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U.S. BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES

# DIARY OF ACTIONS, POLICIES, AND EVENTS: 1991-2015

Domestic Geographic Names

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By William G. Logan, Retired Chair, U.S. Board on Geographic Names



Reston, Virginia  
2018

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## INTRODUCTION

In 1990, Donald Orth published the “*Diary of Actions, Policies and Events: 1890 – 1990*,” documenting the notable actions, policies, and events of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names (BGN). This document is a sequel to Orth’s diary, covering the period from January 1991, where Orth’s document ends, through December 2015.

Like Orth’s publication, this sequel is arranged in chronological order. Unlike Orth’s publication, this document focuses primarily on the Domestic Names Committee (DNC), though selected excerpts refer to the entire BGN.

Information in the diary has been collected from a variety of sources. These include the minutes of the meetings of the DNC, the BGN and its committees, publications of the BGN, documents in the BGN's files, and other associated material. Minor editing of the source material was done for clarity and consistency. Additional clarifications are marked by brackets.

The primary purpose of this document is to provide BGN members, officers, and staff with a reference to learn of prior policies, considerations, actions, events, and procedures to assist them in their decision-making. State Names Authorities (SNAs) and other interested parties will likely also find this document a useful reference. The diaries document the history of the national program for the standardization of geographic names in the United States.

# ACRONYMS

## A

AAG – Association of American Geographers (currently American Association of Geographers)  
ACAN – Advisory Committee on Antarctic Names  
ACEF – Advisory Committee on Extra-Terrestrial Features  
ACUF – Advisory Committee on Undersea Features  
AFN – Alaska Federation of Natives  
ANS – American Name Society  
ANSI – American National Standards Institute  
ASCII – American Standard Code for Information Interchange  
ASWS – Assistant Secretary for Water and Science  
ASBGHN – Arizona State Board on Geographic and Historic Names

## B

BGN – U.S. Board on Geographic Names  
BIA – Bureau of Indian Affairs  
BLM – Bureau of Land Management  
BOEM – Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

## C

C&GS – U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey  
CACGN – California Advisory Committee on Geographic Names  
CD-ROM – Compact Disc Read Only Memory  
COGNA – Council of Geographic Names Authorities  
CMC – Colorado Mountain Club  
CBGN – Colorado Board on Geographic Names  
CPCGN – Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names  
CSKT – Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes  
CTUIR – Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation

## D

DGNP – Domestic Geographic Name Proposal  
DGNR – Domestic Geographic Name Report  
DHS – Department of Homeland Security  
DLCMP – Data Lifecycle Management Plan  
DMA – Defense Mapping Agency  
DNC – Domestic Names Committee  
DOC – Department of Commerce  
DoD – Department of Defense  
DOJ – Department of Justice  
DOI – Department of the Interior  
DOS – Department of State (see also State)  
DOT – Department of Transportation

## **E**

ED – Department of Education  
EEZ – Exclusive Economic Zone  
EPA – Environmental Protection Agency

## **F**

FAA – Federal Aviation Administration  
FCC – Federal Communications Commission  
FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency  
FGDC – Federal Geographic Data Committee  
FID – Feature Identification Number  
FIPS – Federal Information Processing Standard  
FNC – Foreign Names Committee  
FWS – U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

## **G**

GNBC – Geographical Names Board of Canada  
GNDB – Geographic Names Data Base  
GNIP – Geographic Names Improvement Program  
GNIS – Geographic Names Information System  
GNS – GEOnet Names Server  
GPO – Government Printing Office; Government Publishing Office  
GSA – General Services Administration

## **H**

HBGN – Hawaii Board on Geographic Names

## **I**

ICOS – International Congress of Onomastic Sciences  
IGC – International Geographical Congress  
IGNAC – Idaho Geographic Names Advisory Council  
INCITS – InterNational Committee for Information Technology Standards  
IBGN – Illinois Board on Geographic Names  
IPA – International Phonetic Alphabet

## **K**

KGNC – Kentucky Geographic Names Committee

## **L**

LC – Library of Congress

## **M**

MOBGN – Missouri Board on Geographic Names  
MOU – Memorandum of Understanding

## **N**

NAACP – National Association for the Advancement of Colored People  
NACIS – North American Cartographic Information Society

NAGPRA – Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act  
NARA – National Archives and Records Administration  
NCAI – National Congress of American Indians  
NCBGN – North Carolina Board on Geographic Names

NCTC – National Conservation Training Center  
NED – National Elevation Dataset  
NESDIS – National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service  
NGA – National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency  
NGNDB – National Geographic Names Database  
NGP – National Geospatial Program  
NGTOC – National Geospatial Technology Operations Center  
NHD – National Hydrography Dataset  
NID – National Inventory of Dams  
NIMA – National Imagery and Mapping Agency  
NIST – National Institute of Standards and Technology  
NOAA – National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NOS – National Ocean Service  
NOW – National Organization of Women  
NPS – National Park Service  
NSDI – National Spatial Data Infrastructure  
NSF – National Science Foundation  
NSS – National Speleological Society

## **O**

OGC – Open Geospatial Consortium  
OCS – Office of Coast Survey  
OGBN – Oregon Geographic Names Board  
OKBGN – Oklahoma Board on Geographic Names  
OMB – Office of Management and Budget

## **P**

PAIGH – Pan-American Institute of Geography and History  
PCGN – Permanent Committee on Geographical Names for British Official Use  
PII – Personally Identifiable Information  
PLANSUS – Placename Survey of the United States  
PPP – Principles, Policies, and Procedures

## **R**

RIF – Reduction in Force  
RMMC – Rocky Mountain Mapping Center

## **S**

SCAR – Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research  
SDBGN – South Dakota Board on Geographic Names  
SHPO – State Historic Preservation Office  
SI – Smithsonian Institute

SNA – State Names Authority  
SOI – Secretary of the Interior  
SPN – Staff Processed Name

## **T**

TGO – Tribal Governance Officer  
THPO – Tribal Historic Preservation Office  
TIGER – Topologically Integrated Geographic Encoding and Referencing  
TXSNA – Texas State Names Authority

## **U**

UCGN – Utah Committee on Geographic Names  
UK-APC – United Kingdom Antarctic Place-Names Committee  
UNCSGN – United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names  
UNGEGN – United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names  
Unicode – Unique, unified, universal encoding  
URISA – Urban and Regional Information Systems Association  
U.S. – United States  
USACE – U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
USDA – U.S. Department of Agriculture  
USCG – U.S. Coast Guard  
USFS – U.S. Forest Service  
USGS – U.S. Geological Survey  
USPS – U.S. Postal Service

## **W**

WGNC – Washington Geographic Names Committee  
WSBGN – Washington State Board on Geographic Names WSGNC – Western States Geographic Names Council  
WBD – Watershed Boundaries Dataset  
WFS – Web Feature Service



## Officers of the Board on Geographic Names

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 Richard Forstall, Chairman, Domestic Names Committee  
 Carl Nelius, Chairman, Foreign Names Committee  
 Robert McArtor, Chairman, Publicity and Publications Committee  
 Richard Randall, Executive Secretary, U.S. Board on Geographic Names  
 Roger Payne, Executive Secretary, Domestic Names Committee  
 Richard Randall, Executive Secretary, Foreign Names Committee  
 Manuel Lujan, Jr., Secretary of the Interior

### *Feb. 14 (506th) Special Committee on Commemorative Names Policy*

The Special Committee on Commemorative Names Policy submitted its report to the Domestic Names Committee (DNC). The one-year waiting period requirement after a person's death was reaffirmed. The wording of the policy was also clarified to read: "A person's death on or at a feature, such as in a mountaineering accident or a plane crash, or the mere ownership of land or the feature, does not by itself meet the 'direct association' criterion."

### *Jun. 13 (510th) Derogatory Names in Texas*

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in Austin supported a bill in the Texas Legislature to change the names of eighteen features in Texas that contain the words "Nigger" (shown on some State maps) or "Negro." Although there was no discussion or correspondence with the DNC or the Texas State Names Authority (TXSNA), the law was passed and the replacement names are now official in Texas. Roger Payne made several attempts to speak with the president of the Austin chapter of the NAACP, but was unable to reach him. The names will be docketed when received from the TXSNA. Some of the names are commemorative and appear to be in conflict with DNC policy.

### *Jul. 11 (511th) Congressional Action to Change Day Needle to Crooks Needle, CA*

The Chief Ranger of Sequoia National Park informed the DNC that Day Needle, a summit in the park just south of Mount Whitney, had been renamed Crooks Needle by congressional legislation. The feature was originally named for William Day of Johns Hopkins University, but it has not been labeled on USGS topographic maps. Congressman Jerry Lewis of California attached a rider to other legislation to change the name to Crooks Needle in honor of 94-year-old Hulda Crooks, a friend of the Congressman. A celebration is scheduled to be held at Mount Whitney to commemorate the event. Because the honoree is not deceased, the name violates DNC policy.

*Aug. 8 (512th) Special Committee on Commemorative Names Policy*

Tracy Fortmann (NPS) distributed copies of the draft of the new policy. She stated that no major changes had been made since the last draft. Members suggested several editorial changes, and discussed issues such as whether the policy should include reference to alternative forms of commemoration, and whether the Wilderness Areas Policy should include the exceptions stated in the *Principles, Policies, and Procedures* (PPP).

Members agreed that suggestions would be taken until August 15, after which the policy would be presented in draft form at the upcoming meeting of the Western States Geographic Names Council (WSGNC). The changes will not take place until reviewed at the February 1992 special policy meeting.

*Oct. 10 (514th) Congressional Action on Mount McKinley versus Denali, AK*

The perennial clause in the Department of the Interior's Appropriations Bill, forbidding funds to be allocated to the name change from Mount McKinley to Denali, is likely to be removed. It is also probable that a bill will be introduced in Congress that will retain the name Mount McKinley. [An Ohio Representative introduced a bill in January 2015 to retain the name Mount McKinley, but the name was changed to Denali by the Secretary of the Interior in August 2015.]

*DNC Purview on Canal, Ditch, and Reservoir Names*

The Rocky Mountain Mapping Center (RMMC) of the U.S. Geological Survey stated that it did not believe the BGN should render decisions on canals, ditches, reservoirs, and similar cultural features that the RMMC considered to be administrative in nature. Roger Payne said he would research past discussions on this subject.

*Nov. 11-19 15th Session of UNGEGN, Geneva, Switzerland*

The 15th Session of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) was held at the United Nations Office in Geneva, Switzerland. The session was attended by 79 participants from 39 countries. Roger Payne was the sole U.S. delegate and was elected to be rapporteur. The U.S. is actively participating in the working groups for training, automation and gazetteers, and terminology.

*Nov. 14 (515th) Commemorative Naming by Congress*

The DNC discussed its concerns that commemorative naming of geographic features by Congress is inconsistent with DNC policy. The DNC is concerned that if this type of naming becomes frequent there may be resentment from the general public who are required to adhere to DNC policies. A member suggested that the problem be researched and a list of such cases be made to determine if a pattern is developing. [Results of this research were not reported.]

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*Diacritical and Writing Marks in Tribal Names*

The USGS Rocky Mountain Mapping Center (RMMC) submitted a list of Native American names containing special writing marks for the DNC's consideration. These names have been applied to maps that have already been sent to the printer; however, the DNC was not made aware of the issue until its September meeting. RMMC pointed out that diacritics are used in some French and Spanish names and they see a conflict between the Use of Diacritical Marks Policy and the Native American Placenames Policy.

*Nov. 22 - Dec. 8 4th PAIGH Geographic Names Course, Aguascalientes, Mexico*

The Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH) held its Geographic Names Course in Applied Toponymy in Aguascalientes. The course is designed to promote the establishment of national programs of names standardization and to foster standard procedures of applied toponymy throughout the member nations of PAIGH. The course was conducted in English with simultaneous translation to Spanish. Richard Randall was the lead instructor; Roger Payne and Henri Dorian (Canada) taught other portions of the course. Twenty-seven students attended.

*Dec. 12 (516th) Diacritical and Writing Marks in Tribal Names*

The USGS Rocky Mountain Mapping Center (RMMC) reports that it had discussions with the Hopi Nation regarding the list of Native American names containing special marks that was sent to the DNC (see November 14). The DNC was assured by the RMMC that it will be involved in these matters in the future.

*Scope of the BGN's Purview*

In response to the discussions held on October 10<sup>th</sup>, Roger Payne reported that his research had not revealed much in the way of a definitive statement on the scope of the BGN's purview. The earliest mention was in 1916, which implied that cultural features, especially "populated places and county seats," were within the BGN's purview. Other references imply that before 1947, every type of feature was within its purview. After the BGN was reorganized in 1947, Public Law 80-242 stated that "The Board is responsible for and renders decisions for geographic features except for certain administrative and legislative names." No further clarification was given. The law further stated that the BGN retains the right and responsibility to promulgate all names including administrative and legislative "for purposes of standardization."

The USGS RMMC inquired whether canals, ditches, and incorporated places should be excluded from the BGN's purview. The DNC's policy is now and has always been to adjudicate all name problems, even for administrative names, if asked.

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### *Jan. 9 (517th) GNIS and Gazetteer Report*

The Geographic Names Information System (GNIS) CD-ROM has been delivered and distributed to USGS Earth Science Information Center offices around the country and to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Library. It is not being sold, but staff will determine the possibility of getting copies for interested BGN members.

### *May 5-9 16th Annual Meeting of WSGNC, Astoria, OR*

The Western States Geographic Names Council (WSGNC) held its 16th annual meeting in Astoria, Oregon, hosted by Lewis McArthur (Chair, OGNB) and the Oregon Geographic Names Board (OGNB). Activities included a meeting of the OGNB; the monthly meeting of the DNC (the 520th, held on May 9th); and the toponymic tour. During the meeting, the DNC heard two public presentations: one in favor of the proposal to change the spelling of seven feature names in the State of Washington from "Soleduck" to "Sol Duc"; and one on a forthcoming proposal to name an unnamed stream in Washington United Nations Creek. Two representatives of the National Park Service gave a presentation in opposition of the proposals to change the spelling of "Soleduck."

### *May 9 (520th) DNC and ACUF Purview Over Offshore Features*

Maritime boundaries have always been a factor in determining the purview of the DNC. While the United States presently recognizes a twelve-mile limit, the DNC renders decisions only within the three-mile limit. The naming of features beyond this limit is under the purview of the BGN's Advisory Committee on Undersea Features (ACUF).

### *Jun. 11 (521st) Formation of Scope and Purview Subcommittee*

The DNC formed a subcommittee to study and analyze which feature types fall within the DNC's purview. Richard Forstall (Census) was appointed as chair, with Roberta Quigley (USFS) and Robert McArtor (GPO) appointed as members.

*Aug. 13 (523rd) Diacritical Marks for Place Names in Guam*

Lou Yost (DNC Staff) reported that the USGS Rocky Mountain Mapping Center (RMMC) requested guidance from the DNC as to the proper procedure for submitting names that contain diacritical marks for features in Guam. The DNC discussed the matter and decided that in light of the new wording of its policy on diacritical marks, the names could be submitted via the Geographic Names Information System data input program, provided they are consistent with the DNC's other policies.

*Aug. 17-19 16th BGN/PCGN Conference, Washington, DC*

The 16th BGN and British Permanent Committee on Geographical Names conference was held at the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, DC. The meeting was an abbreviated version of the biennial conference. The focus of the discussion was on preparations for the upcoming 6th UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNCSGN).

*Aug. 25-Sep. 3 6th UNCSGN and 16th Session of UNGEGN, New York, NY*

The Sixth UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNCSGN) and the 16th Session of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) were held at United Nations Headquarters in New York. The conference was attended by 169 participants from 69 countries. There were six members in the U.S. delegation. Roger Payne served as rapporteur. The U.S. delegation sponsored three activities: a field trip to the Catskill Mountains; a reception by the Department of State; and a reception at the Explorer's Club.

