



GULF OF MEXICO PROGRAM
POLICY REVIEW BOARD

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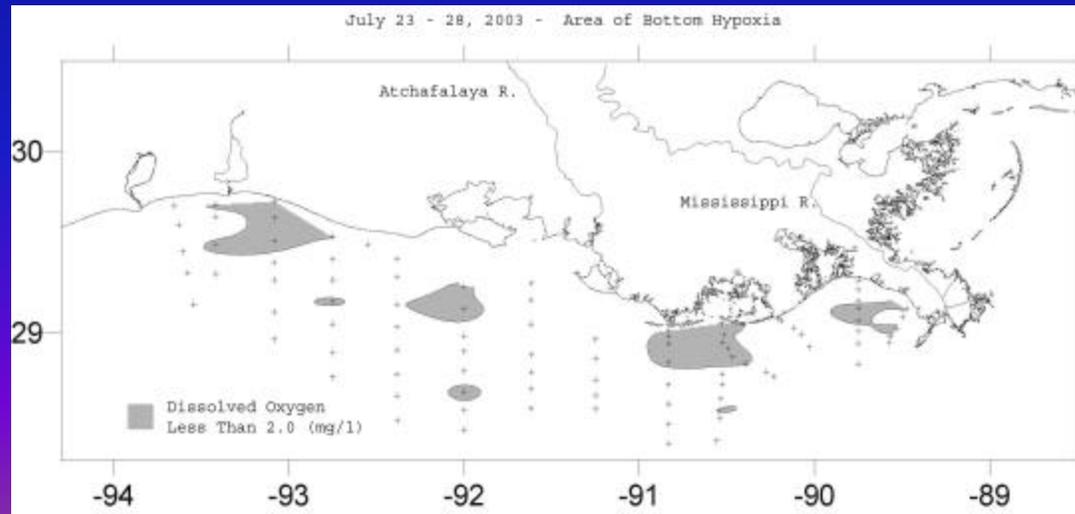
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING

March 18, 2004

New Orleans, Louisiana



Mississippi River/ Gulf of Mexico Watershed Nutrient Task Force: Hypoxia Action Plan



