APPROVED JURISDICTIONAL DETERMINATION FORM U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

This form should be completed by following the instructions provided in Section IV of the JD Form Instructional Guidebook.

SECTION I: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A. REPORT COMPLETION DATE FOR APPROVED JURISDICTIONAL DETERMINATION (JD): 06 November 2017

B. DISTRICT OFFICE, FILE NAME, AND NUMBER: Galveston District, SWG-2015-00400, 130-acre Site, 6 Mile Segment Highway 105, Waters of the United States, Montgomery and Dobbin, Montgomery County, Texas

C. PROJECT LOCATION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

State: Texas County/Parish: Montgomery City: Montgomery to Dobbin

Center coordinates of site (lat/long in degree decimal format, NAD-83): Lat. See Table 1. °N, Long. °W;

Universal Transverse Mercator: UTM: 15N, See Table 1. N., E., NAD: 83

Name of nearest water body: Town Creek and Lake Creek

Name of nearest Traditional Navigable Water (TNW) into which the aquatic resource flows: Lake Creek

Name of watershed or Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC): West Fork San Jacinto River - 12040101

Check if map/diagram of review area and/or potential jurisdictional areas is/are available upon request.

Check if other sites (e.g., offsite mitigation sites, disposal sites, etc...) are associated with this action and are recorded on a different JD form.

D. REVIEW PERFORMED FOR SITE EVALUATION (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY):

Office (Desk) Determination. Date: 12 October 2017

Field Determination. Date(s): 10 May 2017

SECTION II: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

A. RHA SECTION 10 DETERMINATION OF JURISDICTION.

There **Are no** *"navigable waters of the U.S."* within Rivers and Harbors Act (RHA) jurisdiction (as defined by 33 CFR part 329) in the review area. [*Required*]

Waters subject to the ebb and flow of the tide.

Waters are presently used, or have been used in the past, or may be susceptible for use to transport interstate or foreign commerce. Explain:

B. CWA SECTION 404 DETERMINATION OF JURISDICTION.

There Are "waters of the U.S." within Clean Water Act (CWA) jurisdiction (as defined by 33 CFR part 328) in the review area. [Required]

1. Waters of the U.S.

- a. Indicate presence of waters of U.S. in review area (check all that apply): ¹
 - TNWs, including territorial seas
 - Wetlands adjacent to TNWs
 - Relatively permanent waters² (RPWs) that flow directly or indirectly into TNWs
 - Non-RPWs that flow directly or indirectly into TNWs
 - Wetlands directly abutting RPWs that flow directly or indirectly into TNWs
 - Wetlands adjacent to but not directly abutting RPWs that flow directly or indirectly into TNWs
 - Wetlands adjacent to non-RPWs that flow directly or indirectly into TNWs
 - Impoundments of jurisdictional waters
 - Isolated (interstate or intrastate) waters, including isolated wetlands
- b. Identify (estimate) size of waters of the U.S. in the review area: Non-wetland waters: 715linear feet: ~8-10 width (ft) and/or 0.173 acres Wetlands: acres
- **c. Limits (boundaries) of jurisdiction** based on: **Established by OHWM.** Elevation of established OHWM (if known):

¹ Boxes checked below shall be supported by completing the appropriate sections in Section III below.

² For purposes of this form, an RPW is defined as a tributary that is not a TNW and that typically flows year-round or has continuous flow at least "seasonally" (e.g., typically 3 months).

2. Non-regulated waters/wetlands (check if applicable):³

Potentially jurisdictional waters and/or wetlands were assessed within the review area and determined to be not jurisdictional. Explain:

SECTION III: CWA ANALYSIS

A. TNWs AND WETLANDS ADJACENT TO TNWs

The agencies will assert jurisdiction over TNWs and wetlands adjacent to TNWs. If the aquatic resource is a TNW, complete Section III.A.1 and Section III.D.1. only; if the aquatic resource is a wetland adjacent to a TNW, complete Sections III.A.1 and 2 and Section III.D.1.; otherwise, see Section III.B below.