*Sep. 10 (524th) Proposal for Trans-Boundary Name Pembina Valley, ND*

The Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (CPCGN) submitted a proposal to name this trans-boundary feature in order to make official a name in local usage and to clarify the feature's extent. The name is well established in the area but not shown on maps. The Pembina County (North Dakota) commissioners agreed that the name is used locally. The DNC approved the name at this meeting.

*Oct. 1-2 31st Annual CPCGN Meeting, Saint John's, Newfoundland and Labrador*

The Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (CPCGN) held its 31st annual meeting in Saint John's. No BGN members attended.

● *Oct. 26-Nov. 6 5th PAIGH Geographic Names Course, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil*

The Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH) held its Geographic Names Course in Applied Toponymy in Rio de Janeiro. The course is designed to promote the establishment of national programs of names standardization and to foster standard procedures of applied toponymy throughout the member nations of PAIGH. The course was conducted in English with simultaneous translation to Spanish. Richard Randall was the lead instructor; Roger Payne and a guest lecturer from a university in São Paulo, Brazil taught other portions of the course; 35 students attended.

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### *Feb. 11 (529th) Historical Use versus Local Use in DNC Decisions*

The USGS mapping centers have advised the DNC that some State Name Authorities (SNA) seem to place more emphasis on historical use of a name rather than present-day local use, while the DNC's principles and policies indicate that local use should prevail. Roger Payne confirmed that local use generally prevails but that historical evidence may also be a deciding factor if local use is divided or confusing.

### *Mar. 11 (530th) Domestic Geographic Names Report*

The redesigned Domestic Geographic Names Report (DGNR) form for new name and name change proposals has been distributed to all SNAs, as well as to the USGS mapping centers, U.S. Forest Service regional offices, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA's) National Ocean Service (NOS).

### *Scope and Purview Subcommittee Report*

Richard Forstall (Census) reported that the subcommittee began its initial work by classifying broad categories of named features. [Names not under DNC purview were later listed in Principle III: Names established by an Act of Congress or Executive Order, and Principle IV: Names established by other authorities, in the DNC's *Principles, Policies, and Procedures* document.]

### *Names Made Official by Policy*

If a name is in local use and there is no known conflict among Federal sources, it can be submitted directly to the Geographic Names Information System by the USGS, USFS, or NOS. To assure proper evaluation, those names found to be in local use with no conflict will be distributed to the appropriate SNAs for their comment. [No further action on this coordination with the SNAs was documented.]

### *New Names in Proposed Wilderness Areas*

The Idaho Geographic Names Advisory Council (IGNAC) recommended disapproval of new names in a proposed wilderness area. The DNC discussed whether the word “proposed” should be added to Policy IV: Wilderness Area Geographic Names, when its principles, policies, and procedures are revised. A number of SNAs have suggested that names in wilderness areas should not be changed. The DNC’s policy does not indicate that existing names in wilderness areas cannot be changed, only that newly proposed names must meet the criteria of need, based on safety, education, or area administration.

### *Showing Names on Maps*

Several SNAs requested clarification regarding the removal of names from maps. The DNC does not have such a policy. The use of any name is at the discretion of map editors, but if a name is to be applied to a map it must be approved by the DNC and be in the GNIS.

### *“Negro” Names in Texas*

The DNC has received from the Texas State Names Authority the 18 proposals for name changes made official in Texas by legislation to remove the word “Negro” from geographic names. In accordance with established policy, each proposal will be addressed individually.

### *Apr. 8 (531st) Nicknames and Monikers in Commemorative Names*

The staff requested guidance on three proposals that include nicknames of living persons. DNC members agreed to consider each name as proposed.

### *New Names in Proposed Wilderness Areas*

The USFS has been made aware that several areas in a number of western States are being proposed for wilderness designation. The DNC’s current policy of not approving names in wilderness areas includes those being considered by Congress for wilderness designation, although the staff has no means of determining the extent of these areas. Furthermore, it was noted that the boundaries may change several times before becoming permanently established. Sterling Wilcox (USFS) proposed that mapping personnel in the field should check whether the geographic feature in question is in a proposed wilderness area.

### *Commemorative Names Information Sheet*

A draft copy of the Commemorative Naming Factsheet was distributed. A photo of a 1792 map of Washington, DC is being included as an example of commemorative naming. Following discussion over whether it should be noted that the BGN’s mission extends beyond the United States, it was agreed that the title should be “Commemorative Naming in the United States.”



*May 13 (532nd) Proposal to Change Galena River to Fever River, IL and WI*

The staff prepared a case brief for the Galena River/Fever River controversy. In 1991, the Wisconsin State Legislature changed the name of the portion of the stream in Wisconsin to Fever River and as such it is the name to be used on State publications. The DNC's Principle V: One Name for One Geographic Entity states that there shall be only one official name for a geographic feature. [The BGN staff initiated a proposal to change the name of the Galena River to Fever River in June 1992. The BGN did not approve the proposal on September 8, 1994 and the name Galena River was reaffirmed.]

*Aug. 3 Appointment of FNC Executive Secretary*

Randall Flynn (DMA) was appointed Executive Secretary of the Foreign Names Committee.

*Sep. 8-11 17th Annual Meeting of WSGNC, El Paso, TX*

The 17th annual meeting of the Western States Geographic Names Council (WSGNC) was held September 8-11 in El Paso, hosted by Dr. Lurline Coltharp, professor of linguistics at the University of Texas at El Paso and past president of the American Name Society (ANS). No State/Federal Roundtable session was held during the conference, prompting the WSGNC to vote for a minimum of one half-day for the DNC meeting and one half-day for the roundtable at future conferences.

*Sep. 10th (536th) Minutes recorded no data*

*Sep. 16-17 32nd Annual CPCGN Meeting, Toronto, Ontario*

The Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (CPCGN) held its 32nd annual meeting in Toronto, Ontario. Roger Payne and Randall Flynn represented the BGN. Payne was interviewed by Canadian TV regarding derogatory names and trans-boundary names.

*Oct. 12 BGN Quarterly Meeting Dates*

The BGN voted to establish the third Tuesday of each quarter as a specific time for its Full Board meeting.

*ACAN Responsibility Transferred to USGS*

The BGN voted to accept the recommendation of ACAN to transfer the Antarctic names activity from DMA to USGS. Jon Campbell will serve as secretary, with Roger Payne as Executive Secretary. A contract was awarded to expand the *Gazetteer of Antarctica*.

● *Oct. 14 (537th) Protection of Cave Names*

Russell Kennedy (National Speleological Society (NSS)) spoke to the DNC and distributed a copy of the NSS policies that promote the study and protection of caves, cave safety, and the education of cavers. The NSS has identified three issues:

1. Officials at Hawaii Volcanoes National Park reportedly want to change the names of caves to “hide them”; that is, to make their locations secret for protection purposes.
2. Cave vandalism is especially prevalent in the western United States. NSS would prefer not to make the precise geographic coordinates public, yet they are currently provided in GNIS.
3. In accordance with the Federal Cave Protection Act of 1988, the NSS, along with the Cave Research Foundation, is the contractor to the Federal Government for locating and defining significant caves; however, the term “significant” remains undefined at this time.

*Tribal Names*

Three State Name Authority (SNA) delegates to the recent meeting of the Western States Geographic Names Council (WSGNC) strongly encouraged reactivation of the Native American Names Subcommittee. They suggest the subcommittee should become a Full Board committee, with a linguist as advisor. They also suggested that a manual addressing all aspects of Native American Names be published. The DNC agreed to consider the issue.

● *Oct. 25-Nov. 5 6<sup>th</sup> PAIGH Geographic Names Course, Tegucigalpa, Honduras*

The Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH) held its Geographic Names Course in Applied Toponymy in Santiago. The course is designed to promote the establishment of national programs of names standardization and to foster standard procedures of applied toponymy throughout the member nations of PAIGH. The course was conducted in English with simultaneous translation to Spanish. Roger Payne was the lead instructor; Randall Flynn (DMA) taught other portions of the course. Thirty-three students attended. The automation module was increased to three days.

*Nov. 8-12 PAIGH Conference, San José, Costa Rica*

Roger Payne attended the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH) Conference in San José. The conference is held every four years to allow each of the PAIGH commissions to report accomplishments and plan future activities, as well as to conduct other business. Following Randall's retirement, Payne assumed the position as BGN Executive Secretary. At this meeting, he was appointed president of the Working Group on Geographic Names.

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*Nov. 18 (538th) Publications Catalog*

The Publicity and Publications Committee prepared a *BGN Publications Catalog*, which is a ready reference for ordering any domestic or foreign BGN publication.

*Dec. 9 (539th) Diacritical and Writing Marks Subcommittee*

Robert McArtor (GPO) reported that he had thoroughly investigated the history of the DNC's past activity regarding diacritical marks. He then called for the establishment of a subcommittee for the investigation of diacritical marks, as this is an issue that requires more specific guidance than simply case-by-case consideration. McArtor chaired the committee which included as members: Richard Forstall (Census), and Charles Harrington (NOAA), with Gerd Quinting (DMA), a linguist, as advisor. Lou Yost (DNC Staff) will be staff representative, with Brad Thomas and Roger Payne serving as ex-officio.

*Tribal Names Subcommittee*

Citing a need for more extensive examination into the policy on Native American names, the DNC formed a subcommittee. Ralph Ehrenberg (LC) served as Chair and members included Joel Morrison (USGS) and Robert McArtor (GPO). Jon Campbell (USGS) will serve as staff representative, with Brad Thomas and Roger Payne serving as ex-officio.

*"Squaw" Names and BIA Participation in DNC*

Roger Payne circulated a letter from Marshall Cutsforth (DOI Office of American Indian Trust), who has suggested that the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) should advise the DNC or seek membership on the BGN. Proposals have been received to change the names of Big Squaw Creek, Little Squaw Creek, and Squaw Humper Creek in South Dakota, because of their perceived derogatory nature.

*Dec. 26-30 ANS/PLANSUS Meeting*

Roger Payne attended the annual meetings of the ANS and the Placename Survey of the United States (PLANSUS) in Toronto. He serves on the ANS Board of Managers and as vice president of PLANSUS. He also had the opportunity to visit the offices of the Ontario geographic names staff in North York. The original mission of PLANSUS was to collect names for a national names database; however, it, has redirected its focus toward establishing standards for toponymic research. Payne proposed that with regard to the maintenance of GNIS by Federal agencies, State or regional participation is also required to ensure completeness of the data. It was hoped that PLANSUS could be the focal point of such a project. Three former GNIS contractors continue to provide updates in an unofficial, maintenance capacity, because of their awareness of the importance of keeping the database viable.

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 Bruce Babbitt, Secretary of the Interior

### *Jan. 13 (540th) Scope and Purview Subcommittee*

The draft revision of *Principles, Policies, and Procedures: Domestic Geographic Names* lists the types of names the DNC considers to be under the jurisdiction of other authorities.

### *FIPS 55-3*

The Federal Information Processing Standard (FIPS) 55-3 file (“Codes for Named Populated Places, Primary County Divisions, and Other Locational Entities of the United States, Puerto Rico, and the Outlying Areas”), for which USGS is the maintenance agency, is now completely updated, and will be available on magnetic tape pending a decision regarding pricing and other particulars. This was the first major revision since 1987.

### *Mar. 10 Abolishment of Scientific Naming Needs Policy*

At its 1994 Policy Review Meeting, the DNC decided that there is no longer a need for a Scientific Naming Needs Policy and that any names needed by the scientific community should be processed in accordance with standard procedures and guidelines.

### *Mar. 10 (541st) State Names Authorities Established*

Staff announced that action has been completed, or is in the final stages, for the establishment of five new State Names Authorities (SNAs), bringing the total to 37. Roger Payne suggested that other States might be interested as the need arises and with increased awareness of the process of State-Federal geographic names cooperation.

### *Apr. 14 (542nd) Withdrawal of Proposal to Name Arkansas Beach, AK*

The proposal for the name Arkansas Beach was withdrawn because the name was made official by U.S. Congress Joint Resolution 78.

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*Apr. 19 Appointment of New ACAN Chair*

Pete Bermel (USGS), Chair of the Advisory Committee on Antarctic Names, is retiring in May, and Guy Guthridge (National Science Foundation (NSF)) will assume the role.

*Report of Diacritical and Writing Marks Subcommittee*

At its December 1993 meeting, the DNC authorized the establishment of a committee to address the use of diacritic and other writing marks in Hawaiian and Native American names. However, after its initial meeting, members of other BGN committees expressed an interest in broadening its scope, with the purpose of developing a policy applicable to all aspects of the BGN's work. As a result, the committee was dissolved and reconstituted as a committee of the Full Board on April 19, 1994. It was determined that the BGN's policy regarding diacritic marks should be uniformly applied.

*Jun. 9 (544th) Possessive Case Apostrophes in Variant Names*

Staff asked for guidance from members on the use of the possessive case ('s) in variant names. A member suggested that the staff make a list of benefits of and problems with their potential use. This procedural decision would apply to variant names only and not affect the present policy, which prohibits the possessive case in official names.

*Jun. 13-24 17th Session of UNGEGN, New York, NY*

The 17th Session of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) was held at United Nations Headquarters in New York, NY. The session was attended by 69 participants from 34 countries. There were four members in the U.S. delegation. The U.S. delegation submitted eight papers, including the U.S.-Canada Division Report.

*Jul. 14 (545th) Native American Names Subcommittee Report*

The Native American Names Subcommittee will meet with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to ask that a representative be appointed to attend DNC/BGN meetings to advise on Native American names. The subcommittee has been made aware of concerns regarding the Native American Names section of the revised principles, policies, and procedures.

*Possessive Case Apostrophes in Variant Names*

In response to the DNC's request, the staff distributed a chronology of actions related to apostrophes in geographic names.

*Jul. 29 First meeting of the BGN's Diacritical and Writing Marks Committee*

The committee, formerly a DNC subcommittee, met to discuss diacritical and writing marks in Hawaiian, Native American, and Micronesian names. The committee reviewed the policies of the Foreign Names Committee and the Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names.

*Aug. 11 (546th) BIA Joins the DNC*

Joel Morrison introduced Dr. Lathel Duffield (BIA), who has agreed to serve as a deputy member from the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs. Dr. Duffield has a doctorate in anthropology from the University of Wisconsin and is very knowledgeable in Native American studies, both current and historical.

*Sep. 7-10 18th Annual Meeting of WSGNC, Rapid City, SD*

The Western States Geographic Names Council (WSGNC) held its annual meeting in Rapid City, South Dakota, hosted by the South Dakota Board on Geographic Names (SDBGN) and the University of South Dakota. The 49 registered attendees included 13 BGN representatives from the DNC and staff. BGN presentations included a GNIS CD-ROM demonstration led by Robin Worcester. Activities included a meeting of the SDBGN; a meeting of the Placename Survey of the U.S. (PLANSUS); the monthly meeting of the DNC (the 547th, held on September 8th); the State/Federal Roundtable; and a toponymic tour of the Black Hills. Information learned on the toponymic tour was added to the National Geographic Names Database (NGNDB).

*Sep. 8 (547th) DNC Reports*

During its monthly meeting held at the meeting of the Western States Geographic Names Council (WSGNC), the DNC presented reports from the following committees and subcommittees: Publicity and Publications, Diacritics and Writing Marks, Scope and Purview, and Native American Names. A draft revision of the Native American Names Policy was distributed, and attendees at the conference were invited to submit comments.

