

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law: Gulf Hypoxia Program State Workplan Summaries March 2022

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provides a historic \$50 billion in funding for (EPA) to support states and Tribes investing in clean and safe water. For the first time, this funding will allow EPA to invest in strategies to improve water quality in the Mississippi River and Atchafalaya River Basin and the Gulf of Mexico and to reduce the hypoxia zone in the northern Gulf. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provides \$60 million for actions that support the Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Watershed Nutrient Task Force's Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan, with \$12 million per year for five years. Most of this funding is going to the 12 Task Force member states as Cooperative Agreements, this Fact Sheet summarizes each of the states' first workplan under the Gulf Hypoxia Program (GHP).

Arkansas

Title: Arkansas Implementation of 2022 Nutrient Reduction Strategy

Organization: Arkansas Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Division

Funding: \$1,713,333; 5-year workplan

Project Description: Arkansas proposes to utilize the first two years of GHP funding to implement goals and strategies identified in the recently updated Arkansas Nutrient Reduction Strategy (ANRS). Additionally, the 2022 ANRS updated how the state will prioritize watersheds (i.e., Tiers) for nutrient reduction—Tier 1 (Maximum Focus), Tier 2 (Focus for Reduction, but needs monitoring data), and all other watersheds (Tier 3 and 4). Projects implemented will focus on water quality monitoring and conservation practice implementation in Tier 1 and Tier 2 watersheds.

Illinois

Title: Advancing Implementation of the Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy

Organization: Illinois Environmental Protection Agency

Funding: \$1,713,333; 3.5-year workplan

Project Description: The Illinois workplan includes seven projects that will advance the implementation of the Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy by creating new initiatives and scaling up existing programs. Projects include water quality monitoring in surface and groundwater, agriculture conservation practice implementation, watershed education and outreach, data metrics collection, and nutrient strategy update and reporting, with an emphasis on benefiting disadvantaged communities.

Indiana

Title: Staffing Capacity, Soil Sampling, Science Assessment

Organization: Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA), Division of Soil Conservation

Funding: \$1,713,333; 3-year workplan

Project Description: The Indiana State Department of Agriculture is proposing to hire a staff person to help manage these new BIL dollars, and to provide support with the State Nutrient Reduction Strategy

efforts. This staff person will manage and coordinate the soil sampling program that will be developed under this work plan and coordinate other on-farm trial programs. These programs will aim to increase the frequency in which landowners do soil sampling as well as improve nutrient use efficiency. ISDA is also proposing the creation of the Indiana Nutrient Research & Education Program that will focus on the work of the Indiana Science Assessment. This program will allow for continued management and research analysis under Indiana's Science Assessment to determine conservation practices' efficiency in improving water quality.

Iowa

Title: Expanding the Network of Iowa Conservation Agronomists

Organization: Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship

Funding: \$2,060,880; 4-year workplan

Project Description: This project will support implementation efforts of the Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy and advance the Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan by promoting the voluntary adoption of proven nutrient reduction practices on private lands that also provide multiple benefits (wildlife habitat, carbon sequestration, etc.). The project will focus on expanding an innovative approach to leverage farmers' trusted advisors to identify, plan, and support implementing these practices in priority watersheds. This approach is critical in providing additional capacity to reach additional farmers and provides a more efficient and streamlined approach to connecting with and delivering these practices.

Kentucky

Title: Nutrient Staffing & Implementation

Organization: Kentucky Division of Water

Funding: \$1,713,333; 4-year workplan

Brief Project Description: Kentucky's Nutrient Staffing & Implementation (NSI) workplan will provide staffing for grant administration, nutrient reduction strategy deployment, and nutrient management planning. Additionally, the workplan will prioritize nutrient investments in municipal stormwater and wastewater treatment systems and increase funding for agriculture conservation practices. Funding will expand outreach and marketing of Kentucky's new Agriculture Water Quality Act Planning Tool and fill gaps in Kentucky's stream gaging network.

Louisiana

Title: Louisiana Nutrient Reduction & Management Strategy Implementation

Organization: Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality

Funding: \$1,713,333; 3-year workplan

Brief Project Description: This workplan will target implementing agricultural best management practices within prioritized tracts in northeast Louisiana and will conduct transect monitoring in coastal Louisiana. Best management practices will be targeted within the Lake St. Joseph and Cypress Bayou watersheds to reduce agriculture-induced nutrient loading and provide other water quality improvements. Coastal monitoring will occur along a transect extending from Barataria Pass, Louisiana, to the inner shelf of the Gulf to inform the interactive effects of multiple ecosystem change drivers (e.g., restoration, riverine nutrient loading, hypoxia, climate change) on living resources in the Gulf.

