



Hypoxia literally means “low oxygen.” Hypoxic water bodies are depleted of dissolved oxygen, which is the amount of free oxygen dissolved in the water. When hypoxia occurs, dissolved oxygen has become so low that it can no longer support life. Hypoxia is now recognized as one of the most crucial environmental problems worldwide. In the Gulf of Mexico, hypoxic events are known as the “Dead Zone” and have been increasing in frequency and size.

NOAA and its partners are leading efforts to understand, predict, and ultimately reduce hypoxic events and their effects on ecosystems and coastal communities. NOAA’s National Coastal Data Development Center supports these efforts and works with the NOAA’s Center for Sponsored Coastal Ocean Research’s Gulf of Mexico Ecosystems & Hypoxia Assessment Program, the Gulf of Mexico Monitoring Stakeholder Committee, and the Gulf of Mexico Alliance Nutrients & Nutrient Impacts Priority Issue Team.

The National Coastal Data Development Center is also a partner in the Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Watch. This cooperative project develops near real-time data and map products during the annual Southeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program (SEAMAP) summer shipboard survey of fish in the Gulf of Mexico. During the two-week SEAMAP cruise, a scientist aboard the ship processes the measurements from electronic dissolved oxygen sensors, verifies the measurements, and sends the data electronically to the National Coastal Data Development Center. The Center’s staff then transforms the measurements into maps that identify areas of hypoxia. As the Center generates new maps during the cruise, they are immediately published on the Internet for the public to view. The environmental data gathered during the annual cruises will help scientists understand the effects of the physical environment on fish and other marine organisms.

Hypoxia Watch Interactive Map

The Hypoxia Watch Interactive Map Service provides near real-time data on hypoxic conditions in the Gulf of Mexico during June and July

Participants and Partners:

- NOAA’s Center for Sponsored Coastal Ocean Research
- NOAA’s National Marine Fisheries Service, Stennis Space Center & Pascagoula, MS
- Coastwatch – Caribbean/Gulf of Mexico Regional Node
- The Northern Gulf Institute
- The Gulf of Mexico Alliance

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