NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM
FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

1. NAME
COMMON:
Sublett Farm, Stone Residence, Dorgan Residence
AND/OR HISTORIC:
Rancho Estelle

2. LOCATION
STREET AND NUMBER:
Rio Grande

CITY OR TOWN:
Big Bend National Park
STATE:
Texas

3. CLASSIFICATION
CATEGORY (Check One)
[X] District
[ ] Site
[ ] Building
[ ] Structure
[ ] Object

OWNERSHIP
[X] Public
[ ] Private
[ ] Both

STATUS
[X] Occupied
[ ] Unoccupied
[ ] Preservation work in progress
[ ] In Process
[ ] Being Considered

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)
[X] Agricultural
[ ] Commercial
[ ] Educational
[ ] Entertainment
[ ] Government
[ ] Industrial
[ ] Military
[ ] Museum
[ ] Private Residence
[ ] Religious
[ ] Scientific
[ ] Transportation
[ ] Other (Specify)
[ ] Comments

4. AGENCY
U. S. Government, National Park Service, Department of the Interior
REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)
Southwest Regional Office, P. O. Box 728
CITY OR TOWN:
Santa Fe
STATE:
New Mexico

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Courthouse, Brewster County
CITY OR TOWN:
Alpine
STATE:
Texas

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Buildings Inventory
DATE OF SURVEY:
10/64
[ ] Federal
[ ] State

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Library of Congress
CITY OR TOWN:
Washington
STATE:
D.C.
CODE:
11
The exact number, type, and location of structures at Rancho Estelle are unknown. Those structures that do remain are all in various states of ruin. Some stabilization work has been done, but all are presently endangered. They are as follows:

BBH-12, Sublett Farm House: This structure was a one-story adobe house having a cane and viga roof. It contained 2 rooms separated by a central hall, and a covered porch across the front of the structure.


BBH-14, Adobe Shed: One-story, single room adobe structure which served variously as a warehouse and store. The roof is gone and the walls are deteriorating.

BBH-15, Stone Farm House: This stone structure consisted of 2 apartments separated by a day room, at the end of which was an outdoor cooking area and fireplace. Substantial stonework walls are still fairly intact, but the roof is now gone. The structure probably housed farm workers.

BBH-139, Dorgan Residence: One-story ranch home of adobe and stone wall construction. The core of the house is a 30' x 30' living room with 3 smaller rooms and a porch extending from the central square giving a total floor space of ca. 1,200 sq. ft. A unique feature of the construction is the large square main room with a 2-way fireplace in the center made of petrified wood and acting as a structural pier supporting huge log beams extending to the corners of the room forming a hipped, almost flat, roof with a large chimney at the apex. The house is now roofless and in ruins. Lintels over the main entrance are carefully selected cured logs forming segmental arches. Floors are concrete slab. Floor plan consists of the large main room and smaller rooms on the northeast and southwest sides. The southeast side opened to a covered terrace or ramada overlooking the flood plain of the Rio Grande and Mexico to the south. Walls plastered exterior and interior. Mr. Dorgan was said to be the son-in-law of James Sublett and an associate in the enterprise.

Proposed level of treatment: Preservation.

Estimated cost of treatment: $15,000 initially, $1,000 P/A thereafter based on 1973 costs.
James Sublett was one of the first settlers in the Big Bend area to actively farm the Rio Grande flood plain on a large scale. In partnership with Clyde Buttrill, he farmed the area and operated the store at what came to be known as Castalon or La Harmonia Farm, several miles downstream.

When the Buttrill-Sublett partnership broke up, Sublett purchased 4 sections of land at the present location and under the name of Grand Canyon Farms, Sublett and his associates operated what came to be known as Rancho Estelle.

Rancho Estelle derives its primary significance from its importance in depicting the flood plain farming activity along the Rio Grande, and is a good and representative example of such. Additionally, the Dorgan House has outstanding architectural merit among remaining structures of its time, type, and place.
### 9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES


### 10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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**APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:** 135

**LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY**

**LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES**

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<td>29° 09' 30&quot;</td>
<td>130° 35' 00&quot;</td>
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**LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
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### 11. FORM PREPARED BY

**NAME AND TITLE:** David G. Battle, Historical Architect

**BUSINESS ADDRESS:**

National Park Service, Southwest Regional Office

**STREET AND NUMBER:** P. O. Box 728

**CITY OR TOWN:** Santa Fe

**STATE:** New Mexico

**PHONE:** (505) 988-6501

**DATE:** February, 1973

### 12. CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

**State Liaison Officer recommendation:**

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No
- [ ] None

**State Liaison Officer Signature:** [Signature]

**In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Liaison Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The recommended level of significance is: [ ] National [ ] State [ ] Local**