1. TNW

Identify TNW:

Summarize rationale supporting determination:

2. Wetland adjacent to TNW

Summarize rationale supporting conclusion that wetland is "adjacent":

B. CHARACTERISTICS OF TRIBUTARY (THAT IS NOT A TNW) AND ITS ADJACENT WETLANDS (IF ANY):

This section summarizes information regarding characteristics of the tributary and its adjacent wetlands, if any, and it helps determine whether or not the standards for jurisdiction established under *Rapanos* have been met.

The agencies will assert jurisdiction over non-navigable tributaries of TNWs where the tributaries are "relatively permanent waters" (RPWs), i.e. tributaries that typically flow year-round or have continuous flow at least seasonally (e.g., typically 3 months). A wetland that directly abuts an RPW is also jurisdictional. If the aquatic resource is not a TNW, but has year-round (perennial) flow, skip to Section III.D.2. If the aquatic resource is a wetland directly abutting a tributary with perennial flow, fill out Section III.D.4.

A wetland that is adjacent to but that does not directly abut an RPW requires a significant nexus evaluation. Corps districts and EPA regions will include in the record any available information that documents the existence of a significant nexus between a relatively permanent tributary that is not perennial (and its adjacent wetlands if any) and a traditional navigable water, even though a significant nexus finding is not required as a matter of law.

If the water body⁴ is not an RPW, or a wetland directly abutting an RPW, a JD will require additional data to determine if the water body has a significant nexus with a TNW. If the tributary has adjacent wetlands, the significant nexus evaluation must consider the tributary in combination with all of its adjacent wetlands. This significant nexus evaluation that combines, for analytical purposes, the tributary and all of its adjacent wetlands is used whether the review area identified in the JD request is the tributary, or its adjacent wetlands, or both. If the JD covers a tributary with adjacent wetlands, complete Section III.B.1 for the tributary, Section III.B.2 for any onsite wetlands, and Section III.B.3 for all wetlands adjacent to that tributary, both onsite and offsite. The determination whether a significant nexus exists is determined in Section III.C below.

1. Characteristics of non-TNWs that flow directly or indirectly into TNW

(i) General Area Conditions:

- Watershed size: 164 square miles Drainage area: 24.4 square miles Average annual rainfall: 47.3 inches Average annual snowfall: N/A inches
- (ii) Physical Characteristics:
 - (a) <u>Relationship with TNW:</u>
 - Tributary flows directly into TNW.
 - \square Tributary flows through 2 tributaries before entering TNW.

Project waters are **20-25** river miles from TNW. Project waters are **1-2** river miles from RPW. Project waters are **10-15** aerial (straight) miles from TNW.

³ Supporting documentation is presented in Section III.F.

⁴ Note that the Instructional Guidebook contains additional information regarding swales, ditches, washes, and erosional features generally and in the arid West.

	Project waters are 1 (or less) aerial (straight) miles from RPW. Project waters cross or serve as state boundaries. Explain:
	Identify flow route to TNW ⁵ : Tributary stream order, if known:
(b)	General Tributary Characteristics (check all that apply): Tributary is: ⊠ Natural □ Artificial (man-made). Explain: □ Manipulated (man-altered). Explain:
	Tributary properties with respect to top of bank (estimate): Average width: 8-10 feet Average depth: 6 feet Average side slopes: 3:1
	Primary tributary substrate composition (check all that apply): Silts Sands Concrete Cobbles Gravel Muck Bedrock Vegetation. Type/% cover: Other. Explain:
	Tributary condition/stability [e.g., highly eroding, sloughing banks]. Explain: Presence of run/riffle/pool complexes. Explain: Tributary geometry: Meandering Tributary gradient (approximate average slope): 1 %
(c)	Flow: Tributary provides for: Seasonal flow Estimate average number of flow events in review area/year: 6-10 Describe flow regime: Other information on duration and volume: Surface flow is: Discrete and confined. Characteristics: Subsurface flow: Unknown. Explain findings: □ Dye (or other) test performed:
	Tributary has (check all that apply): Bed and banks OHWM ⁶ (check all indicators that apply): clear, natural line impressed on the bank changes in the character of soil shelving vegetation matted down, bent, or absent leaf litter disturbed or washed away sediment deposition water staining other (list): Discontinuous OHWM. ⁷ Explain:
	If factors other than the OHWM were used to determine lateral extent of CWA jurisdiction (check all that apply): High Tide Line indicated by: oil or scum line along shore objects fine shell or debris deposits (foreshore) physical markings/characteristics tidal gauges other (list):
 Cha	e mical Characteristics: racterize tributary (e.g., water color is clear, discolored, oily film; water quality; general watershed characteristics, etc.). Explain: Unknown ttify specific pollutants, if known:

⁵ Flow route can be described by identifying, e.g., tributary a, which flows through the review area, to flow into tributary b, which then flows into TNW. ⁶A natural or man-made discontinuity in the OHWM does not necessarily sever jurisdiction (e.g., where the stream temporarily flows underground, or where the OHWM has been removed by development or agricultural practices). Where there is a break in the OHWM that is unrelated to the water body's flow regime (e.g., flow over a rock outcrop or through a culvert), the agencies will look for indicators of flow above and below the break. ⁷Ibid.

(iv) Biological Characteristics. Channel supports (check all that apply):

- Riparian corridor. Characteristics (type, average width): Forested, 50-80 feet wide within project site.
 - Wetland fringe. Characteristics:
- Habitat for:
 - Federally Listed species. Explain findings:
 - Fish/spawn areas. Explain findings:
 - Other environmentally-sensitive species. Explain findings:
 - Aquatic/wildlife diversity. Explain findings:
- 2. Characteristics of wetlands adjacent to non-TNW that flow directly or indirectly into TNW

(i) Physical Characteristics:

- (a) <u>General Wetland Characteristics:</u> Properties: Wetland size: acres Wetland type. Explain: Wetland quality. Explain: Project wetlands cross or serve as state boundaries. Explain:
- (b) <u>General Flow Relationship with Non-TNW</u>: Flow is: **Pick List**. Explain:

Surface flow is: **Pick List** Characteristics:

Subsurface flow: **Pick List**. Explain findings: Dye (or other) test performed:

- (c) <u>Wetland Adjacency Determination with Non-TNW:</u>
 - Directly abutting
 - □ Not directly abutting
 - Discrete wetland hydrologic connection. Explain:
 - Ecological connection. Explain:
 - Separated by berm/barrier. Explain:
- (d) Proximity (Relationship) to TNW

Project wetlands are **Pick List** river miles from TNW. Project waters are **Pick List** aerial (straight) miles from TNW. Flow is from: **Pick List**. Estimate approximate location of wetland as within the **Pick List** floodplain.

(ii) Chemical Characteristics:

Characterize wetland system (e.g., water color is clear, brown, oil film on surface; water quality; general watershed characteristics; etc.). Explain:

Identify specific pollutants, if known:

(iii) Biological Characteristics. Wetland supports (check all that apply):

- Riparian buffer. Characteristics (type, average width):
- Vegetation type/percent cover. Explain:
- Habitat for:
 - Federally Listed species. Explain findings:
 - Fish/spawn areas. Explain findings:
 - Other environmentally-sensitive species. Explain findings:
 - Aquatic/wildlife diversity. Explain findings:

3. Characteristics of all wetlands adjacent to the tributary (if any)

All wetland(s) being considered in the cumulative analysis: **Pick List** Approximately () acres in total are being considered in the cumulative analysis.

For each wetland, specify the following:

Directly abuts? (Y/N) Size (in acres)

Directly abuts? (Y/N)

Size (in acres)

Summarize overall biological, chemical and physical functions being performed:

C. SIGNIFICANT NEXUS DETERMINATION

A significant nexus analysis will assess the flow characteristics and functions of the tributary itself and the functions performed by any wetlands adjacent to the tributary to determine if they significantly affect the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of a TNW. For each of the following situations, a significant nexus exists if the tributary, in combination with all of its adjacent wetlands, has more than a speculative or insubstantial effect on the chemical, physical and/or biological integrity of a TNW. Considerations when evaluating significant nexus include, but are not limited to the volume, duration, and frequency of the flow of water in the tributary and its proximity to a TNW, and the functions performed by the tributary and all its adjacent wetlands. It is not appropriate to determine significant nexus based solely on any specific threshold of distance (e.g. between a tributary and its adjacent wetland or between a tributary and the TNW). Similarly, the fact an adjacent wetland lies within or outside of a floodplain is not solely determinative of significant nexus.