The DNC also provided an overview of recent activities by the BGN's Advisory Committee on Antarctic Names (ACAN). Following the transfer of Antarctic names from DMA to USGS, Antarctic data is now current, and a new edition of the *Antarctic Gazetteer* has been compiled, with over 1,000 additional entries since 1980. It also includes locative, historical, and name origin information, and is scheduled for publication this year. Antarctic names will also be included on the next revision of the GNIS compact disk. [See October 12, 1993]

### *BGN 100 Year Diary/History*

The compilation of a general history of the first 100 years of the BGN is complete and final editing is in progress. The final format and publication has not yet been determined. [Although never published in hardcopy, the *Diary of Actions, Policies, and Events: 1890-1990*, by Donald Orth, was made available as a PDF and is posted on the BGN's website.]

### *Proposal to change Negro Mountain to Black Hero Mountain Not Approved*

The DNC did not approve a proposal to change the name of Negro Mountain, a range in Pennsylvania and Maryland, to Black Hero Mountain. This proposal was first submitted to the BGN in 1991 by a resident of Pennsylvania in order to commemorate the 13 African-Americans from Pennsylvania and Maryland who were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. All local interested parties were opposed to the name change. The DNC's decision cited the fact that Negro Mountain was a longstanding name believed to commemorate an enslaved person who lived in the 18th century. [The BGN has periodically received inquiries about changing the name of the range, but has not received another proposal to change it. See also February 10, 2005 (664th).]

### *Sep. 29-30 33rd Annual CPCGN Meeting, Victoria, British Columbia*

The Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (CPCGN) held its 33rd annual meeting in Victoria, British Columbia. Roger Payne attended, representing the BGN.

### *Oct. 13 (548th) Proposal to Change Negro Run to Martin Luther King, Jr. Creek, NJ*

The DNC received a proposal to change the name of Negro Run in Upper Freehold Township, New Jersey, to Martin Luther King Junior Creek; in July 1995, the proponent shortened the name to M L King Creek based on the DNC's Long Names Policy. Another interested party has suggested that a different name would be more appropriate, while a third party believes the existing name should not be changed. Chick Fagan (NPS) suggested contact should be made with Coretta Scott King in regard to the matter. [At its December 14, 1995 meeting, the DNC did not approve the name change and affirmed the name Negro Run for Federal use.]

### *FCC and FAA Data Added to GNIS*

The GNIS now includes information from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for all radio and TV towers, and from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for all airports nationwide.

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*Nov. 8-16 17th BGN/PCGN Conference, London, England*

The 17th BGN and British Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (PCGN) conference was held at the offices of the Royal Geographical Society in London. This was the first full conference since 1988. Several representatives also met with the United Kingdom Antarctic Place-Names Committee (UK-APC) in Cambridge to discuss conflicting policy suggestions received from the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR).

*Dec. 8 (550th) Alaska Board on Geographic Names Rejects Names*

Mount Andrew Johnson: The Andrew Johnson Memorial Society proposed naming a summit in Alaska for former President Andrew Johnson, but the proposal was rejected by the Alaska Board on Geographic Names, which cited opposition from Native groups and the City of Cordova.

Mount Huscroft: This proposal, to name a summit for Jim Huscroft, a longtime resident of Cenotaph Island, was also rejected, citing the negative recommendation of the Huna Indian Association, which believes places should not be named for individuals. The association has also indicated that much has been accomplished toward producing a map of Glacier Bay showing Tlingit names.



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### *Jan. 12 (551st) Report of the Diacritics and Writing Marks Committee*

The DNC recommended a policy change. Evidence of well-established orthography and strong local support for the use of diacritical marks will be necessary and each proposal to the DNC will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. This policy is also to be applied to the Advisory Committee on Undersea Features (ACUF). The Advisory Committee on Antarctic Names (ACAN) and the Foreign Names Committee (FNC) have already accepted the use of diacritical marks.

A working subcommittee within the Diacritical and Writing Marks Committee is in the process of developing definitions of key terms, which will be sent to the DNC for approval. A final report will be submitted to the Full Board in April. Publication of the revised *Principles, Policies, and Procedures: Domestic Geographic Names* (PPP) will be delayed in order to include the revised policy.

### *Possessive Case Apostrophes in Names*

Roger Payne distributed a chronology of the BGN's discussion and actions on the use of apostrophes in the possessive case. This subject has not been discussed by the Diacritical and Writing Marks Committee because it is presumed to be a separate issue. The Diacritical and Writing Marks Committee should make a statement to this effect in its policy. [The revised policy, dated March 9, 1995 and approved by the BGN April 18, 1995, did not explicitly mention possessive apostrophes.]

### *Feb. 9 (552nd) Diacritical and Writing Marks Policy Revised*

The DNC approved a policy revision regarding the use of diacritic marks in names under the purview of the DNC.

### *Commemorative Names Policy and Animal Names*

The DNC was asked to consider whether the Commemorative Names Policy should apply to animals. After some discussion, it was agreed that it applies only to persons.

### *Legal versus Local Use for Names of Incorporated Places*

There are communities listed in the Federal Information Processing System (FIPS 55) with two different names, one reflecting local usage and one for the incorporated entity. Questions have arisen as to which name should appear on Federal maps. The DNC was reminded that the name for Federal map use is the official name as recorded in GNIS.

### *Possessive Case Apostrophes in Variant Names*

Possessive apostrophes are removed from all variant names when entered into GNIS; however, the staff suggests that variant names should reflect actual usage, including apostrophes. There was a lengthy debate, after which the consensus was that variant names should carry the apostrophe if warranted.

### *Application Official in DNC Decisions*

Staff requested clarification as to whether a DNC decision applies only to the geographic name, or whether it also includes its application (location). There was lengthy discussion and debate, culminating in the consensus that the decision includes both the name and its application. A description is provided to guide cartographers and others in defining the feature to which the name is applied.

### *Apr. 4 FNC 300th Meeting*

The Foreign Names Committee (FNC) held its 300th meeting at the Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division.

### *Apr. 6 (553rd) "Squaw" Name Changes in Minnesota and Arizona*

A bill will be introduced into the Minnesota Legislature that will direct that all geographic names in that State containing the word "Squaw" be changed. A bill has also been introduced into the Arizona Legislature with wording that any name considered "derogatory" or pejorative to Native Americans will be changed.

### *"Squaw" Name Origin*

Research shows that the word "Squaw" is from the Iroquois language and generally means "woman," but it gradually became derogatory to some, especially after tribal intermarriage with French fur-traders, who were sometimes called "squaw-men."

*Apr. 18 BGN 200th Meeting*

The 200th meeting of the Full Board was held at the USGS in Reston, Virginia. Former members and staff, and the director of the USGS attended. The chair recognized the BGN's past two Executive Secretaries, Meredith "Pete" Burrill and Richard R. Randall. Commemorative plaques were presented to recently retired BGN and Advisory Committee members: Charles Harrington (NOS), Alison Wilson, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), and Richard Perry (NOS). Henry Tom (NIST) was recognized for his work with the DNC. The meeting was preceded by a concert by The Globe Masters, an elementary school chorus from Richmond, Virginia, who sang a medley naming the countries and capitals of the world, the States of the U.S. and their capitals, and the oceans and seas of the world.

*May 11 (554th) DNC Adopts Separate Policy for Tribal Names*

Lathel Duffield (BIA) reported that the subcommittee's work is complete. The DNC was asked to consider whether it wished to establish a separate policy regarding Native American names. After some discussion, it was agreed to do so. The amendments put forward by the subcommittee were accepted. Duffield suggested working with tribes to organize a joint naming committee.

*May 29-Jun. 9 7th PAIGH Geographic Names Course, Lima, Peru*

The Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH) held its Geographic Names Course in Applied Toponymy in Lima. The course was conducted in English with simultaneous translation to Spanish. Roger Payne was the lead instructor; Randall Flynn taught other portions of the course. Thirty-seven students attended.

*Jul. 12 State Names Authority (SNA) Established in Missouri*

Roger Payne and Lou Yost (DNC Staff) participated by conference call in the first meeting of the Missouri Board on Geographic Names. Twenty-two members were present in the governor's office. Missouri is the 38th State to establish a State Names Authority (SNA). The new board will begin establishing policies and procedures.

*Jul. 31-Aug. 11 UN Advanced Geographic Names Course, Pretoria, South Africa*

Roger Payne participated as the principal instructor in the first two-week United Nations advanced geographic names training course, held in Pretoria, South Africa.

*Sep. 6-10 19th Annual Meeting of WSGNC, Wagoner, OK*

There were 60 registrants at the 19th annual meeting of the Western States Geographic Names Council (WSGNC) in Wagoner, Oklahoma. Roger Payne stressed the importance of the State/Federal Roundtable session and its benefits to both the State Names Authorities (SNAs) and the BGN staff, especially with regard to procedures. The Arizona State Board on Geographic and Historic Names (ASBGHN) conducted a very successful workshop for the processing of geographic names. New and prospective SNAs were invited to attend, and the workshop's success suggests that it will be repeated.

*Sep. 7 (558th) DNC Reports*

The DNC provided updates on various aspects of its operations, including U.S. membership in the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN), which is divided into geographic or linguistic divisions. The United States is a member of the U.S. – Canada Division and the Latin America Division. Reports were also given on the BGN's 200th anniversary celebration; the FNC's 300th meeting; and the forthcoming publication of the *Gazetteer of Antarctica*.

*Principles, Policies, and Procedures: Domestic Geographic Names Revision*

The final reports of the Diacritic and Writing Marks Committee and the Native American Names Subcommittee were approved by the DNC and BGN, respectively. The *Principles, Policies, and Procedures: Domestic Geographic Names* (PPP) was forwarded to the editorial staff at USGS.

*Sep. 28-29 34th Annual CPCGN Meeting, Québec City, Québec*

The Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (CPCGN) held its 34th annual meeting in Québec. The CPCGN received a proposal to change the name of Hudson Bay to Canada Bay, which was discussed by the CPCGN and the three provinces that share the feature. Other provinces indicated an interest, given the feature's national and international significance. [The name Hudson Bay remained the official name as of the publication of this document.]

*Oct. 11 Geographic Names on the Internet*

The National Geographic Names Database (NGNDB) is now available on the Internet, and is fully searchable by Name, State, and/or Feature Type. There is also a graphic interface that depicts the location of the feature.

●ct. 12 (559th) *NPS Internal Commemorative Names Policy*

Roger Payne stated that he had received a letter from the Superintendent of Yosemite National Park regarding commemorative naming in national parks. The National Park Service (NPS) has an internal policy with a waiting period of five years after a person's death. The DNC's, and therefore the Federal Government's policy, is a one-year waiting period. If the DNC approves a commemorative name, Federal agencies are not bound to use or display the name; however, if a particular agency displays or uses a name for a feature, it must be the one approved by the DNC.

Chick Fagan (NPS) explained that NPS employees must first submit commemorative naming proposals through his office and he asked the DNC staff to refer to him any proposals submitted by NPS employees. Proposals received from private citizens to name features in national parks are processed by the staff and the DNC's NPS member is notified.

A Commemorative Names Subcommittee was formed, with Roberta Quigley as Chair, to further investigate the matter. The subcommittee will also address the issue of names proposed for pets. Other members of the subcommittee are Robert McArtor, Curt Loy (NOAA), and Jenny Runyon (DNC Staff).

Nov. 9 (560th) *Protection of Cave Names*

The National Speleological Society (NSS) provided the DNC staff with a listing of several thousand names of caves for entry into GNIS. The file does not include any geographic coordinates, specifically so as not to divulge the precise locations. The DNC staff acknowledged that a number of features that no longer exist (i.e., "historical") are already included in the database without coordinates. There was discussion as to whether this should be allowed for existing features. Members generally agreed that the data is worthwhile, and therefore should be included. It was further noted that archeological sites are also in the database without coordinates so as not to reveal their exact locations.

Dec. 14 (561st) *Inclement Weather and Meeting Cancellation Policy*

The DNC decided that meetings would be canceled when Fairfax County (Virginia) schools are delayed or closed because of inclement weather.

*Commemorative Names Policy and Pet Names*

The Commemorative Names Subcommittee met on November 29th and discussed pet names. The DNC previously voted that names of pets were not subject to the Commemorative Names Policy. However, the subcommittee suggests that pet names should informally be subject to the policy criteria.

*Waiting Period for Commemorative Names*

The Commemorative Names Subcommittee recommended that the waiting period for naming after a person is deceased be changed from one year to five years.

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### *Feb. 8 (562nd) Waiting Period for Commemorative Names*

The DNC discussed whether the waiting period for naming after a person is deceased should be changed from one year to five years in the Commemorative Names Policy. The National Park Service and the State of Oregon already require a five-year waiting period and the sentiment was expressed that it might be better to be more consistent. A member asked if the five-year requirement would be waived in the case of a very prominent person such as a former president.

### *Mar. 14 (563rd) Department Voting Procedures*

Members discussed the voting procedures of the DNC and agreed that each department should have a vote. This would allow the chair, if his/her department is not otherwise represented at the meeting, to have a vote, even though the bylaws state that the chair does not typically vote and only does so to break a tie.

### *Waiting Period for Commemorative Names*

The DNC members were informed that the majority of representatives from the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) regions agree with the suggestion of a five-year requirement for commemorative naming. Members voted to change the waiting period in the Commemorative Names Policy from one-year to five-years after a person is deceased before a feature could be named in their honor. This policy change will take effect immediately.

### *Apr. 18 (564th) State Name Authorities Established in North Carolina and North Dakota*

Two new State Name Authorities (SNAs) began operation, in North Carolina and North Dakota, which brings the total number of SNAs to 41.

### *Names of Native American Origin Policy*

The DNC discussed the Names of Native American Origin Policy and agreed that it is acceptable as previously determined. Attention was then turned to the paragraph submitted as an addition by the Department of the Interior's Office of Policy Analysis. It was agreed that the following sentence would be added at the end of the introductory paragraph:

“As part of its standard review procedure for proposed names, the Board [BGN] will consult with Federally-recognized tribes having an historic or cultural affiliation with the geographic location of the feature.”

### *Commemorative Names Policy and Pet Names*

Members held a lengthy discussion as to whether names of pets should be included in the Commemorative Names Policy. The DNC decided that there will be no specific policy for names of pets, but that the spirit of the Commemorative Names Policy will be applied. A member further suggested that a general paragraph be added at the end of the chapter on policies to indicate that there may be individual cases not completely covered in other policies.

### *Derogatory Names Policy*

Members discussed whether local use or opposition from a large group of people would prevail on an issue involving a derogatory name. The DNC reiterated that the burden of proof is on the proponent, but did clarify the policy by changing “offensive to a large group of people” to “shown to be offensive.”

### *Long Names Policy*

The proposal for Ivy Haneline Pond prompted a discussion of the Long Names Policy. Some members believe that the inclusion of the given name not only violates the policy, but it is too specifically commemorative. After some discussion, the DNC members considered the Long Names Policy to be acceptable and it was not changed. Ivy Haneline Pond was approved by the DNC on April 18, 1996.]

### *May 13-24 8th PAIGH Geographic Names Course, Asunción, Paraguay*

The geographic names course in applied toponymy, held under the auspices of the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH), was taught in Asunción under the auspices of the Pan American Institute of Geography and History. Twenty-six students attended from Paraguay, Uruguay, Bolivia, and Columbia. There is evidence that the goals of the course are gradually being met in Central and South America as a result of the courses held there annually.



*Aug. 1 (568th) Underwater Features*

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration/National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service (NOAA/NESDIS) in Colorado is producing bathymetric charts of the Great Lakes and has proposed new names for a number of underwater features. The names are derived from nearby geographic features and no commemorative names will be proposed. Since it has been indicated that several hundred of these names may be submitted, it was suggested that staff should process the names. This is a procedure whereby a large volume of proposals with no known problems are researched and recommended for approval without being placed on a docket. All interested parties are notified as part of the procedure. Members voted to allow the staff to process the names for these underwater features.

