

PH036311

DATA SHEET

520

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	MAR 12 1976
DATE ENTERED	SEP 29 1976

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC *wh*  
 Grand River Ditch, ~~Grand River North Ditch Feeder, Grand River South Ditch Feeder~~  
 AND/OR COMMON  
 Grand Ditch and Specimen Ditch

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER *N of Grand Lake*  
 Ditch Road

CITY, TOWN  
 Grand Lake

STATE  
 Colorado

VICINITY OF  
 CODE  
 08

NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
 CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
 Fourth

COUNTY  
 Grand

CODE  
 049

2 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE right-of-way	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (if applicable)  
 National Park Service, Rocky Mountain Region

STREET & NUMBER  
 655 Parfet

CITY, TOWN  
 Denver

STATE  
 Colorado

VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
 REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC  
 Division of Water Resources

STREET & NUMBER  
 1845 Sherman

CITY, TOWN  
 Denver

STATE  
 Colorado

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE  
 None

DATE

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

—FEDERAL —STATE —COUNTY —LOCAL

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED    DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Grand Ditch is sited on the precipitous eastern flank of the Never Summer Range. It starts at Baker Creek (elevation 10,300 ft.), runs northeastward through a rocky terrain covered intermittently with a spruce-fir forest, gathers water from Baker Creek, Red Gulch, Opposition Creek, Mosquito Creek, Lost Creek, Big Dutch Creek, Middle Dutch Creek, Little Dutch Creek, Sawmill Creek, Lulu Creek, Lady Creek, and Bennett Creek, and discharges into a La Poudre Pass Creek at LaPoudre Pass (elevation 10,175 ft.).

Specimen Ditch runs from Specimen Creek (elevation 10,300 ft.) to La Poudre Pass, passing through a spruce-fir forest on the northwestern flank of Specimen Mountain.

The Grand Ditch is an earthen canal approximately 14.3 miles long. The cross section of the ditch widens, obviously, as one approaches La Poudre Pass; the typical cross section is trapezoidal, about 20' wide and 6' deep. An unimproved road, running along the berm, parallels the Grand Ditch for maintenance access. The Specimen Ditch, somewhat smaller than the Grand Ditch because of the smaller volume of water, is approximately 1.7 miles long.

Also included in this nomination is Camp 2, a work camp built about 1898 to house the workmen who constructed this segment of the Grand Ditch. Camp 2 is located about 400' west of the ditch in a marshy meadow, surrounded by a spruce-fir forest. Nine cabin ruins, of saddle notched and V notched log construction, were found at this site. A broken range identifies one of the cabins as a cook shack, and pieces of slag mark the blacksmith shop.

Although it is often said that "Chinese coolies" were used in the construction of the ditch, no evidence of such has been found. However, the account book of 1904 contains numerous references to Japanese workers, hired ordinarily, not as individuals, but in "companies". One of the most interesting features of Camp 2 is the series of Japanese "dugouts" in the hillside south of the meadow. It is said that the Japanese, unaccustomed to American food, drew food supplies and cooked for themselves, separate from the other workers. These dugouts were, supposedly, used by the Japanese for their cooking, and adjacent "ovens" may have been used for the making of charcoal.

The Grand and Specimen Ditch, owned by the Water Supply and Storage Company of Fort Collins, will continue to be used for water diversion and maintenance will be performed. The National Park Service will continue to maintain bridges, trails, signs, a ranger station, and a shelter cabin in and adjacent to the nominated area.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1890 - present

BUILDER/ARCHITECT J. J. Argo

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Grand Ditch is the largest of the historical engineering projects for the diversion of water from the western slope of the Colorado Rockies to the South Platte River where the earliest irrigation ditches had been built in 1859. By the 1880's water was in short supply and, accordingly, the Larimer County Ditch Company first diverted water across LaPoudre Pass on October 15, 1890. Then, year by year, the ditch was extended to the south along the Never Summer Range. Working conditions under the inhospitable climate of the high altitude were excruciating, but the workmen shoveled tons of snow, patrolled during spring runoff, and then turned to the improvement and extension of the ditch with pick, shovel, blasting powder, and teams and scrapers. Work was suspended when the ditch reached Opposition Creek about 1911; but then the Ditch Company's successor, the Water Supply and Storage Company, fearing the loss of their claims to additional water, extended the ditch to Baker Creek in 1936.

