



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, SAVANNAH DISTRICT  
100 WEST OGLETHORPE AVENUE  
SAVANNAH GEORGIA 31401

SAS-RD

June 24, 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),<sup>1</sup> SAS-2022-01057<sup>2</sup>

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

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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> 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.).

<sup>3</sup> 33 CFR 331.2.

<sup>4</sup> Regulatory Guidance Letter 05-02.

<sup>5</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.

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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 Georgia 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).

Name of Aquatic Resource	JD or Non-JD	Section 404/Section 10
Wetland 3	Non-JD	None
Wetland 4	Non-JD	None
Wetland 5	Non-JD	None
Wetland 13	Non-JD	None
Borrow Pit	Non-JD	None

## 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. \_\_\_, 143 S. Ct. 1322 (2023)
- e. 1980s preamble language (including regarding waters and features that are generally non-jurisdictional) (51 FR 41217 (November 13, 1986) and 53 FR 20765 (June 6, 1988))
- f. 2008 Rapanos guidance

## 3. REVIEW AREA.

- A. Project Are Size (in acres): 281.99
- B. Center Coordinates of the Project Site (in decimal degrees)  
Latitude: 32.227308                      Longitude: -81.455243
- C. Nearest City or Town: Ellabell
- D. County: Bryan
- E. State: Georgia

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F. Any additional, relevant site-specific information: The site has been historically managed for timber. Evidence of this predates 1993 Google Earth aerial imagery. The last documented timber harvest off of the property was the northern portion of the site in 2013 based on Google Earth Aerial Imagery.

4. NEAREST TRADITIONAL NAVIGABLE WATER (TNW), INTERSTATE WATER, OR THE TERRITORIAL SEAS TO WHICH THE AQUATIC RESOURCE IS CONNECTED.

A. Name of nearest downstream TNW, Territorial Sea or interstate water: The Ogeechee River, which is a TNW is approximately 1.17 miles east of the review site

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)).

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

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. All wetlands within the AJD review area do not have a continuous surface connection (CSC) an a(1)-a(6) water.

6. SECTION 10 JURISDICTIONAL WATERS<sup>6</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>7</sup> N/a

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<sup>6</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>7</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.

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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): N/a
- f. The territorial seas (a)(6): N/a
- g. Adjacent wetlands (a)(7): N/a
- h.

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>8</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. 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

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<sup>8</sup> 51 FR 41217, November 13, 1986.

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).

Name of excluded feature	Size (in acres)	Type of resource generally not jurisdictional
Wetland 3	0.42	Wetland 3 was a closed depressional wetland that was surrounded by uplands. The wetland has a noticeable change in higher elevations surrounding it and there was no observation of a discrete feature that would constitute a CSC from the wetland to a a(1)-a(6) water.
Wetland 4	1.47	Wetland 4 was a closed depressional wetland that was surrounded by uplands. The wetland has a noticeable change in higher elevations surrounding it and there was no observation of a discrete feature that would constitute a CSC from the wetland to a a(1)-a(6) water.
Wetland 5	0.34	Wetland 5 was surrounded by uplands and higher elevations to the north, west and south. The wetland abuts Warnell Farm Road to the east. There is “perched” culvert under the road where Wetland 5 is located. However once on the eastern side of the road where the culvert outfalls there is no evidence of a CSC that would connect to the wetland to a requisite water. Additionally, it is not connected to Wetland 12 to the north due to a lack of a CSC and there was uplands between Wetland 12 and the outfall of the culvert. IF water were to flow through the culvert it would sheet flow over uplands and not within a confined area. Additionally, the wetland is confined to a low-lying area along the western side of the road where slopes are higher to the north and south. Additionally, access road points to the north and south of the wetland coming off the Warnell Farm Road do not have culverts. The wetland is not connected

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		to a discrete feature that constitute a CSC to an a(1) to a(6) water.
Wetland 13	0.03	Wetland 13 was a closed depressional wetland that was surrounded by uplands located at the southeast corner of the review area. The wetland has higher elevations surrounding it and there was no observation of a discrete feature that would constitute a CSC from the wetland to a a(1)-a(6) water.
Borrow Pit	0.71	Borrow pit was dug solely in uplands historically used for some type of borrow material for construction of roads or other fill related to construction on the property. Since the excavation operation has been abandoned the borrow pit does not qualify as a "preamble water (e)". Desktop review of lidar shows a possible discrete feature present, but after a field inspection the possible feature does not exist it appeared to be more of an overland "sheet flow" area more than a discrete feature that would constitute a CSC to and a(1) – a(6) 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. 1. Date of Office (desktop review): June 2024  
2. Date(s) of Field Review (if applicable): June 14, 2024
- b. Data sources used to support this determination (included in the administrative record).
  - ☒ Aquatic Resources delineation submitted by, or on behalf of, the requestor: Aquatic Resource Delineation Exhibit 6/19/2024
  - ☒ Photographs: Corps Site visit on 6/14/2024
  - ☒ Aerial Imagery: Google Earth 2013
  - ☐ LIDAR: 2018-2019 Lidar taken from NOAA: Data Access Viewer and map made in ARCPRO by the Corps.
  - ☒ USDA NRCS Soil Survey: NRCS Web Soil Survey – Hydric Rating dated 6/24/2024
  - ☒ USFWS NWI maps: map provided by applicant titled National Wetlands Inventory Map, dated 10/28/2022
  - ☒ USGS topographic maps: map provided by applicant titled USGS Topographic Map, dated 10/28/2022
  - ☒ USGS NHD data/maps: NHD Map made by the Corps in ARCPRO
  - ☒ Section 10 resources used: SAS Section 10 List

