

EVALUATE HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

Any sites or cultural materials, whether previously identified or newly identified within the area of potential effect must be evaluated for their historic significance in order to determine project effect. This is completed by applying the criteria for National Register of Historic Places (36 CFR 63). The criteria are developed and overseen by the National Park Service (NPS). The NPS has provided detailed guidance for assessing significance (eligibility for the National Register) in HOW TO APPLY THE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION (formerly National Register Bulletin 15) and GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATING AND REGISTERING ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROPERTIES (formerly National Register Bulletin 36).

SHPO requires that the Federal agency follow this guidance when evaluating historic significance. There are three (3) general required provisions: context, criteria, and integrity.

CONTEXT

The first step in determining whether or not a cultural property is a historic property (eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places) is made in regards to context. For the purposes of determining eligibility, a "context" is a body of knowledge that is defined by a specific theme or topic, a specific geographical area, and a specific time period. All contexts and context studies are resource based – that is, they must relate to identifiable cultural resources. Contexts serve as frameworks for evaluating the National Register eligibility of cultural properties. Idaho has a number of NATIONAL REGISTER MULTIPLE PROPERTY DOCUMENTS that are helpful in determining the context of a particular site. Generally, cultural or historic contexts included in the IDAHO CONTEXT APPENDIX are used as a framework for evaluating the significance of a cultural property.

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA

After evaluating context, a cultural property must also be shown to be significant for one or more of the four criteria in order to be considered a historic property:

- A) *Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history*

To be considered for listing under Criterion A, a property must be associated with one or more events important in the defined historic context. Criterion A recognizes properties associated with single events, such as the founding of a town, or with a pattern of events, repeated activities, or historic trends, such as the gradual rise of a port city's prominence in trade and commerce. The event or trends, however, must clearly be important within the associated context: settlement, in the case of the town, or development of

a maritime economy, in the case of the port city. Moreover, the property must have an important association with the event or historic trends, and it must retain historic integrity.

- B) *Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past*

Criterion B applies to properties associated with individuals whose specific contributions to history can be identified and documented. Persons "significant in our past" refers to individuals whose activities are demonstrably important within a local, state, or national historic context. The criterion is generally restricted to those properties that illustrate (rather than commemorate) a person's important achievements.

- C) *Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction*

This criterion applies to properties significant for their physical design or construction, including such elements as architecture, landscape architecture, engineering,

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A HISTORIC PROPERTY CAN BE JUDGED AND EXPLAINED ONLY WHEN IT IS EVALUATED WITHIN ITS HISTORIC CONTEXT.

and artwork. To be eligible under Criterion C, a property must meet at least one of the following requirements:

- Embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction.
- Represent the work of a master.
- Possess high artistic value.
- Represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

D) *Have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history*



Certain important research questions about human history can only be answered by the actual physical material of cultural resources. Criterion D encompasses the properties that have the potential to answer, in whole or in part, those types of research questions. The most common type of property nominated under this Criterion is the archeological site (or a district comprised of archeological sites). Buildings, objects, and structures (or districts comprised of these property types), however, can also be eligible for their information potential.

Criterion D has two requirements, which must both be met for a property to qualify:

- The property must have, or have had, information to contribute to our understanding of human history or prehistory, and
- The information must be considered important.

CRITERIA CONSIDERATIONS

As a general rule, certain classes of properties are considered to be not eligible for the National Register

of Historic Places; however, there are exceptions to these rules, called Criteria Considerations. These classes of properties and their exceptions are:

- a) **Religious properties:** Can be eligible if they derive their significance from their architectural or historical significance, or are part of a larger historic district.
- b) **Moved Properties:** Can be eligible if their significance is primarily architectural or if the location to which it is moved provides a similar context and setting as the location from which it has been removed.
- c) **Birthplaces or Graves:** Can be eligible if the person is of outstanding importance and there is no other extant property associated with their productive life.
- d) **Cemeteries:** Can be eligible if they have distinctive design features, or are associated with specific important historic events.
- e) **Reconstructed Properties:** Can be eligible only if it is accurately executed and presented as part of a restoration master plan and when no other building or structure with the same associations has survived. All 3 of these requirements must be met.
- f) **Commemorative Properties:** Can be eligible if its design, age, tradition or symbolic value has its own historic significance.
- g) **Properties Less than 50 Years Old:** Can be eligible if it is of exceptional importance, or, if, as a class, the property is considered fragile or disappearing.

