

# INSTRUCTION MANUAL FOR OKLAHOMA CERTIFIED CORNER RECORDS (ADOPTED 11-14-08)

## Introduction

The United States Public Land Survey System provides the basic boundary control for the land in Oklahoma. Corners established as a part of those original government surveys are the basis for every legal description of real property in this state. Perpetuation and protection of these public land corners is essential to the orderly development of our communities and permanence of our land boundaries.

Since 1978, the state has required that land surveyors file a certified corner record form for every section, quarter section or other public land survey corner created by the original government survey. To date over 100,000 such forms have been filed with the State Department of Libraries-Archives Division. Title 65, Oklahoma Supplement 1978, 3-116 through 3-123 Oklahoma Statutes, the Corner Perpetuation and Filing Act, prescribes the method and requirements for filing these corner record forms.

Included in these requirements is the obligation on the part of the land surveyor to obtain and review copies of the original government plat and notes. Since land surveyors are required to “follow in the footsteps” of the original surveyor, it is mandatory that they know how the original surveyors performed their surveys and what monuments were set. A painstaking search for evidence for those original surveys cannot be complete without this information.

The Oklahoma Supreme Court addressed the issue of the importance of following in the footsteps of the original surveys in Fellows v. Willett, 224 P.298 (Okla. 1924) where it stated “The original section corners as established by the government survey, or the place where they were established, if they can be definitely determined, are conclusive on all present owners or holders with reference thereto, without regard to whether they were located correctly in the first instance, and must remain the true corners or monuments from which to determine boundaries.”

The land surveyor is also required to certify on the certified corner record forms that corner records on file at the State Department of Libraries were checked prior to making the survey.

## Definitions

Many problems such as multiple monuments representing the same corner have been created by land surveyors who have not adhered to the rules of procedure for subdivision of sections and for replacement of lost or obliterated corners. In many cases there has been a failure to recognize the distinction between the rules for original surveys and those that relate to retracements. Knowledge of the following definitions of the types of land corners is essential to the understanding of the rules to be followed:

**EXISTING CORNER:** An existing corner is one whose position can be identified by verifying the evidence of the monument or its accessories, by reference to the description in

the field notes, or located by an acceptable supplemental survey record, some physical evidence or testimony. Examples of an existing corner would be existing stone markers set in the original survey or existing bearing trees used as accessories to those stone markers.

**OBLITERATED CORNER:** An obliterated corner is one at whose point there are no remaining traces of the original monument or its accessories, but whose location has been perpetuated or the point for which may be recovered beyond reasonable doubt by the acts and testimony of the interested landowners, competent surveyors, other qualified local authorities or witnesses or by some acceptable record evidence.

A position that depends upon the use of collateral evidence can be accepted only as duly supported, generally through proper relation to known corners and agreement with the field notes regarding distances to natural objects, stream crossings, line trees and offline tree blazes, etc., or unquestionable testimony.

Examples of obliterated corners would be those that are presently marked with identifiable and **substantiated** monuments such as iron pins, brass caps or concrete nails. However, obliterated corners need not be presently marked with a monument.

**LOST CORNER:** A lost corner is a point of a survey whose position cannot be determined, beyond reasonable doubt, either from traces of the original marks or from acceptable evidence of testimony that bears upon the original position, and whose location can be restored only by reference to one or more interdependent corners.

Corners should not be identified as lost until a thorough field, office and record search for evidence has been done. *A decision that a corner is lost should not be made until every means has been exercised that might aid in identifying its true original position. Proportional measurement is only done as a last resort when no evidence of the original corners can be found.* Restoration of Lost or Obliterated Corners & Subdivision of Sections, a guide for surveyors, Bureau of Land Management 1974.

## **Instruction for Surveyors**

**COMPULSORY RECORDS:** Whenever you conduct a land survey that uses for control any public land survey corner as defined by the Corner Perpetuation and Filing Act, if you establish, reestablish, monument, remonument, restore, rehabilitate, perpetuate or use as control, you must file a certified corner record.