**Regional Director Signature:** [Signature]

**I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.**

**Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation**

**ATTEST:**

**Keeper of The National Register**

**Date:** 6-30-74

**Title:** [Title]
2. LOCATION

Rancho Estelle is located near the Rio Grande River between Castalon and Santa Elena Canyon. The structures are situated on the north side of Park Route 9 approximately 4.5 miles from the Castalon junction.
# Form No. 10-301a

## UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

### PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

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## 1. NAME

**COMMON:** Sublett Farm, Stone Residence, Dorgan Residence  
**AND/OR HISTORIC:** Rancho Estelle

## 2. LOCATION

**STREET AND NUMBER:** See continuation sheet  
**CITY OR TOWN:** Big Bend National Park

**STATE:** Texas  
**COUNTY:** Brewster

## 3. PHOTO REFERENCE

**PHOTO CREDIT:** Historic American Buildings Survey  
**DATE OF PHOTO:** 1964

**NEGATIVE FILED AT:**  
National Park Service, Southwest Regional Office, Santa Fe, NM

## 4. IDENTIFICATION

**DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.**  
Stone Farm House, BBH-15

# of 5

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**
**NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

**PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM**

*(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)*

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**1. NAME**

**COMMON:** Sublett Farm, Stone Residence, Dorgan Residence

**AND/OR HISTORIC:** Rancho Estelle

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**2. LOCATION**

**STREET AND NUMBER:**

*(See continuation Sheet)*

**CITY OR TOWN:** Big Bend National Park

**STATE:** Texas

**CODE COUNTY:** 48 Brewster

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**3. PHOTO REFERENCE**

**PHOTO CREDIT:** David G. Battle

**DATE OF PHOTO:** 2/13/64

**NEGATIVE FILED AT:**

National Park Service, Southwest Regional Office, Santa Fe, New Mexico

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**4. IDENTIFICATION**

**DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.:**

Sublett Farm Hand's Casita, BBH-13

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**PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER**
**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**  
**NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**  
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
**PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM**  
*(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)*

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1. **NAME**
   - COMMON: Sublett Farm, Stone Residence, Dorgan Residence
   - AND/OR HISTORIC: Rancho Estelle

2. **LOCATION**
   - STREET AND NUMBER: See continuation sheet
   - CITY OR TOWN: Big Bend National Park
   - STATE: Texas
   - CODE: 48
   - COUNTY: Brewster
   - CODE: 043

3. **PHOTO REFERENCE**
   - PHOTO CREDIT: Historic American Buildings Survey
   - DATE OF PHOTO: 1964
   - NEGATIVE FILED AT: National Park Service, Southwest Regional Office, Santa Fe, NM

4. **IDENTIFICATION**
   - Dorgan Residence, BBH-139

**PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER**
**PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM**

1. **NAME**
   - COMMON: Sublett Farm, Stone Residence, Dorgan Residence
   - AND/OR HISTORIC: Rancho Estelle

2. **LOCATION**
   - STREET AND NUMBER: (See continuation sheet)
   - CITY OR TOWN: Big Bend National Park

3. **PHOTO REFERENCE**
   - PHOTO CREDIT: Historic American Buildings Survey
   - DATE OF PHOTO: 1964
   - NEGATIVE FILED AT: National Park Service, Southwest Regional Office, Santa Fe, New Mexico

4. **IDENTIFICATION**
   - DESCRIPTIVE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.
     
     
     Sublette Farm House, BBH-12

**PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER**
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

**PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM**

*(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)*

1. **NAME**
   - **COMMON:** Sublett Farm, Stone Residence, Dorgan Residence
   - **AND/OR HISTORIC:** Rancho Estelle

2. **LOCATION**
   - **STREET AND NUMBER:** See continuation sheet
   - **CITY OR TOWN:** Big Bend National Park
   - **STATE:** Texas
     | Code | COUNTY: Brewster | Code |
     |------|-----------------|------|
     | 48   | Brewster        | 043  |

3. **PHOTO REFERENCE**
   - **PHOTO CREDIT:** David G. Battle
   - **DATE OF PHOTO:** February 13, 1964
   - **NEGATIVE FILED AT:**
     - National Park Service, Southwest Regional Office, Santa Fe, NM

4. **IDENTIFICATION**
   - **SUBJECT:** Sublett Farm Shed, BBH-14

**PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER**