

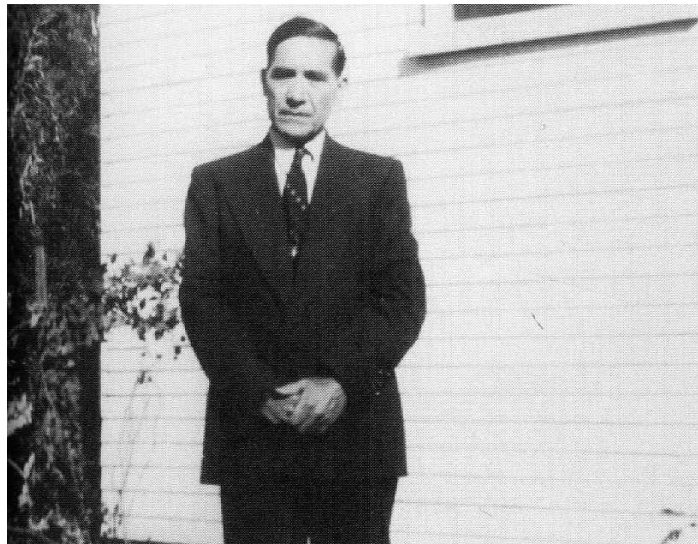
HF17

Ben Duncan Homestead

HF17 Map 6: T5S, R7E S 3.

This section focuses on the homestead tract and improvements. The "X" on the Base Map shows the location of the structure. For more on Ben Duncan see B06 for a biography of the Duncan family. There is a hard copy file containing more documents. Trail HTNF-03 connected the homestead to the west with Haman Ridge and the Covelo-Zenia road and west to Long Ridge. There are photos at the end of this entry of the dilapidated cabin. There are photos and a diagram of the cabin in the site record.

Ben Duncan was the son of John and Polly Duncan. This was one of the first families to move to Long Ridge during the historic era.



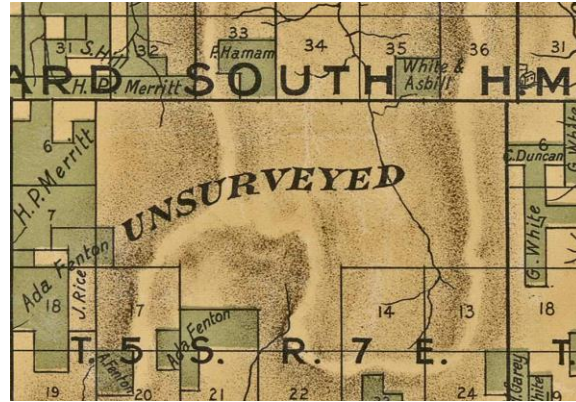
Ben Duncan
(No Date: Bauer and Barney 1997: 71)

I recorded this site in about 1984 and the site record should be on file in HR at SRNF. The improvements were found to be on national forest lands. It was noted at that time that:

It appears the [recent] cadastral survey "moved" the parcel about 100 to 200 yards or even more to the west as the small flat with the cabin is now on FS land.

Given the problems in this area with the inaccuracy of the initial GLO survey, it appears that as a result of recent cadastral surveys the location of Duncan's original cabin now sits on national forest land. For that reason, mapping the location of this tract and site on the Base Map were problematic. When Ben Duncan declared entry, this township (T5S, R7E) had never been formally surveyed by the GLO (Map 1). A letter in the hard copy file dated April 27, 1960, from the Office of the Surveyor General in San Francisco provided direction for surveying this tract.

