

FY 2004 Gulf of Mexico Program Workplan Accomplishments

EPA 855-R-04-004 - September 30, 2004

FY 2004 Gulf of Mexico Program Objectives, Subobjectives, Annual Performance Goals, and Accomplishments

Objective 1: By 2009, restore water and habitat quality in 20% of the impaired segments in the 12 priority coastal areas (i.e., 71 of the 354 segments) to levels that meet state water quality standards.

Note: * **Red** denotes new subobjectives or APGs in FY 2004

Subobjective	Annual Performance Goals	Accomplishments
<p>1(A): By the end of 2004, watershed restoration actions would be implemented to restore beneficial uses in 71 of the impaired coastal segments.</p>	<p>1(A)(1): By September 2004, the GMP will assist the Gulf States in implementing restoration actions for 14 impaired coastal segments.</p>	<p>1(A)(1): GMPO supported projects in 163 Priority Coastal Area Segments/Waterbodies. This achieves our 5-year rolling average of 71 segments which is 20% of the baseline established in 2000. Forty percent of the projects funded in 2004 were concentrated on efforts to improve water quality.</p> <p>CH.13 GW.Tech.01.1 GW.Tech.02 LP.25.1 LP.38 LP.39.1 MB.48 MB.49 MB.50 MS.17.1 FL.24.2/SB.04.2</p> <p>(See Appendix A for specific HUCs & Segments)</p> <p>Appendix A- APG 1A1 -2004 Accomplishments⁵ (PDF, 12pp., 1567Kb, about PDF⁶)</p>
<p>1(B): By 2005, assist the Gulf States in development of their nutrient criteria and management responses to achieve the restoration and protection of nutrient water quality of the Northern Gulf of Mexico's estuarine and near-coastal marine water resources.</p>	<p>1(B)(1): By 2005, the GMP Nutrient Project Team will facilitate the development of a scientifically-derived characterization and assessment/analysis of estuarine ecosystems in the North Central Gulf as they relate to nutrient concentrations and loadings.</p>	<p>1(B)(1): Following the completion of the final workplan/QAPP development, a second workshop was held February 10-11, 2004. From the database inventory, Battelle developed a "living" database inventory that has been updated as data sources were identified. A preliminary QA/QC screen is performed on each dataset. A secondary QA/QC screening will occur once all data are acquired. A nutrient characterization database has been developed to serve as a short-term repository for specific datasets. Parameters standardization and unit conversions are ongoing. A final draft report was completed by September 15, 2004, and will be submitted at the Comprehensive Meeting in October.</p> <p>GW.NE.07.1</p>

		<p>MCB.82</p> <p>(See Appendix B for Draft Report)</p> <p>Appendix B- FY 2004 Accomplishments Nutrient Pilot Study Draft Report⁷ (PDF, 41pp., 3953Kb, about PDF⁶)</p>
<p>1(C): By the end of 2004, develop a coordinated FY 2006 cross-cut budget strategy for GMP's partners to address Gulf coastal issues to restore water and habitat quality.</p>	<p>1(C)(1): Conduct a strategic assessment/business plan development for the National Coastal America Partnership to better apply the capacity and support of this Federal Coastal Programs Leadership initiative in the implementation of the GMP Workplan priorities.</p>	<p>1(C)(1): A business plan/enterprise model was completed for the National Coastal America Partnership to apply capacity and support in the implementation of GMP Workplan priorities.</p> <p>GW.CA.01.1</p> <p>(See Appendix C for the Coastal America Strategic Assessment)</p> <p>Appendix C- FY 2004 Accomplishments -Coastal America Discussion Draft 1.3⁸ (PDF, 40pp., 1237Kb, about PDF⁶)</p>
<p>1(D): By the end of 2006, support coordination of region-wide efforts to establish advanced Bacterial Source Tracking methods and technologies to provide the Gulf States with more effective pathogen source identification tools.</p>	<p>1(D)(1): By 2005, identify effective strategies for coordinating the development and implementation of advanced BST methodologies in support of the Gulf States efforts to conduct source identification.</p>	<p>1(D)(1): Practitioners of BST held a workshop in New Orleans in 2003 to discuss strategies for coordinating and implementing methodologies. A second meeting is planned for November 2004 to discuss related topics such as appropriate method of statistical analysis of BST data, persistence of indicators in estuarine waters and sediments, proportional vs. disproportional libraries; real-time applications, validation of MST accuracy, BST in the Gulf States, etc. A list of abstracts of relevant work will be compiled, and a report will be presented at the meeting in November.</p> <p>LP.38 MS.17.1</p>
<p>1(E): By the end of 2006, support State-driven efforts to conduct strategic assessments on ¼ of the priority coastal impaired segments comprising the 71 priority segments identified by the Program partnership through 2003.</p>	<p>1(E)(1): Beginning in FY 2004, conduct under the leadership of the Gulf States, a total of 6 in priority areas (one in each of the states) strategic assessments each year through FY 2006.</p>	<p>1(E)(1): A strategic assessment process for coastal habitats was funded in FY 2004 in Mobile Bay.</p> <p>MB.51</p>