**EXCEPTION:** If a certified corner record would normally be required, but the monument and its accessories are substantially as described in a certified corner record already on file with the Oklahoma Department of Libraries, Archives & Records Division, no further filing is necessary. However, if you disagree with the monument described in the existing certified corner record and re-establish a new control corner in a different position, you must file a certified corner record and explain the evidence in determining your position for the corner.

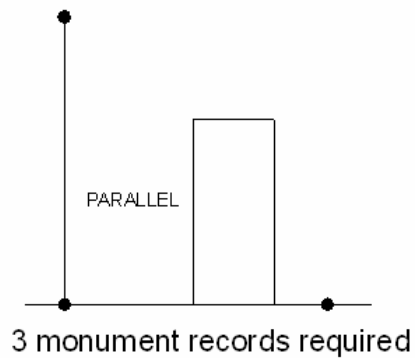
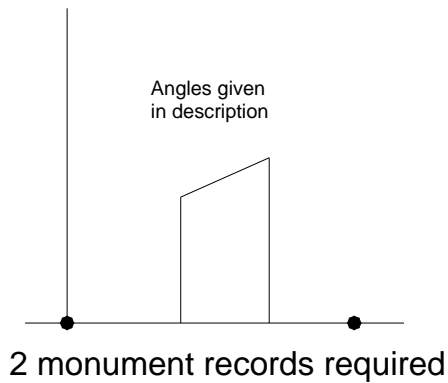
If the monument described in the official record no longer exists and you accept a subsequent monument as marking the position occupied by the original monument, you are in effect restoring an obliterated corner and must file a certified corner record explaining the nature of the evidence which led you to accept the monument as valid.

If a metes and bounds survey is simply “tied” to a section corner, quarter corner or other public land survey corner, you are required to file a certified corner record only on that corner. However, if another public land survey corner was used to establish a basis of bearings, it must be filed also.

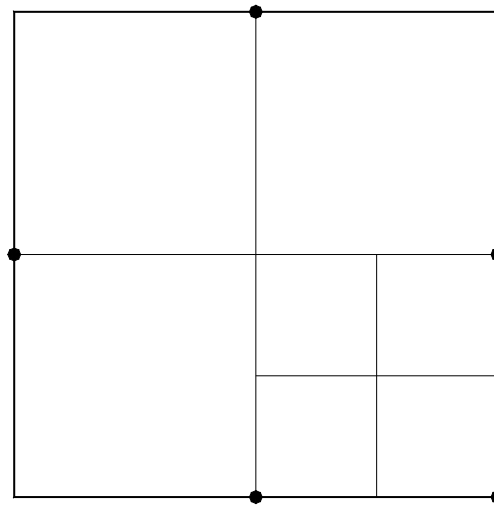
If your land survey required the use of several public land survey corners for control,, a certified corner record must be prepared for each corner.. Each corner must be reported on a separate certified corner record form.

**EXAMPLES:**

A. Miscellaneous tracts.



B. Subdivision of sections. (4 or more monument records required)



If you establish the center of a section, you will normally file records for the four quarter corners. If the survey is for the purpose of locating, for example, the SE1/4, then you would also file a record for the SE corner of the section as well as for the four quarter corners. The center of the section, and other aliquot corners you might set, do not require records, unless these corners were set in the original surveys.

In some areas of the state, particularly in Ottawa, Pottawatomie, and parts of Oklahoma, Lincoln and Cleveland Counties, the original surveyors subdivided sections into 40 acre and other aliquot tracts using the “3-Mile Method”. Interior monuments including the center of section were set by the original surveys. Notes of the original survey must be obtained when surveying in these areas to determine which monuments were set and what procedure was followed in the original survey. In these areas, any original corner that is used as control in a survey must have a certified corner record filed.

C. Platted Subdivisions.

Lot lines within platted and monumented subdivisions will normally be deemed to be controlled by the original or generally accepted block monuments, or other substantiated control within the subdivision.

Filing on public land survey corners that control the location of an existing subdivision will normally not be required. However, if it is necessary to start at one or more public land survey corners establish or re-establish control within the subdivision, a certified corner record must be filed for each such public land survey corner used as control.

Certified corner records will be required on public land corners used to establish new subdivisions.

