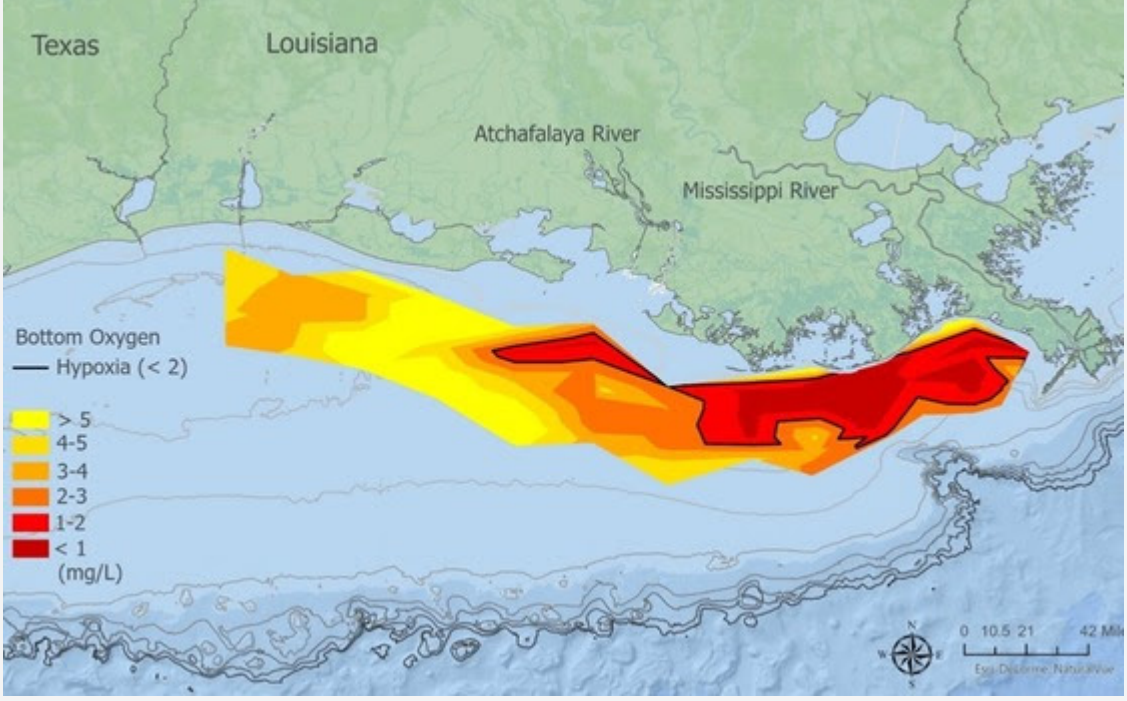
News from the National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) formed the National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS) in 1999 as the focal point for NOAA's coastal ocean science efforts. We provide coastal managers with the scientific information necessary to decide how best to protect environmental resources and public health, preserve valued habitats, and improve the way communities interact with coastal ecosystems.

