

**Gulf of Mexico Program  
Management Committee Meeting  
Summary  
October 8-9, 2003**



(Action Items are listed in Attachment A. A copy of the agenda is included as Attachment B, and the attendee list as Attachment C. Attachment D is the FY 2004 GMP Workplan)

<b>Organization:</b>	<b>Member:</b>	<b>Present:</b>	<b>Absent:</b>
<b>EPA</b>	Miguel Flores, Alternate for Federal Co-Chair	X	
	Bryon Griffith	X	
<b>Texas</b>	Bruce Moulton (State Co-Chair)	X	
<b>Alabama</b>	John Carlton	X	
<b>Florida</b>	Lynn Griffin	X	
<b>Louisiana</b>	Dugan Sabins (Alternate)	X	
<b>Mississippi</b>	Barry Royals (Alternate)	X	
<b>Mississippi</b>	Vacant (Soil & Water Conservation Commission)		X
<b>Texas</b>	Larry McKinney (TX Parks & Wildlife Dept)		X
<b>HHS (FDA)</b>	Merrill McPherson		X
<b>DOC (NMFS)</b>	Vacant (Tom McIlwain retired)		X
<b>USDA (NRCS)</b>	Homer Wilkes		X
<b>DOI (USGS)</b>	Gary Brewer	X	
<b>DOI (FWS)</b>	Columbus Brown		X
<b>DOD (USN)</b>	Robert Stender (Alternate)	X	
<b>DOD (COE)</b>	John Saia	X	
<b>DOD (USAF)</b>	Vic Verma		X
<b>CAC</b>	Casi Callaway	X	
<b>CAC</b>	Jim Kachtick	X	

<b>BAC</b>	Mike Lyons alternate for Flinda Hill	X	
<b>GRN</b>	Cynthia Sarthou, alternate for Deborah Dawkins	X	
<b>CSCA</b>	Joel Yelverton	X	
<b>AFBF-GC</b>	Ned Meister	X	
<b>Fisheries</b>	Ron Lukens		X
<b>TNC</b>	Robert Potts	X	
<b>GSCZ</b>	Vacant - Mike Walker (Alternate)		X
<b>NEPs</b>	David Yeager	X	
<b>NASA</b>	Ron Magee and Mark Boudreaux	X	

1. **Roll Call - Welcome and Introductions of the Board**

*(Bruce Moulton/Miguel Flores)*

Bruce Moulton, State Co-Chair, and Miguel Flores, Alternate Federal Co-Chair, welcomed the Committee. Mr. Flores ensured the Committee that the EPA Region 6 Administrator commits his support and will strive also to enhance Region 4's efforts in supporting the Gulf of Mexico Program.

2. **Overview of Gulf of Mexico Program Goals and Objectives Presentations**

*(Bryon Griffith)*

**Purpose:** Program Workplan Review FY 2000-2003

Bryon Griffith presented an overview of the Gulf of Mexico Program Workplan with the goals and objectives that have been endorsed by the Management Committee from FY 2000 - FY 2003. The Program is conducting a Review for the Committee to keep the Committee informed on what has been accomplished.

**Decision:** Informational

3. **Objective 1, Subobjective 1(A):** By the end of 2004, watershed restoration actions will be implemented to restore beneficial uses in 71 of the impaired coastal segments.

**Priority Areas:**

Lower Laguna Madre  
Coastal Bend and Bays  
Galveston Bay  
Barataria-Terrebonne Bays  
Lake Pontchartrain Basin  
Mississippi Coastal Basin  
Mobile Bay  
Pensacola Bay  
Lower Suwannee River  
Tampa Bay

**Decision:** Informational

Gulf of Mexico Program Office Priority Area Leads presented overviews of each of the Priority Areas showing maps of the areas listed as impaired on the State 303(d) lists, what the impairments are, and information about the projects funded in each of the areas.

4. **Objective 2, Subobjective 2(A):** The ISSC has adopted a goal of reducing *Vibrio vulnificus* 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 illnesses caused by consumption of commercially-harvested raw or undercooked oysters.

The shellfish-related *Vibrio vulnificus* illnesses from 1995-1999 averaged 21.4 with a rate of 0.303 which is the baseline being used. The goal for a 60% reduction would bring the rate down to 0.121 per mil. In 2002 the rate was 0.179. The GMP partnered with ISSC and advocacy organizations to produce and distribute materials targeted at high-risk consumers; in 2002-2003 the distribution was 113,881 consumer brochures in English and 66,627 in Spanish. Provider fact sheets in the amount of 40,709 were also distributed. In addition, GMP partnered with ISSC for a regional workshop to discuss water quality requirements and a training video on *Vibrio Parahaemolyticus*.