*Aug. 3 Names of Native American Origin Policy*

The revised policy was approved by the Secretary of the Interior (SOI).

*Aug. 12-23 18th Session of UNGEGN, Geneva, Switzerland*

The 18<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) was held in Geneva, Switzerland. The session was attended by 90 participants from 45 countries. There were six members in the U.S. delegation. Roger Payne served as rapporteur. There were representatives from American Samoa and the Northern Mariana Islands at the latest meeting of the Asia SE and Pacific SW Division. The delegates will be contacted regarding geographic names activity in their areas.

*Sep. 3-7 20th Annual Meeting of WSGNC, Salt Lake City, UT*

The Western States Geographic Names Council (WSGNC) held its annual meeting in Salt Lake City, Utah, hosted by the Utah Committee on Geographic Names (UCGN). The registered attendees included ten BGN representatives from the DNC and staff. The keynote speaker was John Van Cott, author of *Utah Place Names*. The theme of the meeting was "Place Name Issues in the West: The Significance of Local Usage." BGN presentations included a workshop led by Don Kelly (USGS) on managing names publicity for SNAs, and a paper on commemorative naming in the west by Roberta Quigley (USFS). Other topics included the Place Name Survey of the U.S. (PLANSUS), the possibility of a name change for Devils Tower (summit), and why new names in wilderness areas are not allowed. Activities included a meeting of the UCGN; the monthly meeting of the DNC (the 569th, held on September 5th); the State/Federal Roundtable; and a toponymic tour to Brigham City, the Golden Spike National Historical Site, and Ogden.

*Sep. 5 (569th) DNC Reports*

The DNC provided updates on the issue of cave locations; the activities of the Native American Names Subcommittee; and the proposals to name underwater features in the Great Lakes. Regarding the latter issue, it was noted that if there is no known problem, the names will be

processed by the staff. Any issues will be sent to the BGN for its consideration. Helen Kerfoot (Natural Resources Canada) indicated that the Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (CPCGN) will cooperate in evaluating the proposed names in accordance with the existing trans-boundary agreement.

The DNC noted that the issue of trans-boundary agreements will also be discussed with the appropriate authorities in Mexico, who are in the process of developing a national names authority. [No agreement was ever reached.]

An update was provided on the status of the conventional gazetteers of domestic names. None have been published since 1991, due to a lack of personnel resources and funding. The *Digital Gazetteer of the United States* (compact disc) contains the entire database with software for searching, retrieving, and exporting data, and many believe that conventional gazetteers are no longer needed. The entire database is also available on the Internet and is fully searchable. Standard format files by State are available for download from the Internet. Print-on-demand reports are also available, either at no charge or for a minimal fee.

*Sep. 10-13 35th Annual CPCGN Annual Meeting, Whitehorse, Yukon*

The Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (CPCGN) held its 35th annual meeting in Whitehorse, Yukon. Roger Payne, Randall Flynn, and Gerd Quinting represented the BGN. Attendees discussed trans-boundary procedures and other problems common to both countries.

*Oct. 10 (570th) Protection of Cave Names*

The National Speleological Society (NSS) and various State chapters asked that all geographic coordinates and other locative attributes related to features classified in GNIS as "cave" be removed from public display. A Department of the Interior (DOI) regulation states that no DOI employee may release the location of any cave on Federal land that is significant or under consideration to be designated significant. Since GNIS does not indicate which caves are on Federal lands and to do so would require considerable research, all entries for features classified as "cave" have been blocked from retrieval, except by GNIS staff. The latest version of the *Digital Gazetteer of the United States* on compact disk has been recalled and will be reissued without entries for caves.

*Oct. 16-23 18th BGN/PCGN Conference, Bethesda, MD*

The 18th BGN and British Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (PCGN) conference was held at the National Imagery and Mapping Agency (NIMA) in Bethesda, Maryland. PCGN representatives also attended the Full Board meeting on October 15.

*Dec. 12 (572nd) Executive Order 13007 (Indian Sacred Sites)*

Executive Order 13007 regarding Indian Sacred Sites was issued on May 24, 1996. Accordingly, Native American groups may identify individual sites to a Federal land management agency. David Meier (BLM) noted there was confusion in interpreting the order and the responsibility of Federal agencies in regard to various types of Indian sacred sites.

*Diacritical Marks in Names in National Parks in Hawaii*

The DNC staff and the National Park Service (NPS) agreed that the staff should add Hawaiian writing marks for geographic names in Hawaii Volcanoes National Park and Haleakala National Park. Thus far, three names from lists of about 80 names have been determined to be controversial and will be processed in accordance with DNC procedure.

*Ranch Names*

Ranch names frequently change when ownership changes. In the past, and as late as 1990 in one case, the DNC has ruled on such features. There was discussion as to whether Federal agencies should change these names on maps by administrative procedure or if a DNC decision is needed. The members decided that the names could be changed in accordance with staff processing procedures for administrative names.

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### *Feb. 13 (573rd) Proposal for a Universal Change to "Squaw" Names*

Roger Payne briefed the DNC on the issue regarding the word "Squaw" in geographic names, and informed the members that a request has been received to universally change all names in the Nation that contain the word. Members did not suggest a universal replacement word.

### *Apr. 15 (575th) "Not Official" Names in the GNIS*

Members discussed the use of the words "not official" in GNIS. Specifically, in rare cases when a State Names Authority (SNA) approves a name but the DNC does not, the name might appear on a State product and could be compiled from that source for entry into the National Geographic Names Database (NGNDB) if there is no apparent controversy. The use of "not official" following the name in the GNIS entry serves as an indication that the name must not be used on Federal products. [Although the procedure was considered by some to be confusing, no changes were made.]

### *Separate Records in GNIS for Political Entities and Physical Features with Same Name*

Recent inquiries regarding features in the Pacific area indicate that there is a misconception within some Federal agencies regarding political entities and physical features. A physical feature may have the same name as a political entity, such as Guam (territory and island), and therefore, will be represented by two separate records in the GNIS. Other political entities could have a name that differs from the corresponding physical feature, and it appears some Federal agencies have been using these different names interchangeably. Staff has promulgated the appropriate official name in each case.

*May 8 (576th) Derogatory Names*

The City Council of Tulsa (Oklahoma) is preparing a proposal to change the name of Black Boy Creek. During local investigation, it was discovered that the U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) automated file of bridges contains 20 entries with the pejorative form of the word "Negro." The DOT General Council will take appropriate measures to correct this oversight so that the information in its files adheres to BGN standards.

*May 12-23 9th PAIGH Geographic Names Course, La Paz, Bolivia*

The geographic names course in applied toponymy, held under the auspices of the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH), took place in La Paz. There were 24 students attending the course from four countries. Students attended lectures and participated in an automation workshop and a field exercise.

*Jul. 10 (578th) "Squaw" Name Changes*

The issue of the word "Squaw" in geographic names is active in several States. The DNC encourages individuals to propose replacements for names that they consider pejorative, but each will be processed on a case-by-case basis. A petition and several letters have been received from the California chapter of the American Indian Movement, indicating that proposals will be submitted one-by-one to change names of features in that State.

*Aug. 14 (579th) One Name for One Geographic Entity*

Members discussed the issues regarding the name of a 150-mile-long stream that currently changes official names at the boundary between Georgia and Tennessee (Ocoee River/Toccoa River). The BGN's One Name for One Geographic Entity principle would require a decision for only one of these names. [No further action was documented.]

*Sep. 23-27 21st Annual Meeting of WSGNC, Flagstaff, AZ*

The Western States Geographic Names Council (WSGNC) held its annual meeting in Flagstaff, Arizona, hosted by the Arizona State Board on Geographic and Historic Names (ASBGHN). The registered attendees included BGN representatives from the DNC, FNC, and staff. Activities included a meeting of the ASBGHN; a meeting of the Place Name Survey of the U.S. (PLANSUS); the monthly meeting of the DNC (the 580th, held on September 25th); the State/Federal Roundtable, during which Jenny Runyon (DNC Staff) discussed procedures for staff processing of geographic names; and a toponymic tour of the Hopi Reservation, the Navajo Reservation, and the Grand Canyon. Special events included tours of the USGS Flagstaff Field Office and the Lowell Observatory.

*Sep. 25 (580th) Principles, Policies, and Procedures: Domestic Geographic Names (PPP) Revision*

Roger Payne introduced the updated edition of the PPP and explained the three major changes: 1) the new Names of Native American Origin Policy; 2) in the Commemorative Names Policy, the waiting period is increased from one year to five years after the intended honoree is deceased; and 3) the Use of Diacritical Marks Policy now allows all such marks in domestic names.

*Feature Size as a Consideration in DNC Decisions*

The members questioned whether the size of a feature should be a factor for applying a geographic name, and determined that as long a feature is identifiable it is not too insignificant to be named.

*Sep. 29-Oct. 3 36th Annual CPCGN Meeting, Ottawa, Ontario*

The Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (CPCGN) held its 100th Anniversary celebration and 36th annual meeting in Ottawa. Joel Morrison, on behalf of the BGN, presented a plaque congratulating the CPCGN and noting the long period of cooperation between the CPCGN and the BGN. A congratulatory letter from the Secretary of the Interior to the Chairman of the CPCGN was read into the record.

*Oct. 5 Death of Meredith "Pete" Burrill*

Meredith Burrill (1902-1997) passed away on October 5. He was the first Executive Secretary during the modern era of the BGN, from 1947 to 1973.

*State Names Authority Established in Ohio*

A new SNA has been organized in Ohio, which brings the number of States with such authorities to 42.

*Dec. 11 (583rd) Advisory Committee on Extra-Terrestrial Names*

Randall Flynn, former Secretary of the Advisory Committee for Extra-Terrestrial Names (ACEF), has been tasked to gather more information regarding the status of the extra-terrestrial names database, which is located at the USGS in Flagstaff, Arizona, and to report to the BGN on his findings.

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 Randall Flynn, Executive Secretary, Foreign Names Committee  
 Bruce Babbitt, Secretary of the Interior

*Jan. 12-23 7th UNCSGN and 19th Session of UNGEGN, New York, NY*

The Seventh UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNCSGN) and the 19th Session of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) were held at United Nations Headquarters in New York. The conference was attended by 211 participants from 71 countries. There were ten members in the U.S. delegation. Roger Payne was head of the delegation and was elected rapporteur for the conference. Roberta Quigley (USFS) reviewed a brochure relating to names standardization compiled by UNGEGN.

*Mar. 12 (585th) Standardized Spelling of Names*

Roger Payne circulated an article regarding the spelling of the name of the community of Kosciusko, Texas, which indicates that an individual believes the name should be changed to reflect the “correct” spelling. It was noted that the name is spelled three different ways in the United States: “Kosciusko” in eight States; “Kosciuszko” in five States; and “Kosciuzko” in one State.

Payne noted that people are sometimes confused by the BGN’s mission to standardize name usage. The BGN is responsible for ensuring that every Federal agency and department use the same name, form, and spelling for the same geographic entity, generally based on local usage. It is not the BGN’s responsibility to mandate uniform spelling to be used for every feature in the nation with the same name, nor is the BGN responsible for grammatical correctness in standardizing geographic name usage.

*DNC Purview on Dam Names*

The BGN has rendered several decisions on the names of dams, even though they are not generally considered to be under its purview. Decisions in recent cases were because there were proposals to change the names of associated reservoirs and it was felt that not changing the names of the corresponding dam would be confusing and possibly cause a safety problem.

### *Great Lakes Legislation*

Legislation initiated in the U.S. Senate included Lake Champlain in New York as “one of the Great Lakes.” According to policy, if the language is incidental and for specific purpose only, in this case for awarding sea grants, the feature’s geographic description in GNIS is not affected. The BGN has no action since the change is an Act of Congress. If warranted, legal interpretation of whether the reference is incidental or specific should be made by the Department of the Interior Office of Policy. Further, a spokesperson at the White House confirmed that the language in this bill is considered incidental and “not intended to alter the geography.” In this case, no change in the database was necessary.

### *Counterproposals*

Staff reported that more than one name had been proposed for a single feature. Historically, the DNC has not accepted more than one proposal for a feature at the same time. However, the DNC concluded that when two or more individuals propose different names for the same feature, it is more efficient to conduct concurrent research, docket both names, and make a simultaneous decision.

### *Apr. 9 (586th) BGN Records at the National Archives*

There is a special section in the Cartographic Division of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) for BGN records. Most of the BGN’s material from prior to 1947 has been transferred to NARA, including foreign names work cards. Domestic names work cards are still in use by the staff, primarily because the source references are not in the GNIS, and as such they remain at USGS.

### *PPP Online*

The *Principles, Policies, and Procedures: Domestic Geographic Names* (PPP) is now available on the BGN website.

### *Jun. 11 (588th) Abbreviations in the Names of Incorporated Communities*

The DNC discussed whether to record the full name of an incorporated place if the name is abbreviated in its articles of incorporation. Members decided that the DNC should continue to spell out names in its official records.

### *Jul. 9 (589th) Advisory Committee on Extra-Terrestrial Features*

The GNIS webpage was updated with a link to the Interplanetary Nomenclature query page. This is the first step toward possibly reactivating the BGN’s Advisory Committee on Extra-Terrestrial Features (ACEF).



### *Staff Processed Names*

The DNC has given the staff the authority to process large “lists” of names with minor updates that have a constant theme, such as the diacritical marks in names in Hawaii.

The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Southwest Region requested that features named “Tank” and those classified as “Well” be considered administrative. The DNC staff recommended and the members agreed that the names of these features not be administrative but that they can be processed by the staff.

### *Aug. 10-21 10th PAIGH Geographic Names Course, Lima, Peru*

The 10th course in applied toponymy, held under the auspices of the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH), was conducted in Lima. There were 21 students from military and civilian agencies in Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay, and Uruguay. The course included lectures on various aspects of standardization, as well as an intensive field exercise and a workshop for automated data processing. Publicity for this event included a press conference and television coverage.

### *Sep. 8-12 22nd Annual Meeting of WSGNC, Cody, WY*

The 22nd annual meeting of the Western States Geographic Names Council (WSGNC) was held in Cody. There were 63 paid registrants and 80-85 attendees. In addition to a State/Federal Roundtable, a two-hour session was held with the USFS regarding the testing and use of new software for maintenance of GNIS.

The WSGNC changed its name to the Council of Geographic Names Authorities (COGNA).

### *Sep. 10 (591st) State Name Authorities Established in Ohio and West Virginia*

Roger Payne announced the addition of State Name Authorities (SNAs) for Ohio and West Virginia. This brings the total number of SNAs to 44, with Maine in the process of being reorganized. Also, the first territorial names authority has been organized in Guam.

### *“Squaw” Name Changes*

The National Organization of Women (NOW) conference, held recently in Minnesota, adopted a resolution encouraging active nationwide participation in submitting proposals to the BGN and/or SNAs to replace names that contain the word “Squaw.”

## *Gazetteers*

The staff temporarily abandoned production of U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Professional Paper 1200: *The National Gazetteer of the United States* due to a lack of staff resources. Staff lost the ability to produce conventional interim gazetteers when the GNIS was transferred from a mainframe environment to a dedicated server. The Digital Gazetteer (compact disk) and the website have proven to be a suitable replacement for the conventional gazetteers, and State gazetteers can be downloaded from the website. Also, fan-fold printouts can be made available to those doing names research.

### *Sep. 16-18 37th Annual CPCGN Meeting, Regina, Saskatchewan*

The Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (CPCGN) held its 37th annual meeting in Regina. Roger Payne represented the BGN.

### *Oct. 8 (592nd) Names of Regions*

As a result of an inquiry, the DNC was asked to consider the validity of adding the name Silicon Valley and similar names to the database. The DNC has always declined to name or define regions.