Minnesota

Title: Minnesota Improving Strategic Directions to Reduce Nutrients Entering Rivers Flowing to the Gulf of Mexico

Organization: Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Funding: \$1,713,333; 3-year workplan

Brief Project Description: Minnesota's work plan focuses on eight areas integral to Minnesota's nutrient reduction goals. This work will set strategic directions for scaling up the most critical agricultural best management practices to achieve the remaining nutrient reduction goals at the state lines and at the upstream watershed outlets. Point source nitrogen reduction management plan templates will be developed for use at the highest priority municipal wastewater facilities. Priority watersheds will be mapped, and tools for local watershed nutrient reduction planning will be made more effective. Minnesota's Nutrient Reduction Strategy and tracking system will be updated to achieve and track nutrient reductions through 2035 more effectively.

Mississippi

Title: Gulf Hypoxia Program Workplan

Organization: Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality

Funding: \$1,713,333; 5-year workplan

Project Description: Included within this workplan are the projects planned for completion using FY22 and FY23 GHP funds. This first set of GHP funded activities focuses heavily on collecting data and building tools that can help Mississippi establish a strong foundation for making management decisions. Specifically, these activities will support program staffing, characterize delivered nitrogen loads to the Mississippi River (background nutrient contribution), estimate load reductions achieved through implementation conservation practices using data from 2008- present (load reductions achieved), and build a new biological response metric that can help measure success of nutrient reduction activities (success measure).

Missouri

Title: Missouri Nutrient Reduction Progress

Organization: Missouri Department of Natural Resources

Funding: \$2,461,666, 5-year workplan

Project Description: Missouri Department of Natural Resources' Water Protection Program, as the curator of the Missouri Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy, will implement five separate projects under GHP workplan that achieve actions promised under the state's nutrient strategy. Project deliverables include the development of a statewide nutrient progress tracking dashboard, expansion of water quality monitoring capabilities at stations on three of the state's largest rivers, studying municipal wastewater nutrient removal optimization, investment in gulf hypoxia public outreach and education, and the funding of an academic study to evaluate nutrient reduction effectiveness for a selection of common agricultural best management practices.

Ohio

Title: 2022 Ohio EPA Gulf Hypoxia Assistance

Organization: Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, Division of Surface Water

Funding: \$1,713,333; 2-year workplan

Project Description: This multi-component project consists of:

- Increasing training and technical staff available for planning and designing management and structural practices that reduce agricultural nutrient loading;
- Assessing home septic treatment systems maintenance and disposal of septage;
- Increasing watershed-based planning to develop implementation projects;
- Updating Ohio's Nutrient Reduction Strategy;
- Measuring effectiveness of cascading waterways and/or other innovative practices so that they may be utilized in concert with USDA efforts;
- Increasing staff assigned to Ohio River Basin implementation strategies and evaluation of nutrient reduction strategy; and
- Maintaining and continuing water quality monitoring at three newly established monitoring network gages in the Ohio River Basin.

Tennessee

Title: State of Tennessee Work plan FY 22 and FY 23

Organization: Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC)

Funding: \$1,713,333; 2-year workplan

Project Description: The success of Tennessee's nutrient reduction strategy relies on controlling point sources where TDEC has regulatory authority and working with the agriculture sector to reduce nonpoint sources through incentives, public meetings, outreach, and education. Based on comments from the Tennessee Taskforce, four work products will leverage resources and coordination with federal partners, advance research and communicate progress of nutrient reductions, advance multi-state collaboration, and scale up implementation of Tennessee's nutrient reduction strategy. TDEC and TDA will initiate public meetings for specific programs and initiatives. Major components of this workplan include:

- Nutrient load monitoring, flow gaging and sampling;
- Nutrient optimization of municipal wastewater facilities;
- Nutrient loss reduction with cover crops in priority watersheds; and
- Research support.

Wisconsin

Title: Wisconsin Nutrient Reduction Strategy Implementation

Organizational: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Funding: \$1,713,333, 3-year workplan

Project Description: Wisconsin proposes to use Gulf Hypoxia Program funds to support implementation, coordination, and reporting of the state Nutrient Reduction Strategy. Wisconsin intends to fund innovative practices and pilot projects to reduce agricultural nonpoint source nutrient losses, expand support for key initiatives related to agriculture and water quality, and improve state capability to track, report, and demonstrate progress.