

Thus, gradual changes which are due to natural causes and are perceptible only over some period of time constitute changes in the bed of a waterbody which also change the shoreline boundaries of the navigable waters of the United States. However, an area will remain "navigable in law," even though no longer covered with water, whenever the change has occurred suddenly, or was caused by artificial forces intended to produce that change. For example, shifting sand bars within a river or estuary remain part of the navigable water of the United States, regardless that they may be dry at a particular point in time.

§ 329.14 Determination of navigability.

(a) *Effect on determinations.* Although conclusive determinations of navigability can be made only by federal Courts, those made by federal agencies are nevertheless accorded substantial weight by the courts. It is therefore necessary that when jurisdictional questions arise, district personnel carefully investigate those waters which may be subject to Federal regulatory jurisdiction under guidelines set out above, as the resulting determination may have substantial impact upon a judicial body. Official determinations by an agency made in the past can be revised or reversed as necessary to reflect changed rules or interpretations of the law.

(b) *Procedures of determination.* A determination whether a waterbody is a navigable water of the United States will be made by the division engineer, and will be based on a report of findings prepared at the district level in accordance with the criteria set out in this regulation. Each report of findings will be prepared by the district engineer, accompanied by an opinion of the district counsel, and forwarded to the division engineer for final determination. Each report of findings will be based substantially on applicable portions of the format in paragraph (c) of this section.

(c) *Suggested format of report of findings:*

- (1) Name of waterbody:
- (2) Tributary to:
- (3) Physical characteristics:

(i) Type: (river, bay, slough, estuary, etc.)

(ii) Length:

(iii) Approximate discharge volumes: Maximum, Minimum, Mean:

(iv) Fall per mile:

(v) Extent of tidal influence:

(vi) Range between ordinary high and ordinary low water:

(vii) Description of improvements to navigation not listed in paragraph (c)(5) of this section:

(4) Nature and location of significant obstructions to navigation in portions of the waterbody used or potentially capable of use in interstate commerce:

(5) Authorized projects:

(i) Nature, condition and location of any improvements made under projects authorized by Congress:

(ii) Description of projects authorized but not constructed:

(iii) List of known survey documents or reports describing the waterbody:

(6) Past or present interstate commerce:

(i) General types, extent, and period in time:

(ii) Documentation if necessary:

(7) Potential use for interstate commerce, if applicable:

(i) If in natural condition:

(ii) If improved:

(8) Nature of jurisdiction known to have been exercised by Federal agencies if any:

(9) State or Federal court decisions relating to navigability of the waterbody, if any:

(10) Remarks:

(11) Finding of navigability (with date) and recommendation for determination:

§ 329.15 Inquiries regarding determinations.

(a) Findings and determinations should be made whenever a question arises regarding the navigability of a waterbody. Where no determination has been made, a report of findings will be prepared and forwarded to the division engineer, as described above. Inquiries may be answered by an interim reply which indicates that a final agency determination must be made by the division engineer. If a need develops for an emergency determination, district