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Description of document: US Geological Survey (USGS) briefing materials on Derogatory Names Policy, 2017

Requested date: 03-June-2017

Release date: 06-July-2017

Posted date: 24-December-2018

NOTE: The released materials in this file contain terminology which readers/users may find objectionable

Source of document: Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Officer
U.S. Geological Survey
Department of the Interior
5522 Research Park Drive
Baltimore, MD 21228
Fax: (443) 498-5510
Email: foia@usgs.gov

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From: GS-D-EI_Freedom of Information Act <foia@usgs.gov>
Cc: foia <foia@usgs.gov>
Sent: Thu, Jul 6, 2017 4:28 pm
Subject: FOIA: USGS-2017-00137 Final Response

This letter shall serve as the final response pursuant to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request dated June 03, 2017, and received by the USGS FOIA office on June 03, 2017. The USGS assigned it control number USGS 2017-00137. Please cite this number in any future communications with the USGS regarding your request.

You requested the following information:

A copy of the briefing materials used by Lou Yost and Chris Trent of the US Board on Geographic Names in their recent briefing of the staff of the HSGAC regarding the DNC's Derogatory Names Policy.

USGS Responsive Information

In response to your request, the Bureau located six (6) documents (totaling 54 pages) that are responsive to your request. I have enclosed all responsive records combined into one (1) document in portable document format (PDF) (54 pages), which is being released to you in its entirety.

See attachments:

2017-00137 - Combined Records Final (54 pages)

We have classified you as an "other-use" requester. As such, we may charge you for some of our search and duplication costs, but we will not charge you for our review costs; you are also entitled to up to 2 hours of search time and 100 pages of photocopies (or an equivalent volume) for free. See 43 C.F.R. § 2.39.

After taking into consideration your fee category entitlements, our processing costs are less than \$50.00, we will not bill you because the cost of collection would be greater than the fee collected. See 43 C.F.R. § 2.49(a)(1).

We use Multitrack Processing to process FOIA requests. Your request was originally placed in the Complex processing track.

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You may contact OGIS in any of the following ways:

Office of Government Information Services
National Archives and Records Administration
8601 Adelphi Road - OGIS
College Park, MD 20740-6001
E-mail: ogis@nara.gov
Web: <https://ogis.archives.gov>
Telephone: (202) 741-5770
Fax: (202) 741-5769
Toll-free: 1-877-684-6448

Please note that using OGIS services does not affect the timing of filing an appeal with the Department's FOIA & Privacy Act Appeals Officer.

Additionally, you may also seek dispute resolution services from our FOIA Public Liaison, Mr. Brian May. He can be reached by mail at U.S. Geological Survey, FOIA Public Liaison, 5522 Research Park Drive, Baltimore, MD 21228.

This completes our response under your request. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Enclosures:
2017-00137 - Combined Records Final (54 pages)

V/r
Andreas

//SIGNED//
Georg-Andreas Pogány
Government Information Specialist
Freedom of Information Act Office / FOIA
U.S. Department of the Interior / U.S. Geological Survey
Denver Federal Center, Bldg 25
Box 25046, Mail Stop 406
Denver, Colorado 80225-0046

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BGN/DNC Derogatory Names

Approval requirements – The Domestic Names Committee (DNC) Secretariat/staff conducts research on the current name and the name that has been proposed to replace it. Input is also solicited from local, city, and town governments if pertinent; county commissioners; State Geographic Names Boards and Authorities; any Native American Tribe determined to have a current or historical interest in the area; and any pertinent Federal, State, or local land management agency. This information is then presented to the DNC members who discuss the various aspects of the proposed change and any relevant principles or policies. A motion is made to approve or not approve the proposed change (or to defer it for further information), and the motion is voted upon. A majority vote by the members present passes the motion.

However, in the case of the pejorative form of the word “Negro”, the blanket change was requested by the Secretary of the Interior who has conjoint responsibility with the BGN. In 1962 the DNC approved a policy stating that all of the names should be modified and did not solicit input on individual names. The same reasoning was used in 1974 regarding the pejorative form of “Japanese”.

Common impediments to name changes – The proposed replacement name violates one of the DNC’s principles or other policies. The DNC also places considerable emphasis on local use and preference, and if negative opinions are received from one or more of the entities listed above, the proposed change might not be approved.

Current list of derogatory place names – There are currently only two words that the DNC considers derogatory, the pejorative forms of the words “Negro” and “Japanese”. The DNC will evaluate on a case-by-case basis any other proposal it receives to change a name that the proponent considers offensive. Over the years, the DNC has discussed adding the word “Squaw” to the list of derogatory names; however, it was not added because a few Tribes do not consider the word offensive. The DNC has also discussed adding the word “Negro”; however it has received comments from such people as the president of the Salt Lake chapter of the NAACP and the president of the South Dakota African American History Museum that place names containing the word “Negro” are acceptable. As such, the DNC has been considering changes with “Squaw” and “Negro” case-by-case since the mid-1990s.

DEC 1 1960

Memorandum

To: Atlantic Region Engineer
Central Region Engineer
Rocky Mountain Region Engineer
Pacific Region Engineer
Chief, Branch of Special Maps

From: Chief Topographic Engineer (FT-C)

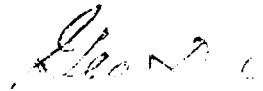
Subject: Geographic names involving the use of the word "nigger"

Since recent maps on which the words "nigger" and "negro" appear as parts of geographic names have indicated a lack of uniformity in treatment, it seems pertinent at this time to restate the Geological Survey position with regard to such names.

The Survey does not approve of the use of the word "nigger" in any derogatory sense. It would seem appropriate to substitute the word "negro" whenever this would not be contrary to well-established documented usage. However, we do not believe it is desirable to attempt to change a name which is well rooted in the history of the community, unless it is clearly shown that there is substantial local objection to it.

The attitude of the Board on Geographic Names is reflected in the following quotation from the minutes of the Domestic Names Committee meeting of January 10, 1957: "The Committee noted that there are in the file several cases involving the word 'nigger,' in none of which is the evidence of local usage and preference adequate for action. The Committee was unanimous that each case should be considered individually rather than by blanket rule."

We believe that there can be little criticism of our maps if we determine which form of the name has been most consistently used on maps, charts, and publications concerning the area, and accordingly use the preferred name on our map.



Chief Topographic Engineer

12-6-60

LFDingman:lr

Copy to: Topo Files

FT

FT-C

Baird (2) ✓

EdRevBd

DFB #1



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

100-1-1052

Dear Mr. Cliff:

A recent expression of concern about a geographic name including the word "nigger" brings into question the propriety of our approach under conditions now prevailing. Surely no one now would suggest a new name including the word, and as surely someone will express concern about any old one that remains.

Whatever the overtones of the word were in the past, unquestionably a great many people now consider it derogatory or worse. It is like an obscenity in that avoidance of its use is common courtesy and in that its use may incur some sort of social penalty. I do not see how the Federal Government can in conscience require the use of the word in any connection.

I am aware of the need to discourage attempts by individuals to change perfectly good names for purely personal reasons. However, the attitude toward "nigger" is broader than personal, and a name can hardly be "perfectly good" if it contains a word that many people find offensive or will not say out loud.

The Department's position on this matter needs to be forthright and clear. I would therefore like the Board on Geographic Names to 1) look into the occurrence of such names, 2) review and summarize actions taken on such names, and 3) work out a policy covering names in which the word "nigger" occurs, either specifically or as part of a class of names that would include it, taking account of both the present day attitude toward this word and the practical aspects of procedures.

Sincerely yours,

(sgd) Stewart L. Udall

Secretary of the Interior

Mr. Edward P. Cliff
Chairman, Board on Geographic Names
Department of the Interior
Washington 25, D. C.



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

10-17 1962

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Secretary of the Interior

Mr. Edward P. Cliff
Chairman, Board on Geographic Names
Department of the Interior
Washington 25, D. C.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE
WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

18413

IN REPLY REFER TO

1350

August 14, 1962

Mr. A. A. Baker, Chairman
Domestic Names Committee
Board on Geographic Names
Geological Survey
Department of the Interior

Dear Mr. Baker:

Attached is copy of Secretary Udall's letter of July 27 asking the Board on Geographic Names to look into the occurrence of geographic names which include the word "nigger," to review and summarize action taken on such names, and to work out a policy covering such names in which the word occurs.

I asked Fred Grover to show you a copy of this letter at the last Domestic Names Committee meeting and discuss it with you informally. This is a formal transmittal to the Domestic Names Committee of the Secretary's request.

I suggest that the Committee plan on making its recommendations to the Board at the next regular meeting in October, if possible. //

Sincerely yours,

Edward P. Cliff
EDWARD P. CLIFF, Chairman
Board on Geographic Names

Enclosure



Growth Through Agricultural Progress

BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

One hundred and third Meeting, October 16, 1962
Room 3013, Interior Building
1 p.m.

MINUTES

Present:

Members: R. J. Voskuil, Chairman
E. P. Cliff, Chairman of Board
F. C. Shepard, Chairman, Publications Committee

By invitation: L. W. Swanson

Ex officio: M. F. Burrill, Executive Secretary, BGN

Absent: G. E. Percy, Chairman of Foreign Names Committee
A. A. Baker, Chairman of Domestic Names Committee

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 p.m. The minutes of the 102nd meeting were approved as written.

Communications

1. Henry Dater has been appointed to the Advisory Committee on Antarctic Names.

1.1 Alberts and Bertrand are on their way to New Zealand. They will confer with the Antarctic authorities there and in Australia. Alberts will continue to Antarctica.

1.2 Since the full ACAN could not meet with the Executive Committee on this date, it was agreed that the Executive Committee will be invited sit in on a working meeting of the ACAN.