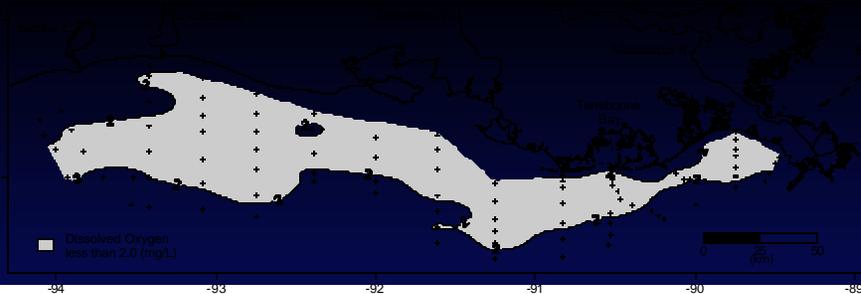
Update

by

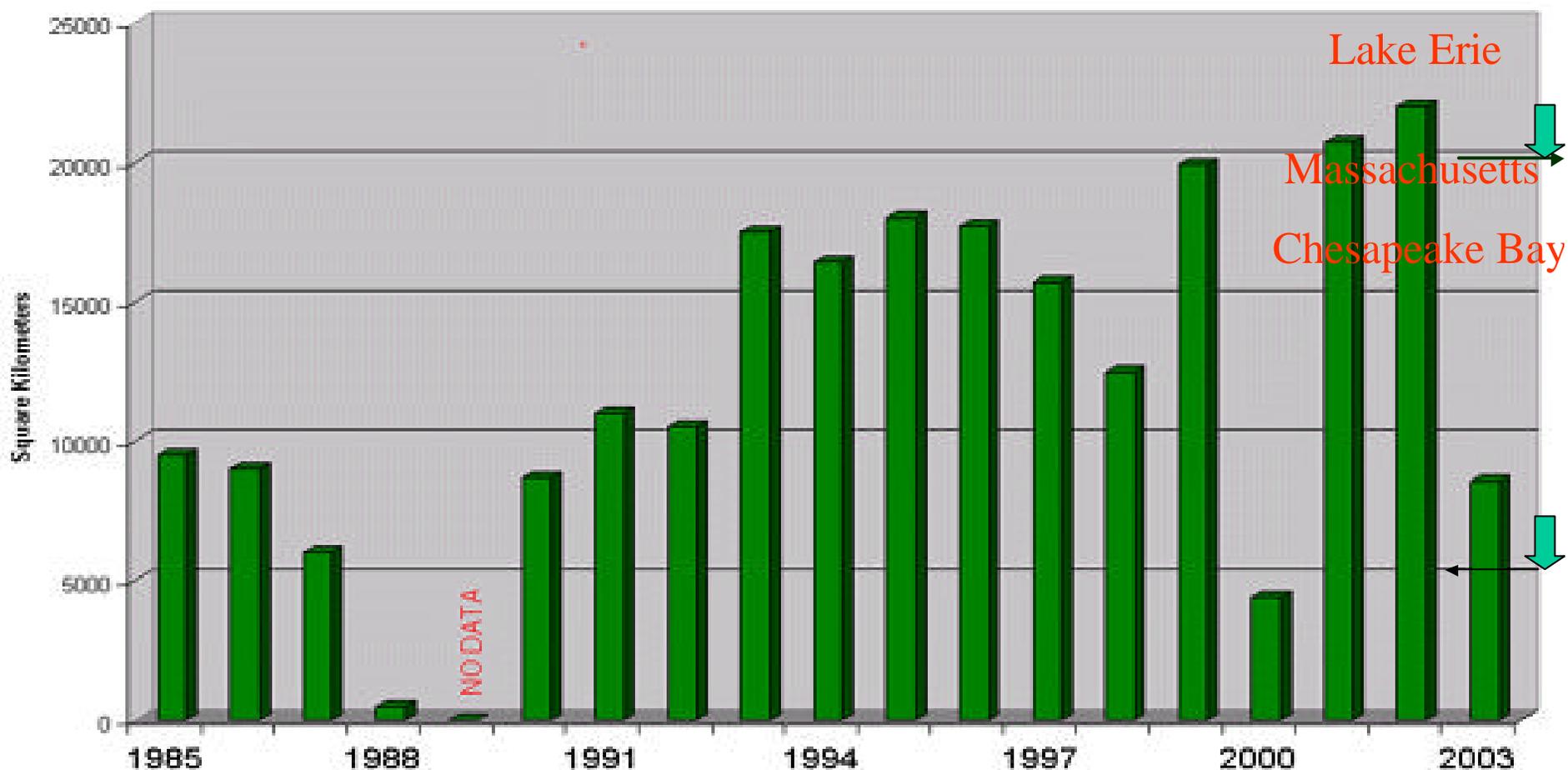
Larinda Tervelt

Gulf of Mexico Program

Results of Annual Summer Cruises



Comparative Size of Hypoxia Area (1985-2003)



Source: Nancy Rabalais, Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium

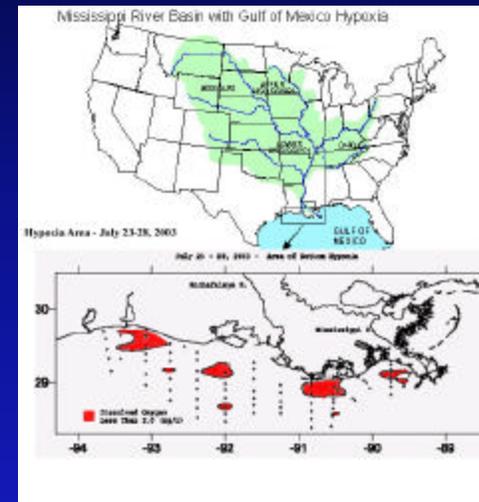
Action Plan

for Reducing, Mitigating, and Controlling Hypoxia
in the Northern Gulf of Mexico



Photo: Louisiana Office of Tourism

January 2001



The guiding principle of the plan is that when establishing priorities for watershed restoration, states, tribes and federal agencies within the Mississippi Basin will consider the potential for benefits to the Gulf