10. OTHER SUPPORTING INFORMATION. N/A

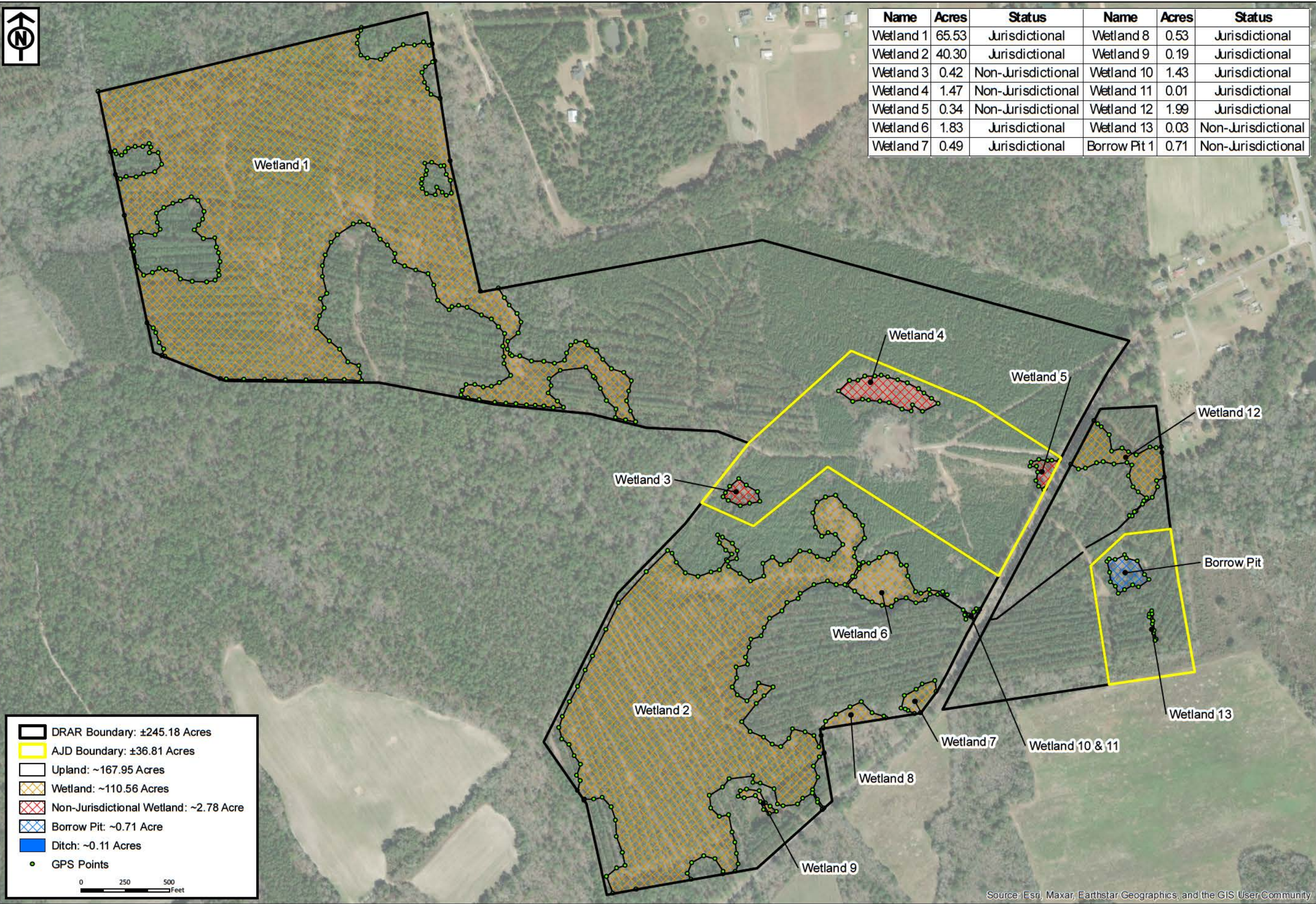
11. NOTE: The structure and format of this MFR were developed in coordination with the EPA and Department of the Army. The MFR's structure and format may be

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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.





**Aquatic Resource  
Delineation Exhibit**  
Prepared For: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Bryan County, Georgia

RLC Project No.: 20-098.1  
Figure No.: 9  
Prepared By: ZM  
Sketch Date: 6/19/2024  
Map Scale : 1 inch = 500 feet