Draft letter to Secretary Udall

2. The Committee went over the DNC draft reply to Secretary Udall's July 27 letter on policy relating to derogatory names. It was the consensus that the letter should be redrafted to make all statements refer to all types of derogatory terms, to make clear that there are classes of names over which the BGN does not have jurisdiction, to state the situation with reference to the name that brought up the question, and to suggest that as instances arise the Board's regular procedures will take care of the problem with a minimum of furor and a maximum of public concurrence in BGN decisions.

2.1 Burrill will redraft the letter in consultation with the staff in the Geological Survey, and will circulate it in draft to the Executive Committee.

Antarctic names

3. The Committee examined and approved 17 new names in the Horlick Mountains, and 46 new names proposed by New Zealand in the Tucker Glacier area. The Committee also approved revision of 22 former decisions, one to eliminate a duplication, the rest to change "islet" to "island." All the names appear on the list dated October 16, 1962, a copy of which is attached.

The Committee adjourned at 1:55 p.m., to meet again on call.

Draft 9-13-62

Dear Mr. Secretary:

This is in reply to your letter of July 27, requesting that the Board on Geographic Names 1) study the occurrence of geographic names on Federal maps and publications using the term "nigger," 2) review and summarize action taken on such names, and 3) establish a policy with practical procedures that would eliminate the word in geographic names.

1. Geographic names in use in the United States and appearing on maps and in other publications have been tabulated only in small part. In the absence of such tabulation, determination of the extent of the use of the term "nigger" in geographic names would require careful examination of tens of thousands of maps. The only States for which complete lists of geographic names are available are Kentucky and Delaware. Of the thousands of names appearing on topographic maps which completely cover the State of Kentucky the term "nigger" occurs only once and will be eliminated when the map is reprinted. Delaware has no geographic name using this word. From these examples and experience with names in other parts of the country, the use of the term is known to be extremely limited.

2. The Board on Geographic Names is guided by a policy of avoidance of names with a derogatory implication. To that end, proposals of new names or name changes involving use of the term "nigger" are not approved. On the other hand, map makers over the years have of necessity been guided by entrenched local usage in the names that have been placed on maps. In a few instances where proposals to change such names have been made, the Board

has been faced with the problem of ignoring a history of usage. In general the historical name has been sustained under the pressure of local opinion concerning firmly entrenched names. Changes to eliminate the term as for example, a proposal in 1961 to change the name of Nigger Lake, Washington, to Ole Lake have been approved by the Board.

3. In order to eliminate the use of the word "nigger" as a part of a geographic name, the Board and all Federal agencies will be guided by the following policy adopted at the meeting of the Board on October 16:

A. The Board shall not approve the use of the term "nigger" as part of a geographic name either as a new name proposal or as a name change.

B. All such names currently appearing on Federal maps will be reviewed by the publishing agencies, and as the maps are revised or reprinted, the names will be modified to remove any derogatory implications.

C. The term "nigger" shall not be used on any new Federal maps or publications as part of a geographic name; when such a term is encountered as being in local usage, it will be modified to remove any derogatory implication.

Sincerely yours,

Edward P. Cliff, Chairman
Board on Geographic Names

Hon. Stewart L. Udall
Secretary of the Interior
Washington 25, D. C.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE
WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

IN REPLY REFER TO
1350

November 16, 1962

Mr. Arthur A. Baker, Chairman
Domestic Names Committee
c/o Geological Survey
Department of the Interior

Dear Art:

I have delayed answering your letter of October 29 until about the time you are expected back in Washington.

I regret that the action of referring the matter of derogatory geographic names to the Executive Committee meets with your disapproval. I also am sorry that you were unable to be there to participate in the discussions, as I am sure that it would have clarified some of the questions that you seem to have.

I cannot agree that the procedure followed was improper. Secretary Udall asked the Board to make a policy determination, and I think that this is an action which should be taken by the Board as a whole rather than one of its subcommittees. So I believe that it was proper to refer the proposed reply to Secretary Udall's letter to the Executive Committee before submitting it to the Board as a whole. The members of the Executive Committee will have an opportunity to review the rewrite of the letter and to express their opinions on it before it is forwarded to Secretary Udall. We will not take further action until you return to Washington and have an opportunity to participate in further discussions.

Frankly, I was not personally sympathetic with the reply drafted by the Domestic Names Committee. My main objection was to the proposal to arbitrarily change names without going through the regular procedures which have been followed by the Board for many years. I regret that I was not at the meeting of the Domestic Names Committee at which this subject was discussed. I realize that I am not in a very good position to object to the action of the Committee because the Department of Agriculture deputy was present.



I am sure that we will be able to agree on a position which will be satisfactory to everyone concerned and will answer the questions raised by the Secretary.

Sincerely yours,


Edward P. Cliff, Chairman
Board on Geographic Names

1/2 74 E - N - M - S - T - O - R

By motion of Overstreet/Driskell it was:

VOTED to ask the Executive Secretary, Board on Geographic Names to make a study of the practicallity of admitting the Department of Transportation, Library of Congress, and the Department of Defense to the Domestic Names Committee.

Orth brought up the question of whether the name "Jap" was acceptable in the light of the official position taken by the BGN in 1963 in a letter to the Secretary of the Interior concerning derogatory names. The question is raised because of the occurence of the name in the geographic names of some of the western states, particulary Oregon. The Oregon Geographic Names Board, for example, presently has on its agenda for consideration the name "Jap Creek." It was:

AGREED that the name "Jap" in geographic names be considered derogatory, and is to be avoided in Federal publications by changing the name to "Japanese, " "Nisei," or by formally proposing another acceptable name.

ICATIONS

Decision List 7303 is being printed and will be distributed soon.

Decision List 7304 is being assembled and processed for submittal to the printer.

SET LISTS

Names were considered on Docket Lists 172, 173, and 176 through 181. The actions taken are indicated on the attached "Names Considered List."

3ING

The Committee adjourned at 3:35 P. M.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 12 at 1:30 P. M. The meeting will be located in the Water Resources Council Conference Room at 2120 L Street, Washington, D. C.

Donald J. Orth
Executive Secretary
Domestic Geographic Names

ID:

R. Henson, Chairman
ic Names Committee



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D. C.

JUL 21 1968

Dear Mr. Cliff:

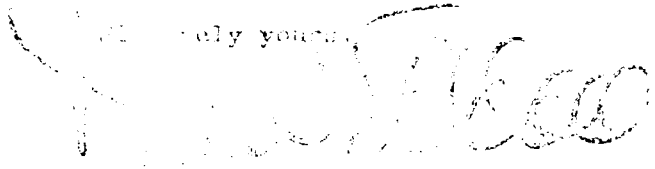
A recent expression of concern about a geographic name including the word "nigger" brings into question the propriety of our approach under conditions now prevailing. Surely no one would suggest a new name including the word, and as surely someone will express concern about any old one that remains.

Whatever the connotations of the word were in the past, unquestionably a great many people now consider it derogatory or worse. It is like an obscenity in that avoidance of its use is common courtesy and in that its use may incur some sort of social penalty. I do not see how the Federal Government can in convenience tolerate the use of the word in any connection.

I am aware of the need to disown words by individuals to change perfectly good names for purely proper reasons. However, the attitude toward "nigger" is broader than personal and a name can hardly be "perfectly good" if it contains a word that many people find offensive or will not say out loud.

The Department's position on this matter needs to be forthright and clear. I would therefore like the Board on Geographic Names to 1) look into the occurrence of such names, 2) review and summarize actions taken on such names, and 3) work out a policy covering names in which the word "nigger" occurs, either specifically or as part of a class of names that would include it, taking account of both the present day attitude toward this word and the practical aspects of procedure.

Sincerely yours,


Secretary of the Interior

Mr. Edward P. Cliff
Chairman, Board on Geographic Names
Department of the Interior
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

This is in reply to your letter of July 27, requesting that the Board on Geographic Names (1) study the occurrence of geographic names on Federal maps and publications using derogatory terms such as "nigger", (2) review and summarize action taken on such names, and (3) establish a policy with practical procedures that would eliminate the word in geographic names.

1. Geographic names in use in the United States and appearing on maps and in other publications have been tabulated only in small part. In the absence of such tabulation, determination of the extent of the use of derogatory terms in geographic names would require careful examination of tens of thousands of maps. The only States for which complete lists of geographic names are available are Kentucky and Delaware. Of the thousands of names appearing on topographic maps which completely cover the State of Kentucky the term "nigger" occurs only once and will be eliminated when the map is reprinted. Delaware has no geographic name using this word. From these examples and experience with names in other parts of the country, the use of the term is known to be extremely limited.
2. The Board on Geographic Names is guided by a policy of avoidance of names with a derogatory implication. To that end, proposals of new names or name changes involving use of derogatory terms are not approved. On the other hand, map makers over the years have of necessity been guided by entrenched local usage in the names

that have been placed on maps. In a few instances where proposals to change such names have been made, the Board has been faced with the problem of ignoring a history of usage. In some cases the historical name has been sustained under the pressure of local opinion concerning firmly entrenched names. However, experience indicates that local people will be reasonable about such matters if they do not feel that a change is being imposed upon them. Changes to eliminate the term as, for example, a proposal in 1961 to change the name of Nigger Lake, Washington, to Ole Lake have been approved by the Board.

There may be derogatory terms used in the names of entities over which the Board has no jurisdiction; such as private property or works of man. With regard to geographic names, the procedures which will be followed by the Board will include:

- A. The disapproval of any new or proposed change of name containing a derogatory term;
- B. Stimulation of local proposals for change of names involving such terms as may be found to exist;
- C. All such names currently appearing on Federal maps will be reviewed by the publishing agencies, and as the maps are revised the names will be referred to the Board for review and action;
- D. Derogatory terms shall not be used on any new Federal maps or publications as part of a geographic name; when such a term is encountered as being in local usage, it will not be incorporated in the map.

