



Welcome to Big Creek Lumber Co.

The management team of Big Creek Lumber Company welcomes you to the company. As a new employee, we feel it's important for you to understand a bit about the company and its history, philosophy and values. The following information is intended to help you create a foundation of understanding on which we can work together to build a mutually satisfactory employment relationship.

Big Creek is a family owned and operated business, headquartered near Davenport, California. The business was founded in 1946 by Frank McCrary, Sr., his sons, Homer ("Bud") McCrary and Frank ("Lud") McCrary, Jr. and his brother-in-law, Homer Trumbo. In 2006, the company will celebrate its 60th year in operation. Big Creek owns timberland and manages timber for other private landowners, harvests timber, operates a sawmill, wholesales the lumber it manufactures, and has four retail/contractor sales yards. The McCrary family, of which members of the second, third and fourth generations are now actively involved in the business, is dedicated to the following principles:

Our heritage is based on three interrelated components - our family, our land, and our business. In advocating family stability, we strive to balance unity of purpose with individual interests. In managing our land, we strive to integrate aesthetic value with health and productivity. In our business dealings, we strive to achieve long-term, sustainable profitability while conducting ourselves with integrity and creating value for ourselves, our employees, our customers and our community.

Big Creek's history is an integral part of the what the company is today and goes back much farther than the 60 years the company has been in business. In the early 1860s, whaling captain Joshua Grinnell worked along the California coast before returning to Iowa to see his family. In the spring of 1863, together with his wife and four-year-old stepson Vid Trumbo, he moved west via wagon train. A year and a half later, the family finally arrived in Santa Cruz County. By 1869, Grinnell was able to mine enough gold along Majors Creek and its tributaries north of Santa Cruz to buy a 147-acre tract of land on Big Creek in the area now known as Swanton. There, he supported his family with a small farm. He later built his family house in a flat spot along Big Creek; six generations later, his descendants, the McCrarys, still call the area home.

Frank McCrary came to the Swanton area from Alaska in 1920 to join a brother who had preceded him by two years. They eked out a living making redwood split stuff, doing carpentry and operating a shingle mill. McCrary woodsmanship and Big Creek land were joined when Frank married Vid Trumbo's daughter, Agnes, in 1924.

Big Creek Lumber Company got its start in 1946. Frank McCrary and his two sons, Lud and Bud, just returned from overseas service in World War II, joined Agnes's brother, Homer Trumbo, and formed a partnership, Big Creek Timber Company. The partners pooled the \$7500 cash and war bonds they had among them and bought surplus military equipment which they modified to serve their needs. Utilizing a mill they created and nicknamed The Termite, they set out with crosscut saws and axes to log portions of Mill and Scotts Creeks.

In 1947, Theodore Hoover let it be known that he was interested in selling stumpage rights on his land in Waddell Creek canyon. Big Creek Timber Company and Hoover negotiated an agreement - \$6.00 per thousand board feet of redwood and \$4.50 per thousand board feet of Douglas Fir; the business was set for expansion. The company constructed a sawmill several miles up Waddell canyon using war surplus landing craft diesel engines for power. As they worked farther into the canyon and distances became too great to skid logs, they built truck roads. In 1948 a small planing mill was built on Highway 1 near Greyhound Rock, where lumber from the sawmill was surfaced. The sawmill started with a capacity of 10,000 board feet per day; by 1955 it was up to 35,000 board feet per day.

In December 1955, the second "100-year storm" in 15 years struck California. By the time it subsided, five bridges had been washed out in Waddell canyon and major damage had occurred. In order to be closer to other sources of logs, the partners decided to move the operation to the coast and built a new sawmill, opposite the planing mill, on the inland side of Highway 1. They chose Big Creek Lumber Company as the new name for the business when they filed for incorporation on April 22, 1960. The partnership, Big Creek Timber Company, was retained to own the land and timber.

