



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, SAVANNAH DISTRICT
4751 BEST ROAD, SUITE 140
COLLEGE PARK, GEORGIA 30337

CESAS-RDP

4 June 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),¹ SAS-2024-00306

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 For the purposes of this AJD, we have relied on section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (RHA),⁴ 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 in this state due to litigation.

1. SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS.

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 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.

B. Determination based on: This determination was made based on a review of desktop data resources listed in Section 9 of this memorandum, a review of the SAS Section 10 list (for a water body that is navigable-in-fact under federal law for any purpose (such as Section 10, RHA), that water body categorically qualifies as a Section 404 "traditional navigable water" subject to CWA jurisdiction under 33 CFR 328.3(a)(1)), and documented (include in AR) occurrences of boating traffic on the identified water. For interstate waters, based on a review several maps listed in Section 9 of this memorandum, the identified water is shown as an aquatic feature and crossing the interstate boundary of Georgia/South Carolina, or Georgia/North Carolina, Georgia/Tennessee, Georgia/Alabama, or Georgia/Florida.

5. FLOWPATH FROM THE SUBJECT AQUATIC RESOURCES TO A TNW, INTERSTATE WATER, OR THE TERRITORIAL SEAS

The stream, S1, is a relatively permanent water (RPW) and is an unnamed tributary to Stream S2, an RPW. Stream S2, is a tributary to Stream S3 (Bull Creek), an RPW. Bull Creek flows to the Chattahoochee River, a traditionally navigable water (TNW). The stream S1, is a tributary to the Chattahoochee River, a navigable water of the United States. The Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) of the unnamed tributary was indicated by the following physical characteristics: natural line impressed on the bank, shelving, absence of vegetation, scour, and bed and banks.

The stream S2, is a relatively permanent water (RPW) and is an unnamed tributary to Stream S3 (Bull Creek), an RPW. Bull Creek flows to the Chattahoochee River, a traditionally navigable water (TNW). The stream S2, is a tributary to the Chattahoochee River, a navigable water of the United States. The Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) of the unnamed tributary was indicated by the following physical characteristics: natural line impressed on the bank, shelving, absence of vegetation, scour, and bed and banks.

The stream S4, is a relatively permanent water (RPW) and is an unnamed tributary to Stream S3 (Bull Creek), an RPW. Bull Creek flows to the Chattahoochee River, a traditionally navigable water (TNW). The stream S4, is a tributary to the Chattahoochee River, a navigable water of the United States. The Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) of the unnamed tributary was indicated by the following physical characteristics: natural line impressed on the bank, shelving, absence of vegetation, scour, and bed and banks.

The stream S3 (Bull Creek) is a relatively permanent water (RPW) and is an named tributary to the Chattahoochee River, an TNW. The stream, S3 or Bull Creek, is a tributary to the Chattahoochee River, a navigable water of the United States. The Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) of the unnamed tributary was indicated by the

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following physical characteristics: natural line impressed on the bank, shelving, absence of vegetation, scour, and bed and banks.

Wetland, PUBG-1, is an adjacent wetland that has a continuous surface connection to the stream S2, which is a relatively permanent water (RPW) and is an unnamed tributary to S3, or Bull Creek, an RPW. Bull Creek flows to the Chattahoochee River, a traditionally navigable water (TNW). The PUBG -1 wetland has a continuous surface connection to the Chattahoochee River, a navigable water of the United States. The wetlands meet the hydrophytic vegetation, wetland hydrology, and hydric soil criteria of the 1987 Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual and the Eastern Mountains and Piedmont Regional Supplement and are contiguous with the unnamed tributary.

Wetland PUBG-2 is an adjacent wetland that has a continuous surface connection to the stream S3, or Bull Creek, which is a relatively permanent water (RPW). Bull Creek flows to the Chattahoochee River, a traditionally navigable water (TNW). The PUBG -2 wetland has a continuous surface connection to the Chattahoochee River, a navigable water of the United States. The wetlands meet the hydrophytic vegetation, wetland hydrology, and hydric soil criteria of the 1987 Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual and the Eastern Mountains and Piedmont Regional Supplement and are contiguous with the unnamed tributary.