Objective 2: Assist the Gulf States in protecting public health by providing information concerning contaminated seafood and early warnings of harmful algal blooms.

Subobjective	Annual Performance Goals	Accomplishments
<p>2(A): The ISSC has adopted a goal of reducing <i>Vibrio vulnificus</i> illnesses by 60% on average for 2007 and 2008. The GMP will assist the Gulf States and the ISSC in reducing the rate of shellfish-borne <i>Vibrio vulnificus</i> illnesses caused by</p>	<p>2(A)(1): Support the Gulf States and ISSC <i>Vibrio vulnificus</i> education efforts to achieve a 40% increase in awareness of risks and a 15% increase in at-risk consumers no longer eating raw oysters.</p>	<p>2(A)(1): A consumer survey conducted by ISSC reports that 57% of all raw oyster consumers were aware of the risk of eating raw oysters and that 37% of the at-risk consumers are eating few oysters. The <i>Vibrio vulnificus</i> Education Subcommittee</p>

consumption of commercially-harvested raw or undercooked oysters.		<p>attributes the diminished numbers to the <i>Vibrio vulnificus</i> education efforts. A follow-up survey will be completed by March 2005.</p> <p>FL.28 GW.PH.13</p> <p>(See Appendix D for Survey)</p> <p>Appendix D - ISSC Baseline Survey⁹ (PDF, 25pp., 438Kb, about PDF⁶)</p>
	<p>2(A)(2): The ISSC has adopted an objective to increase post-harvest treatment capacity of oysters intended for the raw, half-shell market during May to September to 25% by 2004. The GMP will assist the Gulf States in developing post-harvest treatment and management methods needed to achieve this objective.</p>	<p>2(A)(2): Although there have been no Gulf of Mexico Program projects directed toward this objective, it has been met collectively through the Gulf States. The post harvest treatment capacity collectively by the Gulf States exceeds 25%.</p>
<p>2(B): Assist the Gulf States, in cooperation with the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission, in developing and implementing a scientifically sound, Gulfwide monitoring program for total mercury/methylmercury levels in fish tissue from recreationally and commercially important species; and in developing consistent fish consumption advisories and public outreach information regarding the health effects of methylmercury.</p>	<p>2(B)(1): Complete a Gulfwide fish tissue monitoring program for total mercury/methylmercury for important commercial and recreational marine and estuarine species where data is lacking.</p>	<p>2(B)(1):The Gulf Program contributed toward a synoptic survey of mercury in marine and estuarine fish from the Gulf of Mexico in FY 2003. The project is behind schedule. Quality control studies and interlaboratory testing of methods indicate that the method using the total mercury analyzer is providing acceptable data. The survey is expected to be completed by July 2005.</p>
	<p>2(B)(2): The Project Team, composed of State and Federal agencies and in cooperation with nongovernment interests, will develop a consistent fish consumption advisory template to be presented to the Management Committee, will develop an effective outreach plan for the advisory, and will develop a scientifically sound fish consumption survey of recreational, commercial, and subsistence fishermen for the Gulf Coast.</p>	<p>2(B)(2): The Project Team reached consensus on a uniform consumption advisory for mercury in king mackerel from the Gulf of Mexico. The advisory is consistent with the national advisory developed by EPA and FDA for mercury in seafood. The advisory was presented to the GMP Management Committee and Policy Review Board in March 2004. The Team will develop an implementation strategy to work with the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission toward adoption of the advisory by the Gulf states.</p>
	<p>2(B)(3): Provide support for Mercury Database update and facilitate securing web site accessibility of web site.</p>	<p>2(B)(3): The database on mercury in the Gulf of Mexico was updated to include all data available from the States and other federal agencies through September 2003. GMPO will make the database available on the GMPO web site or via a link from the GMPO home page.</p>
<p>2(C): By 2004 and each year thereafter,</p>	<p>2(C)(1): Conduct a workshop in December</p>	<p>2(C)(1): The workshop was held in April</p>

