

APPROVED JURISDICTIONAL DETERMINATION FORM
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

SECTION I: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A. REPORT COMPLETION DATE FOR APPROVED JURISDICTIONAL DETERMINATION (JD): October 14, 2021

B. DISTRICT OFFICE, FILE NAME, AND NUMBER: Buffalo District, Auburn Field Office; Thurston Ridge Solar;
File No. 2021-00124

C. PROJECT LOCATION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION: 3905 Lewis Road

State: New York County: Steuben City: Thurston

Center coordinates of site (lat/long in degree decimal format): Lat: 42.189957 Long: -77.23984

Universal Transverse Mercator:

Name of nearest waterbody: unnamed tributary to Cohocton River; Michigan Creek, Curtis Creek

Name of nearest Traditional Navigable Water (TNW) into which the aquatic resource flows: N/A

Name of watershed or Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC): 02050105

- Check if map/diagram of review area and/or potential jurisdictional areas is/are available upon request.
- Check if other sites (e.g., offsite mitigation sites, disposal sites, etc.) are associated with this action and are recorded on a different JD form.

D. REVIEW PERFORMED FOR SITE EVALUATION (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY):

- Office (Desk) Determination Date: October 14, 2021
- Field Determination Date: August 17, 2021

SECTION II: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

A. RHA SECTION 10 DETERMINATION OF JURISDICTION.

There **ARE NO** "navigable waters of the U.S." within Rivers and Harbors Act (RHA) jurisdiction (as defined by 33 CFR part 329) in the review area. [Required]

- Waters subject to the ebb and flow of the tide.
- Waters are presently used, or have been used in the past, or may be susceptible for use to transport interstate or foreign commerce. Explain: .

B. CWA SECTION 404 DETERMINATION OF JURISDICTION.

There **ARE NO** "waters of the U.S." within Clean Water Act (CWA) jurisdiction (as defined by 33 CFR part 328) in the review area. [Required]

1. Waters of the U.S.

a. Indicate presence of waters of U.S. in review area (check all that apply):¹

- TNWs, including territorial seas
- Wetlands adjacent to TNWs
- Relatively permanent waters² (RPWs) that flow directly or indirectly into TNWs
- Non-RPWs that flow directly or indirectly into TNWs
- Wetlands directly abutting RPWs that flow directly or indirectly into TNWs
- Wetlands adjacent to but not directly abutting RPWs that flow directly or indirectly into TNWs
- Wetlands adjacent to non-RPWs that flow directly or indirectly into TNWs
- Impoundments of jurisdictional waters
- Isolated (interstate or intrastate) waters, including isolated wetlands

b. Identify (estimate) size of waters of the U.S. in the review area:

Non-wetland waters

Wetlands:

¹ Boxes checked below shall be supported by completing the appropriate sections in Section III below.

² For purposes of this form, an RPW is defined as a tributary that is not a TNW and that typically flows year-round or has continuous flow at least "seasonally" (e.g., typically 3 months).

c. Limits (boundaries) of jurisdiction based on: 1987 Manual
Elevation of established OHWM (if known):

2. Non-regulated waters/wetlands (check if applicable):³

Potentially jurisdictional waters and/or wetlands were assessed and determined to be not jurisdictional.

Wetland T-1

On-site observations during the June 2020 and November 2020 delineation indicate that Wetland T-1 is an emergent wetland (PEM) formed in a depression area situated on an elevated ridge within agricultural land above a utility right-of-way that runs parallel to Lewis Road. The wetland is confined by topography and review of aerial photos, USGS topographic map, and the NWI map indicate that the nearest potential RPW is an unnamed tributary to Michigan Creek.

Using the measurement tool from Google Earth, we estimate that the unnamed tributary is approximately 2,140 feet to the east of Lewis Road. No potential connection to the tributary is suggested on any of the maps reviewed. On-site observations during the USACE site visit on August 19, 2021 confirm these findings.

The USDA Web Soil Survey indicates that the wetland lies within Lordstown channery silt loam, 12 to 20 percent slopes which has a hydric rating of 0.