Wetland W-1 is an adjacent wetland that has a continuous surface connection to the stream S1, which is a relatively permanent water (RPW) and is an unnamed tributary to S2. The stream S2 is a relatively permanent water (RPW) and is an unnamed tributary to stream S3 or Bull Creek, an RPW. Bull Creek flows to the Chattahoochee River, a traditionally navigable water (TNW). The W-1 wetland has a continuous surface connection to the Chattahoochee River, a navigable water of the United States. The wetlands meet the hydrophytic vegetation, wetland hydrology, and hydric soil criteria of the 1987 Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual and the Eastern Mountains and Piedmont Regional Supplement and are contiguous with the unnamed tributary.

Wetland W-2, is an adjacent wetland that has a continuous surface connection to the stream S2, which is a relatively permanent water (RPW) and is an unnamed tributary to S3, or Bull Creek, an RPW. Bull Creek flows to the Chattahoochee River, a traditionally navigable water (TNW). The W-2 wetland has a continuous surface connection to the Chattahoochee River, a navigable water of the United States. The wetlands meet the hydrophytic vegetation, wetland hydrology, and hydric soil criteria of the 1987 Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual and the Eastern Mountains and Piedmont Regional Supplement and are contiguous with the unnamed tributary.

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6. SECTION 10 JURISDICTIONAL WATERS⁵: 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 10.⁶ 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
 - e. Tributaries (a)(5):

Name of Aquatic Resource	Size (in acres)	Flow Regime and additional description of the tributary	Method for determining flow regime
S1	0.0092	Intermittent Stream	Review of site photos provided by applicant, FEMA flood maps,

⁵ 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.

⁶ 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.

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			and environmental maps
S-2	0.0615	Perennial Stream	Review of site photos provided by applicant, FEMA flood maps, and environmental maps
S-3 (Bull Creek)	0.4847	Perennial Stream	Review of site photos provided by applicant, FEMA flood maps, and environmental maps
S-4	0.03	Intermittent Stream	Review of site photos provided by applicant, FEMA flood maps, and environmental maps

f. The territorial seas (a)(6): N/A

g. Adjacent wetlands (a)(7):

Name of Aquatic Resource	Size (in acres)	Contiguous with or abutting? If so, list water	Describe continuous surface connection
W1	0.073	Yes, S-1	The wetland boundary is connecting and contiguous with stream S1, an RPW
W2	0.024	Yes, S-2	The wetland boundary is connecting and contiguous with stream S2, an RPW
PUBG-1	0.166	Yes, S-2	The wetland boundary is connecting and contiguous with stream S2, an RPW
PUBG-2	0.326	Yes, S-3	The wetland boundary is connecting and contiguous with stream S3, an RPW

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”).⁷ 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

⁷ 51 FR 41217, November 13, 1986.

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- 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). 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. 1. Date of Office (desktop review): May 8, 2024 – CESAS-RDP
2. Date(s) of Field Review (if applicable): February 5, 2024 – Consultant
 - b. Data sources used to support this determination (included in the administrative record).
 - Aquatic Resources delineation submitted by, or on behalf of, the requestor:
Figure 3 – Delineated Aquatic Features Map
 - Aquatic Resources delineation prepared by the USACE:
 - Wetland field data sheets prepared by the Corps:
 - OHWM data sheets prepared by the USACE:
 - Previous JDs (AJD or PJD) addressing the same (or portions of the same) review area:
 - Photographs: Consultant – Project North Star – Photos 1-28