Action Plan

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Photo: Louisiana Office of Tourism

January 2001

Coastal Goal

- ✍ By 2015 reduce the Gulf of Mexico Hypoxic zone to less than 5,000 square kilometers
- ✍ Aim for a 30% reduction in nitrogen discharges to the Gulf

Actions

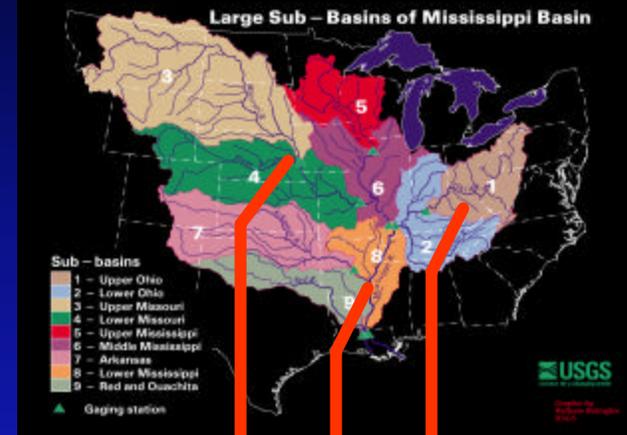
- ? Encourage voluntary, practical, and cost-effective efforts
- ? Use existing programs and innovative approaches
- ? Provide measurable outcomes

Action Plan

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Photo: Louisiana Office of Tourism



January 2001

2

By Summer 2001, States and Tribes in the Basin, in consultation with the Task Force, will establish sub-basin committees to coordinate implementation of the Action Plan by major sub-basins, including coordination among smaller watersheds, Tribes, and States in each of those sub-basins;

Missouri

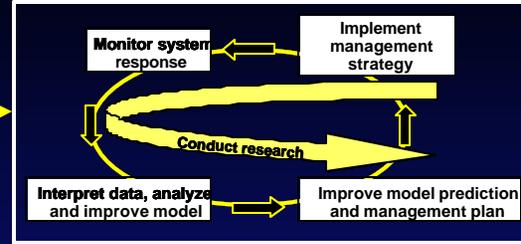
Ohio

Lower MS



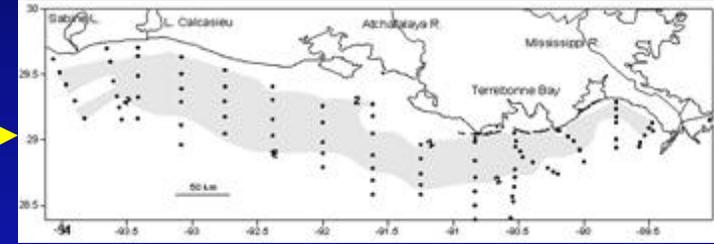
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By Fall 2001, the Task Force will develop an integrated Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Research Strategy to coordinate and promote necessary research and modeling efforts to reduce uncertainties regarding the sources, effects (including economic effects in the Gulf as well as the basin), and geochemical processes for hypoxia in the Gulf;



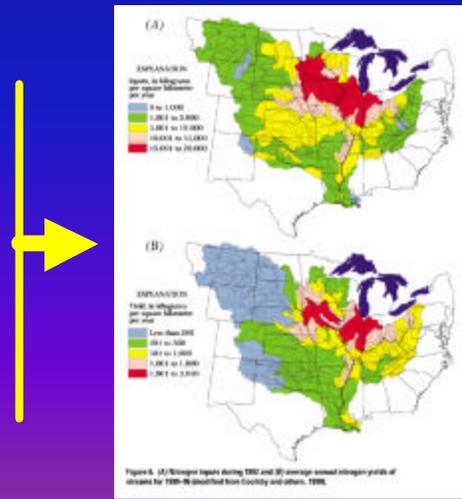
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By Spring 2002, Coastal States, Tribes, and relevant Federal agencies will greatly expand the long-term monitoring program for the hypoxic zone, including greater temporal and spatial data collection, measurements of macro-nutrient and micro-nutrient concentrations and hypoxia as well as measures of the biochemical processes that regulate the inputs, fate, and distribution of nutrients and organic material;



