

“Long Island Sound Nitrogen Reduction - An Ongoing EPA Priority”

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Nitrogen reduction efforts in the Long Island Sound over the past two decades have been viewed as very successful. Over 40 million pounds of nitrogen have been kept out of the system through upgrades to wastewater treatment plants alone with additional reductions in atmospheric deposition and reduced agricultural loadings. In many cases, the dissolved oxygen in the system is responding positively. However, current projections indicate that even with the full implementation of the reductions agreed to in by EPA and the states in 2000, portions of the Sound will not meet water quality standards. In addition, issues such as harmful algal blooms, excess growth of macro algae and low dissolved oxygen conditions in coastal embayments around the Sound need attention. Several county, state and federal efforts have developed recently to evaluate these issues, including the recently released Long Island Sound Nutrient Strategy. This presentation will review the current water quality conditions in the Sound and highlight future actions that are being considered.