



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, SEATTLE DISTRICT
4735 EAST MARGINAL WAY, SOUTH BLDG 1202
SEATTLE, WA 98134-2388

CENWS-Seattle District

2 June 2025

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 NWS-2025-408²

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

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),⁵ the 2023 Rule as amended,

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 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, the territorial seas, or interstate water 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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as well as other applicable guidance, relevant case law, and longstanding practice in evaluating jurisdiction.

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. Ditch 1, jurisdictional, Section 404
 - ii. Wetland 2025-01, jurisdictional, Section 404
 - iii. Wetland 2025-02a, non-jurisdictional
 - iv. Wetland 2025-02b, non-jurisdictional
 - v. Wetland 2025-02c, 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. 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 2.7-acre review area is located at the Lummi Indian Reservation near Bellingham, Whatcom County, Washington (48.746620, -122.649215). The review area consists of undeveloped mixed deciduous and evergreen forest. Four wetlands and one ditch were identified in the review area. The review area is mostly surrounded by undeveloped forest but is bounded by Smokehouse Road to the north.

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4. NEAREST TRADITIONAL NAVIGABLE WATER (TNW), THE TERRITORIAL SEAS, OR INTERSTATE WATER TO WHICH THE AQUATIC RESOURCE IS CONNECTED. Bellingham Bay, approximately 1.2 miles downstream and southeast of the review area. Bellingham Bay is a part of the Puget Sound which is listed as a navigable waterway on the Navigable Waters of the United States in Washington State list dated December 31, 2008.⁶
5. FLOWPATH FROM THE SUBJECT AQUATIC RESOURCES TO A TNW, THE TERRITORIAL SEAS, OR INTERSTATE WATER. Ditch 1 flows 400 feet east along the northern review area boundary. Ditch 1 then flows 30 feet east and into Stream 1. Stream 1 flows approximately 1.2 miles southeast to Bellingham Bay.
6. SECTION 10 JURISDICTIONAL WATERS⁷: 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 10.⁸ 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.

⁶ 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.

⁷ 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.

⁸ 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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- 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):

Ditch 1: Ditch 1 flows 400 feet east along the northern review area boundary and then flows approximately 30 feet east into Stream 1 which flows southeast to Bellingham Bay. During a site visit on 28 May 2025, saturated soils, but no surface water was observed in Ditch 1. According to the antecedent precipitation tool, there were drier than normal conditions during the site visit. According to data collected at the weather station at the Bellingham International Airport, there was approximately 0.3 inches of rain in the ten days prior to the site visit with no precipitation the day of or the day before the site visit. The approximately 3.5-foot-wide ditch is vegetated primarily by reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea* – FACW), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens* – FAC) and piggyback plant (*Tolmiea menziesii* – FAC) and has a defined bed and bank. The Corps observed physical indicators of an ordinary high water mark in Ditch 1 including a shift in vegetation, wracked grassy material, and bent vegetation. Ditch 1 is intermittent according to the Streamflow Duration Assessment Method for the Pacific Northwest. The Corps has determined that Ditch 1 meets the relatively permanent standard and indirectly connects downstream to a TNW and is therefore a water of the U.S.

- f. Adjacent Wetlands (a)(4):

Wetland 2025-01: Wetland 2025-01 is an approximately 0.8-acre palustrine forested wetland in the eastern portion of the review area. Wetland 2025-01 drains north to and abuts Ditch 1, a relatively permanent tributary as documented above. Based on this, the Corps has determined that Wetland 2025-01 has a continuous surface connection to an (a)(3) tributary and therefore meets the definition of an (a)(4) adjacent wetland and is a water of the U.S.

- g. Additional Waters (a)(5): N/A

8. NON-JURISDICTIONAL AQUATIC RESOURCES AND FEATURES

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- 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).⁹ 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).

Wetland 2025-02a: Wetland 2025-02a is an approximately 195 square-foot palustrine forested depressional wetland in the western portion of the review area. No outlet from the wetland was observed during a site visit on 28 May 2025. The wetland does not abut an (a)(1), (a)(2) or (a)(3) water. Therefore, Wetland 2025-02a does not have a continuous surface connection to an (a)(1), (a)(2), or (a)(3) waters and is not a water of the U.S.

Wetland 2025-02b: Wetland 2025-02b is an approximately 1,470 square-foot palustrine forested depressional wetland in the western portion of the review area. No outlet from the wetland was observed during a site visit on 28 May 2025. The wetland does not abut an (a)(1), (a)(2) or (a)(3) water. Therefore, Wetland 2025-02b does not have a continuous surface connection to an (a)(1), (a)(2), or (a)(3) waters and is not a water of the U.S.

Wetland 2025-02c: Wetland 2025-02c is an approximately 580 square-foot palustrine forested depressional wetland in the western portion of the review area. No outlet from the wetland was observed during a site visit on 28 May 2025. The wetland does not abut an (a)(1), (a)(2) or (a)(3) water. Therefore, Wetland 2025-02c does not have a continuous surface connection to an (a)(1), (a)(2), or (a)(3) waters and is not a water of the U.S.