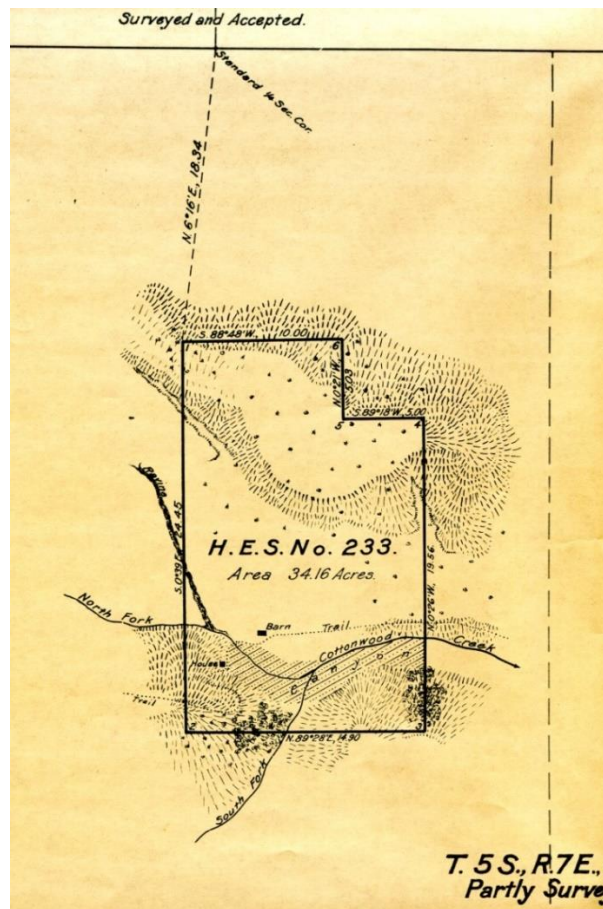
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Map 1

Lowden's 1894 map show this area as unsurveyed
(A2: 05)

At the time Duncan filed for homestead entry, it had been surveyed—see Map 2--using a metes and bounds system from the nearest known corner (a survey map is in the hard copy homestead file).



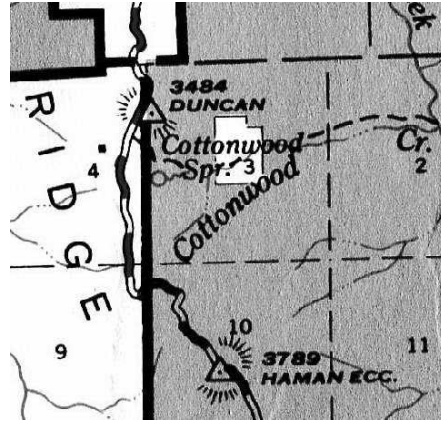
Map 2

July 7, 1916 survey

U.S. Surveyor General Office, San Francisco

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The homestead improvements at the confluence of two branches of Cottonwood Creek where the structure was located now show up as national forest lands on the 1977 SRNF map—Map 2.



Map 2

The SRNF Map 1977 shows the tract just to the east of the confluence of two branches of Cottonwood Creek where the homestead improvements are actually located.
(A2: 21b)

As of 2016, the tract is still private. It has been extremely developed and a road now leads down to the parcel. There are ponds and several out buildings.

Background

Originally, the +/- 36 acre tract was considered to be a NFIA entry and a document dated August 21, 1914 notes that Duncan: "Made settlement on the lands in 1911—as an Indian allotment claim. This was eventually changed and Duncan then filed a homestead entry form: *Application Under Act of June 11, 1906* (NFHA). The entry report by the TNF MRRD ranger was filed June 29, 1914 (see below). The report (in hard copy file) filed on June 29, 1914, indicates that:

The applicant is of Indian blood (yet a citizen and a voter) and settled on these lands as an Indian Claim in August of 1910. Settlement was made and the improvements placed on the tract long after the creation of the Forest.

The following section is a summary of that report:

The improvements consist of a shake cabin, 12' x 14' walls 12' high, with a shed kitchen 7' wide on one side. Probable value \$50.00. A log store 10' x 10', walls 8'. Probable value \$20.00. About two acres have been enclosed with picket fencing, about 100 rods in all...There is also a small hog pen made of