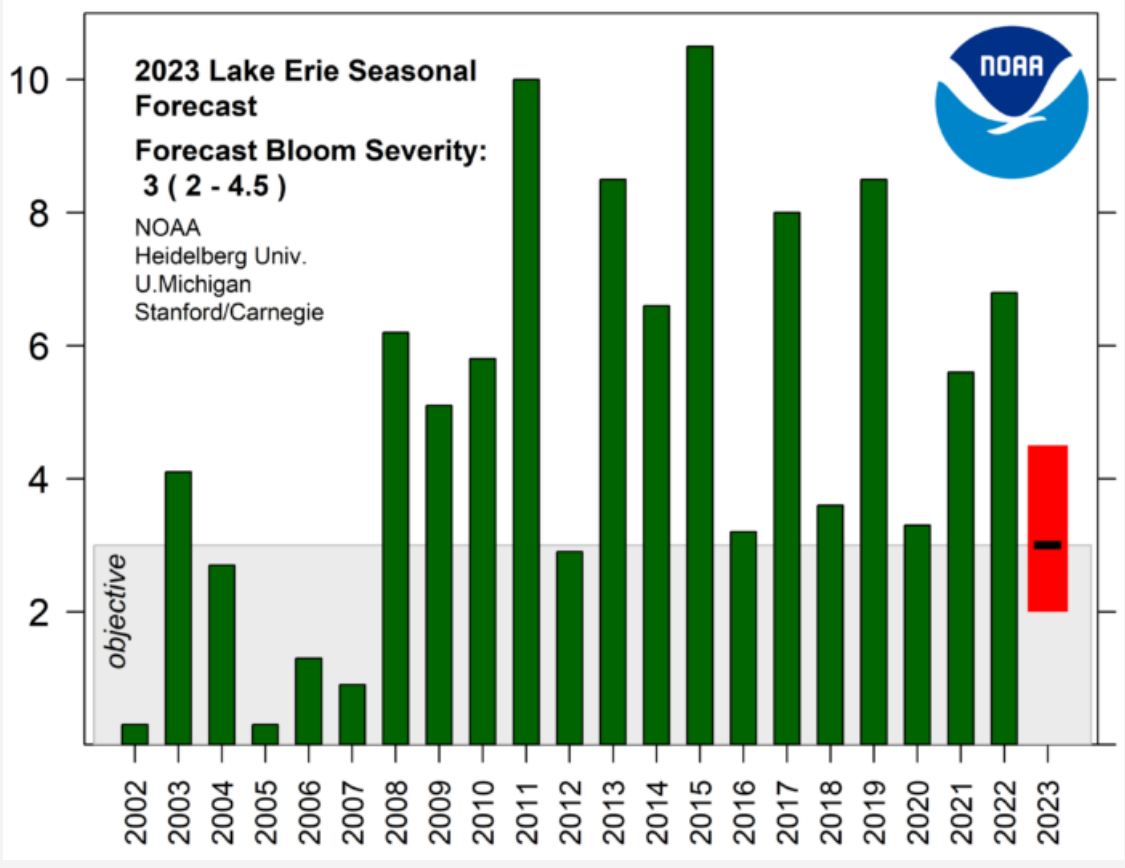
NCCOS now has an **Instagram** account! This expanded social media presence will help us show and tell new audiences how our ecosystem science solutions sustain thriving coastal communities and economies.

Stay up to date on all that we do by following us on **Instagram**, **Facebook**, **Twitter**, **YouTube**, and the **NCCOS website**.

Below Average Summer 2023 'Dead Zone' Measured in Gulf of Mexico
NCCOS-supported scientists have determined that this year's Gulf of Mexico "dead zone" — an area of low oxygen that can kill fish and marine life — is approximately 3,058 square miles, equivalent to more than two million acres of habitat potentially unavailable to fish and bottom species. Continue reading



Smaller Harmful Algal Bloom Predicted for Western Lake Erie in Summer 2023
NOAA and its research partners are forecasting that western Lake Erie will experience a smaller-than-average harmful algal bloom this summer. Continue reading