<p>support implementation of the integrated binational (U.S. and Mexican Border States) early-warning system to support State and coastal community efforts to manage harmful algal blooms (HABs).</p>	<p>2003 to develop an integrated, regional coastal ocean observing system – Gulf of Mexico Coastal Ocean Observing System (GCOOS). Identify data and information needs and develop an action plan for designing and implementing the integrated system to address the needs.</p>	<p>2004 to work toward providing a state-of-the-art monitoring and forecasting system. Identified actions are (1) NOAA HAB Bulletin to provide information on a routine, operational schedule; (2) Coordinated effort to identify which models can be used in real-time, near real-time, or as forecasts; (3) HABSOS should be transitioned from a pilot project to a binational effort and continue efforts to facilitate data access and exchange; (4) Standard protocols should be developed for data collection procedures and routine monitoring; (5) Ocean Observations - add observing stations and incorporate sentinel stations. GMP will serve as point of contact for GCOOS; (6) Improve detection technologies and continue research on ecosystem and biology of HAB system.</p> <p>TX.34</p>
	<p>2(C)(2): Support the U.S./Mexico Binational Agreement by conducting a collaborative review of the current state of <i>Karenia brevis</i> (Red Tide) monitoring, sampling, and reporting protocols utilized by the 11 binational states bordering the Gulf of Mexico.</p>	<p>2(C)(2): A draft report on the collaborative review of monitoring, sampling, and reporting protocols utilized by the 11 binational states was received on July 23, 2004.</p> <p>(See Appendix E for the Draft Report)</p> <p>Appendix E - FY 2004 Accomplishments¹⁰ (PDF, 34pp., 256Kb, about PDF⁶)</p>

Objective 3: By 2009, the GMP will restore, enhance, or protect important coastal and marine habitats that are essential to the recreational and commercial fisheries of the Gulf, including the prevention and control of invasive species in U.S. areas of the Gulf, by 20,000 acres.

Subobjective	Annual Performance Goals	Accomplishments
<p>3(A): Restore, enhance, or protect 2,400 acres each year between 2002 and 2009.</p>	<p>3(A)(1): By September 2004, initiate projects to restore, enhance, or protect 2,400 acres of coastal and marine habitat.</p>	<p>3(A)(1): 3,932 acres were restored, enhanced, or protected for FY 2004.</p> <p>BTB.28.1 – 3200 acres PB.21 – 40 acres GB.15 – 12 acres NOAA CRP – 611 acres NFWF – 5 Star – 69 acres</p> <p>Other habitat projects funded (no acres): GW.HAB.10 PB.20 TX.35</p>
<p>3(B): Assist in the implementation of Louisiana's <i>Coast 2050 Plan</i> to divert Mississippi River water and restore coastal wetlands in a manner that achieves a 15% reduction in the annual nitrate load from the River to the Gulf.</p>	<p>3(B)(1): Assist in developing the technical and scientific feasibility studies and public outreach processes needed to support the design and implementation of both large and small-scale diversions to achieve maximum wetland restoration and nitrate</p>	<p>3(B)(1): GMPO staff attends LCA Advisory Board meetings and the CWPPRA Technical Committee meetings. GMP funded a project in support of the future diversion projects proposed by the LCA Technical Committees.</p>

	removal.	BTB.28.1
3(C): Provide ongoing technical support and GMP Program interface to the Gulf of Mexico Regional Panel on Invasive Species to reduce the introduction of invasive species and minimize their impacts.	3(C)1: By September 2004, provide invasive species management planning assistance to one additional Gulf State (extension of actions taken in FY 2001).	3(C)1: GMP provided invasive species planning assistance to Mobile Bay and funded one project which addressed invasive species. MB.51

