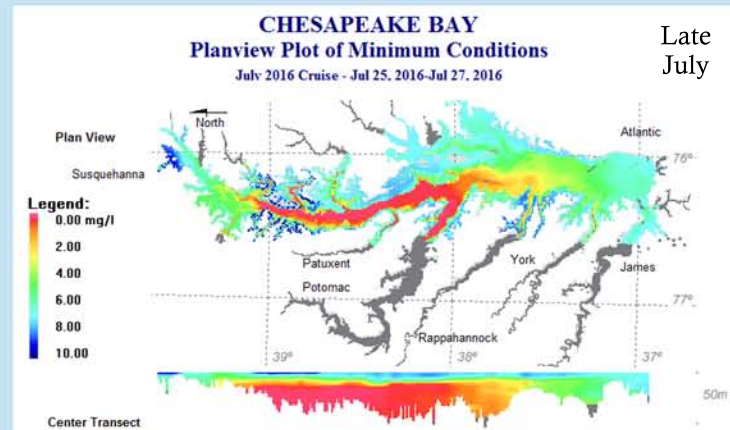
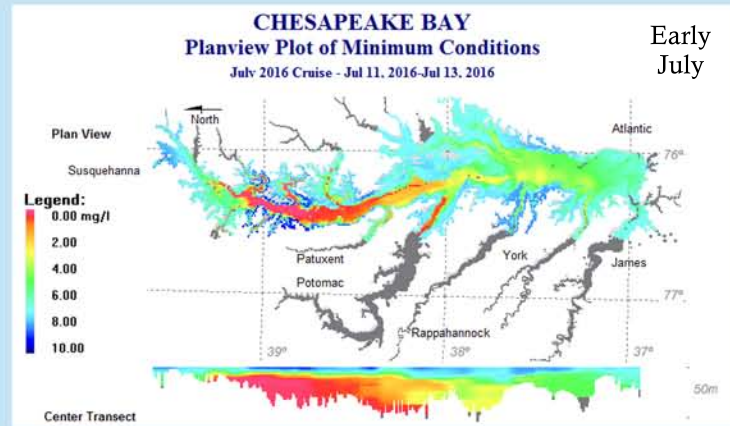
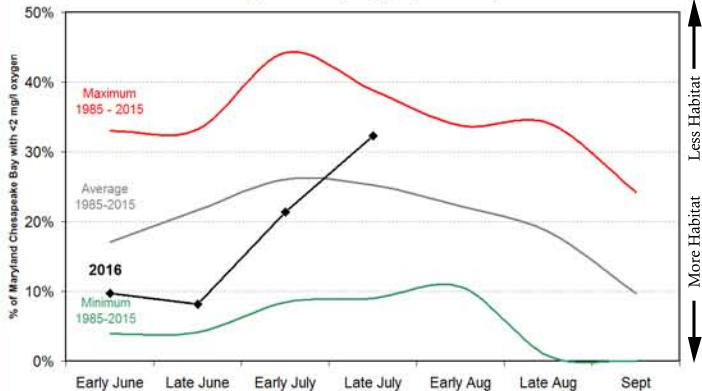


Dissolved oxygen conditions in the Maryland Chesapeake Bay mainstem were the seventh worst since 1985 for the late July period. The hypoxic water volume (areas below 2 mg/l oxygen) was approximately 1.65 cubic miles, which is greater than the late July 1985-2015 average of 1.29 cubic miles. No anoxic zones (areas below 0.2 mg/l) were detected. A prolonged heat wave likely exacerbated low oxygen conditions, as warmer waters hold and mix less oxygen. A lack of significant winds also prevented surface oxygen from mixing to bottom waters. Hypoxia extended south of the Patuxent and Potomac rivers over the past two weeks.

In the beginning of June, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, United States Geological Survey, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science and University of Michigan scientists predicted a close to average sized hypoxic volume for the bay due to lower spring flows (January-May) and nitrogen loading from the Susquehanna and Potomac rivers.



Percentage of Water in Maryland's Mainstem Chesapeake Bay Below 2 mg/l Oxygen (1985-2015)



For more information:

- Maryland Department of Natural Resources - Our Waters Page. dnr.maryland.gov/waters
- Press Release for the 2016 Chesapeake Bay Hypoxic Zone Forecast. 1.usa.gov/28QHmEc

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This document is available in alternative format upon request from a qualified individual with disability.

Crabs, fish, oysters and other creatures in the Chesapeake Bay require oxygen to survive. Scientists and natural resource managers study the volume and duration of bay hypoxia to determine possible impacts to bay life.

Each year (June-September), the Maryland Department of Natural Resources computes these volumes from data collected by Maryland and Virginia monitoring teams. Data collection is funded by these states and the Environmental Protection Agency's Chesapeake Bay Program. Bay hypoxia monitoring and reporting will continue through September.

Posted: July 20, 2016