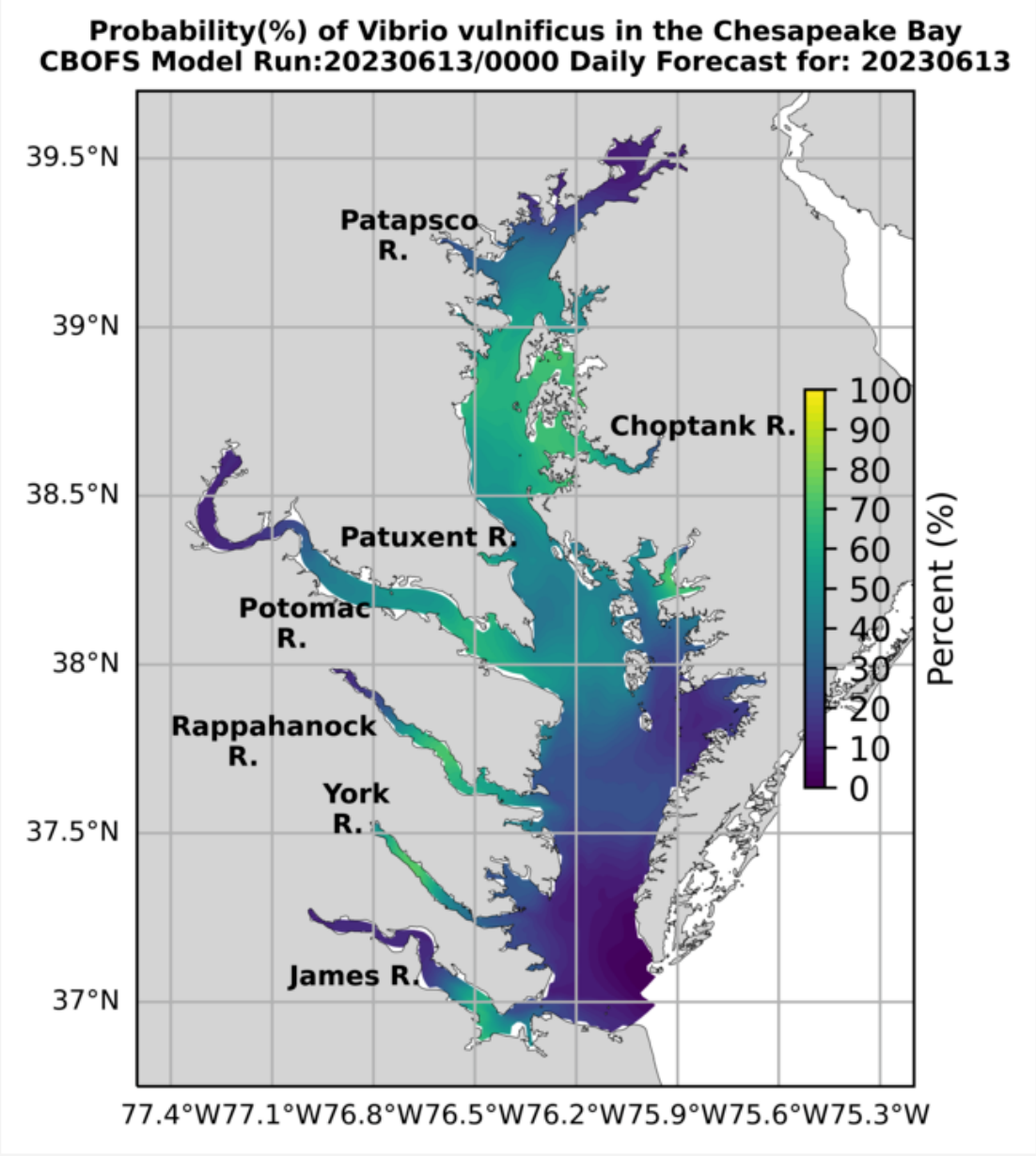


Owner of Puerto Rico Superfund Site Agrees to Contamination Clean Up
This spring, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reached an agreement with Guanica-Caribe Land Development Corporation to remove contaminated soil from the

Ochoa Fertilizer Company “Superfund” site in Guánica, Puerto Rico. Environmental contamination originally reported by NCCOS scientists ultimately led EPA to add the site to its National Priority List for contamination clean up — commonly known as the Superfund program. Continue reading

Forecast Predicts Occurrence of Pathogenic Vibrio Bacteria in Chesapeake Bay Waters

NOAA produces a forecast that tells public health officials in Maryland and Virginia when and where the pathogenic *Vibrio vulnificus* bacteria is most likely to occur in Chesapeake Bay. Continue reading



NCCOS to Support Spatial Analysis for NOAA Aquaculture Opportunity Area Efforts in Alaska

In an effort to boost Alaska's blue economy and cultivate a thriving domestic seaweed and shellfish aquaculture industry, NOAA Fisheries, in partnership with the state of Alaska, have announced Alaska's state waters as the next region to look for Aquaculture Opportunity Areas (AOAs). Continue reading

Atmospheric River Storms Threaten Communities and Economies, But May Enhance Marsh Resilience

Atmospheric rivers — also known as "rivers in the sky" — are long, narrow bands of concentrated water vapor that can produce high winds and massive amounts of snow and rain when they make landfall. The storms they produce have been double-edged phenomena in California this winter, creating devastating flooding and mudslides, but also replenishing freshwater reservoirs in the drought-stricken state. New NCCOS-funded research shows that atmospheric river storms may have another benefit: marsh building. Continue reading

Autonomous Underwater Vehicle Collects Imagery to Evaluate Coral Restoration Effort

Mission: Iconic Reefs is the largest coral restoration project for U.S. coral reefs to date. Seven reefs spanning the reef tract in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (FKNMS) will be restored over the twenty year lifespan of the project, launched in 2019. It is critical to evaluate how this restoration work is changing coral populations and reef communities, both to measure the progress of restoration and to inform potential improvements in restoration methods and approaches. Continue reading

Microplastics in Deep-sea Stomachs: Study Finds Plastic Eaten by Fish and Crustaceans Increases with Depth in the Gulf of Mexico

Below the surface of the Gulf of Mexico, up to 5,000 feet deep, as light fades into dark ocean waters, tiny particles of plastic rain down, showering the water column and settling in sediments on the ocean floor. Small fish and crustaceans dine on these microplastics, which are often slathered in colonies of bacteria. And in a surprising twist: the deeper they live, the more plastic these tiny animals eat. Continue reading

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