Objective 4: By the year 2015, support national efforts to reduce the 5-year running average areal extent of Gulf hypoxia to less than 1,930 square miles.

Subobjective	Annual Performance Goals	Accomplishments
4(A): Support the <i>Action Plan for Reducing, Mitigating, and Controlling Hypoxia in the Northern Gulf of Mexico</i> by facilitating research, monitoring, and modeling efforts that reduce uncertainties in the ecological and economic impact of hypoxia.	4(A)1): Finalize modeling conceptual construct; obtain commitments from potential cooperators and partners to execute the modeling construct; draft Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Field and Modeling Science Plan; obtain and execute operational model simulations to enable future linkages to Air and Sediment modeling components.	4(A)1): The Northern Gulf of Mexico Eutrophication Monitoring and Modeling project provides strategic management support through the integration of monitoring, condition assessment, diagnosis, experimentation, and model forecasting. GMPO has provided assistance to verify and calibrate a suite of linked and coupled models to develop a forecasting capability for the Northern Gulf. Monitoring: GMP provided funding for shipboard support for a cruise conducted in April 2004. Samples are being analyzed at EPA, GED and EPA, Athens Lab. Modeling: Discussions are continuing with DON and other groups regarding hydrodynamic modeling in the Gulf. The decision for this project is to move toward the use of the Intra-Americas Sea (IAS) hydrodynamic model. A Quality Assurance Plan is being developed for the monitoring and modeling which should be completed by December 2004. Continued collaboration to address project issues and to identify partners will continue through 2005. (See Appendix F for the Draft Strategy for the Development of a Framework to Guide Restoration of Oxic Conditions in the Gulf of Mexico) Appendix F- FY 2004 Accomplishments ¹¹ (PDF, 2pp., 55Kb, about PDF ⁶) Appendix F1- Hypoxia Modeling and Monitoring Strategy ¹² (PDF, 14pp., 88Kb, about PDF ⁶) Appendix F2- Progress Report ¹³ (PDF, 2pp., 16Kb, about PDF ⁶)
4(B): Support the <i>Action Plan</i> by assisting the States of Louisiana and Mississippi in implementing voluntary actions to reduce their annual nitrogen discharge to the	4(B)1): Support efforts through the Lower Mississippi River Sub-basin Committee to develop 3 pilot watershed restoration demonstration projects involving nutrient	4(B)1): Each state has selected a showcase watershed, and GMP has received a preproposal from Mississippi for support for their showcase watershed

Mississippi/Atchafalaya River basin.	reduction actions that can be transferred to other sub-basins.	in FY 06. (See Appendix G for the Mississippi Nutrient Showcase Preproposal) Appendix G-FY 2004 Accomplishments ¹⁴ (PDF, 9pp., 252Kb, about PDF ⁶)
	4(B)(2): Support the Action Plan to reduce nutrient and sediment loads to the Mississippi/Atchafalaya Rivers through support for an Industry-Led Solutions Workshop to advance coordination with, and involvement of, agricultural producers in the Sub-basin Committee process.	4(B)(2): A workshop on Industry Led Solutions: Gulf of Mexico was held in November 2003 to focus on the major environmental and economic implications of hypoxia and the role of agricultural leadership in resolving it. A concept paper was developed to serve as an action plan for an industry-led environmental stewardship initiative to address hypoxia. GMP supported the second workshop held in New Orleans, LA, August 26-27, 2004. The proposed Action Plan Participation Strategy developed at the workshop was presented at the Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Watershed Nutrient Task Force Sept 1, 2004. ILS will work with USDA and EPA to determine convergence of opportunities to employ ILS' network, strategies, and tools within the Sub-basin Teams. A Business Plan will be developed by December 2004 to effectively mobilize and sustain the ILS framework in support of carrying out the Hypoxia Action Plan. (See Appendix H for the Concept Paper on Implementing Industry Led Solutions) Appendix H - FY 2004 Accomplishments ¹⁵ (PDF, 16pp., 130Kb, about PDF ⁶)

