



**Mississippi River
Gulf of Mexico
Watershed Nutrient
Task Force**

Hypoxia Task Force: Moving Forward to 2013

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NOAA 3rd Annual Hypoxia Coordination Workshop

March 27, 2012

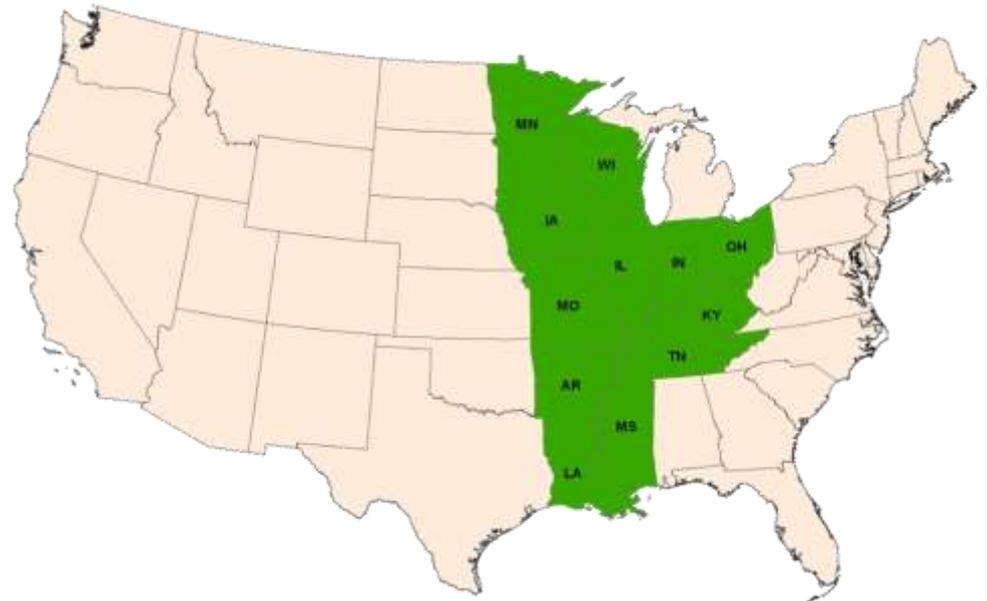
Hypoxia Task Force: Who We Are

5 Federal Agencies and Tribes:

- US Army Corps of Engineers
- US Environmental Protection Agency
- US Department of Agriculture
- US Geological Survey
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- National Tribal Water Council

12 States:

- Arkansas
- Louisiana
- Missouri
- Illinois
- Iowa
- Indiana
- Ohio
- Kentucky
- Tennessee
- Mississippi
- Wisconsin
- Michigan



Each state is represented on the Task Force by either:

Agriculture agency, Environment (pollution control) agency,
or Natural Resources agency

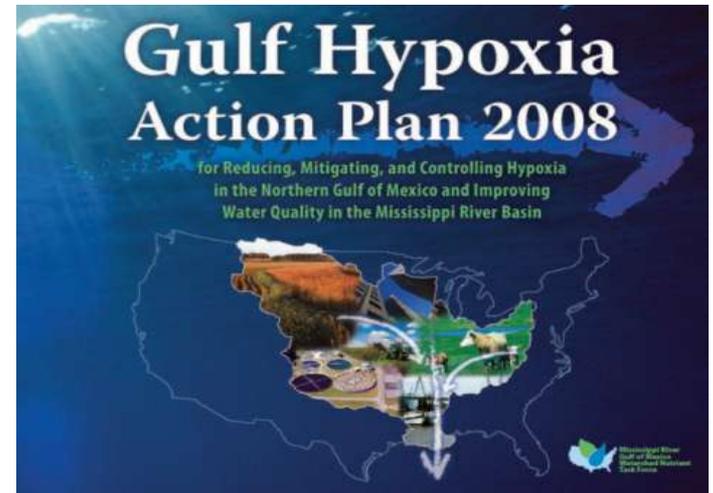
Goals of the Hypoxia Task Force

- ▶ **Coastal Goal:** By 2015, reduce 5-year running average size of the Gulf hypoxic zone to 5,000 km²
- ▶ **Within Basin Goal:** Restore and protect the waters of the 31 states in the Mississippi River Basin
- ▶ **Quality of Life Goal:** Improve the communities and economic conditions across the Basin



Task Force Focus:

- ▶ *2008 Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan*
 - Product of a four-year reassessment and consideration of emerging science
- ▶ Actions to achieve goals include:
 - Develop/implement statewide nutrient reduction strategies with complementary federal strategies
 - Track interim progress on reducing N & P
 - Develop nutrient management tools and reduce scientific uncertainties



