

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

This form should be completed by following the instructions provided in Section IV of the JD Form Instructional Guidebook.

**SECTION I: BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

**A. REPORT COMPLETION DATE FOR APPROVED JURISDICTIONAL DETERMINATION (JD): December 17, 2010**

**B. DISTRICT OFFICE, FILE NAME, AND NUMBER: Sacramento District, El Dorado-Ivanpah Transmission Line, SPK-2010-00576-SG**

**C. PROJECT LOCATION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

State: Nevada County/parish/borough: Clark City: Searchlight  
Center coordinates of site (lat/long in degree decimal format): Lat. 35.542° N, Long. -115.119° W.  
Universal Transverse Mercator:

Name of nearest water body: Piute Wash – interstate water (33 CFR 328.3(a)2) which crosses the Nevada/California Border approximately 60.0 miles from the project area. NV 066, NV 70 and NV94 are assessed on this form and considered to be jurisdictional.

Name of nearest Traditional Navigable Water (TNW) into which the aquatic resource flows: Piute Wash

Name of watershed or Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC): 15030102

- 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. Sites associated with the El Dorado Valley and Colorado River/Lake Mohave Watershed are being submitted separately. Also, those drainages associated with Piute Wash Watershed that do not appear to be connected to tributaries of Piute Wash and therefore, are not jurisdictional are assessed separately.

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

- Office (Desk) Determination. Date: December 17, 2010
- Field Determination. Date(s): August 4, 2010

**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** “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):<sup>1</sup>**

- TNWs, including territorial seas
- Wetlands adjacent to TNWs
- Relatively permanent waters<sup>2</sup> (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

**These waters have a direct connection to Piute Wash, which is a large interstate ephemeral drainage that flows into the Colorado River after crossing the Nevada State line into California. Piute Wash was observed with flow following two rain events that occurred during field surveys. NV 066, NV 70 and NV94 are assessed on this form and considered to be jurisdictional.**

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

Non-wetland waters: linear feet: width (ft) and/or 0.035 acres.  
Wetlands: acres.

**c. Limits (boundaries) of jurisdiction based on: Established by OHWM.**

Elevation of established OHWM (if known): .

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

<sup>2</sup> 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).

2. **Non-regulated waters/wetlands (check if applicable):**<sup>3</sup>

- Potentially jurisdictional waters and/or wetlands were assessed within the review area and determined to be not jurisdictional.  
Explain: .

**SECTION III: CWA ANALYSIS**

**A. TNWs AND WETLANDS ADJACENT TO TNWs: NA**

**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 waterbody<sup>4</sup> 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: 675,301 acres  
Drainage area: 11357 acres  
Average annual rainfall: 7.72 inches  
Average annual snowfall: 1.3 inches

**(ii) Physical Characteristics:**

**(a) Relationship with TNW:**

- Tributary flows directly into TNW.  
 Tributary flows through 1 tributaries before entering TNW.

Project waters are 20-25 river miles from TNW.  
Project waters are 20-25 river miles from RPW.  
Project waters are 20-25 aerial (straight) miles from TNW.  
Project waters are 20-25 aerial (straight) miles from RPW. Not Applicable – no RPW’s found within the area.  
Project waters cross or serve as state boundaries. Explain: Piute Wash crosses into California approximately 60.0 miles downstream of project area.

Identify flow route to TNW<sup>5</sup>: The two drainages assessed on this form are NV 94 and NV 70 which are blue line waters on the USGS topographic maps. NV 066 appears to be relatively significant when viewed on the aerial photograph and merges with NV 70 just downstream of the project area. These appear to be direct tributaries of Piute Wash, although at a distance of about 22.0 miles. They appear significant enough on aerial photographs to carry water, sediment and detritus to Piute Wash during 2-5 year events. A site visit on August 4, 2010, verified that these washes have evidence of an OHWM that connects to Piute Wash and have a defined bed and bank.  
Tributary stream order, if known: 1.

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

**Tributary is:**  Natural

<sup>3</sup> Supporting documentation is presented in Section III.F.

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

<sup>5</sup> 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.

- Artificial (man-made). Explain:
- Manipulated (man-altered). Explain:

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

Average width: 2-10 feet  
 Average depth: 1 feet  
 Average side slopes: **Vertical (1:1 or less).**

**Primary tributary substrate composition (check all that apply):**

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

Tributary condition/stability [e.g., highly eroding, sloughing banks]. Explain: Relatively stable system.

Presence of run/riffle/pool complexes. Explain: None.

Tributary geometry: **Relatively straight**

Tributary gradient (approximate average slope): 2-5 %

(c) **Flow:**

Tributary provides for: **Ephemeral flow**

Estimate average number of flow events in review area/year: **2-5**

Describe flow regime: These are very flashy systems and only flow during rain events. Soils in the area are very sandy and infiltration usually occurs quickly.

Other information on duration and volume:.