Draw connections between the features documented and the effects on the TNW, as identified in the *Rapanos* Guidance and discussed in the Instructional Guidebook. Factors to consider include, for example:

- Does the tributary, in combination with its adjacent wetlands (if any), have the capacity to carry pollutants or flood waters to TNWs, or to reduce the amount of pollutants or flood waters reaching a TNW?
- Does the tributary, in combination with its adjacent wetlands (if any), provide habitat and lifecycle support functions for fish and other species, such as feeding, nesting, spawning, or rearing young for species that are present in the TNW?
- Does the tributary, in combination with its adjacent wetlands (if any), have the capacity to transfer nutrients and organic carbon that support downstream foodwebs?
- Does the tributary, in combination with its adjacent wetlands (if any), have other relationships to the physical, chemical, or biological integrity of the TNW?

Note: the above list of considerations is not inclusive and other functions observed or known to occur should be documented below:

- 1. Significant nexus findings for non-RPW that has no adjacent wetlands and flows directly or indirectly into TNWs. Explain findings of presence or absence of significant nexus below, based on the tributary itself, then go to Section III.D:
- 2. Significant nexus findings for non-RPW and its adjacent wetlands, where the non-RPW flows directly or indirectly into TNWs. Explain findings of presence or absence of significant nexus below, based on the tributary in combination with all of its adjacent wetlands, then go to Section III.D:
- **3.** Significant nexus findings for wetlands adjacent to an RPW but that do not directly abut the RPW. Explain findings of presence or absence of significant nexus below, based on the tributary in combination with all of its adjacent wetlands, then go to Section III.D:

D. DETERMINATIONS OF JURISDICTIONAL FINDINGS. THE SUBJECT WATERS/WETLANDS ARE (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY):

TNWs and Adjacent Wetlands. Check all that apply and provide size estimates in review area:
 TNWs: linear feet width (ft), Or, acres.
 Wetlands adjacent to TNWs: acres.

2. RPWs that flow directly or indirectly into TNWs.

- Tributaries of TNWs where tributaries typically flow year-round are jurisdictional. Provide data and rationale indicating that tributary is perennial: Lake Creek had water flowing during the date of the site visit, and water is present within all aerial photos viewed. The USGS stream gage 08067920, Lake Creek at Sendera Ranch Road near Conroe, Texas, shows water discharge year round. Therefore Lake Creek is a relatively permanent water (RPW).
- Tributaries of TNW where tributaries have continuous flow "seasonally" (e.g., typically three months each year) are jurisdictional. Data supporting this conclusion is provided at Section III.B. Provide rationale indicating that tributary flows seasonally: Town Creek Tributary 2 shows water present within the channel in 4 of the 6 aerial photos between 2006 and 2017, and Tributary 1 to Lake Creek shows water present within the channel in 5 of the 9 aerial photos between 1995 and 2017. Therefore these features are RPWs characterized by seasonal flow of approximately 3 months per year.

Provide estimates for jurisdictional waters in the review area (check all that apply):

- Tributary waters: linear feet width (ft)
- Other non-wetland waters: acres

Identify type(s) of waters:

3. Non-RPWs⁸ that flow directly or indirectly into TNWs.

⁸See Footnote # 3.

Water body that is not a TNW or an RPW, but flows directly or indirectly into a TNW, and it has a significant nexus with a TNW is jurisdictional. Data supporting this conclusion is provided at Section III.C.

Provide estimates for jurisdictional waters within the review area (check all that apply):

Tributary waters: linear feet width (ft). Other non-wetland waters: acres

Identify type(s) of waters:

Wetlands directly abutting an RPW that flow directly or indirectly into TNWs. 4.

- Wetlands directly abut RPW and thus are jurisdictional as adjacent wetlands.
 - Wetlands directly abutting an RPW where tributaries typically flow year-round. Provide data and rationale indicating that tributary is perennial in Section III.D.2, above. Provide rationale indicating that wetland is directly abutting an RPW:
 - Wetlands directly abutting an RPW where tributaries typically flow "seasonally." Provide data indicating that tributary is seasonal in Section III.B and rationale in Section III.D.2, above. Provide rationale indicating that wetland is directly abutting an RPW:

Provide acreage estimates for jurisdictional wetlands in the review area: acres

Wetlands adjacent to but not directly abutting an RPW that flow directly or indirectly into TNWs. 5.