Sincerely yours,

Edward P. Cliff, Chairman
Board on Geographic Names

1/8/74 BGN Meeting

By motion of Overstreet/Driskell it was:

VOTED to ask the Executive Secretary, Board on Geographic Names to make a study of the practicality of admitting the Department of Transportation, Library of Congress, and the Department of Defense to the Domestic Names Committee.

Orth brought up the question of whether the name "Jap" was acceptable in the light of the official position taken by the BGN in 1963 in a letter to the Secretary of the Interior concerning derogatory names. The question is raised because of the occurrence of the name in the geographic names of some of the western states, particularly Oregon. The Oregon Geographic Names Board, for example, presently has on its agenda for consideration the name "Jap Creek." It was:

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Donald J. Orth
Executive Secretary
Domestic Geographic Names

ED:

L. Henson, Chairman
ic Names Committee

DEC 5 1960

Memorandum

To: Atlantic Region Engineer
Central Region Engineer
Rocky Mountain Region Engineer
Pacific Region Engineer
Chief, Branch of Special Maps

From: Chief Topographic Engineer (RT-C)

Subject: Geographic names involving the use of the word "nigger"

Since recent maps on which the words "nigger" and "negro" appear as parts of geographic names have indicated a lack of uniformity in treatment, it seems pertinent at this time to restate the Geological Survey position with regard to such names.

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The attitude of the Board on Geographic Names is reflected in the following quotation from the minutes of the Domestic Name Committee meeting of January 10, 1937: "The Committee noted that there are in the file several cases involving the word 'nigger,' in none of which is the evidence of local usage and preference adequate for action. The Committee was unanimous that each case should be considered individually rather than by blanket rule."

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Leo S. Whitmore

Chief Topographic Engineer

12-6-60
LFD:ngman:lr
Copy to: Topo Files

RT
RT-C
BaIRD (2) ✓
EdReyBd
DRF #1



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

JUL 27 1962

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1. Geographic names in use in the United States and appearing on maps and in other publications have been tabulated only in small part. In the absence of such tabulation determination of the extent of the use of the term "nigger" in geographic names would require careful examination of tens of thousands of maps. The only States for which complete lists of geographic names are available are Kentucky and Delaware. Of the thousands of names appearing on topographic maps which completely cover the State of Kentucky the term "nigger" occurs only once and will be eliminated when the map is reprinted. Delaware has no geographic name using this word. From these examples and experience with names in other parts of the country, the use of the term is known to be extremely limited.

2. The Board on Geographic Names is guided by a policy of avoidance of names with a derogatory implication. To that end, proposals of new names or name changes involving use of the term "nigger" are not

approved. On the other hand, map makers over the years have of necessity been guided by entrenched local usage in the names that have been placed on maps. In a few instances where proposals to change such names have been made, the Board has been faced with the problem of ignoring a history of usage. In general the historical name has been sustained under the pressure of local opinion concerning firmly entrenched names. Changes have been approved by the Board where evidence of local support could be developed as, for example, a proposal in 1961 to change the name of Nigger Lake, Washington, to Ole Lake was approved by the Board.

3. In order to eliminate the use of the word "nigger" as a part of a geographic name, the Board and all Federal agencies will be guided by the following policy adopted at the meeting of the Board on October 16:

A. The Board shall not approve the use of the term "nigger" as part of a geographic name either as a new name proposal or as a name change.

B. All such names currently appearing on Federal maps will be reviewed by the publishing agencies, and as the maps are revised or reprinted, the names will be modified to remove any derogatory implications.

C. The term "nigger" shall not be used on any new Federal maps or publications as part of a geographic name; when such a term is encountered as being in local usage, it will be modified to remove any derogatory implication.

Sincerely yours,

Edward P. Cliff, Chairman
Board on Geographic Names

Hon. Stewart L. Udall
Secretary of the Interior
Washington 25, D. C.

BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

One hundred and third Meeting, October 16, 1962
Room 3013, Interior Building
1 p.m.

MINUTES

Present:

Members: R. J. Voskuil, Chairman
E. P. Cliff, Chairman of Board
F. C. Shepard, Chairman, Publications Committee

By invitation: L. W. Swanson

Ex officio: M. F. Burrill, Executive Secretary, BGN

Absent: G. E. Percy, Chairman of Foreign Names Committee
A. A. Baker, Chairman of Domestic Names Committee

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 p.m. The minutes of the 102nd meeting were approved as written.

Communications

1. Henry Dater has been appointed to the Advisory Committee on Antarctic Names.

1.1 Alberts and Bertrand are on their way to New Zealand. They will confer with the Antarctic authorities there and in Australia. Alberts will continue to Antarctica.

1.2 Since the full ACAN could not meet with the Executive Committee on this date, it was agreed that the Executive Committee will be invited to sit in on a working meeting of the ACAN.

Draft letter to Secretary Udall

2. The Committee went over the DNC draft reply to Secretary Udall's July 27 letter on policy relating to derogatory names. It was the consensus that the letter should be redrafted to make all statements refer to all types of derogatory terms, to make clear that there are classes of names over which the BGN does not have jurisdiction, to state the situation with reference to the name that brought up the question, and to suggest that as instances arise the Board's regular procedures will take care of the problem with a minimum of furor and a maximum of public concurrence in BGN decisions.

2.1 Burrill will redraft the letter in consultation with the staff in the Geological Survey, and will circulate it in draft to the Executive Committee.

Antarctic names

3. The Committee examined and approved 17 new names in the Horlick Mountains, and 46 new names proposed by New Zealand in the Tucker Glacier area. The Committee also approved revision of 22 former decisions, one to eliminate a duplication, the rest to change "islet" to "island." All the names appear on the list dated October 16, 1962, a copy of which is attached.

The Committee adjourned at 1:55 p.m., to meet again on call.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE
WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

18413

IN REPLY REFER TO

1350

August 14, 1962.

Mr. A. A. Baker, Chairman
Domestic Names Committee
Board on Geographic Names
Geological Survey
Department of the Interior

Dear Mr. Baker:

Attached is copy of Secretary Udall's letter of July 27 asking the Board on Geographic Names to look into the occurrence of geographic names which include the word "nigger," to review and summarize action taken on such names, and to work out a policy covering such names in which the word occurs.

I asked Fred Grover to show you a copy of this letter at the last Domestic Names Committee meeting and discuss it with you informally. This is a formal transmittal to the Domestic Names Committee of the Secretary's request.

I suggest that the Committee plan on making its recommendations to the Board at the next regular meeting in October, if possible. //

Sincerely yours,

Edward P. Cliff
EDWARD P. CLIFF, Chairman
Board on Geographic Names

Enclosure



Growth Through Agricultural Progress

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE
WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

IN REPLY REFER TO
1350

November 16, 1962

Mr. Arthur A. Baker, Chairman
Domestic Names Committee
c/o Geological Survey
Department of the Interior

Dear Art:

I have delayed answering your letter of October 29 until about the time you are expected back in Washington.

I regret that the action of referring the matter of derogatory geographic names to the Executive Committee meets with your disapproval. I also am sorry that you were unable to be there to participate in the discussions, as I am sure that it would have clarified some of the questions that you seem to have.

I cannot agree that the procedure followed was improper. Secretary Udall asked the Board to make a policy determination, and I think that this is an action which should be taken by the Board as a whole rather than one of its subcommittees. So I believe that it was proper to refer the proposed reply to Secretary Udall's letter to the Executive Committee before submitting it to the Board as a whole. The members of the Executive Committee will have an opportunity to review the rewrite of the letter and to express their opinions on it before it is forwarded to Secretary Udall. We will not take further action until you return to Washington and have an opportunity to participate in further discussions.

Frankly, I was not personally sympathetic with the reply drafted by the Domestic Names Committee. My main objection was to the proposal to arbitrarily change names without going through the regular procedures which have been followed by the Board for many years. I regret that I was not at the meeting of the Domestic Names Committee at which this subject was discussed. I realize that I am not in a very good position to object to the action of the Committee because the Department of Agriculture deputy was present.



I am sure that we will be able to agree on a position which will be satisfactory to everyone concerned and will answer the questions raised by the Secretary.

Sincerely yours,

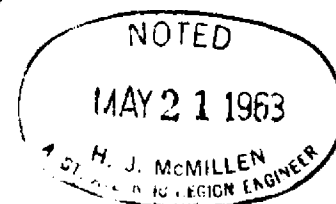
Edward P. Cliff
Edward P. Cliff, Chairman
Board on Geographic Names



2	Region Engineer
5	Asst. Reg. Eng.
1	Adm. Officer
1	Public Affairs
1	Records & Com.
1	Geology
1	Cartography
1	Topography
1	Photogrammetry
1	Planning & Development
1	Research & Development
1	Training
1	Publications
1	Administrative Services
1	General
1	File

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

IN REPLY REFER TO:



Memorandum

MAY 20 1963

To: Atlantic Region Engineer ✓
Central Region Engineer
Rocky Mountain Region Engineer
Pacific Region Engineer
Chief, Branch of Special Maps

From: Chief Topographic Engineer (RT-C)

Subject: Derogatory names

NOTED

MAY 24 1963

James S. Crabtree
Chief, Photogrammetry

The enclosed copy of a letter from the Chairman, Board on Geographic Names, to the Secretary of the Interior is self explanatory.

Procedures listed A, B, C, and D in the Chairman's letter will serve as a guide for treatment of the subject matter.

for Morris M. Thompson
Chief Topographic Engineer

Enclosure

POSTED

JUN 4 1963

CENTRAL FILES

FILED BY *[Signature]*

NOTED

MAY 21 1963

John P. Scott, Jr.
Chief, Cartography Section

NOTED

MAY 21 1963

C. F. FUECHSEL
Atlantic Region Engineer

NOTED

MAY 21 1963

H. WILLIAMS
Plans & Production Section

O.E.N.

