



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS ALBUQUERQUE DISTRICT
4101 JEFFERSON PLAZA NE
ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87109-3435

CESPA-RDN

9 October 2024

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Approved Jurisdictional Determination in accordance with the "Revised Definition of 'Waters of the United States'"; (88 FR 3004 (January 18, 2023) as amended by the "Revised Definition of 'Waters of the United States'; Conforming" (8 September 2023),¹ SPA-2024-00213.

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.² 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.³

On January 18, 2023, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of the Army ("the agencies") published the "Revised Definition of 'Waters of the United States,'" 88 FR 3004 (January 18, 2023) ("2023 Rule"). On September 8, 2023, the agencies published the "Revised Definition of 'Waters of the United States'; Conforming", which amended the 2023 Rule to conform to the 2023 Supreme Court decision in *Sackett v. EPA*, 598 U.S., 143 S. Ct. 1322 (2023) ("*Sackett*").

This Memorandum for Record (MFR) constitutes the basis of jurisdiction for a Corps AJD as defined in 33 CFR §331.2. For the purposes of this AJD, we have relied on Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (RHA),⁴ the 2023 Rule as amended, as well as other applicable guidance, relevant case law, and longstanding practice in evaluating jurisdiction.

1. SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS.

¹ While the Revised Definition of "Waters of the United States"; Conforming 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.

² 33 CFR 331.2.

³ Regulatory Guidance Letter 05-02.

⁴ 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.

CESPA-RDN

SUBJECT: 2023 Rule, as amended, Approved Jurisdictional Determination in Light of *Sackett v. EPA*, 143 S. Ct. 1322 (2023), SPA-2024-00213

- 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. Unnamed Stream 1 is non-jurisdictional.
 - ii. Unnamed Stream 2 is non-jurisdictional.

2. REFERENCES.

- a. "Revised Definition of 'Waters of the United States,'" 88 FR 3004 (January 18, 2023) ("2023 Rule")
- b. "Revised Definition of 'Waters of the United States'; Conforming" 88 FR 61964 (September 8, 2023))
- c. *Sackett v. EPA*, 598 U.S. __, 143 S. Ct. 1322 (2023)

3. REVIEW AREA. The review area consists of approximately 0.85 miles within and near stream channels, labelled as "Toe Slope Limit" on the map entitled *Pinon Hills Extension AECOM Stream Assessment*, dated June 28, 2024.

4. NEAREST TRADITIONAL NAVIGABLE WATER (TNW), THE TERRITORIAL SEAS, OR INTERSTATE WATER TO WHICH THE AQUATIC RESOURCE IS CONNECTED. The nearest interstate water is the San Juan River, which crosses from New Mexico into Colorado as a 9th order stream.⁵

5. FLOWPATH FROM THE SUBJECT AQUATIC RESOURCES TO A TNW, THE TERRITORIAL SEAS, OR INTERSTATE WATER. The streams in the review area flow approximately 800 feet northwest into the Animas River. The Animas River is an 8th order stream and flows approximately 9 stream miles southwest, forming a 9th order stream with the San Juan River. The San Juan River flows over 50 miles to the northwest until crossing from New Mexico into Colorado as a 9th order stream.

⁵ This MFR should not be used to complete a new stand-alone TNW determination. A stand-alone TNW determination for a water that is not subject to Section 9 or 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (RHA) is completed independently of a request for an AJD. A stand-alone TNW determination is conducted for a specific segment of river or stream or other type of waterbody, such as a lake, where upstream or downstream limits or lake borders are established.