5

By Spring 2002, States, Tribes, and Federal agencies within the Mississippi and Atchafalaya River Basin will expand existing monitoring efforts within the Basin to provide both a coarse resolution assessment of the nutrient contribution of various sub-basins and a high resolution modeling technique in these smaller watersheds to identify additional management actions to help mitigate nitrogen losses to the Gulf, and nutrient loadings to local waters, based on the interim guidance established by the National Water Quality Monitoring Council;



6

By Fall 2002, States, Tribes, and Federal agencies within the Mississippi and Atchafalaya River Basin, using available data and tools, local partnerships, and coordination through sub-basin committees, described in action #2, will **develop strategies for nutrient reduction**. These strategies will include setting reduction targets for nitrogen losses to surface waters, establishing a baseline of existing efforts for nutrient management, identifying opportunities to restore floodplain wetlands (including restoration of river inflows) along and adjacent to the Mississippi River, detailing needs for additional assistance to meet their goals, and promoting additional funding;

If plans are cooperatively developed, they should result in the use of funds from the Farm Bill, 319, SRF, and others

At present, 319 contributes \$100 million a year for watershed planning



Where to focus?

Identify sources, contributions, and management measures most appropriate to address sources and problems

Plan -focused on solving problems

States and local communities work together to identify and solve problems

Allow and encourage public involvement in Plan design and implementation

7

By December 2002, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE), in cooperation with States, Tribes, and other Federal agencies, will, if authorized by the Congress and funded in the Fall of 2001, complete a reconnaissance-level **study of potential nutrient reduction actions** that could be achieved by modifying COE projects or project operations. Prior to completion of the reconnaissance study, the COE will incorporate nitrogen reduction considerations, not requiring major modification of significant new costs, into all project implementation actions;

Louisiana Coastal Area Study



8

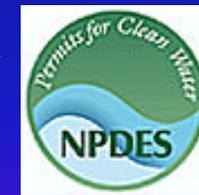
By January 2003, or on a time frame established by the sub-basin committees, Clean Water Act Permitting authorities within the Mississippi and Atchafalaya River Basin will identify point source dischargers with significant discharges of nutrients and undertake steps to reduce those loadings consistent with action #6;



Industry-Led Innovations



Friend of the Gulf Award



Stormwater Phase II
CAFO Rule
Nutrient-Related TMDLs



Seek Expansion of Point-Source Innovations:

Initiate Direct Solicitation for Voluntary “BASF-like” Industry-Led Nutrient Reductions

Nutrient Reduction Awards Program:

Develop and Establish a Program Specifically to Recognize Significant Contributions Made to Reduce Nutrients to the MS River System and, ultimately, the Gulf of Mexico.

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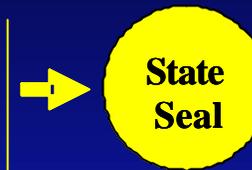
By Spring 2003, or on a time frame established by the sub-basin committees, States and Tribes within the Mississippi and Atchafalaya River Basin, with support from Federal agencies, will increase assistance to landowners for voluntary actions to restore, enhance, or create wetlands and vegetative or forested buffers along rivers and streams within priority watersheds consistent with action #6;

10

By Spring 2003, or on a time frame established by the sub-basin committees, States and Tribes within the Mississippi and Atchafalaya River Basin, with support from Federal agencies, will increase assistance to agricultural producers, other landowners, and business for the voluntary implementation of best management practices (BMPs), which are effective in addressing losses of nitrogen to waterbodies, consistent with action #6;

**Seek Expansion of Non-Point Source Innovations:
Solicit Agricultural Producer Leadership and Partnership in Hypoxia Action Plan
Implementation re: ILS**

Watershed Initiative – FY04: Establish and Implement Gulf Hypoxia Targeting (i.e., 25%)