NOTED

MAY 23 1963

C. W. Buckey
Chief, Field Surveys Section

NOTED

MAY 24 1963

R. J. Belton
Asst. Chief, Field Surveys

LDK

R.m - S-24-63

Dear Mr. Secretary:

This is in reply to your letter of July 27, requesting that the Board on Geographic Names (1) study the occurrence of geographic names on Federal maps and publications using derogatory terms such as "nigger", (2) review and summarize action taken on such names, and (3) establish a policy with practical procedures that would eliminate the word in geographic names.

1. Geographic names in use in the United States and appearing on maps and in other publications have been tabulated only in small part. In the absence of such tabulation, determination of the extent of the use of derogatory terms in geographic names would require careful examination of tens of thousands of maps. The only States for which complete lists of geographic names are available are Kentucky and Delaware. Of the thousands of names appearing on topographic maps which completely cover the State of Kentucky the term "nigger" occurs only once and will be eliminated when the map is reprinted. Delaware has no geographic name using this word. From these examples and experience with names in other parts of the country, the use of the term is known to be extremely limited.
2. The Board on Geographic Names is guided by a policy of avoidance of names with a derogatory implication. To that end, proposals of new names or name changes involving use of derogatory terms are not approved. On the other hand, map makers over the years have of necessity been guided by entrenched local usage in the names

that have been placed on maps. In a few instances where proposals to change such names have been made, the Board has been faced with the problem of ignoring a history of usage. In some cases the historical name has been sustained under the pressure of local opinion concerning firmly entrenched names. However, experience indicates that local people will be reasonable about such matters if they do not feel that a change is being imposed upon them. Changes to eliminate the term as, for example, a proposal in 1961 to change the name of Nigger Lake, Washington, to Ole Lake have been approved by the Board.

There may be derogatory terms used in the names of entities over which the Board has no jurisdiction, such as private property or works of man. With regard to geographic names, the procedures which will be followed by the Board will include:

- A. The disapproval of any new or proposed change of name containing a derogatory term;
- B. Stimulation of local proposals for change of names involving such terms as may be found to exist;
- C. All such names currently appearing on Federal maps will be reviewed by the publishing agencies, and as the maps are revised the names will be referred to the Board for review and action;
- D. Derogatory terms shall not be used on any new Federal maps or publications as part of a geographic name; when such a term is encountered as being in local usage, it will not be incorporated in the map.

Sincerely yours,

Edward P. Cliff, Chairman
Board on Geographic Names



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:
L50(022)

SEP 30 1982

Memorandum

To: Don Orth, Executive Secretary
From: Dwight Rettie, Deputy Member
Subject: Derogatory Names

I will be out of town October 2-18 and will be unable to attend either the October 5, meeting or the Sixth Western Geographic Names Conference scheduled for the middle of the month in Denver.

I do, however, plan to attend the November meeting and would like to request that Negro Cove appearing in Docket 277 for consideration at the October 15 meeting and the issue of derogatory names be set aside until the November meeting.

In the meantime, I would like to suggest that the Board obtain some outside views on the matter of derogatory names. This might include major Black organizations and other ethnic or minority organizations. It also appears to me that the derogatory names policy and the local use policy are presently in conflict.

I am anxious to be constructive and have drafted an alternative policy on derogatory names, on which I will have some additional comments in time for the November meeting (a copy is attached).

DRAFT POLICY ON DEROGATORY NAMES

It is the policy of the United States Board on Geographic Names not to adopt for official government use names, words, or expressions overtly and obviously derogatory in character. For example, the Board will not accept words commonly used as racial or ethnic slurs such as Nigger, Jap, Wop, Chink, and so forth.

It is the policy of the Board not to newly adopt these names even if they are in local usage and regardless of by whom proposed.

In the event any such term was adopted earlier the Board will entertain alternate name proposals when they meet the test of usage and appropriateness. The Board will not on its own motion change previously adopted names except to correct errors.



UNITED STATES BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES

Derogatory Geographic Names Policy and Guidelines

I. Introduction

The guiding principle of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names for the names of places, features, and areas in the United States and its Territories is to adopt for official Federal use the names found in present-day local usage. An exception to this principle occurs when a name is considered by a large number of people to be highly offensive to a particular ethnic or religious group or class of people. In such instances the Board does not approve use of the names for Federal maps and other publications.

The Board, however, is conservative in this matter and prefers to interfere as little as possible with the use of names in everyday language because attitudes and perceptions of words considered to be pejorative vary between individuals and can change connotation from one generation to another. Geographic names are part of the historical records of the United States and the records may be either distorted or disrupted by the elimination of names associated with particular groups of Americans. The action of the Board may in time be a disservice to the people the process is meant to protect.

II. Policy

In the case of domestic geographic names, the Board on Geographic Names will not adopt a (locally used) name for Federal usage that is derogatory to a particular ethnic group, religion, or class of people.

III. Guidelines

A. Any individual or agency may request the Board to change a currently used name on grounds the name is derogatory or patently offensive. Requests for name changes should be in the form of an application to the Board including reasons why the present name should not be used. The requestor may offer an alternate name as part of the application following Board guidelines for submittal of name proposals.

B. Upon receipt of a request to change a derogatory name, the Board will investigate the background for the current name and will solicit from the appropriate State names authority that organization's views on the proposed change, including any alternates.

C. The procedure in B also will be followed for derogatory names encountered during any review of locally used names by the staff of the Board.

D. In considering a change proposal the Board will give careful consideration to all relevant factors including the extent and distribution of usage, historical context, user perceptions and intent, and lexical meanings.

E. The Board will not adopt a name proposal that includes the word "Jap" or the word "Nigger" whether or not it is in current local usage and regardless of by whom proposed.

F. In the event of a name change, the prior form will appear in the permanent record as a variant.

G. In the event a decision is made to change a name held derogatory for which no alternate name is proposed and for which there is no alternate in current local usage, the Board will solicit alternate name(s) from the appropriate State naming authority. If none is received, use of the current name will be discontinued without substitution of an alternate.

Approved by:
U.S. Board on Geographic Names
June 23, 1983

Approved by:
Secretary of the Interior
July 28, 1983



UNITED STATES BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES

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Approved by:
U.S. Board on Geographic Names
June 23, 1983

Approved by:
Secretary of the Interior
July 28, 1983

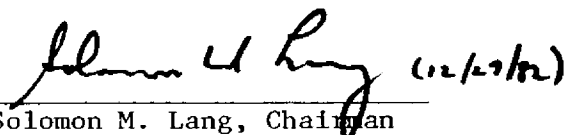
BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES

DOMESTIC NAMES COMMITTEE

Subcommittee to Investigate and Define Local Usage (SIDLU)

REPORT: Review of the Board on Geographic Names'
Derogatory Name Policy

The Subcommittee reviewed the history of the current policy of deletion of pejorative names from Federal publications. In most cases, a pejorative name can be converted easily to another of greater acceptance - e.g., "Jap" to "Japanese." However, the exception is use of the word "Nigger"; but, it is recognized that conversion of the word to "Negro" has already occurred in about 95% of the cases. The problem with this conversion is that in recent days the word "Negro" in itself has assumed pejorative connotation. The only other alternative is "Black" but this would completely obscure the origin of the name. The Subcommittee also considered the current attitudes of the people in this country to the word "Nigger" and it is felt that other people's attitudes have not changed significantly since the implementation of the policy in 1961. It is also felt that the majority of the people in this country find it difficult to use the word, therefore, it would not truly reflect local usage. It is the Subcommittee's recommendation that the policy not be changed.


Solomon M. Lang, Chairman
Subcommittee on Local Usage

Members:

Lewis G. Glover
David E. Meier

BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES

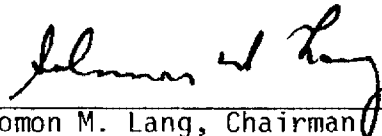
DOMESTIC NAMES COMMITTEE

Subcommittee to Investigate and Define Local Usage (SIDLU)

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August 19, 1982



Solomon M. Lang, Chairman
Subcommittee on Local Usage

Members:

Lewis G. Glover
David E. Meier

8/11/29
November 28, 1989

Mr. Victor Goode
NAACP - Austin Branch
1704 East 12th
Austin, Texas 78702

Dear Mr. Goode:

I apologize for the delay in answering your letter concerning geographic names in Texas that use the word "nigger."

On September 13, 1962, the U.S. Board on Geographic Names established a policy that the word shall not be used on any new Federal maps or other publications as part of a geographic name, and when such a word is encountered as being in local usage, it will be modified to remove any derogatory implication. The Board further stated that all such names already appearing on Federal maps will be reviewed by the publishing agencies, and as the maps are revised or reprinted, the names will be modified to remove any derogatory implications. To our knowledge, this policy has been faithfully carried out and Federal maps published or reprinted since 1962 do not use the word in any geographic names. We do not have authority to provide similar instructions to State and private mapmakers and, of course, can do nothing with regard to Federal maps published before 1962.

In a few cases, we were able to replace some of the "nigger" names with names of the individuals for whom the features were originally named. In most cases, however, the Federal mapmakers substituted the word "negro," a term that is not wholly satisfactory to many. For this reason, we welcome any naming suggestions you may have. We strongly suggest that you work with the Texas State Geographic Names Authority before submitting proposals to the U.S. Board on Geographic Names. You may write or call E. Charles Palmer, Geographic Names Coordinator, TNRS Systems Central, P.O. Box 13231, Capitol Station, Austin, Texas 78711-3231. The telephone number is: 512-463-8403.