The first diversion of water through La Poudre Pass from the western slope was accomplished by the Larimer County Ditch Company incorporated in the State of Colorado on February 26, 1881. Work on the Bennett Ditch (sometimes called the Bennett Ditch Feeder) was begun on September 1, 1890, and was completed October 15, 1890. The Certificate of Incorporation of the Water Supply and Storage Company, successor to the Larimer County Ditch Company, was filed with the State of Colorado on August 8, 1891, and the Larimer County Ditch Company was allowed to expire by statutory limitation.

mid-  
By the/1890's, various companies and individuals were becoming aware of the need for the diversion of irrigation waters from the western slope to the northeastern plains of Colorado, and various claims were filed on the headwaters of the Grand River, today known as the Colorado: In a Statement of Claim of September 3, 1896, the Water Supply and Storage Company stated that they had begun work on the Grand River North Ditch

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Communication, Colorado Secretary of State, Files, Rocky Mountain National Park  
 Alien Water Right, Docket #2, Rocky Mountain National Park  
 Tract Books, Bureau of Land Management, Denver  
 Claim and Adjudication Files, Colorado Division of Water Resources, Denver  
 Minutes, Water Supply and Storage Company, Fort Collins  
 Account Book, Museum Collection, Rocky Mountain National Park  
 Interview with Harvey Johnson, Ferrel Atkins, June 27, 1966 and July 31, 1974

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 460

UTM REFERENCES

C	A	1,3	4,2,2	1,5,5	4,4	6,9	1,1,5	B	1,3	4,3,0	3,7,0	4,4	8,0	8,2,5
		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING					ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING			
	C	1,3	4,2,9	9,2,5	4,4	7,8	7,4,5	D	1,3	4,2,8	1,9,5	4,4	7,9	1,6,5
		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING					ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING			

### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lines 100' on each side of, and parallel to, the centerline of the Grand and Specimen ditches, starting at point A near Baker Creek, thence (following the sinuosities of the ditch) running generally in a northeasterly direction to point B near La Poudre Pass, thence running generally in a southeasterly direction to point C at Specimen Creek; including additionally those lands within a circle with center D and radius 1000' (enclosing Camp 2).

### LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Colorado	08	Larimer	069
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

D. Ferrel Atkins, Ranger Naturalist

ORGANIZATION

National Park Service

DATE

August 12, 1975

STREET & NUMBER

Rocky Mountain National Park

TELEPHONE

303 - 586 - 2371

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

## 12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES

NO

NONE

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is  National  State  Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE: *Deputy Assistant Secretary*

DATE MAR 2 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

9/29/76

ACTING DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

9/27/76

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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Feeder and Grand River South Ditch Feeder on June 7, 1896, based on a survey begun on September 8, 1895. In a Statement of September 1, 1896 the National Land and Irrigation Company, a Nebraska corporation, claimed that it had begun work on the Grand River Ditch by "survey and location of line" on July 13, 1896. And a Declaratory Statement of November 21, 1896 describes a certain J. P. Johnson of Fort Collins as the "owner of the Grand River Ditch" and states that he began work on his ditch on September 14, 1896.

In the midst of these conflicting claims and statements of work performed, one can hardly avoid the vision of romantic "water wars", of tangled survey lines, and of crews frantically competing for priority. One must keep in mind, however, that the term "work begun" in this context often indicated nothing more than the beginning of a crude survey line, and the evidence seems to show that only the Water Supply and Storage Company had construction crews on the site in the summer of 1896. At any rate, it appears that the priority of the Water Supply and Storage Company was soon acknowledged by their competitors -- whose names promptly vanish from the record.