Wetland T-2

This wetland is located within an overhead utility right-of-way adjacent to Lewis Road. The right-of-way is approximately 5-8 feet above Lewis Road. A review of aerial photos and on-site observations during the June 2020 and November 2020 delineation found this wetland to be confined to the delineated boundary by the steep ridge to the west and a slight rise of topography on the west side of Lewis Road. These findings were confirmed during the USACE site visit on August 19, 2021.

A possible connection from Wetland T-2 down the approximately 5-8 foot road bank to the roadside ditch along Lewis Road was investigated. No connection was confirmed.

The USDA Web Soil Survey indicates that the wetland lies within Volusia channery silt loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes with a hydric rating of 5 and Volusia channery silt loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes with a hydric rating of 4.

Note: Neither the aerial photographs nor other map resources suggest the historical presence of this wetland. Based on its location we speculate that the wetland was formed within the utility-right-of-way after construction and regrading of the land.

SECTION III: CWA ANALYSIS

A. TNWs AND WETLANDS ADJACENT TO TNWs

The agencies will assert jurisdiction over TNWs and wetlands adjacent to TNWs. If the aquatic resource is a TNW, complete Section III.A.1 and Section III.D.1. only; if the aquatic resource is a wetland adjacent to a TNW, complete Sections III.A.1 and 2 and Section III.D.1.; otherwise, see Section III.B below.

1. TNW

Identify TNW: .

Summarize rationale supporting determination:

2. Wetland adjacent to TNW

Summarize rationale supporting conclusion that wetland is "adjacent":

³ Supporting documentation is presented in Section III.F.

B. CHARACTERISTICS OF TRIBUTARY (THAT IS NOT A TNW) AND ITS ADJACENT WETLANDS (IF ANY):

This section summarizes information regarding characteristics of the tributary and its adjacent wetlands, if any, and it helps determine whether or not the standards for jurisdiction established under *Rapanos* have been met. The agencies will assert jurisdiction over non-navigable tributaries of TNWs where the tributaries are “relatively permanent waters” (RPWs), i.e. tributaries that typically flow year-round or have continuous flow at least seasonally (e.g., typically 3 months). A wetland that directly abuts an RPW is also jurisdictional. If the aquatic resource is not a TNW, but has year-round (perennial) flow, skip to Section III.D.2. If the aquatic resource is a wetland directly abutting a tributary with perennial flow, skip to Section III.D.4.

A wetland that is adjacent to but that does not directly abut an RPW requires a significant nexus evaluation. Corps districts and EPA regions will include in the record any available information that documents the existence of a significant nexus between a relatively permanent tributary that is not perennial (and its adjacent wetlands if any) and a traditional navigable water, even though a significant nexus finding is not required as a matter of law.

If the waterbody⁴ is not an RPW, or a wetland directly abutting an RPW, a JD will require additional data to determine if the waterbody has a significant nexus with a TNW. If the tributary has adjacent wetlands, the significant nexus evaluation must consider the tributary in combination with all of its adjacent wetlands. This significant nexus evaluation that combines, for analytical purposes, the tributary and all of its adjacent wetlands is used whether the review area identified in the JD request is the tributary, or its adjacent wetlands, or both. If the JD covers a tributary with adjacent wetlands, complete Section III.B.1 for the tributary, Section III.B.2 for any onsite wetlands, and Section III.B.3 for all wetlands adjacent to that tributary, both onsite and offsite. The determination whether a significant nexus exists is determined in Section III.C below.

1. Characteristics of non-TNWs that flow directly or indirectly into TNW

(i) General Area Conditions:

Watershed size: **Pick List**
Drainage area: **Pick List**
Average annual rainfall: inches
Average annual snowfall: inches

(ii) Physical Characteristics:

(a) Relationship with TNW:

Tributary flows directly into TNW.
 Tributary flows through _ tributaries before entering TNW.
Project waters are **Pick List** river miles from TNW.
Project waters are **Pick List** river miles from RPW.
Project waters are aerial (straight) miles from TNW.
Project waters are **Pick List** aerial (straight) miles from RPW.
Project waters cross or serve as state boundaries. Explain: N/A
Identify flow route to TNW⁵:
Tributary stream order, if known:

(b) General Tributary Characteristics (check all that apply):

Tributary is: Natural
 Artificial (man-made). Explain:
 Manipulated (man-altered). Explain:

Tributary properties with respect to top of bank (estimate):

Average width: feet
Average depth: feet
Average side slopes: **Pick List.**

Primary tributary substrate composition (check all that apply):

<input type="checkbox"/> Silts	<input type="checkbox"/> Sands	<input type="checkbox"/> Concrete
<input type="checkbox"/> Cobbles	<input type="checkbox"/> Gravel	<input type="checkbox"/> Muck
<input type="checkbox"/> Bedrock	<input type="checkbox"/> Vegetation. Type/% cover:	

⁴ Note that the Instructional Guidebook contains additional information regarding swales, ditches, washes, and erosional features generally and in the arid West.

⁵ Flow route can be described by identifying, e.g., tributary a, which flows through the review area, to flow into tributary b, which then flows into TNW.

Tributary condition/stability [e.g., highly eroding, sloughing banks]. Explain:
Presence of run/riffle/pool complexes. Explain:
Tributary geometry: **Pick List**
Tributary gradient (approximate average slope):

(c) Flow:
Tributary provides for: **Pick List**
Estimate average number of flow events in review area/year: **Pick List**
Describe flow regime:
Other information on duration and volume:
Surface flow is: **Pick List**. Characteristics:
Subsurface flow: **Pick List**. Explain findings:
 Dye (or other) test performed:

Tributary has (check all that apply):

- Bed and banks
- OHWM⁶ (check all indicators that apply):
 - clear, natural line impressed on the bank
 - changes in the character of soil
 - shelving
 - vegetation matted down, bent, or absent
 - leaf litter disturbed or washed away
 - sediment deposition
 - water staining
 - the presence of litter and debris
 - destruction of terrestrial vegetation
 - the presence of wrack line
 - sediment sorting
 - scour
 - multiple observed or predicted flow events
 - abrupt change in plant community

Discontinuous OHWM.⁷ Explain: .

If factors other than the OHWM were used to determine lateral extent of CWA jurisdiction (check all that apply):

- High Tide Line indicated by:
 - oil or scum line along shore objects
 - fine shell or debris deposits (foreshore)
 - physical markings/characteristics
 - tidal gauges
- Mean High Water Mark indicated by:
 - survey to available datum;
 - physical markings;
 - vegetation lines/changes in vegetation types.

(iii) Chemical Characteristics:

Characterize tributary (e.g., water color is clear, discolored, oily film; water quality; general watershed characteristics, etc.).
Identify specific pollutants, if known: .

(iv) Biological Characteristics. Channel supports (check all that apply):

- Riparian corridor. Characteristics (type, average width): .
- Wetland fringe. Characteristics: .
- Habitat for:
 - Federally Listed species. Explain findings: .
 - Fish/spawn areas. Explain findings: .
 - Other environmentally-sensitive species. Explain findings: .
 - Aquatic/wildlife diversity. Explain findings: .

2. Characteristics of wetlands adjacent to non-TNW that flow directly or indirectly into TNW

(i) Physical Characteristics:

(a) General Wetland Characteristics:
Project wetlands cross or serve as state boundaries. Explain.

⁶A natural or man-made discontinuity in the OHWM does not necessarily sever jurisdiction (e.g., where the stream temporarily flows underground, or where the OHWM has been removed by development or agricultural practices). Where there is a break in the OHWM that is unrelated to the waterbody's flow regime (e.g., flow over a rock outcrop or through a culvert), the agencies will look for indicators of flow above and below the break.

⁷Ibid.

(b) General Flow Relationship with Non-TNW:

Flow is: Intermittent. Explain:
Surface flow is: _____ Characteristics:
Subsurface flow: Explain findings: _____
 Dye (or other) test performed: _____

(c) Wetland Adjacency Determination with Non-TNW:

Directly abutting
 Not directly abutting
 Discrete wetland hydrologic connection. Explain: _____
 Ecological connection. Explain: _____
 Separated by berm/barrier. Explain: _____

(d) Proximity (Relationship) to TNW

Project wetlands are _____ river miles from TNW.
Project waters are _____ aerial (straight) miles from TNW.
Flow is from:
Estimate approximate location of wetland as within _____ floodplain

(ii) Chemical Characteristics:

Characterize wetland system (e.g., water color is clear, brown, oil film on surface; water quality; general watershed characteristics; etc.). Explain: Identify specific pollutants, if known:

(iii) Biological Characteristics. Wetland supports (check all that apply):

Riparian buffer. Characteristics (type, average width):
 Vegetation type/percent cover. Explain:
 Habitat for:
 Federally Listed species. Explain findings:
 Fish/spawn areas. Explain findings:
 Other environmentally-sensitive species. Explain findings:
 Aquatic/wildlife diversity. Explain findings:

3. Characteristics of all wetlands adjacent to the tributary (if any)

All wetland(s) being considered in the cumulative analysis:
Approximately _____ acres in total are being considered in the cumulative analysis.
For each wetland, specify the following:
Directly abuts? (Y/N) Size (in acres)
Summarize overall biological, chemical and physical functions being performed:

C. SIGNIFICANT NEXUS DETERMINATION

A significant nexus analysis will assess the flow characteristics and functions of the tributary itself and the functions performed by any wetlands adjacent to the tributary to determine if they significantly affect the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of a TNW. For each of the following situations, a significant nexus exists if the tributary, in combination with all of its adjacent wetlands, has more than a speculative or insubstantial effect on the chemical, physical and/or biological integrity of a TNW. Considerations when evaluating significant nexus include, but are not limited to the volume, duration, and frequency of the flow of water in the tributary and its proximity to a TNW, and the functions performed by the tributary and all its adjacent wetlands. It is not appropriate to determine significant nexus based solely on any specific threshold of distance (e.g. between a tributary and its adjacent wetland or between a tributary and the TNW). Similarly, the fact an adjacent wetland lies within or outside of a floodplain is not solely determinative of significant nexus.

Draw connections between the features documented and the effects on the TNW, as identified in the *Rapanos* Guidance and discussed in the Instructional Guidebook. Factors to consider include, for example:

- Does the tributary, in combination with its adjacent wetlands (if any), have the capacity to carry pollutants or flood waters to TNWs, or to reduce the amount of pollutants or flood waters reaching a TNW?

- Does the tributary, in combination with its adjacent wetlands (if any), provide habitat and lifecycle support functions for fish and other species, such as feeding, nesting, spawning, or rearing young for species that are present in the TNW?
- Does the tributary, in combination with its adjacent wetlands (if any), have the capacity to transfer nutrients and organic carbon that support downstream foodwebs?
- Does the tributary, in combination with its adjacent wetlands (if any), have other relationships to the physical, chemical, or biological integrity of the TNW?

Note: the above list of considerations is not inclusive and other functions observed or known to occur should be documented below:

1. **Significant nexus findings for non-RPW that has no adjacent wetlands and flows directly or indirectly into TNWs.** Explain findings of presence or absence of significant nexus below, based on the tributary itself, then go to Section III.D: .
2. **Significant nexus findings for non-RPW and its adjacent wetlands, where the non-RPW flows directly or indirectly into TNWs.** Explain findings of presence or absence of significant nexus below, based on the tributary in combination with all of its adjacent wetlands, then go to Section III.D:
3. **Significant nexus findings for wetlands adjacent to an RPW but that do not directly abut the RPW.** Explain findings of presence or absence of significant nexus below, based on the tributary in combination with all of its adjacent wetlands, then go to Section III.D:

D. DETERMINATIONS OF JURISDICTIONAL FINDINGS. THE SUBJECT WATERS/WETLANDS ARE (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY):

1. **TNWs and Adjacent Wetlands.** Check all that apply and provide size estimates in review area:
 TNWs: linear feet width (ft), Or, acres.
 Wetlands adjacent to TNWs: acres.
2. **RPWs that flow directly or indirectly into TNWs.**
 Tributaries of TNWs where tributaries typically flow year-round are jurisdictional. Provide data and rationale indicating that tributary is perennial:

 Tributaries of TNW where tributaries have continuous flow “seasonally” (e.g., typically three months each year) are jurisdictional. Data supporting this conclusion is provided at Section III.B. Provide rationale indicating that tributary flows seasonally: .
Provide estimates for jurisdictional waters in the review area (check all that apply):
 Tributary waters: linear feet width (ft).
 Other non-wetland waters: acres.
Identify type(s) of waters: .
3. **Non-RPWs⁸ that flow directly or indirectly into TNWs.**
 Waterbody that is not a TNW or an RPW, but flows directly or indirectly into a TNW, and it has a significant nexus with a TNW is jurisdictional. Data supporting this conclusion is provided at Section III.C.
Provide estimates for jurisdictional waters within the review area (check all that apply):
 Tributary waters: linear feet width (ft).
 Other non-wetland waters: acres.
Identify type(s) of waters: .