### *Oct. 27-Nov. 6 19th BGN/PCGN Conference, London, England*

The 19th BGN and British Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (PCGN) conference was held at the offices of the Royal Geographical Society in London. Emphasis was placed on the merits of continued collaboration. A meeting with the staff of the UK Antarctica Place-Names Committee was held in Cambridge on November 1.

### *Nov. 12 (593rd) DNC and ACUF Purview on Offshore Names*

The name NR-1 Hole, for an undersea feature beyond the 12-mile jurisdictional limit of the United States, was recommended for approval by the BGN's Advisory Committee on Undersea Features (ACUF). The proponent had originally requested that the DNC rule on this proposal because it is within the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of the United States. Citing existing policy, the proposal was forwarded to ACUF, which recommended approval.

### *Staff Processing of Stream Names*

Some States have indicated that there may be Statewide programs to apply names to a significant number of unnamed streams in support of various environmental programs. The DNC was asked to consider whether staff processing should be expanded to approve large numbers of such names. The DNC indicated that further discussion is needed, but recommended that any procedure change must include State Name Authorities. The DNC decided that these proposals would be processed normally.

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### *Standardized Spelling of Names*

The DNC received a proposal to standardize the spelling of the name “Sacajawea” or “Sacagawea” nationwide. The DNC reaffirmed its policy of standardizing feature names rather than orthography. Each proposal will be considered on a case-by-case basis and on its own merits.

### *Dec. 10 (594th) Geyser Names in Yellowstone National Park*

A list of names of geysers found in published literature and local use, received from the National Park Service (NPS) staff at Yellowstone National Park, will be staff processed. One of the names, Bulger Geyser, reflects a change from Bulger Spring, and is a previous BGN decision. Therefore, this name will be processed through the standard procedure.

### *Commemorative Names Policy and Waiting Period*

Staff asked the DNC for guidance regarding the five-year waiting period criterion of the Commemorative Names Policy as applied to proposals submitted to a SNA. If the SNA received a proposal prior to April 1996, when the waiting period was modified from one to five years, staff was instructed to accept that proposal for processing.

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### *Jan. 14 (595th) Discussion of Offshore Names*

The Office of Coast Survey (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NOAA OCS) led a discussion and made a recommendation to amend the BGN's present policy concerning offshore names with regard to the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The DNC agreed that proposals to name features up to 12 nautical miles offshore will be considered, but State Names Authorities (SNAs) will not be contacted, except in special cases, if the feature is beyond the three nautical mile limit, in keeping with general Federal policy. The DNC declined to consider names in the EEZ of the U.S. beyond the 12 nautical mile limit.

### *Feb. 11 (596th) Reaffirming Decisions*

If a proposed name change is disapproved by the DNC, staff questioned whether the name that is retained should receive a BGN decision date. After discussion, the members determined that these situations will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, and unless specifically directed, the existing name will not take a revised BGN decision date.

### *Names in the Republic of Palau*

Names of features in the former Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands are in GNIS and are maintained for purposes of mapping by USGS. However, the DNC was reminded that by plebiscite, the Republic of Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia have the special status of Freely Associated States with the United States. Since this means independent country status, the staff will accept whatever changes are suggested by the respective governments in accordance with established policy.

### *Mar. 11 (597th) Staff Processed Names for the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, MA*

Fifty-one proposals were submitted by a U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) employee at the Woods Hole Field Center, to name undersea features in the Stellwagen Bank National Marine

Sanctuary. Twenty-nine of the features fall within 12 miles of the Massachusetts shoreline. The other 21 names have been forwarded to the Advisory Committee on Undersea Features (ACUF) for processing. These names are being proposed as a result of a mapping project conducted as a collaborative effort between USGS and the NOAA, and with the support of the University of New Brunswick Ocean Mapping Group and the Canadian Hydrographic Service. The names will appear on two USGS Geologic Investigations series maps. They were selected for various reasons, including long-time usage by local fishermen, physical attributes of the feature, proximity to a named feature, and the name of the research vessel that conducted the survey. These are the first names approved by the DNC in accordance with its new policy of approving names beyond three and up to twelve miles off shore.

#### *Apr. 8 (598th) Possessive Case Apostrophes in Names*

Apostrophes are allowed in administrative names appearing in GNIS. These are names, which by decision of the DNC, are not under its purview. Examples include churches, schools, cemeteries, etc. (see end notes of Chapter II, *Principles, Policies, and Procedures: Domestic Geographic Names* (PPP)). This contradiction between apostrophes in administrative names and in names approved by decision has caused some confusion among users.

#### *Official Name for Puerto Rico*

Staff received a letter from the office of the Governor of Puerto Rico stating that the two names of the principal island are Island of Puerto Rico and Isla de Puerto Rico. However, since the BGN's principle of univocity requires a single official name, the DNC was advised that Island of Puerto Rico should be official for Federal use.

#### *Changing DNC Meeting Votes*

Because of some indecision on a vote at the last meeting, the members discussed whether a member should be allowed to change his or her vote after the meeting was adjourned. Members decided that votes may not be changed after the end of the meeting.

#### *Use of Diacritical Marks Policy*

It was noted that the wording of the Use of Diacritical Marks Policy, as included in the PPP, is not the final version as approved by the DNC. The approved version reads as follows:

The presence of diacritic marks, special letters, or symbols will not necessarily bar approval of a geographic name by the BGN. While each name will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, a spelling that includes diacritical marks, special letters, or symbols will be considered only if consistent with a widely accepted standard orthography. There must also be substantial evidence of active local use or acceptance of the name as proposed. In cases where diacritical marks, special letters, or symbols are not approved, name forms that carry them are considered variant names (see Principle I)

[The correct approved version was never republished.] [Refer to PPP version 1.0, published December 2016, for the latest policy on diacritics (Chapter 2. Principle I; Chapter 3. Principle VI; and Appendix G)]

*May 13 (599th) "Squaw" Name Changes in Montana*

The Montana Legislature has passed a bill making it illegal to use the word "Squaw" in the name of any geographic feature in that State. A State committee will be appointed to select replacement names, with the Montana Geographic Names Advisor (GNA) as advisor.

*Definition of Terms*

As the result of an inquiry, the terminology referring to the United States, the Continental United States, and the Conterminous United States, as stated by the BGN on May 14, 1959, was reviewed and reaffirmed; specifically:

United States: The 50 States and the District of Columbia.

Continental United States: The 49 States located on the continent of North America and the District of Columbia.

Conterminous United States: The 48 States and District of Columbia, that is, the United States before January 3, 1959, which wholly fills an unbroken block of territory.

*Jun. 10 (600th) Staff Processed Names*

Staff asked whether staff processed names (SPNs) should be included in the annual decision lists. After a lengthy discussion, it was decided to eliminate the SPN reference and to refer to all decisions (staff processed and full procedure) as BGN decisions, because there may be a tendency to view an SPN as "less official," which it is not. Also, it was noted that the DNC has empowered the staff to make this judgement, and it is the same as deliberation by the DNC. It was further noted that *all* entries in GNIS are official, either by decision or by policy. The lack of a BGN decision date means there is no known problem. A decision date means there was initially a controversy, but a resolution was reached.

*Jul. 8 (601st) Names in Guam*

Congressman Underwood (Guam) requested that the names on USGS topographic maps being revised for Guam be forwarded through his office to the Chamorro Language Institute for examination, in a procedure similar to that conducted in Hawaii.

*Extent of Feature Official in DNC Decision*

Following an inquiry from the staff, the DNC affirmed that the extent of a feature is part of the decision.

*Jul. 12-23 11th PAIGH Geographic Names Course, Guatemala City, Guatemala*

The 11th course in applied toponymy, held under the auspices of the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH), was conducted in Guatemala City. There was a larger than usual class of 35 students, as a special request from the government of Guatemala. The course included lectures on various aspects of standardization, as well as an intensive field exercise and a workshop for automated data processing.

*July 28 Proposal to Name the Southern Ocean*

David M. Karl, Professor of Oceanography, University of Hawaii, proposed to ACAN that the name Southern Ocean be made official for the ocean area around Antarctica; this would recognize the name used by most countries and in many scientific publications. ACAN determined that this proposal was not within its purview and referred the matter to the FNC, which approved the name.

*Sep. 7-11 23rd Annual Meeting of COGNA, Spokane, WA*

The Council of Geographic Names Authorities (COGNA) held its annual meeting in Spokane, Washington, hosted by the Washington State Board on Geographic Names (WSBGN). The keynote speaker was Robert Carriker, who gave a presentation on "Lewis & Clark in Washington." BGN member Ronald Grim gave a presentation on the Mullan Road, the first wagon road to cross the Rockies. Activities included a WSBGN meeting; the monthly meeting of the DNC (the 603rd, held on September 9th); the State/Federal Roundtable, which covered SPNs Procedures, administrative names issues, and state and local input on proposed names; and toponymic tours of downtown Spokane and Spokane Falls, along the route of the Mullan Road into Idaho, and locations along the Columbia River including Grand Coulee Dam and Tribal museums.

*Sep. 9 (603rd) Proposal to Change Names containing the word "Hangman," ID/WA*

In 1959, a proposal was submitted by the chair of the Spokane County (Washington) Board of Commissioners to change the name of Hangman Creek to Latah Creek. The proponent later agreed that the proposal should also apply to three related features. There was considerable discussion regarding the controversy, since the name Latah Creek was legislated by the State of Washington in 1899. The DNC voted to reaffirm the 1959 decisions for Hangman Creek and Little Hangman Creek, citing strong local usage and a lack of new evidence that the 1959 decision should be overturned. It deferred decisions on the other two names pending recommendations from the Idaho Geographic Names Advisory Council for South Fork Hangman Creek, and from

the Washington State Board on Geographic Names (WSBGN) for Hangman Valley. The WSBGN cannot rule on the issue of Hangman Creek versus Latah Creek, because it is State law and the law has been interpreted to apply to Little Hangman Creek as well. However, since the valley of the same name is not a water feature, the WSBGN believes it can make a recommendation for that feature's name. .

*Sep. 29-Oct 3 38th Annual CPCGN Meeting, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island*

The Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (CPCGN) held its 38th annual meeting in Charlottetown. Roger Payne represented the BGN at the meeting.

*Oct. 13-14 Alexandria Digital Library Symposium*

Roger Payne and Randall Flynn attended the Alexandria Digital Library's symposium, hosted by the Smithsonian Institution, which focused on the development and use of digital gazetteers in mapping. Participants from the academic community, private industry, and the Federal Government attended. Three SNAs (Arizona, Oklahoma, and Washington), as well as names experts from Canada and Honduras, also attended, and confirmed the need for standardization and maintenance of geographic names databases.

*Oct. 21 (604th) State Name Authority Established in Tennessee*

Tennessee has established a SNA. Only Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Indiana, Iowa, and Kansas do not yet have such an authority.

*Oct. 22 North American Cartographic Information Society presentation*

Roger Payne gave an invited paper at the 19th annual meeting of the North American Cartographic Information Society (NACIS), held October 20th to 23rd in Williamsburg, Virginia, entitled "The U.S. Board on Geographic Names' Influence on Cartographic Application."

*Dec. 9 (606th) Foreign Names Not Requiring Secretary of the Interior Signature*

The Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Water and Science questioned why the decision to approve the name Southern Ocean was not sent to the Secretary of the Interior (SOI) for signature. DNC staff explained that foreign names for use in U.S. mapping are not presently signed by the Secretary.



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### *Jan. 13 (607th) State Names Authority Reorganized in Maine*

The Maine State Names Authority has been reorganized and reconstituted. The Michigan State Office of Natural Resources, while not officially recognized as a State Names Authority (SNA), has demonstrated a willingness to work with the DNC and indicates that it always defers to the local county or township on names issues.

### *Jan. 17-28 20th Session of UNGEGN, New York, NY*

The 20th Session of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) was held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, NY. The session was attended by 131 participants from 52 countries. There were twenty members in the U.S. delegation. Randall Flynn substituted as rapporteur for Roger Payne while he was on assignment in Antarctica. Payne serves as liaison between UNGEGN and the Pan American Institute of Geography and History. Lou Yost (DNC Staff) served as rapporteur for the Working Group on Training. Wayne Furr (Executive Secretary, COGNA) participated as an observer

### *Feb. 10 (608th) United States-Canada Trans-boundary Names*

The DNC recently approved 19 names for previously unnamed underwater features in Lake Ontario and referred the trans-boundary names to the Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographic Names (PCGN). The names Niagara Fan and Charity Shoal may need to be reconsidered because of possible differences with the PCGN. [No further action was recorded on this issue.]

### *Mar. ? Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographic Names renamed*

The name of the Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographic Names was changed to the Geographical Names Board of Canada.

*Mar. 9 (609th) Staff Processed Names*

The DNC voted to allow Staff Processed Names (SPNs) to appear in the Decision List without complete descriptions. A note in the foreword will explain that such entries, which do not include docket numbers, have been staff processed. SPNs are usually submitted in large lists, where the proposed new names or changes are consistent throughout and where the DNC has authorized the staff to resolve the issue.

*Mar. 28-31 GeoNames 2000 Conference, Frankfurt am Main, Germany*

A symposium titled GeoNames 2000 was held in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, hosted by the German Federal Government. Roger Payne and Gerd Quinting (NIMA) presented papers, and Randall Flynn served as a session moderator. The session provided an informal forum for addressing issues in international toponymy, and for analyzing and solving problems.

*May 11 (610th) "Squaw" Name Changes in Maine*

The State of Maine passed legislation directing that geographic names containing the words "Squaw" and "Squa" be changed. The Maine State Names Authority will work with the DNC regarding the proposed replacement names.

*Vermont State Names Authority Procedures*

The DNC staff received a copy of the Vermont State law indicating that no geographic name in the State may be changed without the approval of the Vermont State Names Authority.

*Names of National Parks in Hawaii*

Chick Fagan (NPS) noted that the names of national parks are established by Congress, and as such, can only be changed by Congress. It has been suggested that the names of several parks in Hawaii should include diacritical marks, to reflect the fact that marks are being restored to the names of geographic features within the parks. A proposal is being examined that would result in legislation to allow the NPS to add such marks, where necessary, without legislation for each name. [The Hawaiian National Park Language Correction Act of 2000 was passed December 15th, 2000, changing the names of seven national parks.]

*Jun. 8 (611th) "Squaw" Name Changes in Oklahoma*

The State of Oklahoma passed a non-binding joint resolution to change names in that State that contain the word "Squaw." Oklahoma becomes the fifth State to take some form of legislative action in this regard. [Four preceding States are: Minnesota, Arizona, Montana, and Maine.]

*Jun. 26-Jul 7 12th PAIGH Geographic Names Course, Asunción, Paraguay*

The 12th course in applied toponymy, held under the auspices of the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH), was conducted in Asunción. The course included lectures on various aspects of standardization, as well as an intensive field exercise and a workshop for automated data processing. There were 21 students from civilian and military agencies of the national government, as well as from the national university. Positive results are evident from the many years this course has been offered, and more than 250 students have been trained thus far.

*Aug. 14-18 International Geographical Congress, Seoul, Republic of Korea*

The International Geographical Congress (IGC), which takes place every four years, held its latest meeting in Seoul. There was an entire session devoted solely to geographical names.

*Sep. 14 (613th) State Names Authority Established in Kansas*

Roger Payne attended a meeting of U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) State Cooperators in Rolla, Missouri, where he made a presentation on the status of GNIS, with special attention to redesign and the spatial enabling of data. He also discussed the connections between the BGN and GNIS. As a result of the meeting, a new SNA has been established in Kansas. Only Massachusetts, Michigan, Iowa, and Indiana do not have such an authority.