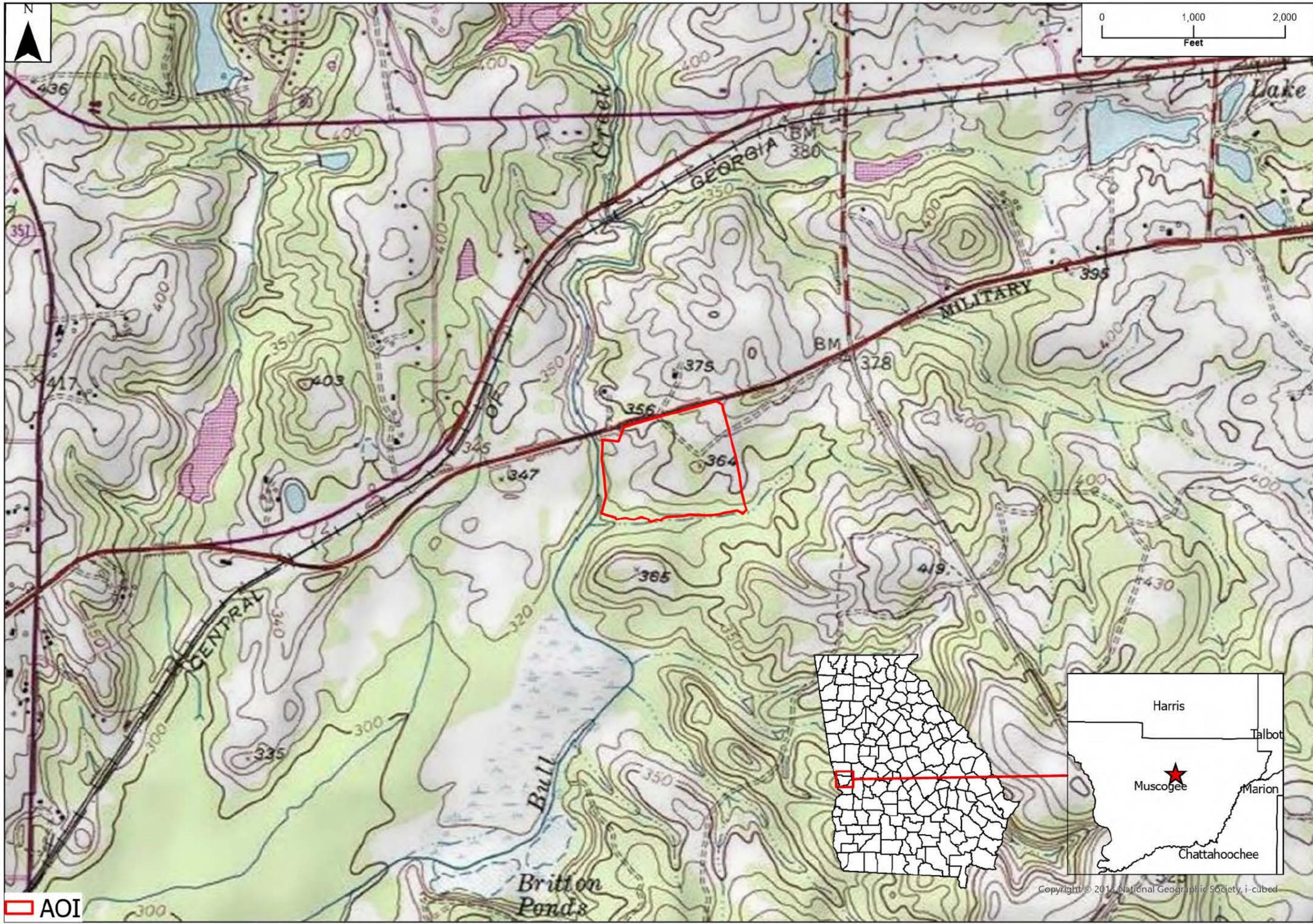
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- Aerial Imagery:
- LIDAR: USACE-RDP June 4, 2024
- USDA NRCS Soil Survey: Custom Soil Resources January 26, 2024
- USFWS NWI maps:
- USGS topographic maps: Figure 1 – Topographical Location Map – Project North Star
- USGS NHD data/maps: Title and Dates
- Section 10 resources used: Title and Dates
- NCDWR stream identification forms
- Antecedent Precipitation Tool Analysis: List Date(s)
- Other sources of Information: FEMA National Flood Hazard Layer Firmette

10. OTHER SUPPORTING INFORMATION.

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.



Project North Star - Columbus, GA
Figure 1 - Topographical Location Map (Midland 7.5 Minute USGS Quadrangle)
Muscogee County, GA



Project North Star - Columbus, GA
 Figure 3 - Delineated Aquatic Features Map
 Muscogee County, GA

