



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, OMAHA DISTRICT
8901 SOUTH 154TH STREET, SUITE 2
OMAHA, NE 68138-3635

CENWO-ODR-B

11 July 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),¹ [NWO-2025-00934-WEH \(MFR 1 of 1\)](#)²

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.³ 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.⁴ For the purposes of this AJD, we have relied on section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (RHA),⁵ 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

¹ 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.

² 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.).

³ 33 CFR 331.2.

⁴ Regulatory Guidance Letter 05-02.

⁵ 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.

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amended on 8 September 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).
 - i. [Unnamed Tributary to Verdigre Creek \(RPW\)-Jurisdictional, water of the United States](#)

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. *Sackett v. EPA*, 598 U.S. 651, 143 S. Ct. 1322 (2023)
- d. 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 JD review area includes approximately 146.05 acres, 42.62150° latitude, and -98.04499° longitude, Section 32, Township 31N, Range 6W; Verdigre, Knox County, Nebraska. Boundary of JD review area, and Aquatic Resource Figure attached.](#)

4. NEAREST TRADITIONAL NAVIGABLE WATER (TNW), INTERSTATE WATER, OR THE TERRITORIAL SEAS TO WHICH THE AQUATIC RESOURCE IS CONNECTED. [The unnamed tributary to Verdigre Creek \(RPW\) flows into Verdigre Creek \(RPW\) that flows into the Niobrara River \(TNW\). The Niobrara River was determined to be a TNW because it is considered navigable in fact and is used for recreational purposes such as kayaking and is a Wild and Scenic River system.](#)

5. FLOWPATH FROM THE SUBJECT AQUATIC RESOURCES TO A TNW, INTERSTATE WATER, OR THE TERRITORIAL SEAS. [The unnamed tributary to Verdigre Creek \(RPW\) flows northeast underneath a bridge crossing 532 Avenue, continuing northeast for approximately 0.14 miles where it discharges into Verdigre Creek \(RPW\). Verdigre Creek flows approximately 6.10 miles north directly into the Niobrara River \(TNW\).](#)
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 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 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](#)

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.

- e. Tributaries (a)(5): [Unnamed tributary to Verdigre Creek \(RPW\), jurisdictional: The unnamed tributary to Verdigre Creek contains one reach that is approximately 1.55-miles long. The relatively permanent unnamed tributary to Verdigre Creek was determined to be an RPW through desktop available resources and Google Earth Aerial Imagery and from the furthest downstream portion of the reach. Flow can be seen in the unnamed tributary on Google Earth dates \(April 2014, September 2020, March 2021, and March 2025\) indicating that the unnamed tributary contains flow seasonally and given its proximity to Verdigre Creek \(RPW\) which flows yearly. The antecedent precipitation tool \(APT\) indicated normal conditions for the month of March 2025. The NHD/NWI layer were used and referenced below. A defined bed and bank and ordinary high-water mark is visible on Google Earth Aerial Imagery. The unnamed tributary to Verdigre Creek flows directly into Verdigre Creek, Verdigre Creek flows north discharging into the Niobrara River, a wild and scenic river and TNW.](#)
- 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”).⁸ 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. [N/A](#)
- 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](#)

⁸ 51 FR 41217, November 13, 1986.

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- 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). [N/A](#)
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. [Virtual Site visit conducted on June 26, 2025, by Corps](#)
 - b. [NHD - Google Earth Layer, accessed on June 26, 2025](#)
 - c. [National Wetlands Inventory Map, accessed on June 26, 2025](#)
 - d. [Google Earth Aerials 1993-2025 accessed June 26, 2025](#)
 - e. [Antecedent Precipitation Tool \(APT\), accessed June 26, 2025](#)
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

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additional guidance from the agencies; however, the approved jurisdictional determination described herein is a final agency action.

Unnamed
Tributary to
Verdigre Creek

42.62150, -98.04499

Area Requested
for Jurisdictional
Determination

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