5. **Objective 2, Subobjective 2(B):** Assist the Gulf States in cooperation with the GSMFC in developing and implementing a scientifically sound, Gulfwide monitoring program for total mercury/methylmercury levels in fish tissue and in developing compatible fish consumption advisories and public outreach information.

A third update of the Gulf of Mexico Program mercury database has been completed. About 6000 new records were added in September 2003. Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Florida are monitoring for mercury. The Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission initiative to implement a Gulf-wide monitoring program has not been funded. The estimated cost is \$2M.

The Project Team to assist in developing consistent fish consumption advisories met in June 2003. There was consensus at the time by Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, and Mississippi to agree that women of child bearing age and children under 7 years should not consume these fish. All others not in these sensitive sub-populations should limit consumption of king mackerel within the size range of 24-32 inches fork length to two meals/month. Texas was not represented at the meeting, but is working with the Team.

6. **Objective 2, Subobjective 2(C):** Complete a pilot project for an early-warning system to support State and coastal community efforts to manage harmful algal blooms (HABs) by the end of 2004.

Harmful algal blooms affect public health, economy, resources, and ecology. Forecasting would lead to better management for decision makers. The pilot project is to design a HAB data management and communication system to lead to more timely detection, tracking, and forecasting. The retrospective case study analysis found that 1996 and 2000 were geographically-extensive bloom years and 1997 was a geographically-limited bloom year. The case study produced a visualization of events prior to, during, and following *K. brevis* blooms; a web-based portal system for linking and integrating multiple

data types from multiple sources; and a simulation of the blooms to demonstrate the benefits of timely data integration and information dissemination. There were obstacles and challenges identified during the case study and recommendations for developing and implementing a real-time or near real-time HABs observing system.

7. **Objective 3, Subobjective 3(A)**: Restore, enhance, or protect 2,400 acres of coastal and marine habitat each year between 2002 and 2009.

The habitat acreage goal is accomplished through: State projects and partnership projects. Partnerships are with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and NOAA Community Restoration Grant Program. Through 2003, total acreage impacted through restoration, protection, or enhancement are 9,387 acres. Other habitat projects are baseline characterizations; archiving historical data; developing data information systems; habitat restoration plans; monitoring of seagrasses; demonstration and research projects. In 2003, The Nature Conservancy is beginning a Gulf of Mexico Initiative and support for Gulfwings. This initiative will identify cross-cutting areas to target habitat restoration projects and build partner capacity in Mexico.

**Objective 3, Subobjective 3(B)**: Assist in the implementation of Louisiana's Coast 2050 Plan to divert MS 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.

GMPO offered communication/modeling assistance to the LCA outreach and technical committees and supported Louisiana coastal wetlands restoration projects.

8. **Habitat Partnership Initiative** – Coastal America and the Corporate Wetland Restoration Partnership

The GMP is working with the Coastal America Gulf of Mexico Regional Implementation Team and the Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership to leverage collective resources and skills and processes of the private and public sectors to restore wetlands and other aquatic habitats. Through the GMP State Meeting process, projects have been identified for partnership in every Gulf State.

9. **Objective 4, Subobjective 4(A)**: Support the Action Plan for Reducing, Mitigating, and Controlling Hypoxia in the Northern Gulf of Mexico by facilitating research, monitoring, and modeling efforts that reduce uncertainties in the ecological and economic impact of hypoxia.

GMP has collaborated with EPA's ORD Gulf Breeze Laboratory and Office of Water to initiate a Gulf hypoxia modeling and monitoring framework. Surveys are planned in 2003 and 2004 in partnership with NOAA/NMFS and LUMCON to collect data.

**Objective 4, Subobjective 4(B)**: Support the Action Plan by assisting the States of Louisiana and Mississippi in implementing voluntary actions to reduce their annual nitrogen discharge to the Mississippi/Atchafalaya River Basin.

GMP has supported State efforts to form a Lower Mississippi River Sub-basin Committee and was requested by the Louisiana Governor to facilitate the Sub-basin Team development in 2002. The strategy for the Lower Mississippi River Sub-basin Committee Initiative is to help to focus and maximize resources and support local scientific solutions to Gulf hypoxia and focus on results. The Strategic Assessment Process within the

Lower Mississippi River Sub-basin is (1) Selection of priority watershed; (2) identification of nitrogen source category; (3) selection of applicable BMPs; (4) selection of demonstration sites - choose a site and BMP for N load reduction where environmental responses can be quantified.