⁸See Footnote # 3.

4. Wetlands directly abutting an RPW that flow directly or indirectly into TNWs.

- Wetlands directly abut RPW and thus are jurisdictional as adjacent wetlands.
- Wetlands directly abutting an RPW where tributaries typically flow year-round. Provide data and rationale indicating that tributary is perennial in Section III.D.2, above. Provide rationale indicating that wetland is directly abutting an RPW:
- Wetlands directly abutting an RPW where tributaries typically flow "seasonally." Provide data indicating that tributary is seasonal in Section III.B and rationale in Section III.D.2, above. Provide rationale indicating that wetland is directly abutting an RPW:

Provide acreage estimates for jurisdictional wetlands in the review area: _____ acres.

5. Wetlands adjacent to but not directly abutting an RPW that flow directly or indirectly into TNWs.

- Wetlands that do not directly abut an RPW, but when considered in combination with the tributary to which they are adjacent and with similarly situated adjacent wetlands, have a significant nexus with a TNW are jurisdictional. Data supporting this conclusion is provided at Section III.C.

Provide acreage estimates for jurisdictional wetlands in the review area: ___ acres.

6. Wetlands adjacent to non-RPWs that flow directly or indirectly into TNWs.

- Wetlands adjacent to such waters, and have when considered in combination with the tributary to which they are adjacent and with similarly situated adjacent wetlands, have a significant nexus with a TNW are jurisdictional. Data supporting this conclusion is provided at Section III.C.

Provide estimates for jurisdictional wetlands in the review area: _____ acres.

7. Impoundments of jurisdictional waters.⁹

As a general rule, the impoundment of a jurisdictional tributary remains jurisdictional.

- Demonstrate that impoundment was created from "waters of the U.S.," or
- Demonstrate that water meets the criteria for one of the categories presented above (1-6), or
- Demonstrate that water is isolated with a nexus to commerce (see E below).

E. ISOLATED [INTERSTATE OR INTRA-STATE] WATERS, INCLUDING ISOLATED WETLANDS, THE USE, DEGRADATION OR DESTRUCTION OF WHICH COULD AFFECT INTERSTATE COMMERCE, INCLUDING ANY SUCH WATERS (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY):¹⁰

- which are or could be used by interstate or foreign travelers for recreational or other purposes.
- from which fish or shellfish are or could be taken and sold in interstate or foreign commerce.
- which are or could be used for industrial purposes by industries in interstate commerce.
- Interstate isolated waters. Explain: _____

Identify water body and summarize rationale supporting determination:

Provide estimates for jurisdictional waters in the review area (check all that apply):

- Tributary waters: _____ linear feet _____ width (ft).
- Other non-wetland waters: _____ acres.
- Identify type(s) of waters: _____
- Wetlands: _____ acres.

F. NON-JURISDICTIONAL WATERS, INCLUDING WETLANDS (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY):

- If potential wetlands were assessed within the review area, these areas did not meet the criteria in the 1987 Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual and/or appropriate Regional Supplements.
- Review area included isolated waters with no substantial nexus to interstate (or foreign) commerce.
 - Prior to the Jan 2001 Supreme Court decision in "SWANCC," the review area would have been regulated based solely on the "Migratory Bird Rule" (MBR).

Waters do not meet the "Significant Nexus" standard, where such a finding is required for jurisdiction. Explain: _____
Provide acreage estimates for non-jurisdictional waters in the review area, where the sole potential basis of jurisdiction is the MBR factors (i.e., presence of migratory birds, presence of endangered species, use of water for irrigated agriculture), using best professional judgment (check all that apply):

⁹ To complete the analysis refer to the key in Section III.D.6 of the Instructional Guidebook.

