



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, GALVESTON DISTRICT  
2000 FORT POINT ROAD  
GALVESTON TEXAS 77550

CESWG-RD-C

March 26, 2024

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Pre-2015 Regulatory Regime  
Approved Jurisdictional Determination in Light of *Sackett v. EPA*, 143 S. Ct. 1322  
(2023),<sup>1</sup> SWG-2023-00466<sup>2</sup>

BACKGROUND. An Approved Jurisdictional Determination (AJD) is a Corps document stating the presence or absence of waters of the United States on a parcel or a written statement and map identifying the limits of waters of the United States on a parcel. AJDs are clearly designated appealable actions and will include a basis of JD with the document.<sup>3</sup> AJDs are case-specific and are typically made in response to a request. AJDs are valid for a period of five years unless new information warrants revision of the determination before the expiration date or a District Engineer has identified, after public notice and comment, that specific geographic areas with rapidly changing environmental conditions merit re-verification on a more frequent basis.<sup>4</sup> For the purposes of this AJD, we have relied on section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (RHA),<sup>5</sup> the Clean Water Act (CWA) implementing regulations published by the Department of the Army in 1986 and amended in 1993 (references 2.a. and 2.b. respectively), the 2008 *Rapanos-Carabell* guidance (reference 2.c.), and other applicable guidance, relevant case law and longstanding practice, (collectively the pre-2015 regulatory regime), and the *Sackett* decision (reference 2.d.) in evaluating jurisdiction.

This Memorandum for Record (MFR) constitutes the basis of jurisdiction for a Corps AJD as defined in 33 CFR §331.2. The features addressed in this AJD were evaluated consistent with the definition of "waters of the United States" found in the pre-2015 regulatory regime and consistent with the Supreme Court's decision in *Sackett*. This AJD did not rely on the 2023 "Revised Definition of 'Waters of the United States,'" as

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<sup>1</sup> While the Supreme Court's decision in *Sackett* had no effect on some categories of waters covered under the CWA, and no effect on any waters covered under RHA, all categories are included in this Memorandum for Record for efficiency.

<sup>2</sup> When documenting aquatic resources within the review area that are jurisdictional under the Clean Water Act (CWA), use an additional MFR and group the aquatic resources on each MFR based on the TNW, interstate water, or territorial seas that they are connected to. Be sure to provide an identifier to indicate when there are multiple MFRs associated with a single AJD request (i.e., number them 1, 2, 3, etc.).

<sup>3</sup> 33 CFR 331.2.

<sup>4</sup> Regulatory Guidance Letter 05-02.

<sup>5</sup> USACE has authority under both Section 9 and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 but for convenience, in this MFR, jurisdiction under RHA will be referred to as Section 10.

amended on September 8, 2023 (Amended 2023 Rule) because, as of the date of this decision, the Amended 2023 Rule is not applicable in this state due to litigation.

## 1. SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS.

- a. Provide a list of each individual feature within the review area and the jurisdictional status of each one (i.e., identify whether each feature is/is not a water of the United States and/or a navigable water of the United States).

**Table 1: Features and type within Review Area**

Feature Name	Latitude/ Longitude	Size (AC)	Feature Type	Jurisdiction
Pond 1	30.00772° N -95.346758° W	0.35	Manmade pond	Non-Adjacent / Non-Jurisdictional
Wetland 1	30.011571° N -95.339321° W	0.30	Wetland	Non-Adjacent / Non-Jurisdictional
Wetland 2	30.012613° N -95.340464° W	0.16	Wetland	Non-Adjacent / Non-Jurisdictional
Wetland 3	30.013063° N -95.343453° W	0.01	Wetland	Non-Adjacent / Non-Jurisdictional
Wetland 4	30.011112° N -95.339913° W	0.41	Wetland	Non-Adjacent / Non-Jurisdictional
Wetland 5	30.010899° N -95.341545° W	0.02	Wetland	Non-Adjacent / Non-Jurisdictional
Wetland 6	30.010598° N -95.344176° W	0.53	Wetland	Non-Adjacent / Non-Jurisdictional
Wetland 7	30.012815° N -95.347186° W	0.12	Wetland	Non-Adjacent / Non-Jurisdictional
Wetland 8	30.010989° N -95.334313° W	3.88	Wetland	Non-Adjacent / Non-Jurisdictional
Wetland 9	30.010928° N -95.330804° W	0.55	Wetland	Non-Adjacent / Non-Jurisdictional
Wetland 10	30.011281° N -95.336537° W	0.36	Wetland	Non-Adjacent / Non-Jurisdictional
Wetland 11	30.011907° N -95.338210° W	1.69	Wetland	Non-Adjacent / Non-Jurisdictional

## 2. REFERENCES.

- a. Final Rule for Regulatory Programs of the Corps of Engineers, 51 FR 41206 (November 13, 1986).
- b. Clean Water Act Regulatory Programs, 58 FR 45008 (August 25, 1993).