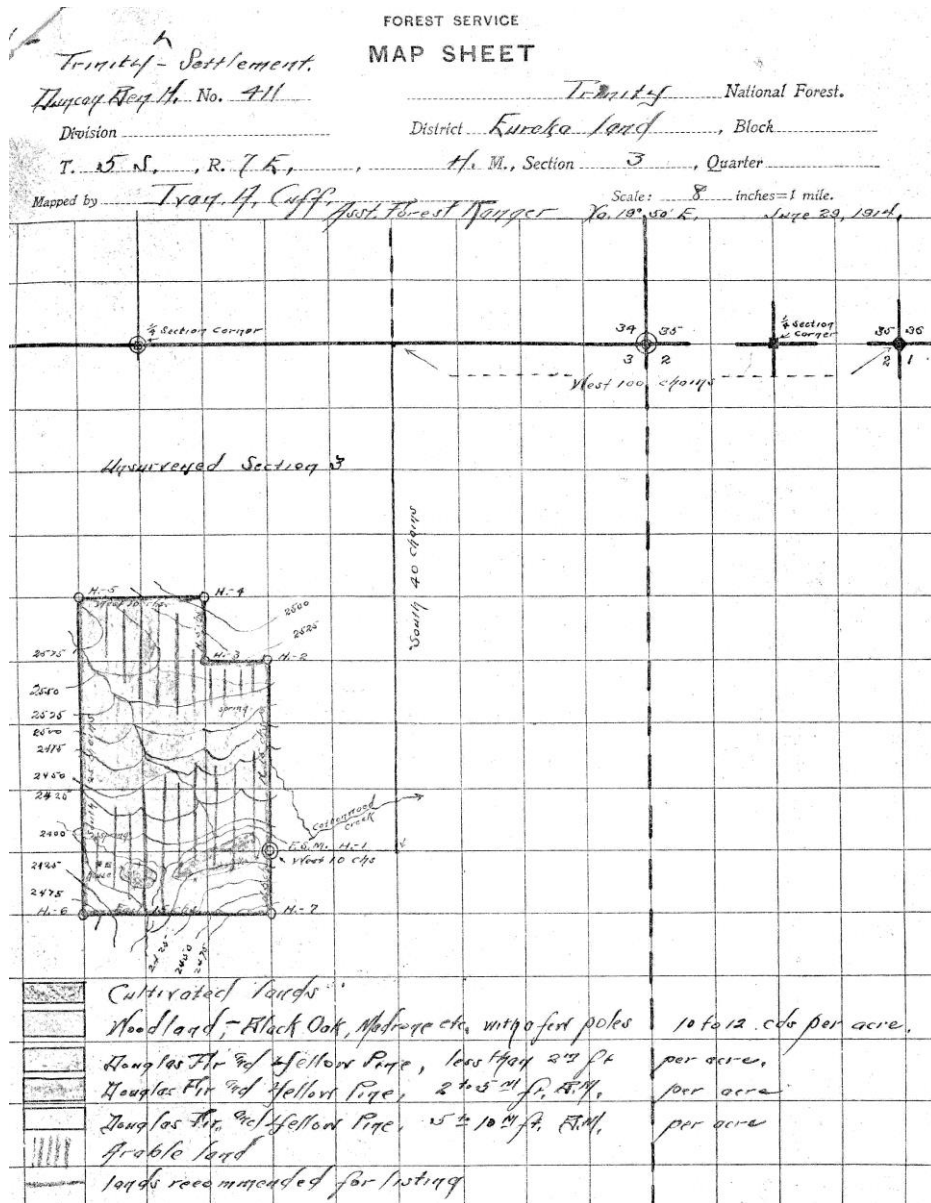
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pickets and about 25' square. About one half the enclosed area or one acre is planted to crops, garden truck chiefly.
 ...Four acres along Cottonwood Creek is level land.

There is a small spring near the house that affords plenty of water for domestic use throughout the year. There is no water available for irrigation after the middle of June...

Only a few small patches of timber reproduction, Douglas fir and yellow pine.

The tract was listed for entry on September 26, 1914. The following map was attached to the report.



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The final *Report on Homestead Claim* was written on April 28, 1920 (see hard copy file). The following information was included in the report.

1. Claimant:

Ben Hall Duncan, Hoaglin, Trinity County, California. The entryman's family consists of a wife and four children. The family resides on the homestead claim; the claim is their-only home.

2. Description of claim:

H.E. 02693 Eureka, H.E.S. #253, comprising 34.16 acres, located in Sec. 5, T., 5 S., R. 7 E. H.M. No description of the land is made by legal subdivisions on account of its being entered under the Act of June 11, 1906 and a metes and bounds survey made.

3 Topography and Surfaces:

The tract is mountainous in character. However, 10 acres are fairly level and can be cultivated to good advantage. Elevation ranges from 2100 to 2400 ft, above sea level. That portion of the claim not suited for farming is excellent for grazing land.