¹⁰ Prior to asserting or declining CWA jurisdiction based solely on this category, Corps Districts will elevate the action to Corps and EPA HQ for review consistent with the process described in the Corps/EPA Memorandum Regarding CWA Act Jurisdiction Following Rapanos.

- Non-wetland waters (i.e., rivers, streams): linear feet width (ft).
- Lakes/ponds: acres.
- Other non-wetland waters: acres. List type of aquatic resource: .
- Wetlands:**
 - T-1 PEM 1.29 acres**
 - T-2 PEM 0.55 acre**

Provide acreage estimates for non-jurisdictional waters in the review area that do not meet the “Significant Nexus” standard, where such a finding is required for jurisdiction (check all that apply):

- Non-wetland waters (i.e., rivers, streams): linear feet, width (ft).
- Lakes/ponds: acres.
- Other non-wetland waters: acres. List type of aquatic resource:
- Wetlands:

SECTION IV: DATA SOURCES.

A. SUPPORTING DATA. Data reviewed for JD (check all that apply)

- Maps, plans, plots or plat submitted by or on behalf of the applicant/consultant:**
- Data sheets prepared/submitted by or on behalf of the applicant/consultant.**
 - Agent: Environmental Design Partnership**
 - Delineator: GZA GeoEnvironmental of New York**
 - Office concurs with data sheets and delineation report.**
 - Office does not concur with data sheets/delineation report.
- Data sheets prepared by the Corps:
- Corps navigable waters’ study:
- U.S. Geological Survey Hydrologic Atlas:
 - USGS NHD data.
 - USGS 8 and 12 digit HUC maps.
- U.S. Geological Survey map(s). Cite scale & quad name: 24000 scale; Campbell, New York**
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Soil Survey. Citation: On-Line Web Soil Survey**
 - Wetland T-1: Soils identified as Lordstown channery silt loam (LoC), 12 to 20 percent slopes (LoC) with a hydric rating of 0.**
 - Wetland T-2: Soils identified as Volusia channery silt loam (VoB), 3 to 8 percent slopes with a hydric rating of 5 and Volusia channery silt loam (VoC), 8 to 15 percent slopes with a hydric rating of 4.**
- National wetlands inventory map: Campbell, New York (06/10/2021) - No wetlands or streams are mapped on the parcel.**
- State/Local wetland inventory map: New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Freshwater Wetland Map. Campbell, New York (06/10/2021) – No wetlands or streams are mapped on the parcel.**
- FEMA/FIRM maps:
- 100-year Floodplain Elevation is: (National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929)
- Photographs:** **Aerial - Google Earth: 04/21/1994, 06/04/2006, 04/30/2007, 05/03/2009, 05/26/2011, 10/05/2016**
 - Other Photos contained in the original Delineation Report received on 01/21/2021 and additional photos provided with revisions to the report on 06/22/2021 and on 08/17/2021 during the USACE site visit.**
- Previous determination(s). File No. and date of response letter:
- Applicable/supporting case law:
- Applicable/supporting scientific literature:

B. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS TO SUPPORT JD:

Based on consideration of the above information and including on-site observations, it has been determined that:

Emergent Wetlands T-1 and T-2 are outside Department of the Army jurisdiction as they do not meet the criteria for a jurisdictional water of the United States according to 33 CFR Part 328.3(a)(1-7) as follows:

1. do not/have not supported interstate or foreign commerce;
2. are not interstate waters/wetlands; the wetlands do not cross state boundaries
3. the degradation or destruction of which would not affect interstate or foreign commerce and does not include such waters:
 - (i) which are or could be used by interstate or foreign travelers for recreational or other purposes; or
 - (ii) from which fish or shellfish are or could be taken and sold in interstate or foreign commerce; or
 - (iii) which are used or could be used for industrial purpose by industries in interstate commerce
4. are not impoundments of water otherwise defined as WOUS under the definition;
5. are not tributaries of waters identified in paragraphs (a)(1)-(4) of this section;
6. are not a territorial sea;
7. are not wetlands adjacent to waters (other than waters that are themselves wetlands) identified in paragraphs (a)(1)-(6) of this section;