Projects also supported include: nitrogen farming; real-time nitrate concentrations and loads in the Lower Atchafalaya River; and Industry Led Solutions Workshop.

**10. State Executive Session Report Out**

Discussions from the State Executive Session centered on the status of the draft Executive Order to establish the Gulf of Mexico Program. The States are in agreement that there is positive support for the Order. States urged that GMP continue to coordinate with the Regions and States to be relevant their programs. Provided positive support for harmful algal bloom activities as well as mercury and public health.

**Decision:** Informational.

**11. Request for Designation of Choctawhatchee Basin as GMP Priority Area**

The Executive Director for the Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance presented justification for the Gulf of Mexico Program to designate and include the Basin as a Priority Area within the framework of the Program's Workplan. The watershed is a multi-state waterbody which is 5,350 square miles covering 9 counties in Alabama (58%) and 6 in Florida. Choctawhatchee Bay is 129 square miles. The Bay has been designated as a critical habitat by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The Bay provides a natural habitat for the Gulf Sturgeon and is a conduit to a significant breeding area. The eastern portion of the Bay is bordered by Florida's fastest growing county, Walton County. The single largest landowner adjacent to the Bay is the US Air Force. There are numerous public and private organizations that promote ecosystem management and sustainability in the Basin. The Bay has candidate impaired waterbodies due to elevated coliform from stormwater.

**Decision:** Florida DEP supports the inclusion of Choctawhatchee Basin as a GMP Priority Area. The Committee unanimously endorsed that the Basin become a Priority Area and sends the recommendation to the Policy Review Board.

**12. Objective 5, Subobjective 5(A): By 2005, achieve improved regional awareness of the value of Gulf resources, key environmental issues, and actions underway or needed to solve the problems.**

The Fourth Annual Gulf Guardian Awards Ceremony was held September 24, 2003, at the Southern States Environmental Conference in Biloxi, MS. EPA Regions 4 and 6 Administrators presented awards. The videos were produced courtesy of the Texas Farm Bureau. FY 2004 applications for the awards are due by April 15, 2004.

Billboards donated by Lamar Advertising displayed the "One Gulf" Campaign in 2002-2003. The "One Gulf" web site was purchased by USM and is updated and maintained by MS-AL Sea Grant.

Radio PSAs have been produced and will begin airing on Clear Channel radio in January and February 2004. Texas Farm Bureau produced the PSAs.

GMP has sponsored various symposia and conferences across the Gulf as well as documentaries and has funded outreach and education projects in each of the Gulf States.

**Objective 5, Subobjective 5(B)**: 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.

Citizen Advisory Committee members have participated in Focus Team, Management Committee and Policy Review Board meetings as well as Project Team meetings. A GMP presentation was developed for the Citizens to use for outreach activities. CAC members present information about Gulf environmental issues and the Gulf Program to constituency groups within their states and to their Governors' Offices and Congressional members.

CAC members review products produced through the Gulf Program or partnerships, provide comments during public comment opportunities and public meetings, and initiate outreach projects in priority areas. The CAC sent resolutions in support of Louisiana Wetlands Loss, in support of the GMP Executive Order, and in support of appropriation and policy recommendations to improve water quality and living resources in the Gulf of Mexico.

**13. FY 2004 Annual Performance Goals**

The Gulf of Mexico Program Workplan for FY 2004 was presented. GMP has added objectives 1(B), 1(C), 1(D), 1(E), 2(C), and 3(C). (See Attachment D). After discussion of all objectives, subobjectives, and annual performance goals, the Committee unanimously endorsed the Plan and recommended it to be sent forward to the Policy Review Board for final review and endorsement at the next meeting.

**Decision:** Endorsement

**14. Member's Roundtable**

Members discussed the inclusion of Mexican components on the Gulf of Mexico Program committees. The Gulf of Mexico States Accord leadership will be with the State of Louisiana in 2004 which would be an excellent opportunity to include the Mexican states. Red tide is of interest to Mexico but other issues such as wetlands loss, hypoxia, public health are also important. The Gulf of Mexico can bring the countries together through ecology and economics.