- c. U.S. EPA & U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Clean Water Act Jurisdiction Following the U.S. Supreme Court's Decision in *Rapanos v. United States & Carabell v. United States* (December 2, 2008)
  - d. *Sackett v. EPA*, 598 U.S. \_\_\_, 143 S. Ct. 1322 (2023)
3. REVIEW AREA. The 151-acre review area is located north of George Bush Intercontinental Airport approximately 800 feet east of the intersection of Farm to Market 1960 Road East and Farrell Road in Houston, Harris County, Texas.
- LATITUDE/LONGITUDE (Decimal Degrees): Center,  
Latitude: 30.011964° N; Longitude: -95.340305° W
4. NEAREST TRADITIONAL NAVIGABLE WATER (TNW), INTERSTATE WATER, OR THE TERRITORIAL SEAS TO WHICH THE AQUATIC RESOURCE IS CONNECTED. N/A
5. FLOWPATH FROM THE SUBJECT AQUATIC RESOURCES TO A TNW, INTERSTATE WATER, OR THE TERRITORIAL SEAS. N/A
6. SECTION 10 JURISDICTIONAL WATERS<sup>6</sup>: Describe aquatic resources or other features within the review area determined to be jurisdictional in accordance with Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899. Include the size of each aquatic resource or other feature within the review area and how it was determined to be jurisdictional in accordance with Section 10.<sup>7</sup> N/A
7. SECTION 404 JURISDICTIONAL WATERS: Describe the aquatic resources within the review area that were found to meet the definition of waters of the United States in accordance with the pre-2015 regulatory regime and consistent with the Supreme Court's decision in *Sackett*. List each aquatic resource separately, by name, consistent with the naming convention used in section 1, above. Include a rationale for each aquatic resource, supporting that the aquatic resource meets the relevant category of "waters of the United States" in the pre-2015 regulatory regime. The rationale should also include a written description of, or reference to a map in the

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<sup>6</sup> 33 CFR 329.9(a) A waterbody which was navigable in its natural or improved state, or which was susceptible of reasonable improvement (as discussed in § 329.8(b) of this part) retains its character as "navigable in law" even though it is not presently used for commerce, or is presently incapable of such use because of changed conditions or the presence of obstructions.

<sup>7</sup> This MFR is not to be used to make a report of findings to support a determination that the water is a navigable water of the United States. The district must follow the procedures outlined in 33 CFR part 329.14 to make a determination that water is a navigable water of the United States subject to Section 10 of the RHA.

administrative record that shows, the lateral limits of jurisdiction for each aquatic resource, including how that limit was determined, and incorporate relevant references used. Include the size of each aquatic resource in acres or linear feet and attach and reference related figures as needed.

- a. TNWs (a)(1): N/A
- b. Interstate Waters (a)(2): N/A
- c. Other Waters (a)(3): N/A
- d. Impoundments (a)(4): N/A
- e. Tributaries (a)(5): N/A
- f. The territorial seas (a)(6): N/A
- g. Adjacent wetlands (a)(7): N/A

## 8. NON-JURISDICTIONAL AQUATIC RESOURCES AND FEATURES

- a. Describe aquatic resources and other features within the review area identified as “generally non-jurisdictional” in the preamble to the 1986 regulations (referred to as “preamble waters”).<sup>8</sup> Include size of the aquatic resource or feature within the review area and describe how it was determined to be non-jurisdictional under the CWA as a preamble water.

Pond 1 (0.35-acres), located on the western side of the review area, has no connection to any of the wetlands in the review area or any non RPW. This man-made pond was excavated out of uplands, presumably for fill material, sometime during the timeframe between 1989 and 1995, per Google Earth historic aerial imagery. No wetland signature appears in the vicinity of this man-made pond.

- b. Describe aquatic resources and features within the review area identified as “generally not jurisdictional” in the *Rapanos* guidance. Include size of the aquatic resource or feature within the review area and describe how it was determined to be non-jurisdictional under the CWA based on the criteria listed in the guidance.  
N/A

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<sup>8</sup> 51 FR 41217, November 13, 1986.



- c. Describe aquatic resources and features identified within the review area as waste treatment systems, including treatment ponds or lagoons designed to meet the requirements of CWA. Include the size of the waste treatment system within the review area and describe how it was determined to be a waste treatment system. N/A
- d. Describe aquatic resources and features within the review area determined to be prior converted cropland in accordance with the 1993 regulations (reference 2.b.). Include the size of the aquatic resource or feature within the review area and describe how it was determined to be prior converted cropland. N/A
- e. Describe aquatic resources (i.e. lakes and ponds) within the review area, which do not have a nexus to interstate or foreign commerce, and prior to the January 2001 Supreme Court decision in “*SWANCC*,” would have been jurisdictional based solely on the “Migratory Bird Rule.” Include the size of the aquatic resource or feature, and how it was determined to be an “isolated water” in accordance with *SWANCC*. N/A
- f. Describe aquatic resources and features within the review area that were determined to be non-jurisdictional because they do not meet one or more categories of waters of the United States under the pre-2015 regulatory regime consistent with the Supreme Court’s decision in *Sackett* (e.g., tributaries that are non-relatively permanent waters; non-tidal wetlands that do not have a continuous surface connection to a jurisdictional water).