Wetlands that do not directly abut an RPW, but when considered in combination with the tributary to which they are adjacent and with similarly situated adjacent wetlands, have a significant nexus with a TNW are jurisidictional. Data supporting this conclusion is provided at Section III.C.

Provide acreage estimates for jurisdictional wetlands in the review area: acres

6. Wetlands adjacent to non-RPWs that flow directly or indirectly into TNWs.

Wetlands adjacent to such waters, and have when considered in combination with the tributary to which they are adjacent and with similarly situated adjacent wetlands, have a significant nexus with a TNW are jurisdictional. Data supporting this conclusion is provided at Section III.C.

Provide estimates for jurisdictional wetlands in the review area: acres

7. Impoundments of jurisdictional waters.⁹

As a general rule, the impoundment of a jurisdictional tributary remains jurisdictional.

- Demonstrate that impoundment was created from "waters of the U.S.," or
- Demonstrate that water meets the criteria for one of the categories presented above (1-6), or

Demonstrate that water is isolated with a nexus to commerce (see E below).

E. ISOLATED [INTERSTATE OR INTRA-STATE] WATERS, INCLUDING ISOLATED WETLANDS, THE USE, DEGRADATION OR DESTRUCTION OF WHICH COULD AFFECT INTERSTATE COMMERCE, INCLUDING ANY SUCH WATERS (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY):10

- which are or could be used by interstate or foreign travelers for recreational or other purposes.
- from which fish or shellfish are or could be taken and sold in interstate or foreign commerce.
 - which are or could be used for industrial purposes by industries in interstate commerce.
 - Interstate isolated waters. Explain:
 - Other factors. Explain:

Identify water body and summarize rationale supporting determination:

Provide estimates for jurisdictional waters in the review area (check all that apply):

- Tributary waters: linear feet width (ft)
- Other non-wetland waters: acres
- Identify type(s) of waters:

Wetlands: acres

⁹ To complete the analysis refer to the key in Section III.D.6 of the Instructional Guidebook.

¹⁰ Prior to asserting or declining CWA jurisdiction based solely on this category, Corps Districts will elevate the action to Corps and EPA HQ for review consistent with the process described in the Corps/EPA Memorandum Regarding CWA Act Jurisdiction Following Rapanos.

F. NON-JURISDICTIONAL WATERS, INCLUDING WETLANDS (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY):

If potential wetlands were assessed within the review area, these areas did not meet the criteria in the 1987 Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual and/or appropriate Regional Supplements.

Review area included isolated waters with no substantial nexus to interstate (or foreign) commerce.

Prior to the Jan 2001 Supreme Court decision in "*SWANCC*," the review area would have been regulated based <u>solely</u> on the "Migratory Bird Rule" (MBR).

Waters do not meet the "Significant Nexus" standard, where such a finding is required for jurisdiction. Explain:

Other: (explain, if not covered above):

Provide acreage estimates for non-jurisdictional waters in the review area, where the <u>sole</u> potential basis of jurisdiction is the MBR factors (i.e., presence of migratory birds, presence of endangered species, use of water for irrigated agriculture), using best professional judgment (check all that apply):

- Non-wetland waters (i.e., rivers, streams): linear feet width (ft).
 - Lakes/ponds: acres.
- Other non-wetland waters: acres. List type of aquatic resource:
- Wetlands: acres.

Provide acreage estimates for non-jurisdictional waters in the review area that do not meet the "Significant Nexus" standard, where such a finding is required for jurisdiction (check all that apply):

- Non-wetland waters (i.e., rivers, streams): linear feet, width (ft).
- Lakes/ponds: acres.

Other non-wetland waters: acres. List type of aquatic resource:

Wetlands: acres.

SECTION IV: DATA SOURCES.