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. Site visit on 28 May 2025

⁹ 88 FR 3004 (January 18, 2023)

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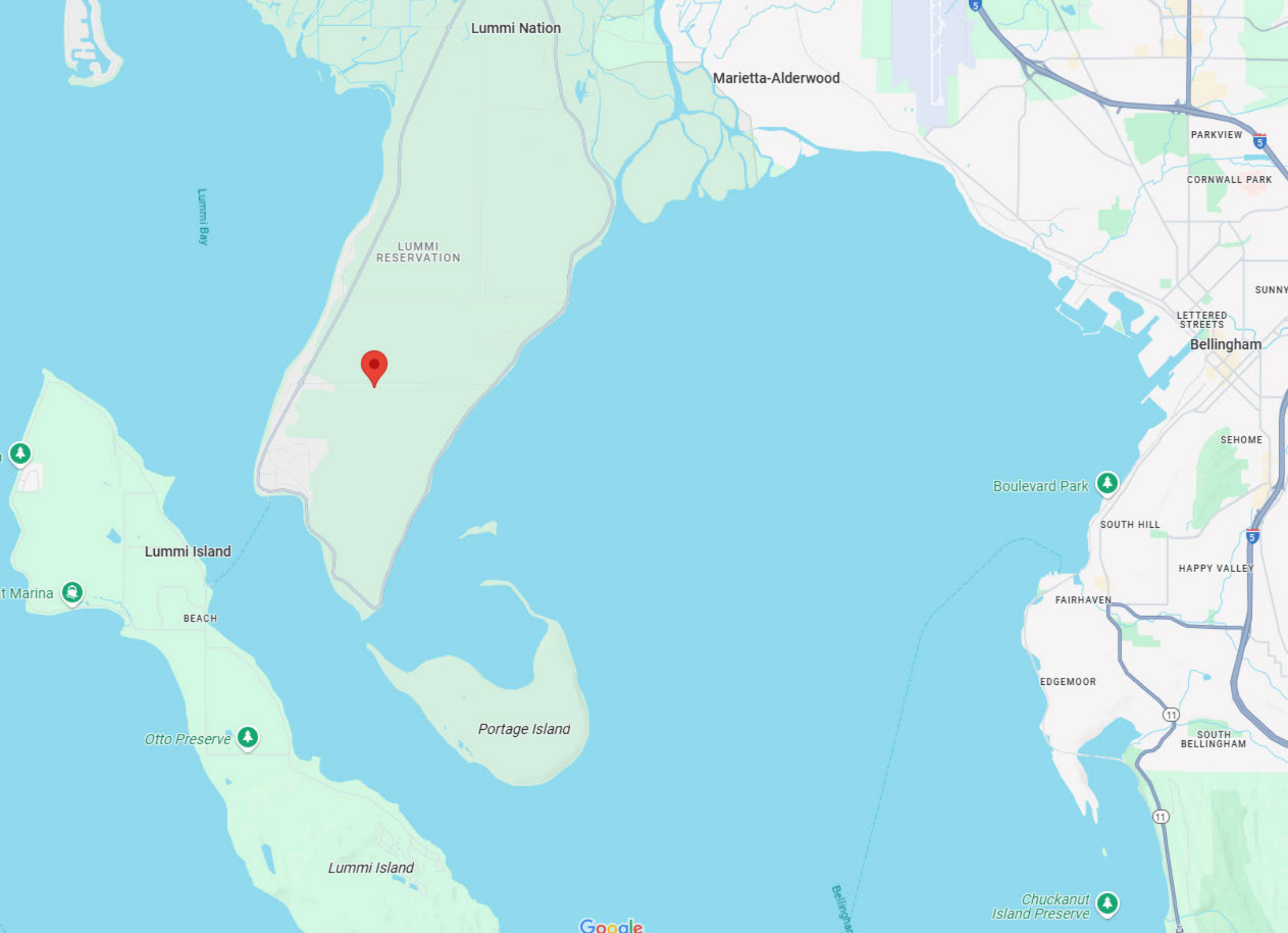
b. Wetland Packet. Northwest Ecological Services. March 2025.

c. USGS TopoView accessed on 5/28/2025 at:

<https://ngmndb.usgs.gov/topoview/viewer/#4/40.01/-100.06>

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.



Lummi Nation

Marietta-Alderwood

PARKVIEW

CORNWALL PARK

Lummi Bay

LUMMI
RESERVATION

SUNNY

LETTERED
STREETS

Bellingham

SEHOME

Boulevard Park

SOUTH HILL

HAPPY VALLEY

Lummi Island

BEACH

Marina

FAIRHAVEN

EDGEMOOR

Otto Preserve

Portage Island

SOUTH
BELLINGHAM

Lummi Island

Chuckanut
Island Preserve

Google



Note: Features shown were not surveyed. Size and location of features shown are approximate.



- Site Wetland
- Wetland Mosaic Boundary
- Review Area Boundary

- Sample Plot
- Stream
- Ditch



Aerial Photo: Whatcom County 2022



	Wetlands 2025-01 and 2025-02	MAR 2025
	Smokehouse Road Lummi Nation Wetland Inventory	