See NRHP Bulletin [HOW TO APPLY THE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION](#) for more information and detail regarding Criteria Considerations.

INTEGRITY

Finally, in addition to context and the four criteria, a cultural property's integrity must also be evaluated. Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance. It is important to note that "integrity" is different than "condition." A property can be in poor condition, but still effectively convey its significance, meaning that it would still have a high level of integrity.

Conversely, a property can be in excellent condition, but has been so altered over time that it has lost all

integrity because it no longer reflects the essential, character-defining features of that style or property type.

The NPS has identified seven aspects of integrity which include: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Each property should be evaluated with these aspects in mind. Depending on the type of property, different aspects of integrity may have more relevance, so each property should be evaluated with that in mind.

LOCATION

Location is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event took place. Integrity of location refers to whether the property has been moved or relocated since its construction. A moved property can be considered to have integrity of location if it was moved before or during its period of significance.

DESIGN

Design is the composition of elements that constitute the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property, but recognizing that properties can change through time and do not always constitute a loss of integrity of design.

SETTING

Setting is the physical environment of a historic property that illustrates the character of the place. Integrity of setting remains when the surroundings of a property have not been subjected to radical change.

MATERIALS

Materials are the physical elements combined in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property. Integrity of materials determines whether or not an authentic historic resource still exists.

WORKMANSHIP

Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period of history. Workmanship is important because it can furnish evidence of the technology of the craft, illustrate the aesthetic principles of a historic period, and reveal individual, local, regional, or national applications of both technological practices and aesthetic principles.

POOR CONDITION – GOOD INTEGRITY



BAYHORSE HOTEL

Although in poor condition, this building at Bayhorse State Park is immediately recognizable for what it was as a boomtown hotel building, identifiable by the false-front design and the exterior door on the second story. Siding and windows, while in a state of disrepair, are all original materials and accurately convey the building's era as late 19th century. This building is listed in the NRHP.

GOOD CONDITION – POOR INTEGRITY



RATHDRUM HOUSE

This home is clearly in good condition and was built during the territorial period of Idaho's history; however, a number of features make it difficult for the casual viewer to properly place its construction in the 1880s. The oversized window on the second story, enclosure of a portion of the front porch (with modern, paired windows), the lack of balustrade on the remaining porch, and loss of prominent, visible entry, all degrade the house's integrity and render it not eligible for the NRHP.

FEELING

Feeling is the quality that a historic property has in evoking the aesthetic or historic sense of a past period of time. Although it is itself intangible, feeling is dependent upon a property's significant physical characteristics that convey its historic qualities.

ASSOCIATION

Association is the direct link between a property and the event or person for which the property is significant. A period appearance or setting for a historic property is desirable. Integrity of setting, location, design, workmanship, materials, and feeling combine to convey integrity of association.

See NRHP Bulletin HOW TO APPLY THE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION for more information and detail regarding the seven aspects of integrity.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE INTEGRITY

Archaeological site integrity is often determined under Criterion (D), the potential of the site to yield information important in history or prehistory. This involves, first, determining through an appropriate review of the background literature, whether the site *could yield information* important in resolving research questions; and second, determining *how intact* the deposit is relative to its information potential. Intact deposits are those that remain relatively undisturbed relative to their past history. This depends on the *context* in which artifacts, features, and other traces of past human activity are found, and the *associations*



among these traces. The archaeologist must determine whether what she finds was found where it was originally deposited, and whether the things she finds are credibly associated with one another. If they meet both conditions, the deposits are intact enough to address a significant research question.

ASSESS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Three general contexts are appropriate for archaeological and traditional cultural properties:

- a. Prehistoric archaeology
- b. Historical archaeology
- c. Ethnic/Native American Traditions

Data from Idaho's prehistoric and historic archaeological deposits and ruins have not been synthesized. In many regions of the state, either a chronology has not been developed or it has not reached common acceptance. Only very limited literature reviews and interviews have been conducted with contemporary ethnic and Native American populations that address traditional cultural properties.