**Follow-up Action Item Summary**  
**Management Committee Meeting**  
October 8-9, 2003

ACTION REQUESTED	LEAD(s):	STATUS:1.
1. Ensure that State Leads have opportunity to comment on National Coastal Condition Report prior to publication.	GMPO	Draft notice sent to State Leads 3/10/04. Comments due by 6/07/04.
2. Choctawhatchee Bay inclusion as a Priority Area recommendation brought before Policy Review Board for endorsement at next meeting.	GMPO	On agenda for PRB meeting, March 18, 2004.
3. FY 2004 Gulf of Mexico Program Workplan objectives, subobjectives, annual performance goals brought before Policy Review Board for endorsement at next meeting.	GMPO	On agenda for PRB meeting, March 18, 2004.



## **GULF OF MEXICO PROGRAM**

### **MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING October 8-9, 2003**

Homewood Suites Hotel  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor – Poydras Room  
New Orleans, Louisiana

### **Final Agenda**

#### **Wednesday, October 8**

#### **8:00 – 9:00 State Executive Session**

9:00 Welcome and Introductions  
(Bruce Moulton/Miguel Flores)

9:15 Overview of Gulf of Mexico Program Goals and Objectives Presentations  
(Bryon Griffith)

**Purpose:** Program Workplan Review FY 2000-2003  
**Decision:** Informational

9:30 Objective 1, Subobjective 1(A): By the end of 2004, watershed restoration actions will be implemented to restore beneficial uses in 71 of the impaired coastal segments.

#### **Priority Areas:**

Lower Laguna Madre – Mary Beth Van Pelt  
Coastal Bend and Bays – Mary Beth Van Pelt  
Galveston Bay – Mary Beth Van Pelt  
Barataria-Terrebonne Bays – Fred Kopfler  
Lake Pontchartrain Basin – Fred Kopfler  
Mississippi Coastal Basins – Melanie Magee  
Mobile Bay – Bill Holland  
Pensacola Bay – Diane Altsman  
Lower Suwannee River – Larinda Tervelt  
Tampa Bay – Larinda Tervelt  
Sarasota Bay – Larinda Tervelt  
Charlotte Harbor – Larinda Tervelt



**Purpose:** Review  
**Decision:** Informational

12:30 Lunch (on your own)

1:30 Objective 2, Subobjective 2(A): The ISSC has adopted a goal of reducing *Vibrio vulnificus* 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 illnesses caused by consumption of commercially-harvested raw or undercooked oysters.

Presentation: Tom Herrington and Fred Kopfler

2:00 Objective 2, Subobjective 2(B): Assist the Gulf States in cooperation with the GSMFC in developing and implementing a scientifically sound, Gulfwide monitoring program for total mercury/methylmercury levels in fish tissue and in developing compatible fish consumption advisories and public outreach information.

Presentation: Fred Kopfler

2:30 Objective 2, Subobjective 2(C): Complete a pilot project for an early-warning system to support State and coastal community efforts to manage harmful algal blooms (HABs) by the end of 2004.

Presentation: Larinda Tervelt

3:00 Objective 3, Subobjective 3(A): Restore, enhance, or protect 2,400 acres of coastal and marine habitat each year between 2002 and 2009.

Objective 3, Subobjective 3(B): Assist in the implementation of Louisiana's Coast 2050 Plan to divert MS 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.

Presentation: Diane Altsman and Jimmy Johnston

3:30 Habitat Partnership Initiative – Coastal America and the Corporate Wetland Restoration Partnership

Bob Bosenberg - COE

4:00 Objective 4, Subobjective 4(A): Support the Action Plan for Reducing, Mitigating, and Controlling Hypoxia in the Northern Gulf of Mexico by facilitating research, monitoring, and modeling efforts that reduce uncertainties in the ecological and economic impact of hypoxia.

Objective 4, Subobjective 4(B): Support the Action Plan by assisting the States of Louisiana and Mississippi in implementing voluntary actions to reduce their annual nitrogen discharge to the Mississippi/Atchafalaya River Basin.

Presentation: Larinda Tervelt

5:00 Adjourn for Manager's Social in Homewood Suites "Lodge" on the lobby level.  
Dinner on your own.

**Thursday, October 9**

8:30 State Executive Session Report Out  
(Bruce Moulton)

**Purpose:** Provide update on State discussions.

**Decision:** Informational.

8:45 Request for Designation of Choctawhatchee Basin as GMP Priority Area

Presentation: Ross Hamilton, Executive Director  
Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance

**Purpose:** Justification for Designation for Choctawhatchee Basin as Priority Area

**Decision:** Endorsement

9:15 Objective 5, Subobjective 5(A): By 2005, achieve improved regional awareness of the value of Gulf resources, key environmental issues, and actions underway or needed to solve the problems.