*Sep. 19-22 1st Annual GNBC Meeting, Winnipeg, Manitoba*

The Geographical Names Board of Canada (GNBC) held its first annual meeting in Winnipeg, hosted by the Manitoba Provincial Names Board. Roger Payne attended.

*Sep. 26-30 24th Annual Meeting of COGNA, St. Louis, MO*

The Council of Geographic Names Authorities (COGNA) held its annual meeting in St. Louis, Missouri, hosted by the Missouri Board on Geographic Names (MOBGN). The theme of the annual meeting was "Where West Meets East." BGN presentations included a GNIS workshop led by Robin Worcester (USGS) and a paper on UNGEGN mapping and toponymy by Roger Payne. Activities included a meeting of the MOBGN; the monthly meeting of the DNC (the 614th, held on September 28th); the State/Federal Roundtable, during which Jenny Runyon (DNC Staff) discussed procedures for staff processing of geographic names; and a toponymic tour of the Missouri Rhineland visiting places with German names in the Missouri River Valley. Special events included tours of Gateway Arch National Park and the Museum of Westward Expansion and a dinner cruise on the Mississippi River.

*Sep. 28 (614th) "Squaw" Name Changes and State Legislation*

Roger Payne provided an overview of legislation that has been passed in several States banning the use of the word "Squaw" in geographic names. Minnesota passed legislation in 1995 to address the use of the word in the names of physical features. Montana passed legislation in 1999, and name changes will be submitted to the BGN. Maine also passed legislation in 1999, and included the variant form "Squa," which also occurs in that State; the State Names Authority will submit proposed changes to the DNC. In May 2000, Oklahoma passed a non-binding resolution calling for changes to names containing the word. Several other States have had informal discussions to do the same.

*Number of Speakers of a Native Language as a Consideration in DNC Decisions*

Members discussed whether the number of speakers of a native language should be a factor in considering name proposals from that language. The members agreed to obtain such information for future proposals. [The number of speakers of a native language has not been included as a consideration in DNC decisions.]

*Oct. 30-Nov. 9 20th BGN/PCGN Conference, Washington, DC*

The 20th BGN and British Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (PCGN) Conference was held at the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, DC. Extensive discussion took place on the topic of flexibility of geographic name usage in various reporting contexts other than cartography, where a firm decision on a single geographic name is required.

*Nov. 9 (615th) Voting by Deputy Members*

The members discussed the subject of voting by deputy members. At the last Full Board meeting, two suggestions were proposed. The first recommends that each department have two votes rather than one. All deputy members from the same Department would have one combined vote regardless of the number of deputy members. The second suggestion recommends that only members be permitted to vote at Full Board meetings, but that the committees could allow voting by all deputy members, because many departments have deputies representing different member agencies with differing needs and views. Another suggestion was that one representative or deputy member from each agency within a department be allowed a vote. [See also Apr 12, 2001 (619th): decision to propose change to BGN voting practice; June 5, 2001: Executive Committee met to discuss and recommend change; June 14, 2001 (621st): Executive Committee's recommendation was announced; July 17, 2001: BGN passed an amendment to the bylaws; September 5, 2001 (624th) entry].

*One Name for One Geographic Entity*

Roger Payne distributed an article concerning the naming of Churchill Peaks in Alaska, and reminded the DNC that names may sometimes apply to features located on or within other features. The article implied that the name Churchill Peaks was intended to *replace* the name Mount McKinley or at least was to be a dual official name. This is incorrect, as the DNC does not recognize dual official names within the United States. There are two distinct peaks named North Peak and South Peak (the highest), and the name Churchill Peaks is applied collectively to these two named features. As such, there are four distinct named entities in this topographic complex.

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 Randall Flynn, Executive Secretary, Foreign Names Committee  
 Bruce Babbitt, Secretary of the Interior

### *Jan. 22-26 7th UN Cartographic Conference for the Americas, New York, NY*

Roger Payne reported on the Seventh United Nations Cartographic Conference for the Americas held in New York. He presented a paper titled “Geographical Names and Cartographic Application.” He was also elected rapporteur for the conference, and Randall Flynn served as assistant rapporteur. A resolution recommending the establishment of National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) was drafted and adopted. There are two paragraphs in the resolution that cite the importance of geographical names as a component of NSDI, and encourage the development and support of national geographical names committees for developing principles and policies.

### *Feb. 8 (617th) Reaffirming Decisions*

Members confirmed that when a proposed name change is not approved, the original name does not automatically become a BGN decision. Members will be given the option of reaffirming the decision with a new decision date on a case-by-case basis.

### *Mar. 8 (618th) Derogatory Name Changes*

South Dakota passed a law, signed by the Governor, to change all names within the State that contain the words “Squaw” and “Negro.” Included in the law are recommended changes submitted by county governments for approximately one-half of the existing names. The staff will review these changes, and work with the South Dakota State Names Authority on the remaining names.

The State Legislature in Idaho failed to move a bill from committee to the floor of the Legislature that would have banned the use of the term “Squaw” in geographic names in that State. The BGN Executive Secretary has been contacted regarding the issue and alternate procedural possibilities. The DNC’s policy regarding derogatory names was reiterated, and the interested parties are encouraged to propose changes, which will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The deadline for changing names containing the words “Squaw” or “Squa” in Maine that resulted from legislation in April 2000 was February 11, 2001. Several town governments sent notice to various Federal agencies directly, which is not in accordance with agreed upon procedures in Maine. The

DNC staff has been advised by the Maine State Names Authority not to process any name changes unless received directly from that organization so as to comply with due process.

*Apr. 12 (619th) Domestic Geographic Names Report (DGNR)*

The revised Domestic Geographic Names Report (DGNR) form for submitting new names and name change proposals was completed. It will soon be fully interactive at the GNIS website.

*Voting by Deputy Members*

Following lengthy discussion, the members decided that a recommendation should be made to the Full Board to allow voting by all deputy members at meetings of the standing committees, with procedures to be determined and applied by each of the committees separately.

*Generics and Tribal Name Proposals*

The Nez Perce Tribe submitted eight proposals for names in Idaho. Six of the proposals contain English generics and two do not. The Tribe has indicated that it does not wish to have the English generic added as this would be redundant. Members noted that the existing DNC policy calls for adding English generics to assist the wide range of map and other users who may not be familiar with the native language and where the lack of a generic may lead to confusion, including in emergency situations. This policy exists for all languages where the type of feature is not clear. The DNC recommended soliciting comments from the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) before possibly invoking the policy.

*May 10 (620th) "Squaw" Name Changes in Piscataquis County, Maine*

The DNC received correspondence from the Maine State Names Authority (SNA) indicating that Piscataquis County has decided to replace every name in the county containing the word "Squaw" with "Moose," and is encouraging the DNC to accept this solution. The DNC expressed concern with the name duplication issue. Members agreed that these names should *not* be "staff processed" if name duplication occurs. Some members questioned the logic of the county's decision and instructed the Executive Secretary to convey their concerns to the SNA.

*One Name for One Geographic Entity*

The staff asked the DNC to comment on the issue of naming a feature that is now recognized as two distinct features. Historically, the name Whitewater River applied to a 75-mile-long stream in Missouri. In the early 20th century, a diversion channel was constructed which diverted the upper part of the stream and separated the feature into two features. There was considerable

discussion, and the staff was directed to indicate that some qualifier or qualifiers such as “Old,” “South,” “Upper,” “Lower,” etc., would be useful, if not required, in this case. [The DNC approved the names Upper Whitewater Creek and Lower Whitewater Creek in 2007; local use showed that the generic “creek” was favored over “river.” At the same meeting, the DNC approved the names Lower Castor River and Upper Castor River to replace the name of Castor River, which had been similarly bisected into two separate features.]

*Jun. 14 (621st) Voting by Deputy Members*

The DNC Chair announced that the BGN Executive Committee had met on June 5th. A version of the BGN’s bylaws with suggested amendments regarding voting rights was distributed to the DNC. There was considerable discussion regarding the paragraph allowing deputy members to vote at meetings of the standing committees. The change indicates that each standing committee may decide if a deputy member may vote, and if so, the procedure for doing so.

*Derogatory Name Changes*

Staff announced that the changes to names in South Dakota that contain the words “Squaw” and “Negro,” mandated by State legislation, are being processed. The Maine State Names Authority has urged the DNC to approve the list of changes from “Squaw” to “Moose” for features in Piscataquis County. It was agreed that the changes would be “staff processed” even if possible name duplication occurs.

Staff announced that Oregon has now enacted legislation, shortly following the “Joint Memorial” (resolution) recently passed, indicating that the word “Squaw” is to be removed from State products and signs, and urging the Federal Government to do the same.

*Jul. 12 (622nd) Discussion of J. Strom Thurmond Reservoir, SC/GA*

The DNC members discussed the name J. Strom Thurmond Reservoir, located in the States of South Carolina and Georgia. In 1980, the name Clarks Hill Lake was congressionally legislated name and it appears to be in predominant local use. However, in 1987, the present name, J. Strom Thurmond Reservoir, was legislated, and therefore is the name that must be used on Federal products.

*Jul. 23-Aug. 3 13th PAIGH Geographic Names Course, Bogotá, Colombia*

The thirteenth course in applied toponymy, held under the auspices of the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH), was conducted in Bogotá. The course included lectures on various aspects of standardization, as well as an intensive field exercise and a workshop for automated data processing. The course included 33 students from various agencies and departments of the national government.



*Sep. 4-8 25th Annual meeting of COGNA, Boise, ID*

The Council of Geographic Names Authorities (COGNA) held its 25th annual meeting in Boise, Idaho, hosted by the Idaho State Historical Society. The meeting was dedicated to Merle Wells, who recently passed away, in honor of his work on Idaho placenames with the Idaho State Museum and Idaho Geographic Names Advisory Council (IGNAC). The 70 registered attendees included representatives from Federal agencies and 17 State Names Authorities. Activities included a meeting of IGNAC; the monthly meeting of the DNC (the 624th, held on September 5th); the State/Federal Roundtable session; and a toponymic tour to Three Island Crossing, where emigrants had to make the decision to risk crossing the Snake River in order to use the easier northern route along the Oregon Trail. The media extensively covered the meeting, especially the discussion of changing Chinks Peak to Chinese Peak (a local issue being considered by the DNC) and use of the word “Squaw” in three geographic names.

*Sep. 5 (624th) Voting by Deputy Members*

For the first time in DNC history, deputy members are now allowed to vote on name proposals.

*“Squaw” Name Changes*

Roger Payne provided an overview of the efforts in various States to eliminate the word “Squaw” in geographic names. The DNC voted to change the names of Squaw Butte and Squaw Coulee to Indian Woman Butte and Indian Woman Coulee.

The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) submitted a resolution to the DNC asking that the word “Squaw” be “added” to the existing list of two derogatory words. Payne elaborated that an informal survey had been conducted by the DNC staff, with the results indicating that interested parties are unable to agree upon a suitable word for a universal change, and further, most Tribal councils that responded indicated a desire to submit replacement names from their respective languages so as to preserve cultural heritage.

*State Names Authorities Established in Massachusetts, Michigan, and Indiana*

Staff announced that Massachusetts, Michigan, and Indiana now have established a State Names Authority (SNA). This leaves only Iowa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and the Northern Mariana Islands without such an authority.

*Staff Processing of Hawaiian Names*

Jenny Runyon (DNC Staff) explained the Staff Processed Name (SPN) procedure, noting that it normally consists of a large list of names with a common theme for change; for example, adding the okina (glottal stop) and kahakō (macron) to large numbers of names in Hawaii. At any time, one or more names may be removed from such lists for any reason for full processing. This procedure includes notifying all interested parties and inviting comment within 30-45 days, after which the proposed change becomes effective. Runyon then presented to the DNC a list of

names in Hawaii that were proposed to be changed to include the special writing marks. [Over 2,500 updates were made to GNIS entries between 1999 and 2015.]

*Sep. 26-28 2nd Annual GNBC Meeting, Halifax, Nova Scotia*

The Geographical Names Board of Canada (GNBC) held its second annual meeting in Halifax, NS. There was a presentation on the spatial encoding of Canada's geographical names database as well as a discussion on undersea features names policies.

*Oct. 11 (625th) Reactivation of Proposal to Change Name of Mount McKinley to Denali, AK*

The Lieutenant Governor of Alaska, who chairs the Alaska Board on Geographic Names, sent a letter to the DNC indicating that the State will be reactivating its request to change the name of Mount McKinley to Denali.

*Nov. 8 (626th) "Squaw" Name Changes in Nebraska*

The DNC approved the changes to six names in Nebraska that contained the word "Squaw". The Governor of Nebraska had encouraged counties to work with local communities to change the names of the fifteen features in eleven counties in Nebraska that contained the word "Squaw." The Governor sent a list of changes for six features located in seven counties that had local support; the other counties were either continuing their research or did not believe that the word "Squaw" was intended to be derogatory. The changes approved were Squaw Creek in Cass County to Mud Creek (after a local name for the stream); Squaw Creek in Gage County to Otoe Creek (for the Otoe Tribe); Squaw Creek in Saline County to Otoe Creek (for the Otoe Tribe); Squaw Creek in Holt County and Knox County to Red Otter Creek (in honor of one of 38 Santee Indians executed in 1862 after a conflict with U.S. troops in Minnesota); Squaw Creek in Otoe County to Wyoming Creek (for Wyoming Township); and Squaw Creek in Sarpy County to Big Elk Creek (for Big Elk [d. 1846] the last "full-blooded" Indian leader of the Omaha Tribe).

*"Squaw" Name Changes in Piscataquis County, Maine*

Staff reported that the Maine SNA confirmed that all appropriate actions were taken with the Piscataquis County "Squaw" names and that due process was followed, so there is no need to re-contact the county. The DNC asked the staff to request written confirmation from the SNA that the local jurisdictions had worked with the Tribal councils.

*USACE Use of Unapproved Names*

There is some evidence that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) may have changed some names on maps and charts because of a lack of awareness of the BGN and its policies and procedures. The committee recommended that USACE should be contacted and encouraged to submit name changes to the DNC, which will then be processed as either staff processed or undocketed names, because of the need for rapid application on Federal maps and products.

Dec. 13 (627th) *"Squaw" Name Changes in Montana*

The Montana Geographic Names Advisor submitted a letter objecting strongly to the DNC's decision to change the names Squaw Butte and Squaw Coulee to Indian Woman Butte and Indian Woman Coulee. The State and county representatives believe there is compelling published and historical evidence to support Sioux Butte and Sioux Coulee instead. They also disputed the claim that the Sioux, "a nomadic people," are not native to the area, noting that the claim "is very weak." [The DNC did not change the names Indian Woman Butte and Indian Woman Coulee.]

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### *Jan. 10 (628th) Handling of Proposals Rejected by State Names Authorities*

Staff asked the DNC for guidance regarding how to proceed in the case of proposals that have been docketed but are now considered “closed” by the Washington State Board on Geographic Names (WSBGN). The WSBGN determined that the proposals did not satisfy the necessary State criteria for consideration. As such, there will be no recommendation from the State. In this case, the names were not proposed separately to the DNC so they should not have been docketed. The DNC decided that if the WSBGN has ruled them “closed,” the DNC should do the same.

### *Feb. 14 (629th) “The National Map”*

Staff informed the DNC that U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) is conducting nine pilot programs to launch *The National Map* effort, which will assure that topographic maps are current and readily available. “Geographic Names” is one of the eight data layers in this effort.