Objective 5: Foster regional stewardship and a strong sense of community and value among Gulf State residents and tourists to protect, restore, and responsibly use the resources of the Gulf of Mexico.

Subobjective	Annual Performance Goals	Accomplishments
5(A): By 2009, achieve improved regional awareness of the value of Gulf resources, key environmental issues, actions underway or needed to solve the problems, and GMP's success in meeting the objectives of the Strategic Workplan to steer a course toward a healthier and more economically sustainable Gulf of Mexico.	5(A)(1): By December 2003, conduct 4th annual Gulf Guardian Awards Program.	5(A)(1): The 4th Annual Gulf Guardian Award ceremony was held in Sept 2003 at the Southern States Environmental Conference in Biloxi, MS. The 5th Annual ceremony is scheduled for December 2004 in New Orleans. (See Appendix I for Gulf Guardian Award winners) Appendix I - FY 2004 Accomplishments Gulf Guardian Award winners ¹⁶ (PDF, 3pp., 79Kb, about PDF ⁶)
	5(A)(2): By December 2004, prepare and	5(A)(2): News releases are being prepared

	distribute news releases for all projects funded in 2003 and 2004.	for all projects funded in FY 2004 and will be completed by December 2004. Education/Outreach projects funded: GW.PH.11 MCB.83 MS.26 CCB.30
	5(A)(3): Highlights and successes of the GMP projects updated quarterly on the GMPO web site and coordinated with partner web sites.	5(A)(3): During 2004, 10 projects were added to the "Highlighted Projects" web page. See http://www.epa.gov/gmpo/accomp.html
	5(A)(4): By December 2004, Communications Committee will develop a new Strategic Plan for outreach/education components of GMP projects and Project Teams and develop promotional activities to achieve awareness of key environmental issues in the Gulf of Mexico.	5(A)(4): The Communications Committee met in February 2004 and an ad hoc group met in April 2004 to begin strategic planning. Consensus of the meetings was to focus communications efforts through media such as web sites. A new Strategic Plan has not been developed.
	5(A)(5): In FY 2004, Communications Committee members will be integrated into all GMP Project Teams.	5(A)(5): Communications Committee members are integrated into the Mercury Consumption Advisory Project Team.
5(B): In 2004, support the Citizens Advisory Committee efforts to achieve improved regional awareness of the value of Gulf resources, key environmental issues, and actions underway or needed to solve the problems.	5(B)(1): In FY2004, the CAC members will attend and participate in CAC meetings, Focus Team meetings, MC/PRB meetings, annual Comprehensive meeting, and Project Team meetings; give presentations to local groups in support of GMP efforts; participate in outreach or communications with constituents in the GMP Priority Areas.	5(B)(1): There were 3 CAC meetings held in 2004. CAC members participated in other meetings such as: Focus Teams, Management Committee, Policy Review Board, State Project Meetings. A Gulf Program informational presentation was developed for CAC members to use at seminars, conferences, professional organizations, and other outreach activities they attend. GW.CAC.01.4
	5(B)(2): In FY2004, CAC members will review GMP products, Gulf Guardian applications, and will communicate with Governors' Offices and Congressional members/constituencies.	5(B)(2): CAC members participated in the selection process for the Gulf Guardian Awards and provided liaison with the Gulf States Governors' offices regarding support for GMP and on CAC membership selection.
	5(B)(3): In FY2004, CAC members will participate in State/local public meetings and public comment opportunities related to Gulf activities and in CAC-initiated outreach projects in GMP Priority Areas.	5(B)(3): CAC members developed a letter of support for the Breaux Act Task Force and participated in each of the Gulf State Project meetings.