Task Force Actions Supporting Nutrient Reductions and State Strategies

▶ Increased coordination:

- EPA Nutrient Framework (March 2011)
- USDA Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative (MRBI)
- Gulf Ecosystem Restoration Task Force
- Virtual Workshops

2008 *Action Plan*: Progress on Nutrient Strategy Development

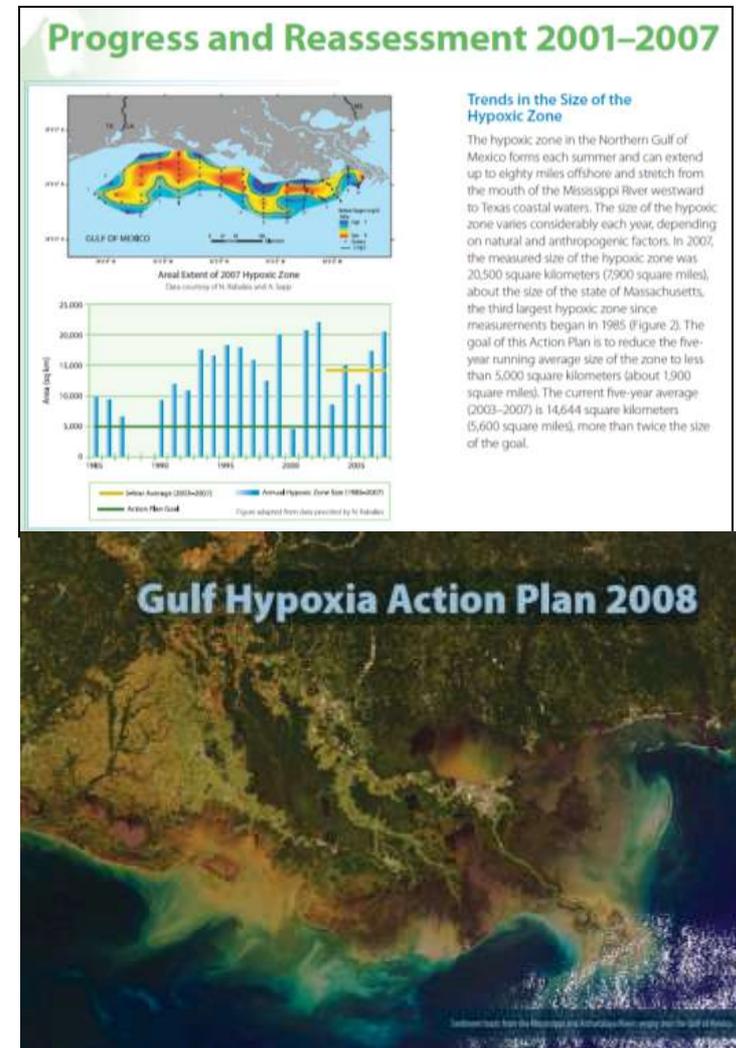
- ▶ Various stages of the development process:
 - Developed the strategy and moved on to implementation
 - Submitted strategy framework to EPA Regions for review
 - Completed initial drafts of nutrient reduction strategies (internally)
 - Holding large stakeholder meetings

2013 Reassessment: **Action Plan Action Item #11**

“In five years (2013) reassess N and P load reductions, the response of the hypoxic zone, changes in water quality through the MARB, and the economic and social effects...determine appropriate actions to continue to implement, or if necessary, revise the strategy.”

History of Task Force Reassessment

- ▶ Reassessment on the state of the science began in 2006:
 - Involved a series of scientific symposia, publication of major technical reports, extensive reviews and stakeholder comments
 - Informed 2008 *Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan*



Reassessment 2013: **Approach**

- ▶ **Assumptions:**

- Studies have informed and refined our approach but do not necessitate a radical shift in actions away from the Action Plan.

- ▶ **Approach** approved by HTF members in September 2011

- Focus on reporting the progress of implementing the first ten Actions in the *2008 Action Plan*

Reassessment 2013: Progress Update

- ▶ Formed a Reassessment Workgroup to cover each action in the Action Plan
- ▶ Workgroup agreed to a draft timeline

Date	Action
Mid-April 2012	All outlines submitted
Mid-August 2012	Second draft completed
September 10, 2012	Face-to-Face Work Group Meeting

Reassessment 2013: Summary

- ▶ *2008 Action Plan* remains valid
 - Recent developments continue to support current direction of our activities
- ▶ Maintain current HTF priority of developing and implementing state nutrient reduction strategies