### *FIPS 55*

Staff announced that FIPS 55 data, which provides the official code for places in the United States, is now available at the BGN website for downloading by State, as well as for searching individual entries. The USGS is the maintenance agency for FIPS 55. [FIPS 55 codes were withdrawn February 8, 2005 and replaced by the GNIS Feature IDs, although FIPS codes are still being cross-referenced in GNIS. See:

<https://www.nist.gov/sites/default/files/documents/itl/FIPSCodesReplacementChart2015.pdf>

### *May 9 (632nd) “Squaw” Name Changes in Montana*

Staff distributed an article from the *Missoulian* newspaper in Montana that described the State legislation changing 76 names containing the word “Squaw.” The article described the process by which a name change is considered at the local, State, and Federal levels.

### *LANDVIEW V DVD*

Staff informed the DNC that the GNIS compact disk will no longer be available publicly because the data and technology are outdated. GNIS data will now become part of the LANDVIEW V DVD. The replacement product might be the LANDVIEW V product currently distributed by the U.S. Census Bureau; some variation of that product, or both. LANDVIEW includes the present capabilities of the textual database along with graphic map display and analysis.

### *Input from Tribal Authorities on Proposals*

Lewis McArthur, Oregon Board on Geographic Names (OGBN), asked the DNC to allow the OGBN to determine whether or not to contact Tribal governments when reviewing names issues. A lengthy discussion ensued and it was noted that this request stemmed from a particular proposal for a feature that was not on or near Tribal lands. It was noted that the BGN's Tribal policy addresses proposals for features wholly or partially on lands under tribal jurisdiction. Members decided that SNAs can contact tribal governments provided they do so for all tribes with a current or historical interest in the area. It was further noted that the DNC values comments from all interested parties.

### *Jul. 23-27 26th Annual Meeting of COGNA, Baltimore, MD*

The Council of Geographic Names Authorities (COGNA) held its 26th annual conference in Baltimore, Maryland. USGS employees and BGN members and staff participated in many of the agenda items: as keynote speaker; giving four paper presentations; serving as panelists; and conducting a workshop. Conference activities included the monthly meeting of the DNC (the 625th, held on July 25th), the State/Federal Roundtable, and a toponymic tour of the Chesapeake Bay, from Baltimore to Annapolis on the tall ship *Clipper City*. Many of the presentations discussed *The National Map* and the extensive digital mapping effort at USGS.

### *Jul. 25 (635th) Alaska Dictionary of Geographic Names*

The names listed in *The Alaska Dictionary of Geographic Names* (Orth, Donald, 1967) have been integrated with GNIS, resulting in approximately 2,600 new entries, as well as notes on name origin and historical information for approximately 15,000 entries.

### *Proposal to Name Clark's Mountain, OR*

The DNC considered a proposal, submitted by the secretary of the Oregon Chapter of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, to make official the name Clark's Mountain for a summit on the coast of Oregon. It is believed that the summit was seen by William Clark in 1805 from nearby Cape Disappointment. There was discussion as to whether the name should include the apostrophe. The Oregon Geographic Names Board (OGBN) requested that it be included, despite the fact that to do so would violate the DNC policy regarding possessive apostrophes. The DNC agreed to consider the name with the apostrophe, adding that if the name was

disapproved, it could be presented a second time without the apostrophe. The DNC approved the name with the apostrophe.

*Aug. 5-16 14th PAIGH Geographic Names Course, San Salvador, El Salvador*

The Pan American Institute of Geography and History's annual course in applied toponymy was held in San Salvador. There were 16 students in the class. The computer workshop was enhanced and the students were trained on the use of the Internet as a toponymic search tool. A LANDVIEW V special disk containing most names in El Salvador was used in the course and was well received.

*Aug. 26-Sep. 6 8th UNCSGN and 21st Session of UNGEGN, Berlin, Germany*

The Eighth UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNCSGN) and 21st Session of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) were held at the Federal Foreign Ministry in Berlin, and included a training session for new delegates, mostly from developing nations. The conference was attended by 282 participants from 88 countries. Randall Flynn and Leo Dillon served as conveners of the Working Group on Gazetteers and Data Exchange the Working Group on Country Names, respectively. Roger Payne was interviewed by National Public Radio regarding the nature and purpose of the conference, and the extent of U.S. participation.

*Sep. 12 (636th) "The National Map"*

Staff reported that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approved "Geographic Names" as a data layer in *The National Map* program.

*Oct. 16-18 3rd Annual GNBC Meeting, Vancouver, British Columbia*

The Geographical Names Board of Canada (GNBC) held its third annual meeting in Vancouver. Payne represented the BGN. The meeting provided an opportunity to hold a UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) Divisional Meeting.

*Oct. 10 (637th) Commemorative Names Policy and Pet Names*

Staff asked members whether they would consider proposals to name features for pets. The DNC determined that unless there is a direct violation of the Commemorative Names Policy, the proposal should go through due process, subject to that policy.

### *Frivolous Proposals*

Staff solicited comments from members as to whether the online form might be resulting in the submission of frivolous name proposals. After some discussion, the DNC decided that staff should require information for select fields so as to make the application more complete and lessen the chance that a submission would be frivolous.

### *Commemorative Names Policy and Family Names*

Staff noted that proposals are being received to name features for an entire family rather than for one or more specific individuals. The DNC confirmed that the Commemorative Names Policy requires the proponent to identify a specific person or persons to be commemorated.

### *Nov. 14 (638th) Possessive Case Apostrophes in Names*

The Oregonian newspaper in Portland contacted the DNC regarding its approval of the name Clark's Mountain, specifically, the inclusion of the possessive apostrophe since the DNC has a policy discouraging such usage. Staff explained that the decision was made to preserve the historical name, although it is only the fifth such exception made since 1890.

### *Dec. 2-13 21st BGN/PCGN Conference, Washington, DC*

The 21st BGN and British Permanent Committee of Geographical Names (PCGN) Conference was held at the Library of Congress in Washington, DC. Numerous topics were discussed, including national standardization, automation, indigenous names, and Antarctic names, as well as various topics related to foreign names activities.

### *Dec. 12 (639th) 1963 and 1974 Changes to Derogatory Names Made Official By Policy*

Staff asked the DNC whether changes that were made in 1963 and 1974, to change the pejorative forms of "Negro" and "Japanese," should be considered BGN decisions. The DNC asked staff to research whether votes had been taken on the matter in 1963 and 1974. [It was determined that the DNC did not vote on the names in 1963 or 1974 so rather than being Official by Decision, the changes became Official by Policy.]

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### *Jan. 9 (640th) Proposal to Name Tagalong Run, PA*

The DNC received a proposal to apply the name Tagalong Run to a stream in Pennsylvania. The name refers to the Girl Scout cookie and so an inquiry has been made to the Little Brownie Bakers regarding the potential copyright issue. [This proposal was approved by the DNC on February 13, 2003.]

### *Feb. 13 (641st) Proposal to Name Mount Orange Shasta, ID*

The DNC received a proposal to name a summit in Idaho Mount Orange Shasta; the name refers to an empty soda can found at the top. The members were asked if such “whimsical” proposals should be processed. Members noted that many names have been and are given in a whimsical manner, which is a vibrant part of the naming process and the nation’s namescape. They determined that such proposals must be given due process. [The proposal for Mount Orange Shasta was disapproved on January 8, 2004.]

### *Processing a Proposal in the Event of a Proponent’s Death*

The staff asked the DNC if, in the event of a proponent passing away prior to a DNC decision, the case should be continued. The DNC determined that the proposal should still be processed.

### *Posting of BGN Documents on the Internet*

In accordance with direction from the Full Board, members discussed what information to post at the public website. They determined that the member list, State Names Authorities list, Docket, Decision Lists, and the Monthly Minutes should be posted. [From DNC minutes, the following initial Internet posting date for documents: March 13, 2006; BGN Review Lists (formerly “Dockets”): June 6, 2006; BGN Fact Sheets: August 27, 2014; Policy X: October 23, 2017]



### *DNC and ACUF Purview Over Offshore Features*

Trent Palmer, Secretary of the Advisory Committee on Undersea Features (ACUF), briefed the DNC on the recent special meeting that was held to analyze areas of responsibility of the BGN's standing and advisory committees. The members agreed that the DNC is responsible for features, exposed and underwater, within 12 miles of U.S. territory. If a feature is partially within this area, DNC and ACUF will collaborate, with the intent of arriving at a single name, despite the fact that there may be conflicting policies. The DNC affirmed that State Names Authorities (SNAs) would not be contacted unless the feature is within three miles of the coast.

### *Consultation with Tribes Not Recognized by the Federal Government*

Although proposals are processed on a case-by-case basis, there is confusion regarding wording in the *Principles, Policies, and Procedures* (PPP) as to which Tribes should be consulted. Specifically, the phrases "historical interest in the area" and "contacting non-federally recognized entities" are confusing. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) will provide guidance as to the wording to be used when contacting non-federally recognized entities. A BIA map that delineates Tribal homelands, plus a 50-mile radius, will determine which federally recognized Tribes to contact.

### *Pueblos and Housing Subdivisions Not Under DNC Purview*

Staff at the National Park Service (NPS) Mapping Center in Harpers Ferry has asked if pueblos (Indian areas of ruin in the southwestern United States) are considered administrative features. After some discussion, members determined that they are administrative and therefore not subject to DNC policies; however, they should be collected and promulgated through GNIS.

Names of housing subdivisions are typically reviewed and approved by county governments and are essentially administrative; therefore the DNC ruled that, effective immediately, such names are outside the DNC's purview. The features should continue to be collected and promulgated through GNIS.

### *Mar. 13 (642nd) Consultation with Tribal Councils*

The Minnesota Geographic Names Authority (SNA) registered a formal complaint regarding the deferral by the DNC at its February meeting of several proposals because the staff had not sought Tribal opinion. The SNA believes that the State law requiring a public hearing is sufficient. The BIA deputy member responded that BIA believes that public hearings are not sufficient to satisfy the Tribal consultation requirement, especially in the case of Tribes with historic interest in an area. It was agreed that a compromise might be possible, whereby the SNA can make the necessary tribal contacts rather than the DNC staff, which is in keeping with the existing county hearing process in Minnesota.

*Mar. 13 Proposal to Name Columbia Point, CO*

Dr. Scott Parazynski (NASA) asked the DNC if NASA's proposal to name a summit Columbia Point, in honor of the Space Shuttle Columbia and the U.S. Space Program, would be considered commemorative. After much discussion, the members decided that the name does not commemorate specific individuals and so the Commemorative Names Policy is not a factor.

*Apr. 10 (643rd) Proposal to Name Piestewa Peak, AZ*

The Governor of Arizona asked the Arizona State Board on Geographic and Historic Names (ASBGHN) to waive its five-year waiting requirement for commemorative names, and to approve a request to change the name of Squaw Peak in the City of Phoenix to Piestewa Peak, in honor of Pfc. Lori Piestewa, who was killed in March in the conflict in Iraq. No proposal has been forwarded to the DNC, which has never made an exception to its five-year waiting requirement.

*Proposal to Name Columbia Point, CO*

The DNC approved the proposal to apply the new name Columbia Point to an unnamed summit in Saguache County, Colorado. Endorsements were received from the county commissioners, the Colorado Board on Geographic Names (CBGN), the Governor of Colorado, and a State Senator, and there was no evidence of any opposition from any indigenous groups.

*May 8 (644th) Proposal to Name Piestewa Peak, AZ*

The DNC members discussed the name change of Squaw Peak to Piestewa Peak, even though no proposal has been received. The ASBGHN will submit the proposal in due course, likely with a request from the Governor's office that the DNC waive the five-year waiting period. However, if this is not possible, the Governor has asked that the proposal be placed on hold until the waiting period has passed. Following further discussion, members noted that only the U.S. Congress, by specific legislation, can circumvent BGN policies.

*Clarification of DNC Purview*

The DNC decided that even though its authority extends to all feature types, its policies will apply only to natural features, plus canals and reservoirs.

*Jun. 12 (645th) PPP Review*

Members reviewed the DNC's *Principles, Policies, and Procedures* (PPP). An annotated copy of the PPP, including all comments received since the June 2000 meeting, was distributed in advance. Each topic in the PPP was assigned a level of importance. DNC members agreed that more time is needed to complete the review. Members also decided that a subcommittee should be established to address the existing Names of Native American Origin Policy.

*“Negro” Names in North Carolina*

The North Carolina State Legislature passed a bill to ban the use of the pejorative form of the word “Negro” in geographic names in the State. The North Carolina Board on Geographic Names (NCBGN) made a presentation on geographic naming to the State Legislature. The NCBGN referenced the decision by the Federal Government in 1962-63 to change all occurrences of the word. The DNC staff has researched the names that were cited specifically in the State bill, and where warranted, has added any missing information to the GNIS.

*Jun. 23-Jul. 4 15th PAIGH Geographic Names Course, Quito, Ecuador*

The annual Geographic Names Course offered by the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH) was conducted in Quito. Twenty-two students were in attendance, all representing their country’s military departments. Resolution V from the 36th PAIGH Conference named the geographic names course “Curso De Nombres Geográficos Jose Joaquín Hungria Morrell.” This name commemorates Ing. Hungria Morrell of the Dominican Republic, who was actively involved in and a major supporter of PAIGH activities for more than 50 years.

*Sep. 11 (648th) DNC Meeting Chair*

The DNC discussed and agreed that in the absence of the chair, the vice-chair should chair the meeting.

*Sep. 30-Oct. 4 27th Annual Meeting of COGNA, Pacific Grove, CA*

The Council of Geographic Names Authorities (COGNA) held its 27th annual meeting in Pacific Grove, California, hosted by the California Advisory Committee on Geographic Names (CACGN). The 60 registered attendees included 17 BGN representatives from the DNC, Foreign Names Committee, Advisory Committee on Undersea Features, and staff. The keynote speaker was Don Cooke, Urban and Regional Information Systems Association (URISA), who discussed Toponymy in the Digital Era. BGN presentations included four papers discussing ACUF standardization, GNIS, generic names, and *The National Map*. Activities included a meeting of CACGN; the monthly meeting of the DNC (649th, held on October 1st); the State/Federal Roundtable, which discussed issues of the BGN’s PPP; and a toponymic tour of Steinbeck Country.

*Oct. 1 (649th) DNC Reports*

Staff provided an overview of a number of “high profile” issues that have been addressed in recent months by various SNAs. Examples include the ongoing effort to change the name of Mount McKinley in Alaska to Denali; the renaming by the ASBGHN of Squaw Peak to Piestewa Peak; the proposed renaming of Lake Powell in Arizona and Utah to Glen Canyon Reservoir; the naming of Columbia Point in Colorado; the rejection of the proposal to rename Jewfish Creek in Florida; and an attempt in Massachusetts to sell the names of parks to commercial ventures. In

addition, the Minnesota SNA has suggested that its public hearing process is sufficient to solicit tribal input. In New Hampshire, despite several discussions with the BGN Executive Secretary regarding Federal naming policies, the State Legislature voted to change the name of Mount Clay to Mount Reagan. No formal proposal has been submitted to the BGN, and the name Mount Clay continues to be official for Federal use.

*Oct. 15-19 4th Annual GNBC Meeting, Saint John's, Newfoundland and Labrador*

The Geographical Names Board of Canada (GNBC) held its 4<sup>th</sup> annual meeting in Saint John's, Newfoundland. Roger Payne represented the BGN and gave a presentation highlighting *The National Map* and noted procedural differences for processing geographic names between the GNBC and the BGN.

*Nov. 13 (650th) DHS's Initial Attendance at the BGN*

The BGN approved the Department of Homeland Security as a BGN member department. Concurrence by the Secretary of the Interior is in process. It is expected that the new appointee(s) will have an interest in geographic information systems and that the new members might also represent the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the U.S. Coast Guard.