4. Settlement & Residence:

Homestead filing was made May 17, 1915. The entryman made settlement and established actual residence on these lands on Aug. 13, 1912 and was later put under special use by the Forest Service prior to listing. The entryman's family [see 1920 census below] has resided continuously on this land since first making settlement in 1912. The entryman is absent for a few months each summer when working for wages, but during the absences, the family remains on the claim. All absences have been for short periods and were made necessary for the applicant to earn money with which to support his family and continue to improve his claim. Information as furnished by entryman and wife also verified by neighbors W. E. Atkeson and Otto Holtorf, who live within three miles of the claim. The above mentioned men secure mail at Hoaglin, California. It was noted that 7 acres of the land were under cultivation. There was a plow, harrow and other farming implements on the place. In the house was noted the following: stoves, cooking utensils, dishes, furniture, beds, bedding, clothing and other household effects.

5. Improvements:

A frame house, 12 x 14 ft. - walls 10 high. Porch along side of building 5 ft. wide. Contains 2 rooms, 2 doors, 2 windows. Floors, walls and ceiling of

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split material. Roof of split shakes. This building is used as a lodging quarters. Its probable value is \$150.00.

A separate building, built as the above, 12' x 16' - 8' walls, is used as a kitchen by the family. Its probable value is .100.00.

The dwelling is habitable at all seasons. A frame barn, 16' x 20' - 16' walls with shod on either side 14' x 20'. Walls are covered with split lumber, roof with split shakes. Probable value - \$150,00.

On the claim there is approximately 320 rods of picket fencing, built at a cost of \$200.00 for material and labor. All improvements on the claim were built by the present claimant. Water for domestic use is obtained from a spring near the dwelling.

6. Cultivation:

Eight acres now under cultivation.

1914- - 4 acres under cultivation, cut 8 tons of hay and raised a garden for home use.

1915 - Same land cultivated as during preceding year. Same crops grown and yield approximately the same.

1916 - 8 acres under cultivation cut 9 tons of hay and grew garden for home use.

1917 - Same land under cultivation, cut practically same quantity of hay as in 1916, and also grew garden for home use

1918 - 1919 , same as 1917.

All hay grown was fed to stock on claim', and gardens were for home use. The clearing of the land now cultivated has cost about 45.00 per acre in labor.

7. Grazing:

The entryman owns 2 horses and 8 hogs. The stock graze on claim and adjoining National Forest land, free under Reg. G-5. Has about 18 chickens.

8. Timber:

There is no timber on the claim. Scattering oak, fir and pine will total 350 cords of cordwood. This at 50[cents] per cord - value \$175.00. No timber cut

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except that necessary in clearing land, for fire wood and for improvements on the claim. No timber sold.

11. Recommendations

I recommend that patent be issued. /s/ O. O. Hayes Ruth. California, . April 28, 1920.

There were no documents available to confirm that the tract was patented but it shows up as private so it is clear that patent was issued. There may be information on this subject in the HR files at SRNF.

Trails

When Duncan lived here, the homestead was only accessible by the trail. He parked his car at the county road and then hiked or traveled by horseback down to his cabin (Garcelon A5: ms01). The Ben Duncan Trail HTNF03 (Map 6) parallels Cottonwood Creek and passed through the homestead. I hiked this trail in about the mid-1980s. The trail followed from the country road (HTNF-04, Haman Ridge Trail/ Wagon Road) east to Salt Creek. At that time, the Ben Duncan Mailbox Trail was still in fairly good condition as far as Salt Creek. For more on Duncan's use of the trail refer to trail entry HTNF-03.

Consultant Interviews

Garcelon (A5; ms0100) indicated that:

Frank McDonald came to the area in 1919. His place was just over Hamon Ridge Road to the west of Tom Duncan's. Ben Duncan and family were in this place also to help McDonald. When I first met Ben he was on this place in 1938. McDonald [Begin page 14] raised hogs to sell and coyotes took their toll to put him out of business. The McDonald family still own this place. There was good timber on it. Ben Duncan was our fireman at the Huber Mill where Bollman Lake is now.

There was still evidence of a trail leading west from about the point that trail HTNF-03—the Ben Duncan Trail hits the county road. The location referred to above (see Garcelon's map at A05: ms01) is downslope from the NFER/Eel River divide a few hundred yards to the northwest.

Census Data

For 1880 and 1900 census data on Ben Duncan see the Duncan family entry B06.

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Ben Duncan was listed on the 1910 census as still living at home. Note that he is recorded as "1/2 IN" on the census form.