Presentation: Terry Hines Smith

Objective 5, Subobjective 5(B): 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.

Presentation: Drew Puffer

10:00 Break

10:30 FY 2004 Annual Performance Goals

**Purpose:** Review and Discussion

**Decision:** Endorsement

10:45 Member's Roundtable

11:15 Review Action Items and set next meeting date

11:30 Adjourn

**GULF OF MEXICO PROGRAM  
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING  
OCTOBER 8-9, 2003**

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DRAFT

October 2003

**Gulf of Mexico Program  
Objectives, Sub-objectives, Annual Performance Goals  
Fiscal Year 2004**

<b>Objective 1:</b> 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.	
Subobjective	Annual Performance Goal
<b>1(A):</b> By the end of 2004, watershed restoration actions would be implemented to restore beneficial uses in 71 of the impaired coastal segments.	<b>1(A)(1):</b> By September 2004, the GMP will assist the Gulf States in implementing restoration actions for 14 impaired coastal segments.
<b>1(B):</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.	<b>1(B)(1):</b> 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.
<b>1(C):</b> 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.	<b>1 (C) (1):</b> 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.
<b>1(D):</b> 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.	<b>1(D)(1):</b> 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.
<b>1(E):</b> 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.	<b>1(E)(1):</b> 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.

<b>Objective 2:</b> Assist the Gulf States in protecting public health by providing information concerning contaminated seafood and early warnings of harmful algal blooms.	
<b>Subobjectives</b>	<b>Annual Performance Goals</b>
<b>2(A):</b> 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 consumption of commercially-harvested raw or undercooked oysters.	<b>2(A)(1):</b> 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.
	<b>2(A)(2):</b> 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.
<b>2(B):</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.	<b>2(B)(1):</b> Complete a Gulfwide fish tissue monitoring program for total mercury/methylmercury for important commercial and recreational marine and estuarine species where data is lacking.
	<b>2(B)(2):</b> 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.
	<b>2(B)(3):</b> Provide support for Mercury Database update and facilitate securing web site accessibility of web site.



<p><b>2(C):</b> By 2004 and each year thereafter, 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><b>2(C)(1):</b> Conduct a workshop in December 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><b>2 (C) (2):</b> 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>

**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.

Sub-objectives	Annual Performance Goals
<p><b>3(A):</b> Restore, enhance, or protect 2,400 acres each year between 2002 and 2009.</p>	<p><b>3(A)(1):</b> By September 2004, initiate projects to restore, enhance, or protect 2,400 acres of coastal and marine habitat.</p>
<p><b>3(B):</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><b>3(B)(1):</b> 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 removal.</p>
<p><b>3(C):</b> 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.</p>	<p><b>3(C)1:</b> By September 2004, provide invasive species management planning assistance to one additional Gulf State (extension of actions taken in FY 2001).</p>

<b>Objective 4:</b> 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.	
<b>Sub-objectives</b>	<b>Annual Performance Goals</b>
<b>4(A):</b> 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.	<b>4(A)(1):</b> 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.
<b>4(B):</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 Mississippi/Atchafalaya River basin.	<b>4(B)(1):</b> Support efforts through the Lower Mississippi River Sub-basin Committee to develop 3 pilot watershed restoration demonstration projects involving nutrient reduction actions that can be transferred to other sub-basins.
	<b>4(B)(2):</b> Support the <i>Action Plan</i> 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.
<b>Objective 5:</b> 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.	
<b>5(A):</b> 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.	<b>5(A)(1):</b> By December 2003, conduct 4 <sup>th</sup> annual Gulf Guardian Awards Program.
	<b>5(A)(2):</b> By December 2004, prepare and distribute news releases for all projects funded in 2003 and 2004.
	<b>5(A)(3):</b> Highlights and successes of the GMP projects updated quarterly on the GMPO web site and coordinated with partner web sites.

	<b>5(A)(4):</b> 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.
	<b>5(A)(5):</b> In FY 2004, Communications Committee members will be integrated into all GMP Project Teams.
<b>5(B):</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.	<b>5(B)(1):</b> 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.
	<b>5(B)(2):</b> In FY2004, CAC members will review GMP products, Gulf Guardian applications, and will communicate with Governors= Offices and Congressional members/constituencies.
	<b>5(B)(3):</b> 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.