

Assessing the Eligibility and Integrity of Irrigation Ditches and Associated Water Control Features

Criteria to consider when assessing the eligibility of irrigation ditches/systems:

1. Does it have unique construction or features?
2. Does it retain its original features (headgates, overflow structures, siphons, etc.)?
3. Does it basically follow its original alignment?
4. Is it the first ditch or the largest ditch in the area?
5. Was it constructed by or for an important time period or event (Homesteading Act, Great Depression, Carey Act, etc.)?
6. Was it constructed by or for an important individual or group?
7. Is it directly associated with the interpretation of a single historic site?
8. How much water does it convey?
9. Did it serve an important purpose in the development of the local area?
10. How many different individuals/farmsteads does it serve?
11. Is it a primary ditch?
12. Does it have a name?
13. Does it continue to function in its original capacity?
14. Does it appear in the Montana Water Resources Survey?

(<http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/water/water-rights/records-unit/survey-books>)

We understand that project APEs often intersect with portions of linear features like irrigation systems. We are unable to concur with an Ineligible determination for a segment of an irrigation ditch if the eligibility of the of the entire irrigation system has not been resolved.

We recommend that the evaluator first consider and convey the significance of the entire resource (i.e. irrigation system), which can be done with historical research and does not require field recordation of every feature. Once the significance of the larger system has been evaluated within its historic context, the integrity of the segment being recorded can be evaluated.

Additional Resources:

<https://www.oregon.gov/oprd/HCD/SHPO/docs/ORLinearResourcesGuidancev2.pdf>

https://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb30/nrb30_8.htm

<http://www.thc.texas.gov/public/upload/preserve/survey/survey/Irrigation.pdf> (Pages 229-269)

<https://www.fcgov.com/historicpreservation/pdf/holleran.pdf?1508793205> (Pages 82-88)