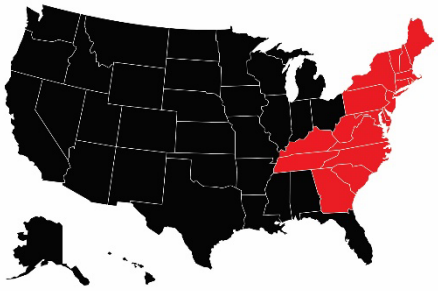
Using AI for Mapping Land Descriptions
(Metes & Bounds)

There is an effective use for AI in genealogy and that is helping to map out the shape from land descriptions when they are in the Metes & Bounds format.



State Land States

As a reminder, the Metes & Bounds system was used in the eastern United States (and in some parts still today). These states are called the State Land States (shown in red). Here is an example of what a land description might look like using the Metes & Bounds description.

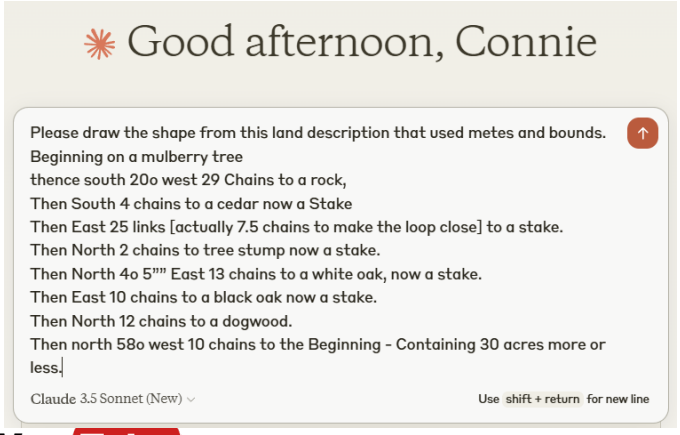
> Beginning on a mulberry tree
> thence south 20° west 29 Chains to a rock,
> Then South 4 chains to a cedar now a Stake
> Then East 25 links [actually 7.5 chains to make the loop close] to a stake.
> Then North 2 chains to tree stump now a stake.
> Then North 4° 5" East 13 chains to a white oak, now a stake.
> Then East 10 chains to a black oak now a stake.
> Then North 12 chains to a dogwood.
> Then north 58° west 10 chains to the Beginning - Containing 30 acres more or less.

You can use software like DeedMapper by Direct Line Software, but there is a learning curve to using this software. In addition to purchasing the software, you may need to purchase the background maps. Even then, it is hard to place the description above using references like a dogwood tree, a stake, a fence, a rock, and a tree stump.

However, if you want just to map out the shape of the land, AI can be your friend.

This is just one reason why transcribing the land description of a will or deed can save you hours of time.

Simply grab the transcription and tell the AI platform you wish to draw this land based on these "metes and bounds" land



description. I have found that Claude.ai works best for this application.
After just a few seconds, Claude.ai gave me this map based on the land description from the above prompt.

Additionally, you do not need to figure out how long links, chains, poles, and other metes and bounds units of measurement is. It is all done for you in a matter of seconds.

I've created a visualization of the land boundary based on the metes and bounds description. The drawing shows:

1. The starting point at the mulberry tree
2. All the directional changes with their corresponding landmarks
3. The complete boundary closing back to the beginning point
4. Labels for each landmark point
5. A grid pattern for scale reference (each major grid line represents 1 chain)

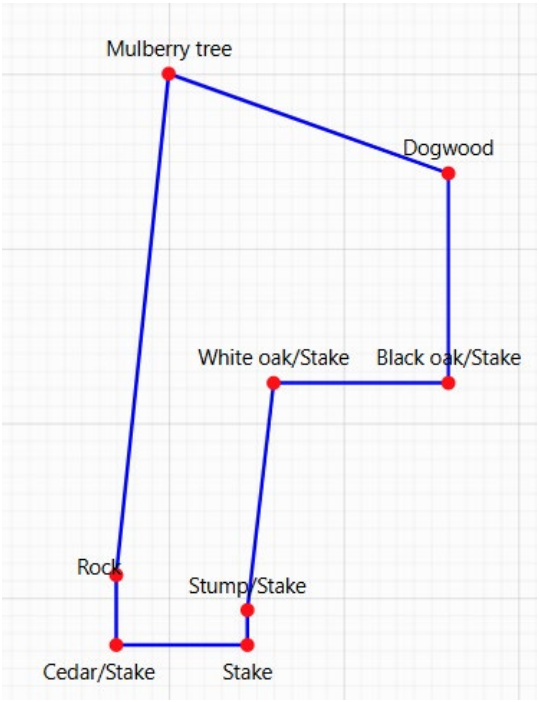
Note that I've scaled the visualization to make it easily viewable, where:

- 1 chain = approximately 66 feet
- 1 link = 7.92 inches (1/100 of a chain)

The angles and distances have been preserved according to the description, including:

- South 20° west for 29 chains
- South for 4 chains
- East for 7.5 chains
- North for 2 chains
- North 4° 5' East for 13 chains
- East for 10 chains
- North for 12 chains
- North 58° west for 10 chains back to the beginning

Would you like me to modify any part of the visualization or add additional details?

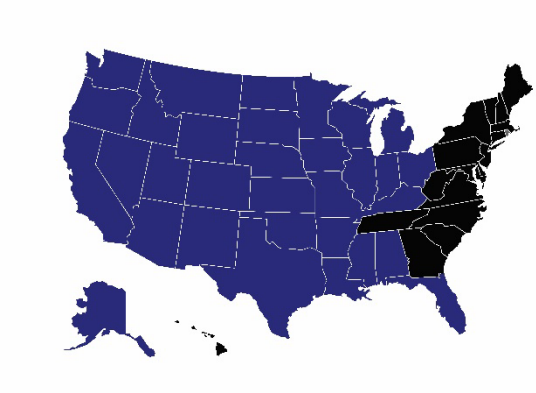


You can continue the conversation with the AI if needed.

AI is not perfect; you may want to verify its results manually.

In case you need it...

While this document is about the State Land States and using AI to map Metes & Bounds, here is the information about Federal Land States. Please see the other handouts about land records for more details.



Federal Land States

There really is no need to map Federal Land States using AI because the website below has everything mapped already, including in some cases, the original old maps.

Federal Land States (in blue) are primarily western states and use a grid system found at the Bureau of Land Management a.k.a. General Land Office. These records are available for free at https://glorecords.blm.gov/.