CESPA-RDN

SUBJECT: 2023 Rule, as amended, Approved Jurisdictional Determination in Light of *Sackett v. EPA*, 143 S. Ct. 1322 (2023), SPA-2024-00213

6. SECTION 10 JURISDICTIONAL WATERS⁶: 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 10.⁷ 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 2023 Rule as amended, 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 2023 Rule as amended. 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. Traditional Navigable Waters (TNWs) (a)(1)(i): N/A.
 - b. The Territorial Seas (a)(1)(ii): N/A.
 - c. Interstate Waters (a)(1)(iii): N/A.
 - d. Impoundments (a)(2): N/A.
 - e. Tributaries (a)(3): N/A.
 - f. Adjacent Wetlands (a)(4): N/A.
 - g. Additional Waters (a)(5): N/A.

8. NON-JURISDICTIONAL AQUATIC RESOURCES AND FEATURES

⁶ 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.

⁷ 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.

CESPA-RDN

SUBJECT: 2023 Rule, as amended, Approved Jurisdictional Determination in Light of *Sackett v. EPA*, 143 S. Ct. 1322 (2023), SPA-2024-00213

- a. Describe aquatic resources and other features within the review area identified in the 2023 Rule as amended as not “waters of the United States” even where they otherwise meet the terms of paragraphs (a)(2) through (5). Include the type of excluded aquatic resource or feature, the size of the aquatic resource or feature within the review area and describe how it was determined to meet one of the exclusions listed in 33 CFR 328.3(b).⁸ N/A.
- b. 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 2023 Rule as amended (e.g., tributaries that are non-relatively permanent waters; non-tidal wetlands that do not have a continuous surface connection to a jurisdictional water).
 - i. Unnamed Stream 1 is a first-order stream measuring approximately 2,000 feet in length. On April 9, 2024, a consultant conducted a Streamflow Duration Assessment Method (SDAM) on Unnamed Stream 1 (sampling point 4). The SDAM classified the stream as ephemeral, and photos show the conditions to be arid with a rocky and sandy channel. This information suggests Unnamed Stream 1 only experiences flow for short durations in response to rainfall. Therefore, Unnamed Stream 1 does not meet the relatively permanent standard as defined in the 2023 Rule, as amended, and is not a water of the United States.
 - ii. Unnamed Stream 2 is a second-order stream measuring approximately one mile in length. It is formed by the confluence of Unnamed Stream 1 and another unnamed stream. On April 9, 2024, a consultant conducted a SDAM on Unnamed Stream 2 (sampling points 1-3). The SDAM classified the stream as ephemeral, and photos show the conditions to be arid with a rocky and sandy channel. A USGS StreamStats Report generated on October 8, 2024, from a point on Unnamed Stream 2 at the downstream end of the review area, shows that the basin size is 0.8 square miles and that mean annual precipitation is approximately 10 inches. This information suggests Unnamed Stream 2 only experiences flow for short durations in response to rainfall. Therefore, Unnamed Stream 2 does not meet the relatively permanent standard as defined in the 2023 Rule, as amended, and is not a water of the United States.

⁸ 88 FR 3004 (January 18, 2023)

CESPA-RDN

SUBJECT: 2023 Rule, as amended, Approved Jurisdictional Determination in Light of *Sackett v. EPA*, 143 S. Ct. 1322 (2023), SPA-2024-00213

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. Streamflow Duration Assessment Method report submitted by the applicant's consultant, dated April 16, 2024.
 - b. Map entitled *Pinon Hills Extension AECOM Stream Assessment*, by Barr Engineering Co., dated June 28, 2024.
 - c. USGS 1:24,000 Topographic maps, 2023. Flora Vista, NM, and Farmington North, NM.
 - d. USGS StreamStats Report, generated October 8, 2024.
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.



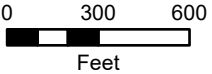
- Stream Assessment Point
- Toe Slope Limit
- CR 3900
- Road

NWI

- Freshwater Emergent Wetland
- Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland
- Freshwater Pond
- Riverine

National Hydrography Dataset

- River/Stream: Perennial
- River/Stream: Intermittent
- River



Sources: AECOM, Barr, USGS, USFWS, Esri

Pinon Hills Extension
AECOM

Stream Assessment

