



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, MEMPHIS DISTRICT  
167 N. MAIN STREET ROOM B-202]  
MEMPHIS, TN 38103

CEMVM-R

16 June 2025

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> MVM-2025-139 (MFR 1 of 1)

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>2</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>3</sup> For the purposes of this AJD, we have relied on section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (RHA),<sup>4</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 amended on 8 September 2023 (Amended 2023 Rule) because, as of the date of this decision, the Amended 2023 Rule is not applicable Tennessee due to litigation.

1. SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS.

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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> 33 CFR 331.2.

<sup>3</sup> Regulatory Guidance Letter 05-02.

<sup>4</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.

CEMVM-R

SUBJECT: Pre-2015 Regulatory Regime Approved Jurisdictional Determination in Light of *Sackett v. EPA*, 143 S. Ct. 1322 (2023), MVM-2025-139

- 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).
  - i. E038, (35.730936, -89.516852), non-jurisdictional
  - ii. E039, (35.731598, -89.516586), non-jurisdictional
  - iii. E041, (35.731030, -89.517967), non-jurisdictional
  - iv. W001, (35.709154, -89.515669), non-jurisdictional
  - v. W002, (35.708572 -89.515786), non-jurisdictional
  - vi. W003, (35.713486 -89.517898), non-jurisdictional
  - vii. W004, (35.715684 -89.511766), non-jurisdictional
  - viii. W005, (35.714398 -89.512650), non-jurisdictional
  - ix. W006, (35.716970 -89.520437), non-jurisdictional
  - x. W010, (35.731357 -89.517265), non-jurisdictional
  - xi. W011, (35.730898 -89.518274), non-jurisdictional
  - xii. W012, (35.727292 -89.521797), 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. 651, 143 S. Ct. 1322 (2023)

CEMVM-R

SUBJECT: Pre-2015 Regulatory Regime Approved Jurisdictional Determination in Light of *Sackett v. EPA*, 143 S. Ct. 1322 (2023), MVM-2025-139

- e. "Memorandum to the Field Between the U.S. Department of the Army, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Concerning the Proper Implementation of 'Continuous Surface Connection' Under the Definition of 'Waters of the United States' Under the Clean Water Act" (March 12, 2025)
3. REVIEW AREA. The review area covers approximately 490 acres located in Ripley, Lauderdale County, Tennessee. The project area is transected by Highway 19, from east to west. Approximate coordinates of the site are 35.723829°N, -89.517959°W.
4. NEAREST TRADITIONAL NAVIGABLE WATER (TNW), INTERSTATE WATER, OR THE TERRITORIAL SEAS TO WHICH THE AQUATIC RESOURCE IS CONNECTED. The project area drains to the Hatchie River.
5. FLOWPATH FROM THE SUBJECT AQUATIC RESOURCES TO A TNW, INTERSTATE WATER, OR THE TERRITORIAL SEAS. The entire project area drains through multiple unnamed tributaries to the south and southeast into Hyde Creek, then into Cane Creek, which then flows to the Hatchie River. However, features E-038, E-039, and E-041 all drain to the south into sheet flow. Features W001, W002, W003, W004, W005, W006, and W012 are surrounded by uplands and do not drain to downstream TNWs. Features W010 and W011 drain to erosional features E038, E039, and E041; as noted above, these features dissipate to overland sheet flow.
6. SECTION 10 JURISDICTIONAL WATERS<sup>5</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>6</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,

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<sup>5</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>6</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.

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 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>7</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. N/A
- 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.

E038 (207 linear feet), E039 (321 linear feet), and E041 (188 linear feet) are erosional swales that all lack indicators of an ordinary high water mark. They all originate from field runoff in the northern portion of the project area and turn into upland sheet flow to the south in an agricultural field.

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<sup>7</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).

W001 (0.04 acre) and W002 (0.13 acre) were both observed as depressional wetlands within an agricultural field. W001 and W002 are surrounded by uplands and have no connections to other waters.

W003 (0.06 acre) is a depressional wetland in the central region of the southern portion of the project area. W003 is surrounded by uplands and does not directly abut or have a continuous surface connection to a relatively permanent water.

W004 (0.30 acre) and W005 (0.04 acre) are both depressional wetlands in the eastern region of the southern portion of the project area. W004 and W005 are surrounded by forested uplands to the east and an upland agricultural field to the west and both do not directly abut, nor do they have continuous surface connections to relatively permanent waters.

W006 (0.14 acre) is a depressional wetland in the central region of the southern portion of the project area. W006 is surrounded by upland agricultural fields and

CEMVM-R

SUBJECT: Pre-2015 Regulatory Regime Approved Jurisdictional Determination in Light of *Sackett v. EPA*, 143 S. Ct. 1322 (2023), MVM-2025-139

does not directly abut or have a continuous surface connection to a relatively permanent water.

W010 (0.20 acre) was observed as a depressional wetland within the north region of the north portion of the project area located within an agricultural field. W010 has a connection to multiple swales (E038, E039, and E041); however, these features lack a continuous surface connection to downstream relatively permanent waters.

W011 (0.05 acre) is a depressional wetland within the north region of the north portion of the project area located within an agricultural field. W011 has a connection to swale E041. However, these features lack a continuous surface connection to downstream relatively permanent waters.

W012 (0.03 acre) is a depressional wetland within the central region of the northern portion of the project area. W012 is surrounded by uplands and does not directly abut or have a continuous surface connection to a relatively permanent water.

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. Office Evaluation June 4, 2025
  - b. Maps and photos submitted by or on behalf of the AJD requestor: Silicon Ranch Corporation
  - c. U.S. Geological Survey Map: 1:24,000 Ripley, Lauderdale County, TN
  - d. National Regulatory Viewer
10. OTHER SUPPORTING INFORMATION. Stream features (S001, S002, S003, S004, S005, S006, S007, S008, S009, S010, S011, S012, S013, S014, S015, S016, S017, S018, and S019), wetland features (W007, W008, and W009), and pond (P001) are addressed through a Preliminary Jurisdictional Determination.
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.