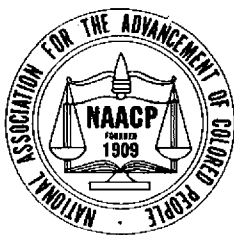
Sincerely,

Donald J. Orth
Executive Secretary
Domestic Geographic Names

Copy to Mr. Palmer

cc: RGCN (2) ✓
jf:files

RES:RGCR:RGCN:DJOrth:jcf:11-28-89



AUSTIN BRANCH
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE
SEVENTEEN O FOUR EAST TWELFTH • AUSTIN, TEXAS 78702 • 512-476-6230

25 October 1989

NOTED

OCT 29 1989

Executive Secretary
Domestic Geographic Names

Mr. Donald Orth
Board of Geographic Names
U.S. Dept. of Interior
12201 Sunrise Valley Drive
M.S. 911
Reston, Virginia 22092

Dear Mr. Orth:

This complaint concerns the federal government's use of racially-offensive names in its maps and/or publications. A small peak between Buchanan and Inks lakes in central Burnet County, Texas is called "Nigger Head Hill." A 4-mile long stream in northwestern Travis County, Texas is "Nigger Branch." And another waterway that cuts through Stephens County, Texas is called "Nigger Creek."

The Board of Geographic Names should, as a matter of policy, change these racist epithets. The reason is simple: use of such epithets by the government is wrong. If, however, the Board requires more than an ethically-based policy rationale, it only need look to the U.S. Constitution.

The Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery. In 1968, the U.S. Supreme Court indicated that the amendment was intended to prohibit not just slavery, but also the "badges and incidents of slavery." Jones v. Alfred H. Mayer Co., 392 U.S.409, 441(1968). Under Jones, current forms of racial discrimination are badges of slavery proscribed under the Thirteenth Amendment if they are historically linked with slavery or involuntary servitude.

Texas entered the Union as a slave state. Even as a Republic, prior to becoming a state, Texas supported slavery. And before becoming a Republic, slavery was alive and well in Texas despite the fact that it was illegal under Mexican law. During this antebellum period, the term "nigger" was a common term for Texas blacks, most of whom were slaves. We believe there is a link between the institution of slavery and the use of the term "nigger" by whites to refer to Afro-Texans. Consequently, Section One of the Thirteenth Amendment by its own force bans the Board's practice and/or policy as a "badge and incident of slavery."

Further, the implied Equal Protection clause of the Fifth Amendment supports this result. The federal government cannot show a compelling interest in refusing to rectify the Board's particular stigmatization of Afro-Texans. To the extent that the Board's conduct constitutes "state action"--and we believe it clearly does--the Board has an affirmative obligation to eliminate all the remaining vestiges of its prior discrimination so that it has no present effects.

Thus, we encourage the Board to take immediate action to rename "Nigger Head Hill" either after Mickey Leland, the late Texas Congressman, or Hendrick Arnold, a famous Afro-Texan fighter in the Texas Revolution. "Nigger Branch" should be renamed after either Ada Simond, the preeminent Black Austin historian and educator who died Sunday, or after the late Arthur B. DeWitty. He was the first Black in Austin to run for city council and a prominent activist, leader, and educator who worked with the NAACP and organized the Voters League. As for "Nigger Creek," the Mexia, Texas NAACP branch should be consulted regarding an appropriate Black hero or heroine.

Finally, our own Travis County Commissioners Court unanimously voted to direct the county Public Improvements and Transportation Department to identify all county property that might have a racially offensive name or designation. Presumably, the Court will take appropriate steps to change such names.

We are, of course, prepared to work with you and look forward to your prompt attention to this matter. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Victor Goode" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Victor Goode

November 3, 1989

Mr. Orth:

This is a high-profile letter from Victor Goode who, I gather, is a lawyer for the NAACP. Roger specified that only you could sanction a reply. Attached is some background research material that might bear on this delicate matter. You may want to refer to a recent letter that Roger wrote in response to a telephone inquiry on the same subject. (Jan has a copy.)