Iowa CREP Wetlands



- CREP
- EQIP
- WHIP
- WRP

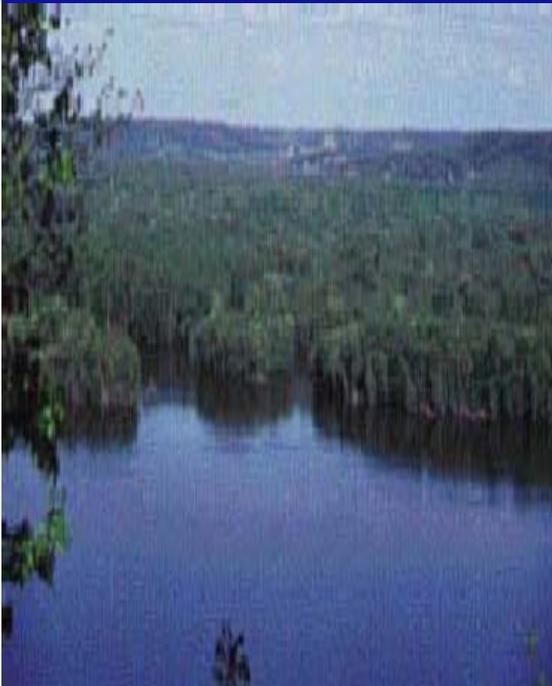


Watershed Initiative 04'



11

By December 2005, and every five years thereafter, the Task Force will assess the nutrient load reductions achieved and the response of the hypoxic zone, water quality throughout the Basin, and economic and social effects. Based on this assessment, the Task Force will determine appropriate actions to continue to implement this strategy or, if necessary, revise the strategy.



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OTHER ACTIONS:

- ✍ Support LMR SBC projects
- ✍ Support development of Sub-Basin committees
- ✍ Finalize MMR report
- ✍ Monitoring of the Hypoxic Zone
- ✍ Resolution of support for LCA
- ✍ Point & non point source innovations
- ✍ WI targeting
- ✍ Awards program



Strategies:

Reduce Nitrogen Loads

Focus on Sources

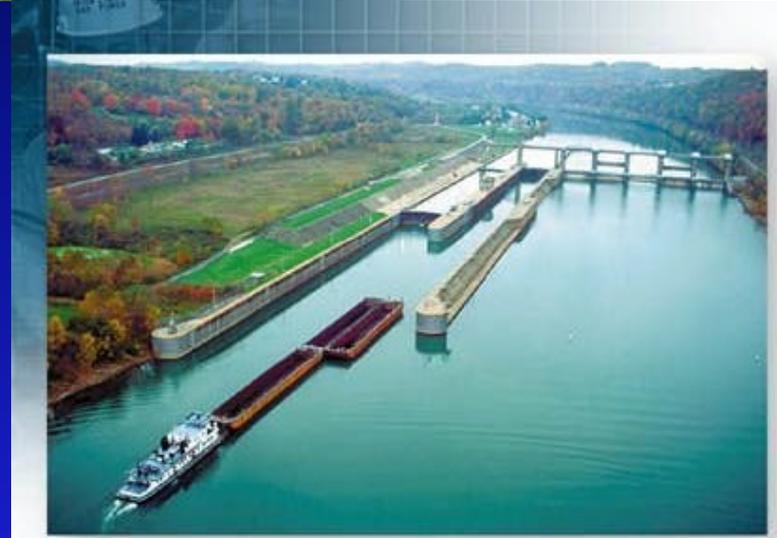
Point & Non-point

Coordinate program efforts

SRF, 319, 104(b)(3), WQS, SWP, NPDES, Phase II stormwater program, CAFO implementation
CRP, WRP, EQIP, GRP, WHIP, CREP, CEAP,

Use innovative options and ideas

Pollutant trading
Watershed permitting
TMDL clustering
Green lands, blue water



Other Opportunities

Industry-Led Solutions



Green Lands, Blue Water



Illinois Bundle Flower



Alfalfa



FLAX