John Duncan	Head	M	W	50	M	1/2	43
_____ Polly	wife	F	W	53	M	1/4	43
_____ Ben	son	M	W	21	S		

1910 census
(A3: 1910-7a)

By 1920 he was married and had four sons. As with many of the Willburns, Ben Duncan's race changes from census to census. On the 1920 census he is listed as white as are his wife and children.

71	72	Duncan, Benjamin H.	Head	0	7	W	W	31	W
		" Lily	wife			F	W	29	W
✓		" Andrew J.	son			M	W	10	S
✓		" Henry H.	son			M	W	7	S
✓		" Glenn H.	son			M	W	5	S
✓		" Lee W.	son			M	W	3	S

1920 Census
(A2: 1920-8)

On the 1930 census the entire family is listed as Indian. Duncan's wife Lily had died and he was raising his three sons alone.

8	8	Duncan Ben H	head	0		M	W	40	W	22
		_____ Andrew J	son	X		M	W	19	X	
		_____ Henry H	son	X		M	W	17	X	
		_____ Glenn H	son	X		M	W	15	X	
		_____ Lee W	son	X		M	W	13	X	

1930 census
(A3: 1930-2)

By the 1940 census Ben Duncan had remarried. On this census both Ben and his young wife, Doris, are listed as white. Given the inaccuracy of the census listings it is difficult to know if she was part Indian. The census recorded that she was born in Fortuna.

49	49	Duncan Benjamin H	Head	0	1	M	W	51	M	10	H
		_____ Doris	wife			F	W	27	M	10	H

1940 census
(A3: 1940-8)

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Tom Duncan place 1971.
(SRNF MRRD files)

All images by T. Keter c. 1985

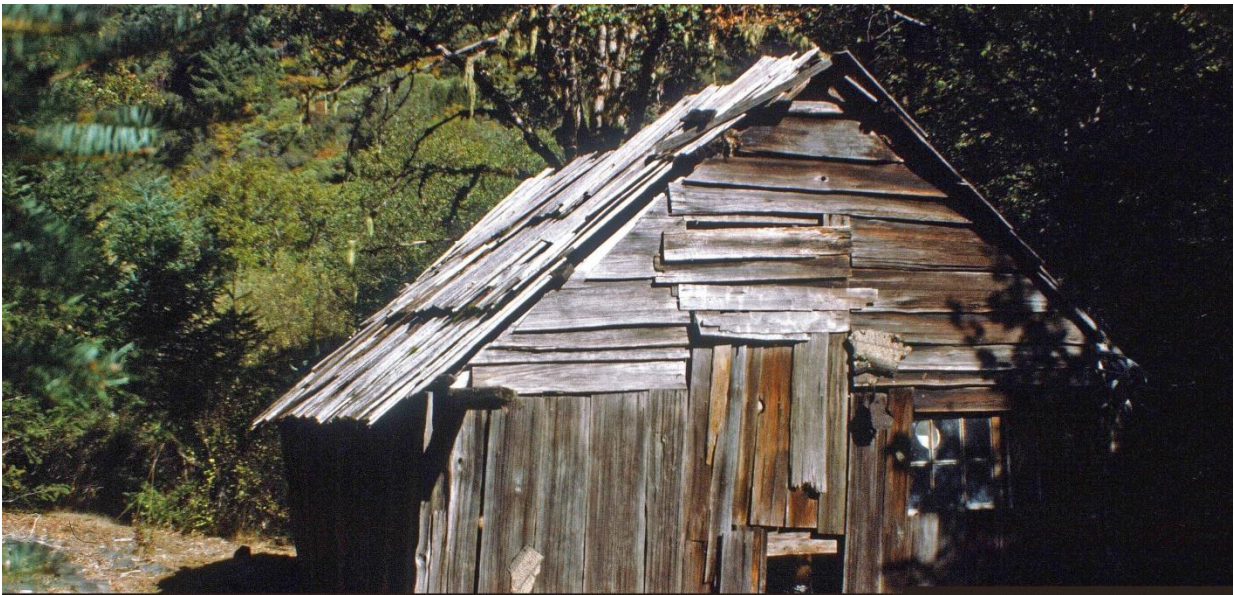


Ben Duncan's cabin--view to north.

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View north to cabin.



View of Cabin

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View to NNW; note road 5S30 at top of photo.