Shortly after midnight on June 21, 1960, fire broke out in the uninsured, wood-framed sawmill, reducing it to tons of scrap metal in a matter of minutes. The cause of the fire was never discovered. The McCrary family, however, looked upon the disaster as an opportunity to upgrade the mill and increase production. Within days, they began to operate with a portable sawmill and to search for sawmill machinery. A new concrete and steel mill was producing lumber before the end of the year. The sawmill was located on leased property and shortly after construction of the new mill, the landlords raised the price of the lease to a prohibitive sum. Meanwhile, an adjoining property, which offered a much better site, came up for sale. By 1964, the entire operation had been reconstructed on the new site, complete with office, sawmill, planing mill, warehouse and maintenance shop. A short time later, the old site was offered for sale and Big Creek acquired it for storage of logs and by-products.

Along with the company's growth, the McCrary family experienced personal losses and gains, as well. Homer Trumbo died in 1949, Frank McCrary, Sr. in 1964 and Agnes McCrary in 1995. Lud and Bud each married and now there are six adult children and thirteen grandchildren in the family.

Today, Big Creek's mill cuts, planes and processes over 100,000 board feet of lumber per day. In addition to the Davenport location, which includes manufacturing, wholesale, distribution of engineered wood products, maintenance and administration facilities, Big Creek also has contractor/retail sales yards in Santa Cruz, Watsonville, Paso Robles and Half Moon Bay. The company has approximately 225 employees at its five locations.

Over the years, Big Creek has acquired timberland throughout the Santa Cruz Mountains, and in 1991, bought a 4300-acre tract in the Butano Creek watershed of San Mateo County. Big Creek now owns nearly 9000 acres of land, helping insure an adequate supply of timber for its sawmill. It also owns timber rights to or manages for other property owners, several thousand additional acres of timberland.

Since Josh Grinnell's arrival on Big Creek in 1869, his descendants have recognized their essential relationship with the land. From it, the McCrary family receives its livelihood, identity and lifestyle. The success of the business allows them to retain the land and maintain its nearly natural state. Because of the importance of the land to them, it is imperative to them that the

business continues to succeed.

The McCrary family's reverence for the land is probably one of the main reasons Big Creek Lumber Company has become widely recognized for its strong environment ethics. Over the past 60 years, Big Creek has taken the initiative to find solutions to the environmental problems frequently associated with logging and has been a leader in setting standards for forestry practices. In 1991, Bud McCrary was honored with the prestigious Francis H. Raymond award "in recognition of his outstanding contributions to forestry in California". In 1995, Big Creek received the California Department of Fish & Game's "Private Sector Award" "in recognition of outstanding wildlife conservation achievement". In 1996, Big Creek received "Well Managed Forest" certification from Scientific Certification Systems, an environmental claims certification organization of worldwide stature. In addition to its long-term commitment to the land, the McCrary family has a strong sense of responsibility to the community. Each year Big Creek provides support to numerous local organizations including the Monterey Bay Aquarium, the Monterey Bay Salmon & Trout Project, the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County, the Santa Cruz County Fair and numerous school and youth programs. Big Creek's reputation for ethical business practices has allowed the company to succeed in an industry with many obstacles.

Now there are more trees in the forest than when loggers first began cutting in Santa Cruz County. Because Big Creek practices selective harvesting, 70 percent of the saleable volume of a given tract can be harvested by cutting less than 50 percent of the trees. When a stand of redwood trees is thinned, the remaining trees grow much faster, and sprouts will develop from the cut stumps and grow as much as 10 feet in the first year. Lud and Bud McCrary like to point out that the forest is better today than when they first started logging with their dad and uncle. Today, from the stump of the first tree that Lud McCrary and Homer Trumbo cut by hand, sprouts a 30-inch-diameter, 150-foot-tall redwood.

Big Creek's employees have been essential in the company's success. About one third of Big Creek's employees have been with the company ten or more years, a tribute to their commitment. Historically, the employees who have prospered at Big Creek Lumber have demonstrated the following qualities:

- honesty, personal integrity
- pride in doing a quality job, strong personal commitment to their work
- desire to provide excellent customer service
- motivation to work hard
- desire to learn new skills, increase knowledge and take on challenges
- innovation
- commitment to improving themselves and the company
- versatility, adaptability
- dependability
- a positive outlook
- an orientation toward finding solutions
- respect for themselves, the company and others
- thriftiness, frugality
- fairness

All of us at Big Creek welcome you and encourage you to recognize both the company's rich heritage and the many opportunities it offers.