



Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Gulf Hypoxia Program



Background

[The Hypoxia Task Force](#) (HTF) was established in 1997 to reduce the size of the low-oxygen, hypoxic zone in the northern Gulf of Mexico. The Task Force is a federal, state, and tribal collaborative and voluntary partnership that works with other partners, including multi-state “sub-basin” committees and a land grant university consortium (known as Southern Extension Research Activity-46 (SERA-46)) to implement the [Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan](#). A key goal of the Action Plan is to decrease the size of the hypoxic zone in the northern Gulf of Mexico. To achieve this goal, the HTF works to reduce excess nitrogen and phosphorus loads into waterways of the Mississippi/Atchafalaya River Basin (MARB). [State Nutrient Reduction Strategies](#) are the cornerstone of the HTF’s activities.

The Gulf Hypoxia Program (GHP) is funded through the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), which provides \$60 million over five years for EPA to issue grants to advance the goals of the Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan. The BIL provides, for the first time, funding specifically authorized to implement the Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan. This historic investment will allow the HTF states, tribes and key partners to make significant strides towards achieving the goals of the HTF’s Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan.

Consistent with the goals of the Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan, EPA will focus on the following priorities:

- Supporting states as they scale up implementation of their nutrient reduction strategies;
- Supporting tribes in leveraging existing nutrient reduction strategies or developing new ones to advance HTF goals;
- Advancing multi-state collaboration through support for multi-state organizations that will help to achieve the goals of the Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan;
- Documenting and communicating progress towards HTF goals at the Basin scale;
- Advancing research in support of nutrient reduction strategies; and
- Leveraging resources and coordinating with other federal, foundation, state, and tribal programs.

The following priorities are consistent with EPA’s overall implementation of the BIL:

- Ensuring that GHP benefits are realized by disadvantaged communities;
- Advance water quality actions that have climate adaptation or mitigation co-benefits;
- Fully enforcing civil rights;
- Supporting the American worker and build a strong conservation workforce; and
- Supporting domestic manufacturing.

Funding Distribution

EPA will award most of the BIL funding to states through cooperative agreements. EPA also intends to make modest awards to eligible tribes and to key partners of the HTF: multi-state sub-basin committees, and a land grant university (LGU) consortium. The following table describes how BIL funding for the GHP will be distributed to partners.

	FY 22 \$	FY 23 \$	FY 24 \$	FY 25 \$	FY 26 \$
Total State Base	11,580,000	8,980,000	8,980,000	8,980,000	11,580,000
Each of 12 States	965,000	748,333	748,333	748,333	965,000
Eligible Tribes ¹	0	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	0
Sub-Basin Committees	0	400,000	400,000	400,000	0
LGU Consortium	0	200,000	200,000	200,000	0
EPA 3% Set Aside	360,000	360,000	360,000	360,000	360,000
EPA 0.5% Inspector General Set Aside	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000

Eligible Activities

EPA guidance notes that state workplans must support the following five strategic outcomes:

- Supporting staff to implement the workplan;
- Reducing nonpoint source nutrient pollution as articulated in state strategies;
- Prioritizing and targeting watersheds with the greatest opportunities for nutrient reductions;
- Collaborating across state boundaries with HTF partners; and
- Using state-level water quality programs and actions to better support nutrient reductions.

More Information

Read more about the BIL at <https://www.epa.gov/infrastructure/bipartisan-infrastructure-law-fact-sheets>, and for more information on water investments, see <https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2021-11/e-ow-bid-fact-sheet-final.508.pdf>

¹ Eligible tribes are the 21 federally recognized Indian tribes that have Indian country in the MARB parts of the 12 HTF state area with current CWA 106, 319, and/or GAP program grants.