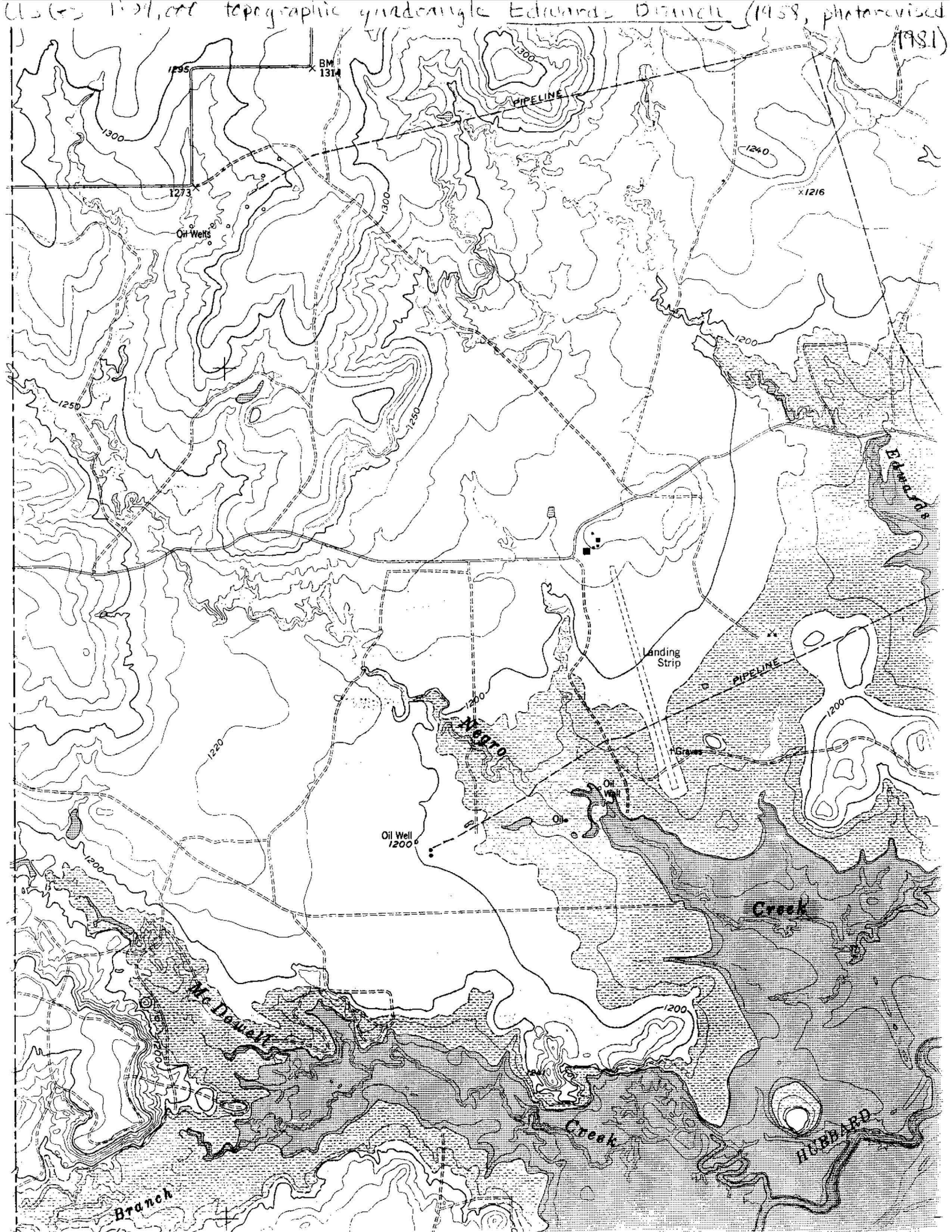
Campbell

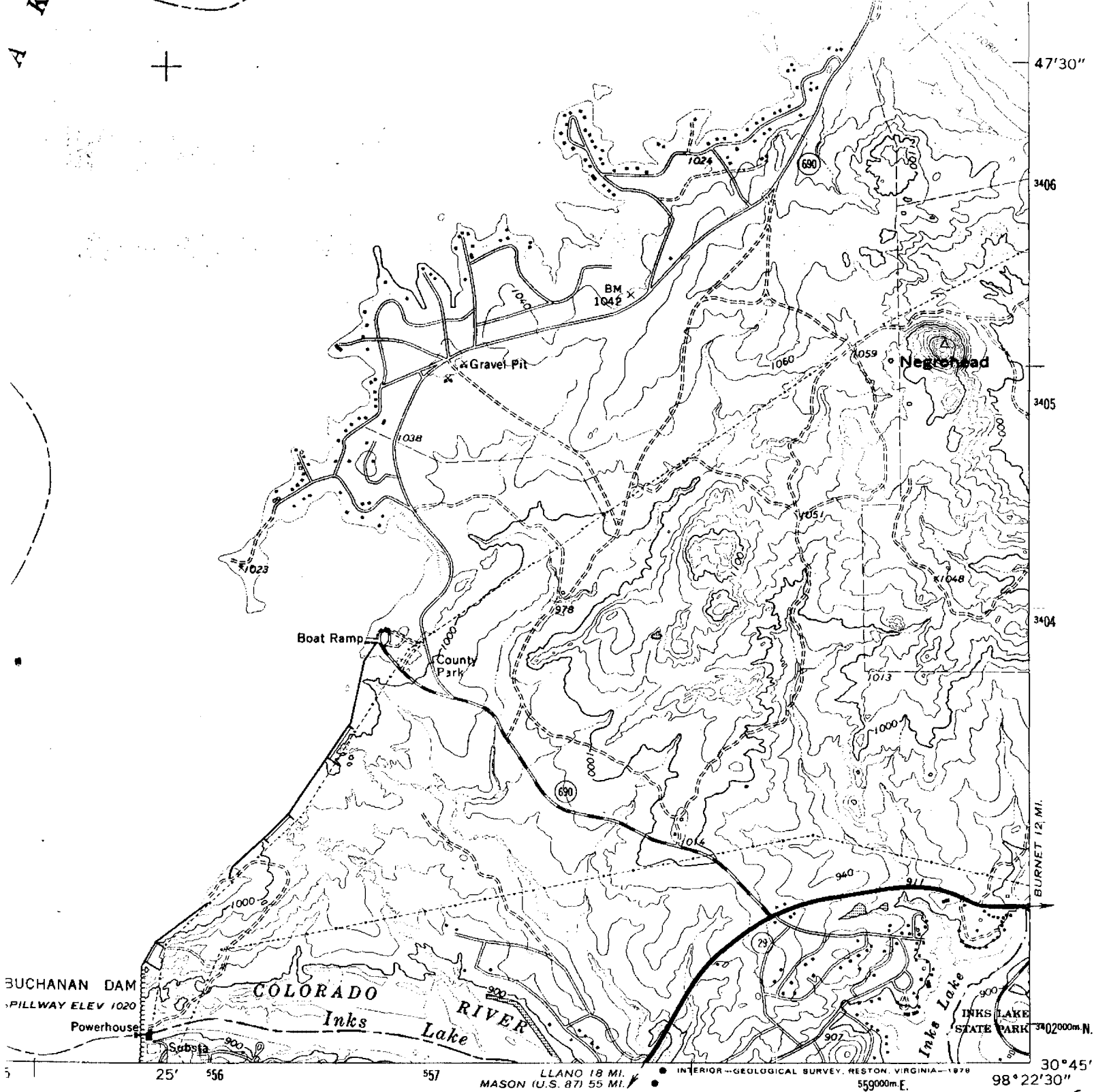
See
attached

11-6

None of the names mentioned by
Goode exist on currently published maps.
Photo copies attached.

jc





1 MILE
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ER



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	—————	Light-duty
Medium-duty	- - - - -	Unimproved dirt	- . - . -
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LAKE BUCHANAN, TEX.

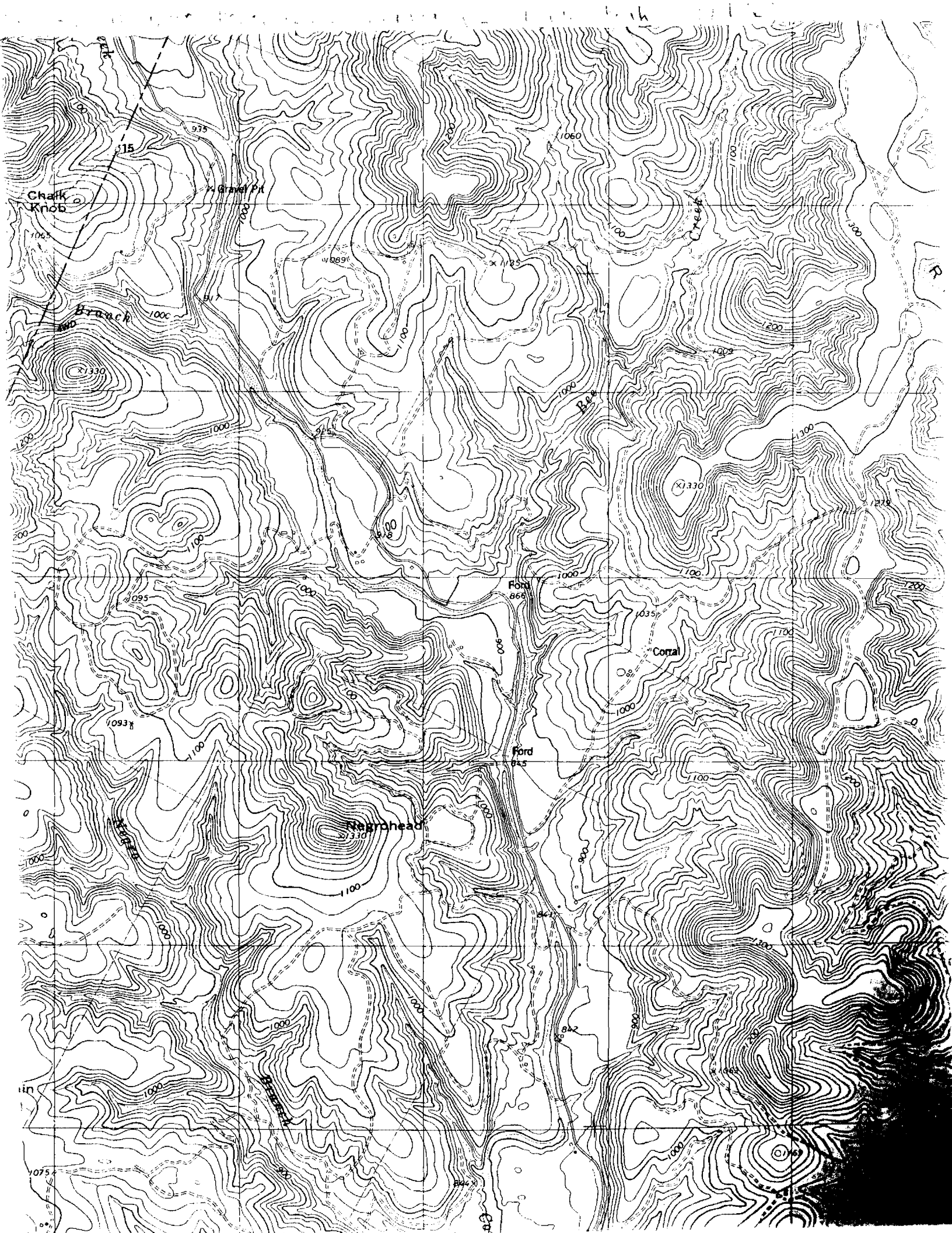
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3098-432

DOMESTIC GEOGRAPHIC MAPS



telephone inquiries

November 1, 1989

Mr. Gordon Bowman
Assistant Attorney for
Travis County
P.O. Box 1748
Austin, Texas 75767

Dear Mr. Bowman:

Enclosed is a copy of Principles, Policies, and Procedures: Domestic Geographic Names which explains in Policy VI on pages 15 and 16 the rules regarding the treatment of derogatory names. On pages 11 and 12 you will find Policy II dealing with name changes. Also enclosed is a form that can be used in submitting a name change to the U.S. Board on Geographic Names.

You may be interested to know that all reference to the term "nigger" used in geographic names has been changed in the Geographic Names Information System (GNIS), the Nation's automated names system, to reflect instructions from the Department of the Interior changing "nigger" to "Negro." These instructions apply to Federal maps and other publications, as well, but some older maps may not have been reprinted and, therefore, will still display the offensive term.

Please contact us if you have questions or require further assistance.

Sincerely,

Roger L. Payne, Manager
Geographic Names Information System

Enclosures

cc: RGCN (2)
jf:files

RES:RGCR:RGCN:RLPayne:jcf:11-1-89

etc. *Fisheries* 1, 618 The 'Cut-lips,' 'Day Chub,' or 'Nigger Chub,' ... [is] found in abundance only in the basin of the Susquehanna. 1880 GOODE *Amer. Fishes* 321 Next in importance ... comes the Flat Fish, *Pseudopleuronectes Americanus*. ... New York anglers call it the 'Nigger Fish.' 1896 JORDAN & EVERMANN *Check-List Fishes* 265 Cut-lips; Nigger Chub; Nigger Dick. ... Abundant in the basins of the Susquehanna, Hudson, Potomac, James, Roanoke, and Kanawha.

(2) 1876 *Fur, Fin, & Feather* Sept. 101/2 The gray-duck, shell-drake and teal ... are obliged to tolerate in their society that ... stupid, tough, shot-resisting thing, which is vulgarly called 'nigger duck.' 1917 *Birds of Amer.* I, 97/2 The Cormorants have many local names, such as 'Shag,' 'Lawyer,' and 'Nigger Goose.'

(3) 1894 *Amer. Folk-Lore* VII, 92 *Eupatorium purpureum*, nigger-weed, queen-of-the-meadow, Ind. *Ib.* 103 *Carex*, sp., nigger-wool, Neb.

+9. In special combinations.

Nigger corner, a portion of a church or hall reserved for the use of Negroes; *n. crib*, = NEGRO CAR; *n. talk*, credulous gossip or exaggeration emanating from Negroes; *n. teacher*, a white person, usually from the North, serving as a teacher for Negroes in the South.

1894 'MARK TWAIN' P. *Wilson* xxi, In the 'nigger corner' sat Chambers. 1849 A. MACKAY *Western World* I, 102 'But where have you put him [a Negro]?' ... 'Put him?—in the nigger crib, to be sure.' 1866 C. H. SMITH *Bill App* 105 All else was rumor and nigger talk. 1880 TOLBOEE *Bricks* 163 A good many gentlemen called in to see the school ... merely desirous to see the pretty Yankee 'nigger teachers.'

III. Phrases and expressions.

10. *To let off a little nigger*, to act in the manner of a Negro. *colloq.* Obs.

1828 *Yankee* May 175/1 You would swear from the words and sounds ... that the fellow was going to tear somebody limb from limb. ... No such thing ... he is only letting off a little nigger.

+11. *To work like a nigger* (or variant of this), to work very hard. *colloq.*

1836 GILMAN *Recall*. (1838) 180, I have toiled night and day. I've worked like a nigger, and more than a nigger. 1880 'MARK TWAIN' *Tramp Abroad* 40 He laid into his work like a nigger. 1901 MERWIN & WEBSTER *Column 'K'* 20, I'd been working like a nigger 'most five months.

