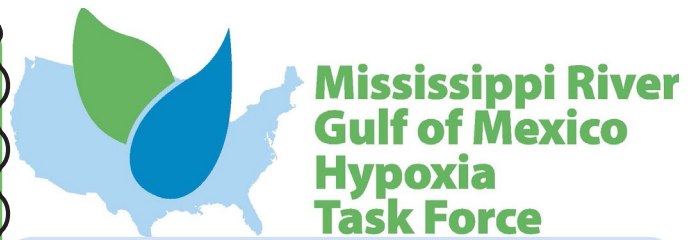


The Hypoxia Task Force and its 2017 Report to Congress



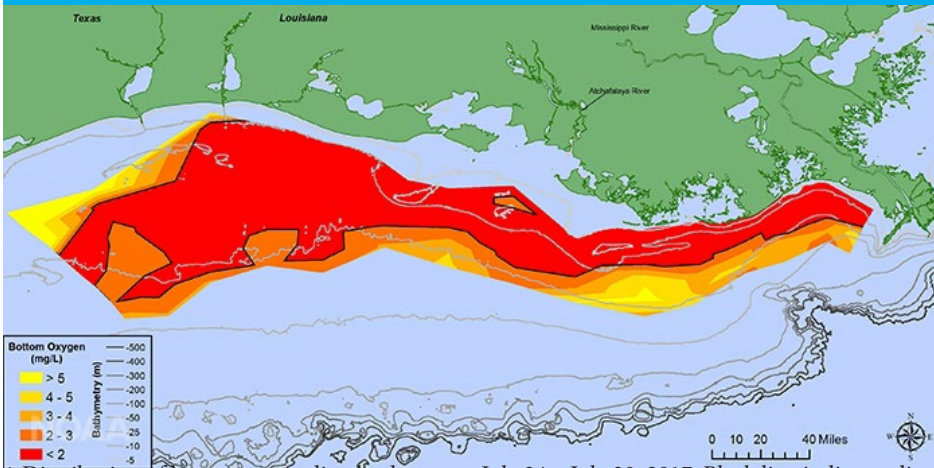
What is the Hypoxia Task Force and its Report to Congress?

The Hypoxia Task Force (HTF) is a partnership of 12 states, five federal agencies and a representative for tribes that works collaboratively to reduce nutrient pollution in the Mississippi/Atchafalaya River Basin (MARB) and the extent of the hypoxic zone in the Gulf of Mexico at the mouth of the Mississippi River. On behalf of the HTF, EPA recently submitted its second biennial Report to Congress and the President, as called for by the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 2014.



Report Highlights

- 2016 Report on Point Source Progress in HTF States
 - ◊ Tracks the number and percentage of major sewage treatment plants issued National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits with: 1) monitoring requirements for nitrogen and/or phosphorus; and 2) numeric discharge limits for nitrogen and/or phosphorus.
- December 2016 Federal Strategy Update
 - ◊ Issued by the federal HTF members to guide assistance to states and continued scientific support
- Coming soon: 2017 Report on Nonpoint Source Progress
- The state nutrient reduction strategies continue to serve as the cornerstone for implementing nutrient reductions in each state.
- The HTF continues to work with land grant universities in the HTF states and other partners with similar goals. These partnerships are critical to success, helping the HTF meet research and outreach needs and carry out the ecosystem and watershed restoration actions that will reduce nutrient loads.



The HTF Goal:
Reduce the size of the hypoxic zone to less than 5,000 km² by 2035.

Interim Target:
A 20% reduction of nitrogen and phosphorus loading by 2025, relative to the 1980-1996 baseline average loading to the Gulf.

