

Client Guidelines: Irrigation Certification for Irrigation Project Redevelopment

A. Purpose

This document outlines the requirements for when an existing irrigation project, deemed to have a special irrigation certificate under *The Irrigation Act, 2019*, undergoes redevelopment.

B. Project Redevelopment

A project redevelopment occurs when an existing irrigation project, that is operating under authority of a special irrigation certificate, is converted from a gravity or side-wheel irrigation system to a more energy and water efficient, low pressure irrigation system.

C. Special Irrigation Certificate

Under *The Irrigation Act, 2019*, parcels that were being irrigated prior to the establishment of *The Irrigation Act, 1996*, are granted a special irrigation certificate.

Irrigation projects operating under authority of a special irrigation certificate have not been assessed for the suitability of the parcel for irrigation according to today's standards.

D. Detailed Land Assessment

The Ministry of Agriculture will conduct a thorough review of the land in the project redevelopment area. Using existing data, aerial imagery and an in-field investigation with detailed soil salinity surveys using soil samples from the field, the ministry will assess the suitability of the parcel for sustainable irrigation and create an Agri-Environmental Report.

The Agri-Environmental Report will be provided to the irrigator and summarizes the findings of the detailed assessment:

1. Redevelopment Area Irrigable

The ministry will issue a full standard irrigation certificate if the detailed assessment confirms the redevelopment area is suitable for irrigation.

2. Redevelopment Area Not Irrigable

If the detailed assessment confirms the redevelopment area is not suitable for irrigation, the ministry will provide an explanation why the land is not suitable for irrigation. The ministry will work with the producer to determine next steps.

E. Water Quality Assessment

The ministry may require a water quality assessment to ensure that the water quality is still adequate for irrigation purposes before approving a project for redevelopment.

F. Authority

The Irrigation Act, 2019, (effective March 20, 2020) following sections apply to these guidelines:

- Section 3-2 addresses the requirement to apply for and obtain an Irrigation Certificate.
- Section 7-5 identifies when special irrigation certificates apply.

G. General

1. Irrigation certification protects the province's water and related land resources, as well as protecting an irrigator's significant investment in infrastructure.
2. The irrigation certification process will confirm whether the land is suitable for irrigation.
3. The ministry supports the irrigation industry to alter and improve existing irrigation works.
4. Improved energy and water efficiencies are realized when an existing irrigation project using a gravity or side-wheel irrigation system is redeveloped and converted to a high efficiency, low pressure irrigation system.

Visit the Ministry of Agriculture [irrigation webpage](#) for more information or contact the Crops and Irrigation Branch in Outlook at 306-867-5500.