+12. *A nigger in the woodpile* (or *fence*), a concealed or inconspicuous but highly important fact, factor, or 'catch' in an account, proposal, etc. *colloq.*

1861 in Moore *Rebellion* Rec. I, III, 21 He soon discovered 'the nigger in the woodpile.' 1876 *Congress. Rec.* 4 Aug. 5153/1 If some one should say ... that there was some 'nigger in the wood-pile,' some 'cat in the bag,' some motive to actuate me. 1882 WEED *Autobiog.* 477, I'll find out in the course of the day what this means. There's a nigger in the fence somewhere. 1884 HARRIS *Mingo* 186 Once 'twas the nigger in the wood-pile; now it's the nigger in the steeple. 1900 *Congress. Rec.* 6 Feb. 1571/2 Louisiana sugar planters had found a new 'nigger in the wood pile,' who was not as useful as the one they have now. 1904 *N.Y. Herald* 13 Feb. 8 There is evidently a 'nigger in the woodpile'—and he should be smoked out. 1911 QUICK *Yellowstone Nights* 286 He's always looking for a nigger in the fence.

+Nigger, v.

1. *To nigger off*, to burn (a log) in two, or to burn off a piece or length of a log. Also *vb. n. colloq.*

1833 S. SMITH *Life J. Downing* 22 He laid sticks across the large logs that were too heavy to move, and *niggered* them off with fire, and then rolled them up in piles and set fire to 'em again. 1843 'CARLTON' *New Purchase* 1. 188 In addition to the 'niggering off,' it became necessary as the cold increased, to chop off logs. *Ib.* Niggering belongs mainly to very large timber, and pertains rather to the science of log-rolling than of preparing fuel. 1887 J. KIRKLAND *Zury* 38 This [tree-trunk] he would measure off in about twenty-foot lengths, and at the end of each length he would build a fire, which ... would sever the log at that point, leaving it in lengths which could be hauled by a stout team over the snow to the place where they might be needed. This method of severing logs is called in the vernacular 'niggering them off,' whether because of its laziness, or of the blackness of the resulting heads.

2. *To nigger out*, (see quotation.) Obs.

1859 BARTLETT 292 *To nigger out* land, signifies, in Southern phraseology, to exhaust land by the mode of tilling without fertilization pursued in the slave States.

3. *To nigger it*, to live meagerly or barely.

1857 J. HYDE *Mormonism* 120 Many of the people express satisfaction in seeing these 'better-dressed fellers' obliged to 'nigger it' as well as themselves. 1878 BEADLE *Western Wilds* 349 Was it not more of an honor to be the 'bishop's fourth' ... than the 'slavey' of a poor mechanic, to 'nigger it on love and starvation'?

Nigger baby. +1. (See quotation.) +2. *pl. local.* (See quotation.)

—(1) 1871 DE VERE 117 Among the cant words produced by the late Civil War, nigger babies also became very popular; the term originated with the veterans serving under the Confederate General Hardee, who gave that name to the enormous projectiles thrown into the city of Charleston by the Swamp Angel of General Gillmore, as his monster-gun in the swamps was ironically called. (2) 1901 JEPSON *Flora of Western Middle*

Calif. 120 *Spirinchium*, *bellum*. Blue-eyed grass. Nigger-babies. ... Very common throughout California. Mar.-April.

+Nigger-chaser. A squiblike form of fireworks which when ignited zigzags over the ground. *colloq.* — 1883 PECK *Bad Boy* 22, I had a lot of rockets and Roman candles, and six pin-wheels, and a lot of nigger chasers. 1921 MCLFORD *Bar-20* Three xvi, 217 Most likely they'll be nigger-chasers, th' way some folk'll be steppin' lively to get out of th' way.

+Nigger-engine. = NIGGER N. 4 a. — 1878 BEADLE *Western Wilds* 378 Then oaths, spurs, 'nigger-engine' and all the other available machinery were set in operation. 1882 *Harper's Mag.* Jan. 175/2 One of the 'nigger' engines is suddenly called into service to tighten a two-inch rope, or wind up a discarded cable.

+Niggerhead. (See also NEGROHEAD.)

1. A stone or rock: (see quot. 1886).

1847 HOWE *Hist. Coll. Ohio* 560 It was a saw mill, with a small pair of stones attached, made of boulders, or 'nigger heads,' as they are commonly called. 1886 *Smithsonian Inst. Rep.* II, 523 *Nigger head*. (1) The black concretionary nodules found in granite; (2) Any hard, dark, colored rock weathering out with rounded nodules or boulders; (3) Slaty rock associated with sandstone. A quarryman's term. 1916 SANDBURG *Chicago Poems* 41 A boy passes and throws a niggerhead that chips off the end of the nose [of a statue].

+2. (See quot. 1871.) Obs. Also attrib.

1868 *N.Y. Herald* 6 July 3/2 The d—d radical party, with its niggerhead Congress. 1871 DE VERE 281 They were Democrats, and retorted upon violent Union men by calling them Niggerheads.

+3. (See quot. 1859.)

1859 BARTLETT 292 *Nigger Heads*, the tussocks or knotted masses of the roots of sedges and ferns projecting above the wet surface of a swamp. 1892 A. E. LEE *Hist. Columbus, Ohio* I, 274 Hummocks, called in the borough dialect 'nigger-heads,' formed by tufts of swamp grass. 1908 BEACH *Barrier* 75 Five men wound up the valley ... emerging from sombre thickets of fir to flounder across wide pastures of 'nigger-heads.'

+4. a. *The black-eyed Susan* *Rudbeckia hirta*. +b. *The greenbrier*, *Smilax rotundifolia*.

1899 COULTER *Flora of Indiana* 984 *Rudbeckia* *hirta*. Black-eyed Susan. Meadow Cone Flower. Nigger-head. ... Flowers from early in June until the late frosts. 1913 BRITTON & BROWN *Flora N.A.* III, 476 Black-eyed Susan. ... Prairies and plains. ... [Also called] Nigger- or darker-head. 1923 CLUTE *Dict. Amer. Plant Names* 15 *Smilax rotundifolia* [called] Cat-brier, greenbrier, ... nigger-head, devil's hop-vine [etc.].

+5. *A cactus of the genus Ferocactus*. Also attrib. with *cactus*. (Cf. BARREL CACTUS.)

1877 H. C. HODGE *Arizona* 244 The kind [of cactus] commonly called the nigger head is round, of the size of a cabbage, and covered with large crooked, catlike thorns. 1881 *Amer. Naturalist* XV, 984 Another species of the family is one commonly called the 'nigger-head' or 'barrel cactus' a Mammalaria. 1923 *Stand. Plant Names* 293 Niggerhead cactus.

||Niggerheadism. [NIGGERHEAD 2.] The policy or views of those favoring equal rights for Negroes and white persons. An opprobrious term. — 1868 *N.Y. Herald* 7 July 6/2 It demanded ... a final settlement of the vexed questions of copperheadism and niggerheadism.

+Nigger heaven. (See quot. 1912.) *colloq.* — 1878 DALY in J. J. DALY A. *Daly* 249 There is a 'Nigger Heaven' (as the third tier is called in Troy) here, & as 'tis very capacious I have been liberal with my pocket passes. 1912 THORNTON 608 *Nigger heaven*, the gallery of a theatre or place of entertainment. Common in Boston in 1888-91.

+Niggerish, a. Like or characteristic of a Negro or Negroes. A derogatory term. Also comb. — 1825 NEAL *Bro. Jonathan* II, 67 Ye great niggerish lookin', wap-sided, haw. 1866 *Atlantic Mo.* XVIII, 79/1 Ann Judy's piety was in no respect the niggerish kind; when I say 'colored,' I mean one thing, respectfully; and when I say 'niggerish,' I mean another, disgustedly.

+Nigger-jockey. A sharper who trades in Negro slaves. Obs. — [1838 HALIBURTON *Clockmaker* 2 Ser. 32 A nigger-jockey, sir, says I, is a gentleman that trades in niggers,—buys them in one state, and sells them in another, where they arn't known.]

+Nigger-killer. 1. One who maltreats Negro slaves. Obs. 2. (See quot. 1880.) *colloq.* — (1) 1856 OLMDEN *Slave States* 108 If a man does not provide well for his slaves, ... he gets the name of a 'nigger-killer.' (2) 1889 *Cent.* 2506/1 The whip-tailed scorpion, *Thelyphonus giganteus*. Also called ... nigger-killer. ... (Florida.)

+Nigger luck. Unexampled and unexpected good luck. *colloq.* — 1851 GLISAN *Jrnl. Army Life* 90, I occasionally made him a little envious by my nigger-luck, as he is pleased to term it. 1869 HARTE *Luck of Raging Camp* 31 When a man gets a streak of luck, —nigger-luck,—he don't get tired. 1888 *Critic* 14 April (F.), I am cursed ... if any darned rebel can have such nigger luck and enjoy it while I live. 1900 SAVAGE *Night Passenger* 135 It has been a great stroke of nigger luck.

+Nigger-shooter. A sling shot. *colloq.* — 1883 SWEET & KNOX *Through Texas* 339 Just about the time people have got used to tops buzz-zing about their ears, the 'nigger-shooter' mania breaks out. 1901 *40 Modern Fables* 172 All you wanted to do was to tear out with them Toughs and kill Birds with Nigger-Shooters. 1903 'O. HENRY' *Cobbles & Kings* (1916) 95 He went at the chocolate team like a bean out of a little boy's nigger shooter.

Dict. of Am. English
Craigie & Hulbert

1/7 74 E - N - M - S - T - O - N - G

By motion of Overstreet/Driskell it was:

VOTED to ask the Executive Secretary, Board on Geographic Names to make a study of the practicallity of admitting the Department of Transportation, Library of Congress, and the Department of Defense to the Domestic Names Committee.