Eleven wetlands (totaling 8.03 acres) were identified in the review area, all of which were determined to be non-adjacent.

Based on the data sources listed in #9, we have determined these wetlands are located in a depressional area and do not connect to Turkey Creek, a relatively permanent waterway (RPW), located approximately 0.72 miles northwest, or any TNW or other waters of the United States. No more than overland sheet flow would exit the wetlands. Some mapped wetlands, located south of delineated Wetlands 4, 5 and 6, extend out of the forested area and into the mowed, 300-foot wide swath located along the property’s southern boundary. NWI indicated some mapped wetlands, located south of delineated Wetlands 8 and 9, could extend out of the review area. A combination of aerial imagery and DEM analyses confirmed these wetlands (Wetlands 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9) do not extend out of the review area as the NWI indicated. Therefore, the one continuous wetland approach was used for Wetlands 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9 to see if the wetlands extended, but is not applicable.

Therefore, the 11 wetlands do not meet the definition of adjacent as defined in the pre-2015 regime post *Sackett* guidance and are not waters of the United States subject to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

A Digital Elevation Model (DEM) for this area depicts a man-made ditch near the southwest corner of the property. This man-made ditch does not connect to the review area and does not drain the review area due to the 300-foot wide swath of upland area along the property's southern border that has been mowed and maintained for approximately 20 years. On the other side of the maintained, 300-foot wide swath is a road. On the northern side of the property, the roadside ditch is separated from the review area by a berm created during a utility (natural gas) easement installation.

9. DATA SOURCES. List sources of data/information used in making determination. Include titles and dates of sources used and ensure that information referenced is available in the administrative record.
  - a. Desk Review: November 17, 2023
  - b. Site Visit: February 1, 2024
  - c. Site visit photos: February 1, 2024
  - d. USACE. Antecedent Precipitation Tool (APT). Accessed February 16, 2024
  - e. Maps, plans, plots, and data submitted by or on behalf of the applicant consultant: Wetland delineation report received April 5, 2023
  - f. Aerial Photos: Google Earth Aerial Imagery (1978-2023)
  - g. United States Department of Interior (DOI), Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), National Wetland Inventory (NWI); FWS NWI ESRI Layer. Accessed February 15, 2024
  - h. United State Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Soil Survey Geographic Database (SSURGO) Esri Layer. Accessed February 15, 2024
  - i. United States Geological Survey Topographic Maps; Accessed February 15, 2024

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- j. NOAA Digital Coast, Data Access Viewer: 2018 Texas Water Development Board (TWBD) LiDAR and Digital Elevation Model (DEM): Coastal Texas. Accessed February 16, 2024
- k. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). 1987. Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual, by Environmental Laboratory. Wetlands Research Program Technical Report Y-87-1 (on-line edition). Washington, DC.
- l. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). 2010. Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Atlantic Gulf Coastal Plains (Version 2.0). Washington, DC.

10. OTHER SUPPORTING INFORMATION. N/A

11. NOTE: The structure and format of this MFR were developed in coordination with the EPA and Department of the Army. The MFR's structure and format may be subject to future modification or may be rescinded as needed to implement additional guidance from the agencies; however, the approved jurisdictional determination described herein is a final agency action.



**SWG-2023-00466**

Approved Jurisdictional Determination Request

North of George Bush Intercontinental Airport, approximately 800 feet east of Farm to Market 19060 Road East and Farrell Road  
30.011964° N, -95.340305° W  
Houston, Harris County, Texas

Google Earth Aerial April 2023  
Wetland Delineation Map


**Legend**

- Pond 1 (0.35-acres)
- Review Area (151-acres)
- Wetland 1 (0.30-acres)
- Wetland 10 (0.36-acres)
- Wetland 11 (1.69-acres)
- Wetland 2 (0.16-acres)
- Wetland 3 (0.01-acres)
- Wetland 4 (0.41-acres)
- Wetland 5 (0.02-acres)
- Wetland 6 (0.53-acres)
- Wetland 7 (0.12-acres)
- Wetland 8 (3.88-acres)
- Wetland 9 (0.55-acres)





**Legend**

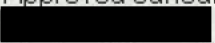
 Review Area (151-acres)

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North of George Bush Intercontinental Airport, approximately 800 feet east of Farm to Market 1960 Road East and Farrell Road  
30.011964° N, -95.340305° W  
Houston, Harris County, Texas

Google Earth Aerial June 2023  
Vicinity Map