- A. SUPPORTING DATA. Data reviewed for JD (check all that apply checked items shall be included in case file and, where checked and requested, appropriately reference sources below):
 - Maps, plans, plots or plat submitted by or on behalf of the applicant/consultant: Wetland delineation submitted by applicant, dated May 2015.
 - Data sheets prepared/submitted by or on behalf of the applicant/consultant.
 - Office concurs with data sheets/delineation report.
 - Office does not concur with data sheets/delineation report
 - Data sheets prepared by the Corps: Data sheets from 10 May 2017 site visit
 - Corps navigable waters' study:
 - U.S. Geological Survey Hydrologic Atlas: West Fork San Jacinto River 12040101
 - USGS NHD data
 - USGS 8 and 12 digit HUC maps
 - Galveston District's Approved List of Navigable Waters

U.S. Geological Survey map(s). Cite scale & quad name: Dacus, Texas – 1962; Montgomery, Texas – 1976; Plantersville, Texas - 1962.

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Soil Survey. Citation: USDA National Cooperative Soil Survey (NCSS) Google

Earth Layer (http://casoilresource.lawr.ucdavis.edu/soil_web/kml/mapunits.kml), accessed 09 May 2017.

National wetlands inventory map(s). Cite name: Online USFWS NWI Google Earth Layer

(http:///www.fws.gov/wetlands/Data/Google-Earth.html), accessed 07 March 2017

State/Local wetland inventory map(s):

FEMA/FIRM maps: Montgomery County, Texas and Incorporated Areas, Panel Numbers 48339C0175G (18 August 2014);

- 48339C0200G (18 August 2014); 48339C0325G (18 August 2014). Flood Zone(s): AE and Shaded X; Elevation: 15-17 feet.
- 100-year Floodplain Elevation is: 15-17 feet (National Geodectic Vertical Datum of 1929)

Photographs: Aerial (Name & Date): 2015 Texas Orthoimagery Program (TOP), 0.5-meter Near Color (NC) / Color Infrared (CIR); 2014 National Agriculture Imagery Program (NAIP), 1.0-meter NC/CIR; Google Earth Aerial Images (1937, 1969, 1995, 2005,

- 2006, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2013, 2014); Digital Globe Near Color High Resolution Aerial Photographs (2016, 2017).
 - or 🗌 Other (Name & Date):
 - Previous determination(s). File no. and date of response letter:
 - Applicable/supporting case law:
 - Applicable/supporting scientific literature:
 - Other information (please specify):

B. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS TO SUPPORT JD: Lake Creek had water flowing during the date of the site visit, and water is present within all aerial photos viewed. The USGS stream gage 08067920, Lake Creek at Sendera Ranch Road near Conroe, Texas, shows water discharge year round. Therefore Lake Creek is a relatively permanent water (RPW).

Town Creek Tributary 2 shows water present within the channel in 4 of the 6 aerial photos between 2006 and 2017, and Tributary 1 to Lake Creek shows water present within the channel in 5 of the 9 aerial photos between 1995 and 2017. Therefore these features are RPWs characterized by seasonal flow of approximately 3 months per year.

Latitude	Longitude	UTM Zone	UTM Easting	UTM Northing	Approximate Size (linear feet / acres)	Cowardin Classification	Regulatory Authority
30.388507	-95.712347	15N	239377.5	3364958.4	40/0.003	R4SBC	404
30.371324	-95.769097	15N	233875.9	3363185.3	325/0.11	R2UBH	404
30.365006	-95.776855	15N	233112.8	3362503	350/0.06	R4SBC	404
	30.388507 30.371324	30.388507 -95.712347 30.371324 -95.769097	Zone Zone 30.388507 -95.712347 15N 30.371324 -95.769097 15N	Zone Zone 30.388507 -95.712347 15N 239377.5 30.371324 -95.769097 15N 233875.9	Zone Zone 30.388507 -95.712347 15N 239377.5 3364958.4 30.371324 -95.769097 15N 233875.9 3363185.3	Zone Size (linear feet / acres) 30.388507 -95.712347 15N 239377.5 3364958.4 40/0.003 30.371324 -95.769097 15N 233875.9 3363185.3 325/0.11	Zone Size (linear feet / acres) Classification 30.388507 -95.712347 15N 239377.5 3364958.4 40/0.003 R4SBC 30.371324 -95.769097 15N 233875.9 3363185.3 325/0.11 R2UBH