Orth brought up the question of whether the name "Jap" was acceptable in the light of the official position taken by the BGN in 1963 in a letter to the Secretary of the Interior concerning derogatory names. The question is raised because of the occurence of the name in the geographic names of some of the western states, particulary Oregon. The Oregon Geographic Names Board, for example, presently has on its agenda for consideration the name "Jap Creek." It was:

AGREED that the name "Jap" in geographic names be considered derogatory, and is to be avoided in Federal publications by changing the name to "Japanese, " "Nisei," or by formally proposing another acceptable name.

ICATIONS

Decision List 7303 is being printed and will be distributed soon.

Decision List 7304 is being assembled and processed for submittal to the printer.

SET LISTS

Names were considered on Docket Lists 172, 173, and 176 through 181. The actions taken are indicated on the attached "Names Considered List."

3ING

The Committee adjourned at 3:35 P. M.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 12 at 1:30 P. M. The meeting will be located in the Water Resources Council Conference Room at 2120 L Street, Washington, D. C.

Donald J. Orth
Executive Secretary
Domestic Geographic Names

ID:

L. Henson, Chairman
ic Names Committee

BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES
DOMESTIC NAMES COMMITTEE

Washington, D. C. 20244

293rd Meeting

Tuesday, May 8, 1973

MINUTES

The meeting was convened at 9:30 a.m. in the Conference Room at 2100 M Street NW.

Present:

Members:

A. A. Baker, Department of the Interior, Chairman
R. P. Driskell (Acting Deputy), Department of Agriculture
A. J. Wraight, Department of Commerce

L. F. Dingman, Executive Secretary

Staff:

E. F. Berringer
D. A. Johnson

Others:

R. R. Randall, Executive Secretary, Board on Geographic Names
D. J. Orth, Geological Survey
Sam Stulberg, Geological Survey
Charles Harrington, National Ocean Survey

Not represented:

U. S. Postal Service
Government Printing Office

1. Minutes of the 292nd meeting were approved as printed.
2. Communications and other business.

- 2.1 The committee approved the name Eisenhower Mountain for a feature in California after the Executive Secretary reported that this name had been approved by the California Advisory Committee.
- 2.2 A letter has been received from the Secretary of Commerce informing the committee that Robert B. Rollins has been appointed as that Department's Deputy Member of the Board.
- 2.3 A letter was received from the Japanese American Citizens League protesting the use of Jap Creek on U.S. Geological Survey maps for the State of Oregon. The Executive Secretary informed the organization that the Oregon State Geographic Names Board has been asked to review the background of this name and to recommend suitable action to replace the derogatory name.
- 2.4 A reply was received from the Corps of Engineers to the letter requesting information on the name changes for reservoirs in Vermont. Since the reply did not adequately resolve the more significant problems involved, further contact with the Corps will be sought in an effort to clarify the overall responsibilities for naming of features related to the Corps of Engineers projects.
- 2.5 The Staff reported to the committee on the various historical and present-day uses of the name Hells Canyon. The committee agreed, after a discussion of the different applications, to submit the Staff's recommendations on Hells Canyon and the Grand Canyon of the Snake River to interested parties for their review and comments.
3. Publications
 - 3.1 Decision List 7204 will be distributed next week.
 - 3.2 Decision List 7301 is being processed for publication.
4. Dockets
 - 4.1 Names were considered on Dockets 158, and 165 through 173. Actions taken are indicated on the attached list of names considered.
5. The committee adjourned at 12 noon. The next meeting is scheduled for June 12, 1973, at 9:30 a.m., in the Geological Survey Conference Room at 2100 M Street NW.



Executive Secretary

OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY
1230 S.W. Park Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97205

OREGON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES BOARD PROPOSAL FORM

1. Proposed Name Japanese Hollow

2. County Wasco

3. Nearest Town or City The Dalles

4. Reason for Proposal:
Check appropriate
box(es)

Controversial Name ☒

Change of Name ☐

New Name ☐

Other ☐

5. Is name in local use? No ☐ Yes ☒
If yes, approximate number of years 65

Sections 24, 25, 35, 36

Sections 1, 2, 3, 11, 10, 9, 8,
17, 18

6. Location
of
Feature

Latitude 121 ° 07 ' "

Longitude 45 ° 31 ' "

Section(s) see above T. 1 N. 13E
S. 13E

Meridian Willamette

7. Brief description of feature: A hollow approximately 10 miles long and 1 mile wide
located off the west side of The Dalles - California Highway south of The
Dalles, Oregon.

8. Reason for choice of name:

Descriptive ☐
For a person ☐
For a nearby feature ☐
Other ☒

For a Japanese company
who owned operated a land
company in the Hollow.

9. Substantiate reason for choice, giving name of feature, description;
full name of person, date of his death and relationship to feature.
(Use separate sheet if necessary.)

There has been no opposition to the name "Jap Hollow" to
date but since the Japanese American Citizens League of
Washington, D. C. has objected to the name "Jap Creek" for
another feature it is considered desirable to remove any
objection to the name "Jap Hollow".

10. Do two or more names exist for this feature? If so, is the name you recommend of longer
local use ☐ more suitable ☐ or more acceptable ☐ than the other(s)? ☐ Why?

11. Do you know any other feature by
the same name? Yes ☐ No ☐

12. If so, where located:
County Nearest town
or city
Section(s) T. R.

13. Maps using proposed name

14. Variant spelling or
Other name(s)

15. Map on which shown

16. Available information as to origin, spelling, and meaning of the proposed name and/or statement concerning nature
of difference in usage or application: The area is named "Jap Hollow" after the incorporators
of the Columbia Land and Produce Company, Shohachi Mishizasi, Hikoichi Okita and
Mauso Yasui. The property was purchased from William L. Davidson, W. H. Wilson and
Orville O. Wingfield in 1908 and sold to I. M. Underwood in 1917. The name "Japanese
Hollow" should be considered. The Columbia Land and Produce Company was the first to
attempt to develop the Hollow on a planned area basis and, if possible, their contribution
should be honored. Attempts to consult with local Japanese Americans were not to
successful, they do not seem to be overly interested in the proposal one way or the
other. Current residents and owners in the Hollow would prefer no name to a new name -
they are consistent in that they objected to a name change during World War II.

17. Authority for name	Address	Occupation
Dick Brothers	The Dalles, Oregon	Attornies
J. Ray Kortge	The Dalles, Oregon	Rancher
Chuck Quint	Jap Hollow, The Dalles, Oregon	Rancher
Bob Olson	Jap Hollow, The Dalles, Oregon	Rancher

18. Approximate number of persons consulted other than above authorities. -25-

INSTRUCTIONS

This form should be used to provide supporting information on domestic geographic name proposals. Names should be reported when more than one name is given to a feature by local inhabitants, and/or on official maps, or in reports of Federal, State, and County agencies; also if there is a disagreement as to the extent of the feature or the application of the name. A full statement covering the field investigation of each name is required in order that adequate evidence may be submitted in proper form to the Oregon Geographic Names Board for decision on the following:

1. Names that have more than one local spelling.
2. Names where local spelling differs from that shown on previously published maps or reports.
3. Conflicting name usage due to change in property ownership.
4. Conflicting published names in sparsely settled areas where local usage cannot be determined.
5. New names, that is, recently assigned or proposed names for features previously unnamed.

Note:

Submit where possible a picture of the feature or area where feature is located and attach all substantiating correspondence and maps concerning location. Use additional sheets if needed.

Submitted by:

Individual or private organization

Member of Oregon Geographic Names Board

Name B. M. Keith

Address 704 Court Street

Date January 28, 1974

The Dalles, Oregon

For Oregon Geographic Names Board Use Only:

- ☒ Approved for submission to national board
☐ Tabled for further investigation by members of board
☐ Tabled for investigation by other agencies
☐ Give name of agency
☐ Rejected to be returned to proponent

Reasons:

J. Herbert Stone
Chairman, Oregon Geographic Names Board

Feb. 9, 1974
Date



Trent, Christopher <ctrent@usgs.gov>

[follow up] BGN

2 messages

Trent, Christopher <ctrent@usgs.gov>
To: maurice_turner@hsgac.senate.gov

Mon, Apr 17, 2017 at 2:20 PM

Hi Maurice,

First, my apologies: I forgot to jot down the names of all your colleagues at last week's meeting. If you wouldn't mind, please pass these along to them.

Attached is a copy of the current bylaws of the BGN, approved late last year. (The Board is working on posting them online.)

Also, one of the questions Lou couldn't quite answer was why the Board is reactive, rather than proactive. He located what may be the original source of that position.

- In the public law currently defining the BGN, P.L. 80-242, it is directed that "all departments, bureaus, and agencies of the Federal Government shall **refer** all geographic names and problems to the said Board for the purpose of eliminating duplication of work, personnel, and authority."
- Also, the original Executive Order that established the Board stated that "to this Board shall be **referred** all unsettled questions concerning geographic names."

So the Board's been reactive since its inception, and designed to be so, with the main innovation being that the Board today does accept referrals directly from the public, too.

Thanks again to asking us to come down and giving us your time! If the committee needs anything else, please let me know.

Best,

Chris Trent
Congressional Affairs
USGS.gov
703-648-4451 (office)
571-524-1869 (mobile)

 **2015 Revised Bylaws, U.S. Board on Geographic Names, 09 28 15.pdf**
181K

Turner, Maurice (HSGAC) <Maurice_Turner@hsgac.senate.gov>
To: "Trent, Christopher" <ctrent@usgs.gov>

Mon, Apr 17, 2017 at 2:23 PM

Thank you.

Maurice Turner

Congressional Innovation Fellow

Senate HSGAC

From: Trent, Christopher [mailto:ctrent@usgs.gov]
Sent: Monday, April 17, 2017 2:20 PM
To: Turner, Maurice (HSGAC)
Subject: [follow up] BGN

[Quoted text hidden]