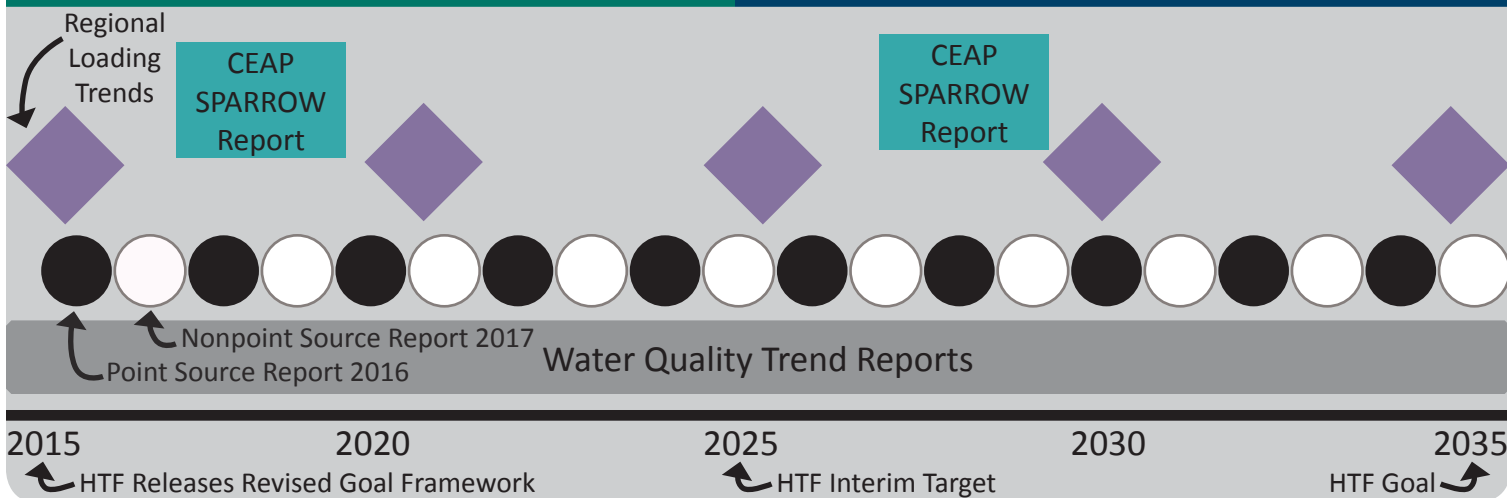
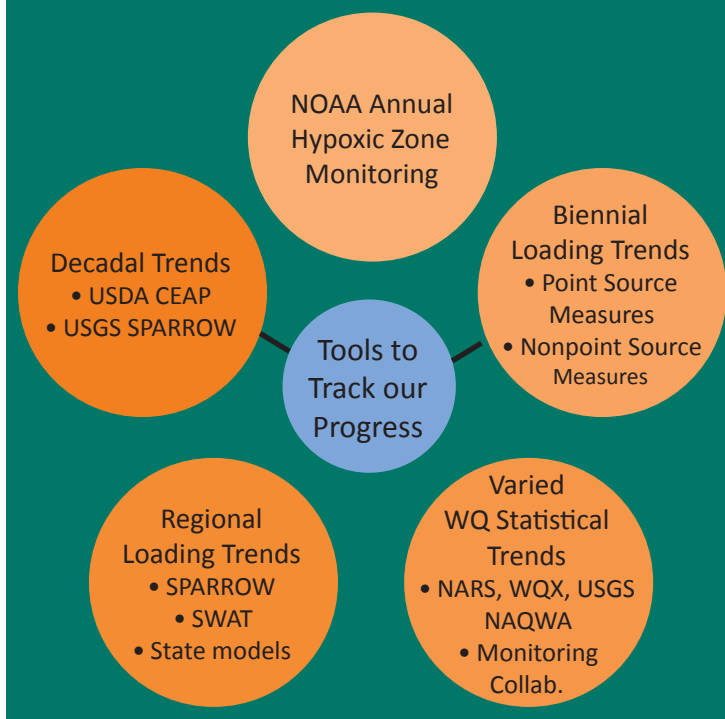
^ Distribution of bottom-water dissolved oxygen, July 24 – July 30, 2017. Black line indicates dissolved oxygen level of 2 mg/L. Data N. N. Rabalais, Louisiana State University & Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium; R. E. Turner, Louisiana State University. Credit: NOAA. Funding source: NOAA National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science.

Tracking Progress Toward Our Goals

The HTF has worked to set and report on metrics, which are key to understanding whether the conservation actions that states and others are taking mean that we are on track to reach our interim target in 2025. Tracking our progress requires measuring basinwide nutrient reductions at multiple scales through multiple tools (see figures to the left and below).

Data and Tools

- NAQWA: National Water Quality Assessment
- NARS: National Aquatic Resource Surveys
- NOAA: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- WQ: Water Quality
- WQX: Water Quality Portal for Nutrient WQ data
- USDA CEAP: U.S. Department of Agriculture Conservation Effects Assessment Project
- USGS SPARROW: U.S. Geological Survey SPATIally Referenced Regressions On Watershed attributes
- SWAT: Soil and Water Assessment Tool



Members of the Hypoxia Task Force

State Agencies

Arkansas Natural Resources Commission
 Illinois Department of Agriculture
 Indiana State Department of Agriculture
 Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship
 Kentucky Department for Environmental Protection
 Louisiana Governor's Office of Coastal Activities
 Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
 Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality
 Missouri Department of Natural Resources
 Ohio Environmental Protection Agency
 Tennessee Department of Agriculture
 Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Federal Agencies & Tribal Nations

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
 U.S. Department of Agriculture
 (Research, Education and Economics;
 Natural Resources and the Environment)
 U.S. Department of Commerce
 (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration)
 U.S. Department of the Interior
 (U.S. Geological Survey;
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)
 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
 National Tribal Water Council

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Visit the website to learn more about hypoxia and Task Force activities and successes:

<http://www.epa.gov/ms-htf>