**TIME LIMIT FOR FILING:** In all cases where monument records are required, they must be filed with the Oklahoma Department of Libraries, Archives & Records Division within 90 days after the survey is completed.. The Board will consider a survey complete when any one of the following occurs;

1. Establishment of monuments
2. Submission of plat or drawing
3. Submission of field notes for plans or planned purposes

**PERMISSIVE RECORDS:**

At the option of the Land Surveyor, he may file other monument records including any of the following:

- Platted Subdivision control monuments
- Corners of miscellaneous tracts or parcels
- Metes and bounds survey markers
- Private or local control surveys
- Witness corners or reference monuments for any of the above

**FILING FEES:** The Office of Archives and Records of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries may charge a reasonable filing fee for the filing and recording of certified corner records. .

## Detailed Instructions for Certified Corner Record Forms

**1. Check appropriate box:** \_\_\_ Existing, \_\_\_ Obliterated, or \_\_\_ Lost, in accordance with Manual of Survey Instructions 1973, Definitions. Report one corner only on each certified corner record form.

**2. CM document number will be completed by the Archivist at the time of filing.**

**3. Indicate the location of the corner being filed on the section map with a circle.**

**4. Corner Description:**

Indicate the corner being filed. For Example: **SW** corner of Section **21**, Township **12 North**, Range **2 West**, Meridian **Indian**, County **Oklahoma**.

**5. Description of original monument and accessories and any subsequent restoration**

**Give sources of information:**

- List the description of the original monument and its accessories as described in the original field notes.
- List the source of the information; i.e., Department of Libraries, Oklahoma City or County Clerk's Office, Cleveland County, etc.

**6. Monument Description:**

Description of corner evidence found and supporting evidence.

- List pertinent evidence found (both physical and record)
- List evidence supporting the validity of the location of the monument position.
- Include parol evidence (statement of witness) when applicable.

In reporting evidence found, use as precise terminology as possible. Use correct diameter sizes for iron rods and pipes.

***EXCEPTION:** Do not use specific names for rock, wood or metal unless you are sure of the type. For example, calling for a granite stone which is really sandstone, for an oak post which is really maple, or for an iron bar which is really brass, will only confuse the issue. In these cases, more general but obvious terms such as hard, soft, gray, reddish, charred, weathered, etc., will be of more value.*

**EXAMPLES:**

- A. Found 1 ½” nominal pipe with brass cap marked **S4|S3** in mound of stones  
**S9|S10**  
With blazed 12” diameter pine bearing N 27°W, 19.6 ft. and blazed 18” pine bearing N 63°E, 26.7 ft.
- B. Found rusted 20d nail with weathered red flagging and rotted guard stake lying along side. Could not trace history of nail.
- C. Interviewed Mr. J. T. Jones who has lived in a farmhouse approximately ¼ mile northeasterly of the corner location for the past 47 years. His signed deposition is included.
- D. Found 6”x8”x30” granite stone monument as described in original field notes. Surrounding soil slightly eroded and stone leaning southerly approximately 30° from vertical. Found stump of 8” pine bearing N 14°E, 28 ft., which may have been bearing tree called for in notes.

**7. Description of Corner evidence set, method used and supporting evidence found:**

- Describe monument you set or any rehabilitation work done.
- Describe any accessories or witness corners set.
- .
- Describe what methods were used for restoration.
- List evidence supporting the validity of the location of the monument position.

**EXAMPLES:**

- A. Set #5 rebar 36” long with aluminum cap, flush with surface of ground as witness corner 25.0 ft. westerly from true corner and on section line. True corner falls in Crystal Creek. Cap marked W.C. 25.OLS 2376. Positional tolerance: N-S 0.5 ft., E-W 2.0 ft.
- B. Drove a #5 rebar 3 ft. long through center of rotting remains of 4x4” wood post. Top rebar 0.5 ft. above ground. Attached aluminum “Surv-Cap” stamped ¼ 8|9, LS 2376. Piled small granite stones in wound around rebar.
- C. Plumbed monument, compacted soil around rock and added collar of small stones. Dug drainage cut-off to decrease erosion.