View E towards the confluence of two forks of Cottonwood Creek.
The trail paralleled the creek to where it joined Salt Creek.

Appendix 1
 Homestead Entry File Documents
 (There are additional documents in the hard copy file)

United States Department Of Agriculture
 Forest Service



L
 Trinity - Settlement,
 Duncan, Ben H. H.A.#411.

Eureka Land District.
 Trinity National Forest.

Ben H. Duncan, postoffice address, Hoaglin, California.

*** **

GENERAL DESCRIPTION.

1. Location:

- (a) 160 acres applied for, in unsurveyed section 3. T 5 S, R 7 E, H.M.
- (b) For description, please refer to accompanying field notes. The lands recommended for listing are located in unsurveyed section 3, T 5 S, R 7 E, H.M.
- (c) The tract is situated in the Salt Creek basin, in the watershed of the North Fork of Eel River. The nearest wagon road is on Haman ridge, West one mile distance. This is a direct road leading from Alder Point in Humboldt County to Covelo, in Mendocino County. The surrounding topography is rough and would require several miles of wagon road to connect the tract with the main road. The tract is reached only by a rough mountainous trail. The nearest settlement of any importance is in Hoaglin Valley North five miles distance. The nearest railroad point is at Alder Point on the N.W.P. railroad, 22 miles by road.

2. Settlement:

- (a) The applicant is of Indian blood (yet a citizen and a voter) and settled on these lands as an Indian Claim in August 1910. Settlement was made and the improvements placed on the tract long after the creation of the Forest.
- (b) The improvements consist of a shake cabin, 12'x 14' walls 12' high, with a shed kitchen 7' wide on one side. Probable value \$50.00. A log store 10'x 10', walls 8' Probable value \$20.00. About two acres has been enclosed with picket fencing, 100 rods in all. Probable value \$50.00 There is also a small hog pen made of pickets and about 25' square. The improvements were constructed by the applicant. About one half the enclosed area or one acre is planted to crops, garden truck chiefly.
- (c) The land has been used for no other purpose than grazing outside the small cultivated area before mentioned.

For information of Ranger.

-1-
[Handwritten signature]

3. Claims:

- (a) There is no conflicting claims to the land. No mining claims or mineral in any quantity known to exist in this locality.

4. Climate:

- (a) Moderate. Annual precipitation about 60 inches, 3/4 rainfall, 1/4 snowfall. Dry season usually extending from about June 15 to October 15. Rainy season from October 15 to June 15, with possible exceptions.
- (b) Killing frosts last occur about May 1 and again occur about October 1, with possible exceptions. Extreme winter cold 10° above. Extreme summer heat 105° F.H.
- (c) Hay crops, fruit and vegetables on the low lands along creek (perhaps 4 acres) on the slopes the land is suited for hay only (hardy grains) too dry for fruit or vegetables.

4. Public Uses:

- (a) The tract is not needed for any public use. The tract has never been posted for an administrative site or for any other use.
- (b) No needed exceptions for roads, trails, telephone lines or for any other purposes.
- (c) The tract has no relation to a drivable stream.
- (d) The tract does not include or control any power sites, and could be of no possible value in connection with any water supply either for irrigation or power.
- (e) The tract is not necessary in the protection of a watershed or a City's water supply.

LISTABLE LANDS.

Location and Acreage:

- (a) Same description as given under paragraph 1, embracing 35 acres in unsurveyed section 3. T 5 S, R 7 E, H.M. No patented lands near this tract. No adjoining claims. No small areas of National Forest land would be isolated or objectionable hiatus formed.
- (b) Area of tract recommended for listing, 35 acres.
- (c) The applicant was present and consulted during the examination.

7. Topography And Soil:

- (a) The greater part of the tract is mountainous. Four acres along Cottonwood creek is level land, a good sandy loam. Ten acres bordering on the North side of the creek has a 5 to 10 degree slope. Above these slopes the hills rise more abrupt, 15 to 29 acres having a 15 to 20 degree slope. At the North end of the tract, along the flat top of a ridge there is about 6 acres fairly level, its slope ranging from one to five degrees. The tract has a general South exposure.
- (b) There are a few bare rock surfaces on the steep points in the Western portion. No loose surface rock. The rock is of a gray sandy nature.
- (c) The soil is generally a medium to a deep soil. There seems to be no change in the soil below the surface. Except on the flats along the creek the soil is very dry.
- (d) There is a small spring near the house that affords plenty of water for domestic use throughout the year. There is no water available for irrigation after the middle of June, and no possible show to develop water for this purpose.