On November 14, 1904 the Water Supply and Storage Company filed with the State Engineer of Colorado a detailed Statement of Claim to Water Right for the purpose of adjudication. This document, signed by President A. A. Edwards on November 11, 1904, carefully describes the route of the ditch by both text and the map of J. J. Argo. Here we find a change in nomenclature, conforming closely to that used today: the name "Grand River Ditch" is applied to that portion of the ditch running from Baker Gulch to La Poudre Pass, while the canal from Specimen Creek to La Poudre Pass is designated as simply the "South Feeder". The Bennett Ditch Feeder is unmentioned, and vanishes from the record.

The water appropriation was adjudicated on August 11, 1906, the decree allowing the Water Supply and Storage Company to withdraw 524.6 c.f.s. of water from the headwaters of the Grand River for the purpose of irrigating 40,000 acres of cropland. Stating that the company had from the date of its first construction "proceeded with all reasonable dispatch and diligence", the date of priority of appropriation and diversion was established as September 1, 1890. Thus the rights are established, and the stage is set for the completion of construction.

It appears that the Grand Ditch was gradually, year by year, extended southward along the flank of the Never Summer Range as the first decade of the 20th century slipped by, though the evidence is fragmentary. The account book for the summer of 1904 contains entries referring to Camp 5 (located at Big Dutch Creek), indicating that work camps had advanced to that vicinity, and

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE two

the ditch reached Mosquito and Opposition creeks by about 1911. Then followed a period of consolidation: the ditch was gradually widened to increase its capacity, slides were stabilized, headgates were improved, and leaks were patched by coating the bottom and sides of the ditch with clay.

By the early 1930's it became apparent to the Water Supply and Storage Company that their rights to Baker Creek water might be jeopardized by their failure to extend the Grand Ditch with "reasonable dispatch and diligence". Accordingly, on July 1, 1935 the company signed a contract with the Gordon Construction Company to complete the ditch "from the present terminus" to Baker Gulch, a distance of "approximately 6 miles".

With the first use of power equipment on the ditch, construction proceeded with dispatch, and at the Board of Directors meeting of September 2, 1936, President Bartels reported on his inspection of the ditch on August 27 and 28:

"He also stated that he was informed that one of the contractors shovels had reached Baker Gulch the final and Western Terminus of the Grand River Ditch and its Extension. This fact was very gratifying as it appeared the consumation and completion of a long sought project was near at hand."

Thus the water diversion canal envisioned by pioneers of the 1880's was now complete, delivering waters to lands which would otherwise be indeed deserving of the descriptive name given them by Major Stephen H. Long in the summer of 1820: the Great American Desert.





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TYPE ALL ENTRIES ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Grand River Ditch, Grand River North Ditch Feeder, Grand River South Ditch Feeder

AND/OR COMMON

Grand Ditch and Specimen Ditch

**2 LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN

Grand Lake

VICINITY OF

COUNTY

Grand

STATE

Colorado

**3 PHOTO REFERENCE**

PHOTO CREDIT

Roger Contor

NEGATIVE FILED AT

Rocky Mountain National Park

DATE OF PHOTO

5 September 1963

**4 IDENTIFICATION**

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

West from Farview Curve to Never Summer Range; Grand  
Ditch is the horizontal "cut" across the view

PHOTO NO.

1 1/4





PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

NPS Number 9/29/76

Title: Grand River Ditch

Grand Co., Colo.

Looking south along Grand  
Ditch to Red Mountain

274

(#2)

Looking south along Grand  
Ditch to Red Mtn.  
f-55

credit: I. B. Lindenthal  
neg. Rocky Mountain National Park





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AND/OR COMMON

Grand Ditch and Specimen Ditch

**2 LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN

Grand Lake

VICINITY OF

COUNTY

Grand

STATE

Colorado

**3 PHOTO REFERENCE**

PHOTO CREDIT

Ferrel Atkins

NEGATIVE FILED AT

Rocky Mountain National Park

DATE OF PHOTO

1 August 1975

**4 IDENTIFICATION**

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

Japanese "dugout" at Camp 2

PHOTO NO

324







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DATE OF PHOTO

1 August 1975

**4 IDENTIFICATION**

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

Cabin ruins at Camp 2

PHOTO NO.

424