

Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Task Force Newsletter

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Hypoxia Task Force Highlights

The Hypoxia Task Force held a virtual public meeting on December 14, 2021 featuring speakers including HTF members, partner organizations, and members of the public. The final agenda and PowerPoints, as well as a summary of the meeting, can be found [here](#).

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, enacted November 15, 2021, provides new authority and appropriated \$60 million for EPA to issue grants (\$12 million per year for five years) to support the 12 Hypoxia Task Force states in implementing the Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan. EPA is working to establish this new grant program and plans to award grants later this year.

State Activities

Ohio Announces \$5 Million for H2Ohio Projects in the Ohio River Basin

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine, along with Ohio Department of Natural Resources Director Mary Mertz, recently announced that \$5 million in H2Ohio grant funding will be directed to 13 wetland projects in 11 counties to help improve water quality in the Ohio River Basin.

The Ohio River Basin H2Ohio Wetland Grant Program was created in July 2021 and provides funding for wetland projects that address nutrient loading and contribute to water quality improvement in the Ohio River and its tributaries. Wetlands help improve water quality by trapping, filtering, and removing excess pollutants and nutrients from the water before they flow into waterways and contribute to harmful algal blooms and downstream challenges. As of 2021, there are [more than 70 H2Ohio wetland projects underway](#).

[Read More](#)

New Arkansas and Minnesota Success Stories

Hypoxia Task Force members are involved in many successful projects and programs aimed at reducing nutrient loads and improving water quality. This work is highlighted in a StoryMap

presenting four themes: technology and practices to reduce nutrient pollution, strategies for success, monitoring and assessment, and funding/financing projects.

Two new stories feature Arkansas and Minnesota projects that have used Clean Water State Revolving Funds (CWSRF) to implement nonpoint source conservation/water quality improvement projects. Arkansas used CWSRF to develop their Septic Remediation Pilot Project, a service that helps homeowners replace failing septic systems in two targeted priority watersheds. Minnesota used CWSRF funds to provide a reliable and sustainable funding source for implementing nonpoint source pollution control practices and projects that prevent, reduce, or eliminate a water quality concern as part of their AgBMP Loan Program. Read more about their accomplishments by visiting EPA's interactive Hypoxia Task Force Success Stories Map.

[Access the StoryMap Here](#)

Federal Activities

EPA Releases Clean Water State Revolving Fund Best Practices Guide for Financing Nonpoint Source Solutions

EPA announced the release of a new guide to help the 51 Clean Water State Revolving Fund programs apply best practices to help turn the tide on nonpoint source pollution. The CWSRF is the nation's largest financial resource dedicated to the purpose of addressing water quality problems and is growing under the new Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Meanwhile, Nonpoint source pollution remains the nation's largest water quality challenge. Despite this, less than 5% of CWSRF resources have been used to address this need. EPA's *CWSRF Best Practices Guide for Financing Nonpoint Source Solutions* is intended to help state staff better align and integrate their state's CWSRF and nonpoint source management programs. The guide suggests strategies and key elements needed to expand the use of CWSRF resources to address priority needs as specified in state nonpoint source management program plans, and it identifies potential obstacles and how to overcome them.

[Access the CWSRF Guide Here](#)

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Awards \$15.2M for Harmful Algal Bloom Research

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is announcing \$15.2M in funding for harmful algal bloom (HAB) research projects throughout U.S. coastal and Great Lakes waters. HABs can produce toxins or cause other harmful effects that can damage ecosystems, disrupt our seafood supply, impact economies, and threaten human health. Marine and fresh waters of the U.S. are increasingly impacted by HABs with blooms reported in nearly every state. They cause annual economic losses up to \$100 million on average, and costs from a single major HAB event can reach tens of millions of dollars. Investments in these projects represent a coordinated effort within the National Ocean Service to advance the nation's ability to observe, monitor, forecast, and manage blooms. Three awards are noteworthy for the Gulf of Mexico. These awards will develop and test a control method for *Karenia brevis* in Southwest Florida, improve detection and forecasting of *Karenia*

brevis and potential unidentified HAB species in the Gulf, and use unmanned aerial and surface vessels to monitor cyanoHABs in Lake Pontchartrain.

[Read More](#)

Resources

New Virtual Platform Will Help Farmers Learn and Share Ideas to Improve Soil, Land, and Bottom Lines

One Good Idea is a new online platform and campaign to help farmers get started and have success with soil health and regenerative practices. Created by a multi-state team of university extension professionals and farmers, One Good Idea was designed to facilitate farmer-to-farmer learning about practices that can improve soil, land, and bottom lines, such as cover crops, conservation tillage, rotational grazing, and nutrient management.

As a clearinghouse of videos and podcasts that feature farmers' ideas and experiences with these practices, One Good Idea creates a centralized location for farmers to learn from their peers about what has worked or hasn't, benefits and precautions, and other details about using conservation practices on their operations. This content is crowdsourced and has been contributed to by university Extension, nonprofits, government agencies, farmer-led groups and individual farmers from across the Midwest and Mid-south.

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Farmer-Led Conservation & Watershed Protection Mini-Grant Program

Looking to kickstart or expand farmer-led conservation demonstration efforts? This mini-grant program will support non-governmental organizations, state or county government agencies, university extension professionals, and others who support farmers in one or more of the 12 Hypoxia Task Force states in the Mississippi River Basin: Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Tennessee, and Wisconsin. Qualified organizations must partner with an existing farmer or farmer-led organization. Awards will be up to \$4000 for one year. Applications accepted through **February 15, 2022**. The grant program is organized by a multi-state partnership of land grant universities in the basin and made possible with funding from the EPA.

[Read More](#)

Visit the EPA Hypoxia Task Force Website

To learn more about the work of the Hypoxia Task Force, visit our website, which features recent reports and measurements, important documents, upcoming actions, and learning opportunities. The "In the Spotlight" section of the homepage provides a great introduction.

[Check out the HTF Homepage](#)

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The *Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Task Force Newsletter* is a quarterly publication produced by EPA's Office of Water in partnership with the Hypoxia Task Force. The newsletter provides a snapshot of recent state activities, federal agency activities, publications, and resources.

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