8. Agricultural Value:

- (a) Four acres on the low lands along creek will grow average gardens, fruit crops and hay. The remaining part of the arable portion is suited for hay crops only. The land is too dry for any crops except the most hardy grains such as wheat, oats and barley. It will be possible to cultivate and grow crops on about 18 acres of the tract, when cleared. Land similar to the flats yield about 1 1/2 tons per acre (grain hay). The slopes will probably yield about 3/4 to 1 ton per acre, no similar land cultivated in the near vicinity. There are no transportation facilities at this time.
- (b) The average cost of clearing the arable lands of brush and timber will be about \$25.00 per acre. It is possible, however, that considerable of the work could be done by the the applicant yet very little of this kind of work has been done on the tract.
- (c) If cleared and prepared for tilling, the value of the land would not exceed \$5.00 per acre, judging from other sales.

9. Forest Value:

- (a) For the whole tract there is about 65 M ft. B.M., Douglas Fir and Yellow Pine. The timber is not over mature and is apparently sound, its approximate value is \$2.00 per M ft. B.M. A total value of \$130.00 for the tract. In addition to the above described timber there is 260 cords of cordwood. The cordwood is of little value except to be used in the development of the claim. No chance to dispose of this timber for many years to come, the land is very inaccessible.
- (b) Only a few small patches of reproduction, douglas fir and yellow pine. Its approximate age ranging from 12 to 15 years.

10. Other Factors:

- (a) No other lands in the near vicinity have any possible agricultural value.

Respectfully submitted,

June 29, 1914.

Joan A. Cuff
Asst. Forest Ranger.

John T. Gray.
Forest Ranger.

Approved 8/29 1914.

E. W. Jotter.

Acting Forest Supervisor.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE

MAP SHEET

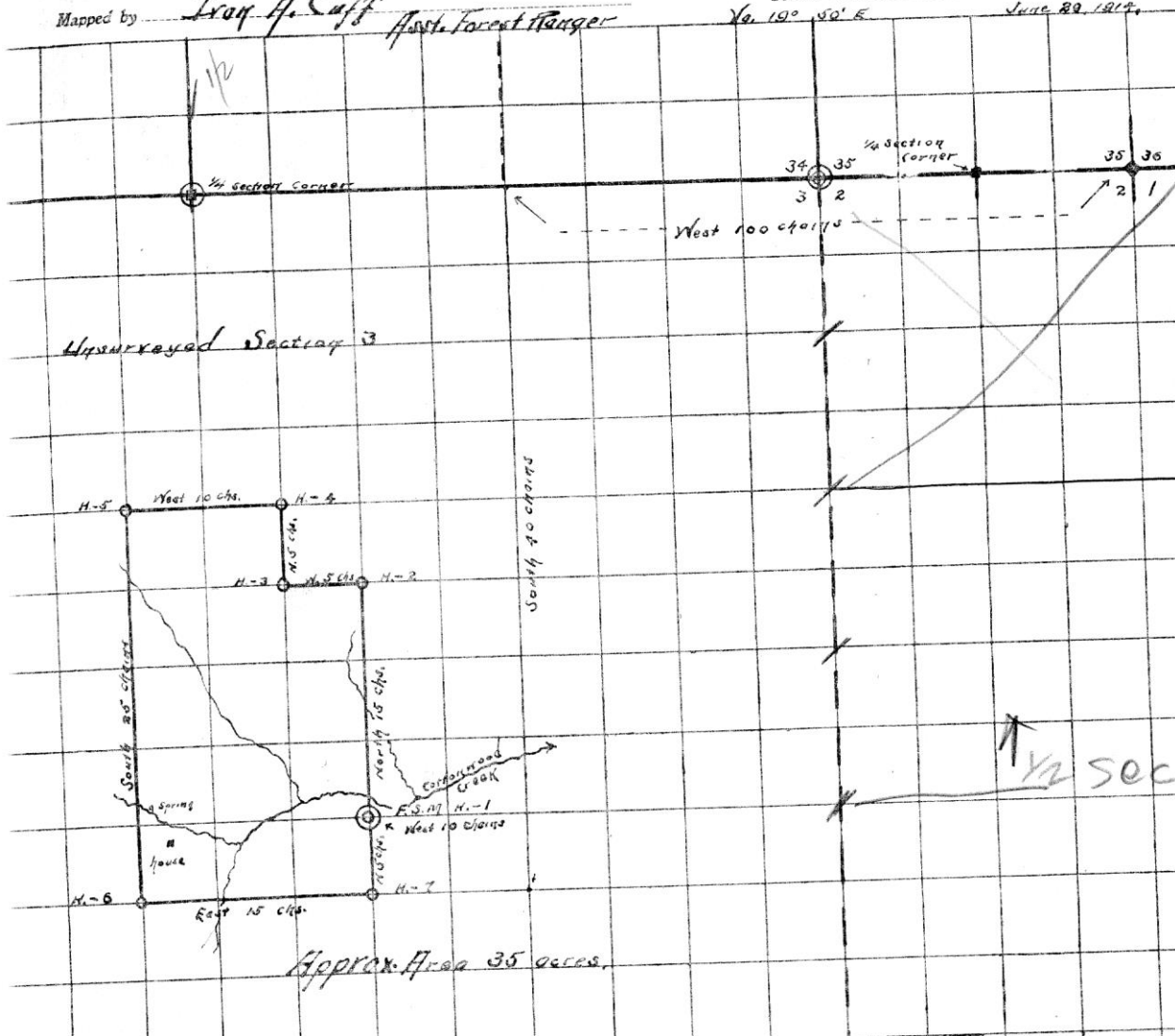
Trinity Settlement
Tucson Reg. H. No. 411