Surface flow is: **Discrete and confined.** Characteristics: Flow only during storm events.

Subsurface flow: **Unknown.** Explain findings:

- Dye (or other) test performed:

**Tributary has (check all that apply):**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bed and banks  |   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OHWM <sup>6</sup> (check all indicators that apply): |   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> clear, natural line impressed on the bank            | <input type="checkbox"/> the presence of litter and debris          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> changes in the character of soil                                | <input type="checkbox"/> destruction of terrestrial vegetation      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> shelving  | <input type="checkbox"/> the presence of wrack line                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> vegetation matted down, bent, or absent                         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> sediment sorting                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> leaf litter disturbed or washed away                            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> scour                           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> sediment deposition                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> multiple observed or predicted flow events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> water staining  | <input type="checkbox"/> abrupt change in plant community           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other (list):   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Discontinuous OHWM. <sup>7</sup> Explain:                       |   |

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

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

**(iii) Chemical Characteristics:**

Characterize tributary (e.g., water color is clear, discolored, oily film; water quality; general watershed characteristics, etc.).

Explain: No water present. When water is present, it probably carries a high sediment load.

Identify specific pollutants, if known: None known except for sediment.

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

- Riparian corridor. Characteristics (type, average width):
- Wetland fringe. Characteristics:
- Habitat for:

<sup>6</sup>A 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.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

- Federally Listed species. Explain findings: Potential desert tortoise habitat.
- 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: No wetlands present. NA

### 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: Drainages NV 94 and NV 70 drain directly into Piute Wash at a distance of about 22.0 miles from the project area. These washes appear as blue lines on the USGS topographic map and probably provide some water, sediment and detritus during storm events that occur every two to five years. NV 066 merges with NV 70 downstream of the project area and appears to be a relatively large and significant drainage. They appear to be significant washes when viewed on an aerial photograph and are major tributaries to Piute Wash. During the site visit of August 4, 2010, it was determined that these three washes have a continuous OHWM to Piute Wash and could provide biological, chemical and physical contributions to Piute Wash.
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-RPWs<sup>8</sup> 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: **0.035 acres** linear feet **2-5** width (ft).  
 Other non-wetland waters: acres.  
Identify type(s) of waters: **Ephemeral Drainages.**

**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.<sup>9</sup>**

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):<sup>10</sup>**

- 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: .  
 Other factors. Explain: .

<sup>8</sup>See Footnote # 3.

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

<sup>10</sup>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.

**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). These ephemeral drainages would not have been jurisdictional based solely on the MBR.
- Waters do not meet the "Significant Nexus" standard, where such a finding is required for jurisdiction. Explain:
- Other: (explain, if not covered above): .

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):

- 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: acres.

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). 16.84 acres
- Lakes/ponds: acres.
- Other non-wetland waters: acres. List type of aquatic resource: .
- Wetlands: acres.

**SECTION IV: DATA SOURCES.**

**A. SUPPORTING DATA. Data reviewed for JD (check all that apply - checked items shall be included in case file and, where checked and requested, appropriately reference sources below):**

- Maps, plans, plots or plat submitted by or on behalf of the applicant/consultant: Garcia and Associates, 2010.
- Data sheets prepared/submitted by or on behalf of the applicant/consultant.
  - Office concurs with data sheets/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: Piute Wash 15030102.
  - USGS NHD data.
  - USGS 8 and 12 digit HUC maps.
- U.S. Geological Survey map(s). Cite scale & quad name: 24K Quad, Searchlight and Fourth of July Mountain.
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Soil Survey. Citation: .
- National wetlands inventory map(s). Cite name: .
- State/Local wetland inventory map(s): .
- FEMA/FIRM maps: .
- 100-year Floodplain Elevation is: (National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929)
- Photographs:  Aerial (Name & Date): .
  - or  Other (Name & Date): .
- Previous determination(s). File no. and date of response letter: Currently in review: SPK-2010-0252.
- Applicable/supporting case law: .
- Applicable/supporting scientific literature: .
- Other information (please specify): .

**B. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS TO SUPPORT JD: These waters have a direct connection to Piute Wash, which is a large interstate ephemeral drainage that flows into the Colorado River after crossing the Nevada State line into California. Piute Wash was observed with flow following two rain events that occurred during field surveys. The two drainages, NV 94 and NV 70 are shown as blue lines on the USGS topographic maps and appear on recent aerial photographs and have a continuous ordinary high water mark to Piute Wash. NV 066 also appears to be relatively significant when viewed on the aerial photograph and merges with NV 70 just**

**downstream of the project area. NV 066 has a continuous OHWM above NV 70. It is likely that during 2 to 5 year events that water from NV 94, NV 70 and NV 066 will contribute sediment and detritus to Piute Wash. Therefore, the Corps recommends that NV 94, NV 70, and NV 066 be considered jurisdictional based on a significant nexus to Piute Wash, an interstate water.**