

The Mill B site embodies the kind of landscape transformations representative of the past 150 years in the Prairie Creek corridor. The area went from being part of the original flood plain and riparian zone of Prairie Creek; to part of the long-time ranching operation and homestead of the Davison family; to being transformed into a mill site by the Arcata Redwood Company (ARCO); and ultimately incorporated into Redwood National and State Parks and restored to its original wetland and riparian functions.

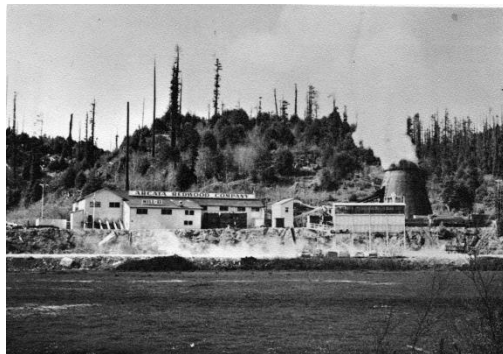
Arcata Redwood's Mill B was built in 1952 to handle smaller logs than ARCO's main mill near Arcata at that time. Once Mill A was built in 1960 to handle the large logs (replacing the Arcata mill) all of ARCO's milling facilities were located in the Prairie Creek corridor near their timber lands in the Prairie and Redwood Creek basins. Mill B was designed to cut logs less than 28 inches in diameter and low grade chunks of salvage material. It was called the "salvage mill".

According to the Draft Summary Report Wetland and Stream Channel Restoration at the Arcata Redwood Co. Mill B site by Redwood National and State Parks and ISTE A (1999):

The mill site was cut into a ridge located approximately 25 feet in elevation above the wetland / floodplain of Prairie Creek. Prior to 1962, an upper log deck was constructed adjacent to the south side of the mill site in the alluvial flats of Davison Creek. In 1967 a lower log deck was constructed on the wetland / floodplain of Prairie Creek, and extending to the south east of the earlier deck. The lower deck was approximately three acres in area and consisted of 6 to 14 vertical feet of fill. The fill was quarried from a ridge immediately to the west of the deck. This deck extended from the base of the quarried ridge to Prairie Creek. During the construction of the lower deck, Davison Creek was diverted to the north, under the deck, and drained by a ditch dug through the wetland.

During the rehabilitation of the area in 1999 the fill was removed and placed back on the hillside it came from and the original hydrology and vegetation of the site was restored. The area became what is now known as Elk Meadow and is the location of a park comfort station with access to several trails, a bike path and an Elk viewing area. Mill B was in operation until approximately 1973.

Mill B 1966



Mill B circa late 1960s



Mill B site before rehab 1992



Mill B site after rehab 1999