Therefore, each archaeological site/ruin will be considered eligible to the National Register until it is demonstrated that no information remains to be gleaned from its deposits or surface features. A potential traditional use location will be regarded as eligible until its significance is invalidated through interviews with appropriate traditional communities.

Finally, isolated finds will be considered ineligible if there is no evidence of possible associated subsurface materials. Adequate justification must be given and a statement of non-significance should be provided on the isolate form.

For Section 106-related surveys, evaluation is a crucial step in the 106 Review process and needs to be well documented. Cultural properties recorded during general archaeological research must be evaluated to be added to Idaho's state inventory.

If sufficient data is not available to evaluate a cultural property, the site form and survey report should contain a statement of insufficient information. This statement

should be followed by recommendations for further investigations that would provide the data necessary for evaluation.

TRADITIONAL CULTURAL PROPERTY (TCP) EVALUATION

A traditional cultural property (TCP) is a property that is significant because of its association with cultural practices or beliefs of a living community that are rooted in that community's history and are important in maintaining the cultural identity of the community. To be considered in the Section 106 Review process, a TCP must be listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

To be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), a traditional cultural property must:

- **Be a tangible place.** The NRHP does not list cultural practices or beliefs. Tangible means that you must be able to physically locate a property. It does not mean that you have to have physical, man-made features or items at the place. A mountain, a street corner, and a pueblo are all tangible places.
- **Be important** to the community today and play the same role in the community's traditions as it did in the past.
- **Have been important for at least 50 years.** For example, a place where pow-wows are held now, but were not held 25 years ago, probably does not meet the 50-year rule. The use of the property, however, does not have to be continuous over the last 50 years, but there should be a pattern of use or continued value.
- **Have integrity.** By regulation, integrity means integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The importance of each of these elements varies depending on the nature of the property. For TCPs, integrity can often be evaluated in terms of the strength of the property's association with the traditions of the community and the property's condition. The association between the place and the community's traditions must be strong. For example, if the traditional activity can be carried

out anywhere, then there is no link between the activity and the place (ritual bathing – in any stream or just in a particular spring; fishing – any local source or a specific hole or spot associated with a deity or spirit; hunting – any natural area where game is available or particular sacred hunting ground). Every year since 1832, the Seneca and Cayuga Indians have conducted specific ceremonies at what is now the Basset Grove Ceremonial Grounds in Oklahoma. This property definitely has integrity of association and location. The property's condition is just as important to consider. If commercial buildings surround a TCP that should have a pristine natural environment, then the property has little integrity of condition. Integrity of condition, however, should be evaluated from the perspective of those who value or use the property. For example, a New Mexico Hispanic community has conducted traditional dances in a specific area since the early 1900s. The three-acre dance site now includes a bar, community center, and parking lot. Nevertheless, the ongoing use of the site in much the same manner as has been conducted for over the last 80 years demonstrates that the dance site still has integrity of condition for that particular tradition. If the changes had somehow forced the termination of dances there, or their relocation, the integrity of condition would be lacking, despite the fact that the Hispanic community might still regard the old site as a special location.

- **Have definable boundaries.** Establishing boundaries can be problematic. In many cases, the idea that there is a "real" boundary is absurd. Nevertheless, a TCP listed in the NRHP must have definable, or at least defensible, boundaries. Geological or natural formation traditional cultural properties can also often be problematic because it can be difficult to establish where a formation begins or ends. For example, the top of a mountain is usually obvious, but where is the bottom? Knowledgeable members of the traditional community should be consulted for guidance about what criteria are important in deciding where, for example, a mountain begins or ends. Their comments should be supported by oral tradition, ethnographic evidence, or physical evidence. Perhaps the answer lies in what

constitutes a mountain, or a significant place, not where does it begin and end. Is the river at the mountain's base part of the mountain or is the river its own entity distinct from the mountain? The answers will vary by community.

- **Have defensible boundaries.** Defensible boundaries should be based on the characteristics of the property, how it is used, and why it is important. These characteristics must be clearly articulated in the documentation.
- **Meet NR Criteria.** Like any other property, to be listed in, or eligible for listing in, the NRNP, a TCP must meet one or more of the NRHP criteria. TCPs do not have criteria all of their own. TCPs are almost always listed under Criterion A (and sometimes B) for their association with historical events or broad patterns of events.

Not all TCPs are eligible for the NRHP.