**8. Reference monuments: (At least three)**

- Describe at least three accessories or witness corners set.
- Give bearing, either true or magnetic, to each of the three accessories together with the length to each accessory in either feet or meters.
- A true bearing shall be based upon the Oklahoma State Plane Coordinate System or a Solar observation.
- State if compass bearing is corrected for magnetic declination.

**9. Sketch**

- Make a neat sketch showing the relative positions of the monument and reference points.
- Give dimensions, with topographic features, names and widths of streets (if known)
- North arrow
- Show location of conflicting monuments at this corner. Note if they are shown on previously filed certified corner forms. .

**10. Sign and seal in the space provided.**

- Signature and seal must be in accordance with Board rules..
- Complete all contact information in the spaces provided

**11. Oklahoma State Plane Coordinates**

- If State Plane Coordinates are determined, show the “X” and “Y” position and the zone.
- Datum: State the zone and the datum for the coordinates provided (i.e. NAD27, NAD83, UTM etc)
- Source: State the source of your coordinates (i.e. RTK-GPS observation, scaled from quadrangle map, etc. Be specific

**PENALTIES**

The State Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors has the authority of enforcing this Act. Failure to file an Oklahoma Certified Corner Record could subject the surveyor to penalties as prescribed by law.

Copies of the Oklahoma Certified Corner Record form may be reproduced or may be obtained from the Oklahoma Department of Libraries, Archives & Records Division, 200 N.E. 18<sup>th</sup> Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73105. The form may also be downloaded from the Oklahoma Society of Land Surveyor’s website at [www.osls.org](http://www.osls.org) or the Board’s website at [www.pels.state.ok.us](http://www.pels.state.ok.us).

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Amended 11/14/08

**APPENDIX I**

**PIPE DIAMETERS (Inches)**

<b>Nominal</b>	<b>Standard Weight (Schedule 40)</b>		<b>Extra Strong (Schedule 80)</b>	
	<b>O.D.</b>	<b>I.D.</b>	<b>O.D.</b>	<b>I.D.</b>
<b>3/8</b>	<b>.675</b>	<b>.493</b>	<b>.675</b>	<b>.423</b>
<b>1/2</b>	<b>.840</b>	<b>.622</b>	<b>.840</b>	<b>.546</b>
<b>3/4</b>	<b>1.050</b>	<b>.824</b>	<b>1.050</b>	<b>.742</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>1.315</b>	<b>1.049</b>	<b>1.315</b>	<b>.957</b>
<b>1-1/4</b>	<b>1.860</b>	<b>1.380</b>	<b>1.660</b>	<b>1.278</b>
<b>1-1/2</b>	<b>1.900</b>	<b>1.610</b>	<b>1.900</b>	<b>1.500</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>2.375</b>	<b>2.067</b>	<b>2.375</b>	<b>1.939</b>

**APPENDIX II**

**REINFORCING BAR NOMENCLATURE**

Steel reinforcing bars (up to 1" diameter) are designated by numbers. These numbers are equal to the number of eighths of an inch in the nominal diameter of the bars. The nominal diameter of a bar which has concrete bonding deformations (or ribs) is equivalent to the diameter of a plain (smooth) bar having the same weight per foot as the deformed bar. Non-standard bars (e.g. square, rectangular, T-shape, etc.) should be described in detail to facilitate identification.

<b>Number Designation</b>	<b>Diameter (Inches)</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>3/8</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>1/2</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>3/5</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>3/4</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>7/8</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>

**SAMPLE FORM LETTER REQUESTING  
OKLAHOMA LAND SURVEY MONUMENT RECORDS**

**Date:**

**From:**

**To:** Department of Libraries, Archives Division

**Subject:** Certified Corner Records & GLO Notes Request

We respectfully request all records Certified Corner Records on the sections listed below. If indicated by the check box we also request the GLO notes for the same section.

Section	Township	Range	Meridian	CCR Filings (circle one)		GLO Notes (circle one)	
				fax	mail pick-up	mail pick-up	
_____	_____	_____	_____		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	_____	_____	_____		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	_____	_____	_____		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	_____	_____	_____		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

My company information is listed below for billing purposes:

Company Name  
Address  
City, State, Zip  
Phone number  
Fax number

Requested by: \_\_\_\_\_