Trinity National Forest.
District Luzack Land, Block _____

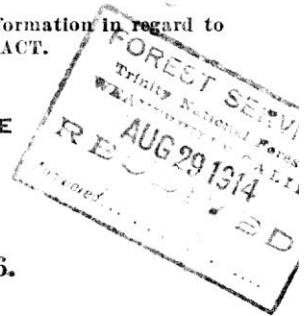
Division _____
T. 5 S., R. 7 E., H. M., Section 3, Quarter _____

Mapped by Ira H. Caff Asst. Forest Ranger

Scale: 3 inches = 1 mile.
No. 190 50' E June 29 1914.



Acquired Ad # 411



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE

3953

10:20 am APPLICATION UNDER ACT OF JUNE 11, 1906.

One
#411 Trinity

Hoaglin, Calif

Aug 21 1914

THE DISTRICT FORESTER,
SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.

I hereby make application for the examination and listing, under the Act of June 11, 1906, of

the following-described lands in the *Trinity* National Forest,
A tract described by metes and bounds in unsurveyed Section 3
T. 5 S., R. 7 E., 16 N., Beginning at a point 110 chains West and 40 chains
(If the land is surveyed, give each smallest legal subdivision and the section, township, and range. If the land is unsurveyed, describe it by reference to
South of the cor. to Sections 35 and 36 on Forty Acres, T. 4 S., R. 7 E.
North 15 chains, West 5 chains, North 5 chains, East 10 chains,
natural objects, streams, or improvements, with boundary lines sufficiently definite to identify the land, so that the examiner may easily locate it. When
South, 20 chains, East 15 chains, N. 20th 5 chains to the point
of beginning. Containing 35 acres more or less.
(If the land is surveyed, submit sketch of the land on the township plat, last page.)

I certify that I am entitled to make entry under the homestead laws and the Act of June 11, 1906,
and that I have actually been upon the land above described, having settled upon it (or examined it)

Made settlement on the lands in 1911 - as an Indian
(Give the date of settlement or the date of the examination, the character of the improvements, if any, and the amount of cleared land.)
allotment claim.

My present address is *Hoaglin, Trinity County, Calif*

Ben H. Humeau
Applicant.

Signed and certified to in my presence this _____ day of _____, 1914

(Signature of Forest officer.)

(Title.)

NOTE.—To prevent mutual errors and misunderstandings, to make possible the systematic classification of all agricultural lands in the National Forests, and to safeguard innocent land seekers against unscrupulous "locators," experience has proven the necessity of having all applications certified to before a forest supervisor, acting supervisor, ranger, or assistant ranger. No forest officer is allowed to accept fees for this service.