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### *Jan. 8 (652nd) PPP Review*

In order to finalize the *Principles, Policies, and Procedures* (PPP), the DNC addressed two outstanding issues. First, there is an apparent discrepancy in the pet/animal names policy between the Commemorative Names Policy and the section on Miscellaneous Policies. A member suggested that there is a difference between “commemorative” naming for persons and for animals, and as such the policy should not apply to pets/animals. After discussion, the members agreed they would continue to accept proposals to name features for pets and other animals and that each case would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

There is also a discrepancy between the Derogatory Names Policy and the Use of Variant Names Policy with regard to the possible publication of the word “Squaw” as a variant name on Federal maps. A member suggested that the policy might be reworded to indicate that in those cases where a name containing the word “Squaw” had been changed by the DNC, the variant name should not be published. However, because the word “Squaw” has not been added to the list of two names that are prohibited universally, this might still be confusing and inconsistent. The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) deputy member asked whether the word “Squaw” should be determined to be derogatory and offered to draft new wording of the Derogatory Names Policy stating that the name should be recognized as being universally derogatory. This resulted in some discussion regarding the establishment of a universal replacement word. There has been some interest in applying the term “Indian Woman,” although it is still understood that many Tribal groups would prefer to propose a name in their native language or one that has significance in their culture. The members asked the staff to draft three versions of the policy: one with the original wording; another outlining the results of the June 2003 policy review meeting; and a third summarizing the results of this meeting.

Members noted that the revision of the PPP should be an ongoing process. Changes, additions, and editorial corrections may be proposed, evaluated, and applied at any time, not just at five-year intervals.

### *DNC and ACUF Purview Over Offshore Features*

The Secretary of the Advisory Committee on Undersea Features (ACUF) restated the need for cooperation between the DNC and ACUF in cases where a geographic feature under consideration lies within an area of interest to both committees. A review of the Undersea Features listed in the GEOnet Names Server (GNS) shows that there are a number of features that should be under the purview of the DNC or under the purview of both committees jointly. As an example, there are approximately 80 features that fall wholly or partially within the 12-mile nautical limit off the coast of California. After further review, only six of the names still need to be resolved, with only one of real concern because the honoree of the name, which was approved by ACUF in 1990, is still living. For features that straddle the 12-mile line, the entry can and should appear in both the domestic and undersea features databases, and the entries should be coordinated.

There are also a few entries in GNIS for which the feature type was recorded incorrectly, as well as numerous entries in GNS for features that straddle the 12-mile line that should be added to GNIS; the ACUF staff will forward the details to the DNC staff for resolution. An exception are those which are near Guantanamo Bay in Cuba; that area is only leased by the U.S. Government, and any geographic features which fall in leased areas are not under the purview of the DNC and therefore not listed in GNIS. The DNC was reminded that for features that lie within the 12-mile limit but beyond three miles of the coastline, the county and State governments are not consulted, as these features are outside State purview.

### *Feb. 12 (653rd) Advisory Committee on Extra-Terrestrial Features*

The responsibility for naming features on Mars lies with the BGN's Advisory Committee on Extra-Terrestrial Features (ACEF), with its secretariat at the USGS facility in Flagstaff, Arizona. NASA was one of the original members of ACEF. The advisory committee's jurisdiction extends only to lunar and planetary bodies, not stars.

### *PPP Revision Discussion*

A member of the Colorado Board on Geographic Names (COBGN) expressed concerns regarding the DNC's PPP, particularly the repetition of some statements and confusion about the content of the policy boxes.

Several items in the PPP still need to be resolved. For example, a member suggested that the Use of Diacritical Marks Policy be removed, as it is no longer relevant. Instead, a note regarding diacritics and special writing marks might simply be included under Guidelines. Roger Payne will prepare a summary of all the changes and issues that still need to be considered, including the revised wording of the policy regarding proposals for animal/pet names.

### *Hyphens in Tribal Names*

The staff requested the DNC's guidance on two new proposals to apply indigenous names containing hyphens to geographic features. After further research and input from Dr. William Bright, a noted toponymist and linguist, the DNC decided that hyphens should be permitted in such names.

### *Mar. 11 (654th) PPP Revision Discussion*

The DNC reviewed a summary of outstanding policy issues. The revised wording of the Animal Names Policy was approved, as was the issue of formatting the document and the matter of redundancy of policy references throughout the document. The deletion of the Use of Diacritical Marks Policy was also approved, citing its lack of relevance since all characters of the Roman alphabet are now permitted. [The Animal Names Policy does not appear in the 1997 edition of the PPP. See also January 13, 2005 664th entry]

### *Mar. 19 Determining Lands of Historical Interest to Tribes*

Several DNC members and staff met at the Library of Congress to review the research conducted by a George Washington University graduate student on the availability of maps showing historical Indian lands in the United States, and to discuss how this information might be used by the DNC staff to define "lands of historical interest."

Attendees discussed the issue of State Tribal liaisons. The DNC might wish to make a presentation to these groups and/or to the annual conference of the National Congress of American Indians.

### *Apr. 20-29 22nd Session of UNGEGN, New York, NY*

The 22nd Session of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) was held at United Nations Headquarters in New York. The session was attended by 190 participants from 63 countries. There were ten members in the U.S. delegation. Payne served as head of the delegation, which also included Curt Loy (NOAA), Leo Dillon (State), Bonnie Gallahan (USGS), Randall Flynn (NGA), and Trent Palmer (NGA). The U.S. participates in most of the working groups, but especially those on Training, Gazetteers and Toponymic Data Files, Pronunciation, and Terminology. Loy participated in the signing of a cooperative agreement between the BGN and the UK's Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (PCGN).

### *May 14 (656th) Meeting held at Library of Virginia, Richmond*

The DNC held its meeting at the Library of Virginia, hosted by the Virginia Geographic Names Authority. A reporter from the *Richmond Times Dispatch* was present, and an article was published shortly after. Following the meeting, the DNC members and staff toured the Alan M.

Voorhees Map Collection, an extensive exhibition of maps dating from the eighteenth century and earlier.

*June 10 (657th) Proposal to change Rhode Island to Aquidneck Island*

The DNC voted not to approve a proposal to change the name of the island named Rhode Island to Aquidneck Island. The name Aquidneck Island was a 1930 BGN decision; the name Rhode Island was a 1963 BGN decision. Although the name Aquidneck Island was in widespread local use, the BGN voted to retain the name Rhode Island based on the recommendations of local and State governments.

There has been very little activity over the past year regarding the renaming of geographic features named “Squaw.” The Montana House Bill 412 “Squaw Name Change” Committee continues to submit proposals and several changes have been approved by the DNC.

*Vermont SNA Procedures*

The Vermont Board on Geographic Names declined to make a recommendation on a proposal that had been submitted directly to the DNC because the proponent did not file a separate proposal directly with the State Board “as required by State law.” The DNC hopes a compromise to this procedural impasse can be found. [No compromise was reached and as of the publication of this document Vermont requires proponents to file directly with the State Board]

*PPP Revisions*

It was noted that all the remaining issues regarding the revision of the *Principles, Policies, and Procedures: Domestic Geographic Names* (PPP) have been resolved, with the exception of some minor rewording of a portion of the Policy on Derogatory Names, which is to be submitted by the USDA Forest Service. This will be the version that will be submitted at COGNA as a final draft.

*Proposal to Apply the Name Oklahoma River to a Portion of the North Canadian River, OK*

A bill has been introduced into the Oklahoma Legislature to apply the name Oklahoma River to the seven-mile portion of the North Canadian River that flows within the corporate boundaries of Oklahoma City. The original intent of the legislation was to rename the entire North Canadian River, which would have created a contentious situation. However, this new version is not to change a name, but to apply an additional name to a portion of an already-named feature, which is an acceptable toponymic practice. [The name North Canadian River remains official for Federal use for the entire length of the stream, with Oklahoma River included as a variant-in part.]



*Aug. 23-Sep. 3 16th PAIGH Geographic Names Course, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic*

The 16th Annual Geographic Names Course, offered under the auspices of the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH), was held in Santo Domingo. There were 18 students from the national government of the Dominican Republic, as well as academia and one student from Venezuela's national government.

*Sep. 9 (660th) "Squaw" Name Changes in Piscataquis County, Maine*

In 2001, the Piscataquis County government changed 14 names containing the term "Squaw" to "Moose." However, the DNC informed the county that perhaps more thought should have gone into the process, with different names selected so as to avoid duplication. The county declined, and the Maine State Names Authority recommended that the DNC approve all the changes to "Moose." The DNC staff confirmed that the new names have come into limited local use and are being submitted to the USGS in State data files. It seems the potential duplication of names is not a concern to the county or local citizens. The DNC approved the changes.

The word "Moose" is an Algonquin word. The DNC indicated that the procedure adopted by the county in this case was ill-developed and not in the spirit of the intent of the law, but had now been overtaken by events, specifically locally published digital maps.

*Sep. 15-17 5th Annual GNBC Meeting, Kingston, Ontario*

The Geographical Names Board of Canada (GNBC) held its 5th annual meeting in Kingston. Lou Yost (DNC Staff) represented the BGN. Topics included derogatory names, aboriginal names, and other issues familiar to the DNC. The Atlas of Canada, with assistance from members of the GNBC, has been collecting spatial footprint data (geometry) for inclusion in its online products.

*Oct. 7 (661st) Principles, Policies, and Procedures (PPP) Discussion*

The final issues related to the completion of the revision to the PPP, specifically the wording of the Derogatory Names Policy and the Use of Variant Names Policy, were resolved and the policies were approved. [See also, June 10, 2004 (657th).]

*Oct. 19-23 28th Annual meeting of COGNA, Jacksonville, FL*

The Council of Geographic Names Authorities (COGNA) held its annual meeting in Jacksonville, Florida, hosted by the Florida State Names Authority). The 60 registered attendees included 16 BGN representatives from the DNC, ACUF, and staff. The keynote speaker was Albert Th  berge (NOAA) who spoke about naming offshore East Coast and Gulf Coast undersea features. BGN presentations included two workshops on GNIS maintenance and DNC processing procedures, and three papers related to *The National Map*. Activities included the monthly meeting of the DNC (the 662nd, held on October 20th); the State/Federal Roundtable; and a toponymic tour of Saint Augustine.

*Oct. 20 (662nd) Staff Processing Names*

Jenny Runyon (DNC Staff) provided an overview of the proposal review process conducted by DNC staff. Map and text research is conducted, after which input is solicited from the appropriate counties, State Names Authorities (SNAs), and other interested parties. The Quarterly Docket is a summary of cases awaiting resolution by the DNC. Some cases can go to the DNC almost immediately after being docketed, while others need additional work and will take longer. Only if the case is ready for a vote will it go before the DNC. When all interested parties have commented, the cases are compiled into the Review List, which consists of the names to be voted on at the next meeting. The Monthly Action List is intended to be a summary of the DNC's decisions following each meeting, although it was noted that production of this report has been suspended temporarily, pending analysis of its worth and as a result of cutbacks in office staff. Similarly, the Annual Decision List has not been published since 1999. Upon request, the staff can provide a list of all decisions for a particular State. Payne indicated that the Decision List will no longer be published in conventional form and will be posted at the website instead. [It was not posted but users can query GNIS for all decisions during a specified timeframe.]

*Nov. 14-20 Meeting of PAIGH Directing Council, San José, Costa Rica*

Payne attended a meeting of the Directing Council of the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH) in San José. He now serves as Vice-President of the U.S. National Section. The meeting's purpose is to evaluate and analyze proposals before the Institute, and to make recommendations regarding acceptance.

*Dec. 14 (663rd) State Names Authority Established in Indiana*

Indiana has established a new Geographic Information Office, which is responsible for cooperating with the BGN on geographic names issues.. With this addition, there are now authorities in 50 States, along with Puerto Rico and Guam.

*Dec. 26-28 American Name Society Conference, Philadelphia, PA*

Jenny Runyon (DNC Staff) attended the annual meeting of the American Name Society (ANS) in Philadelphia, as a member of the ANS Executive Committee and Vice-President of the Toponymic Interest Group. This is the last year that ANS will meet in conjunction with the Modern Language Association in late December; beginning in 2006, it will meet instead in early January with the Linguistic Society of America.

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### *Jan. 13 (664th) Congressionally Approved Names Containing Abbreviations (Mt. or St.)*

The DNC agreed that if a name is established by an Act of Congress or Executive Order with an abbreviation (such as Mt. or St. rather than Mount or Saint), it should accept that form and the name should be recorded as such in GNIS. Prior to this decision, the DNC’s policy had always been to fully spell such names, with the exception of initials in personal names, and abbreviations were not permitted.

Joe Marinucci (Census) announced that the Census Bureau has decided that for its new edition of its FIPS 6-5 (“County Names”) publication, it will follow the DNC policy of spelling out *all* county names containing the abbreviation for Saint(e) unless it can be shown that the name was officially established in that form. In the case of incorporated populated places, the name should appear in the official articles of incorporation. It was agreed that if a name is spelled out, the abbreviated name is a valid variant name in GNIS.

### *Animal Names Policy Review*

The DNC reviewed the Animal Names Policy, as there appears to be a discrepancy between the wording in the current version of the draft PPP (i.e., “the [BGN] Board will not consider names for pets”) and the recollections of the staff. The members reiterated that the DNC *will* consider naming features for pets on a case-by-case basis; however, it will not consider such names to be commemorative. The PPP will be revised to reflect this discussion. [See also, March 11, 2005 (654th).]

### *Feb. 10 (665th) Discussion of Negro Mountain, PA/MD*

The staff provided a local writer with a synopsis of the DNC’s 1994 decision not to rename Negro Mountain, a summit located on the boundary between Maryland and Pennsylvania. The writer indicated that a newly-published book suggests the proposal was submitted by a large group of African American citizens living in the vicinity of the summit, whereas it was in fact submitted by a single individual from Pittsburgh. The proposed change was rejected on September 8, 1994 (547th) after the DNC received unanimous objections to the change from all

interested parties. The staff took the opportunity to provide the writer with the correct background on the proposal.

*Current Official Version of the PPP*

DNC members have asked whether the DNC is operating under the 1997 published *Principles, Policies, and Procedures* (PPP) or the current draft version. Since the draft is just that, the 1997 version is the only official document to be used.

*Mar. 1-10 22nd BGN/PCGN Conference, London, England*

The 22nd BGN and British Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (PCGN) conference was held at the offices of the Royal Geographical Society in London. An agreement was renewed with the PCGN regarding continued specific collaboration between the BGN and PCGN.

*Apr. 14 (667th) Commemorative Names and Intellectual Property Rights*

In response to a proposal for the new name A D Williams Creek, the Chair recently made inquiries at the Department of the Interior (DOI) Solicitor's Office regarding the trademarking of the name and likeness of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his family members. The intended honoree, Adam Daniel Williams, was the maternal grandfather of Martin Luther King, Jr. The inquiry resulted in a broader discussion of commemorative naming and whether the DNC has any legal obligations to obtain clearance for the application of commemorative names. Vanessa Cooper and Elizabeth Coles from DOI's Solicitor's Office attended the meeting to offer their expertise in intellectual property rights. After a lengthy discussion, they recommended and there was general concurrence that the DNC should address this issue in the PPP. They stressed that the responsibility for obtaining concurrence or consent from the family or estate should rest with the proponent and not with the DNC staff. This procedure is most important when the name could have commercial implications, such as with regard to a prominent person or a commercial product. When a name proposal is submitted by a family member, there is a presumption that the family concurs. In the case of the A D Williams Creek case, staff noted that the King Center had been asked to comment on the proposal, and after a review of the evidence, the center had determined that its purview did not extend to stream naming and the DNC was free to pursue this naming effort. [A D Williams Creek was approved by the DNC on July 14, 2005.]

### *Populated Places and Administrative Names*

The DNC decided to manage incorporated Populated Places (PPLs) in GNIS as if they are administrative features. That is, if the Census Bureau advises the GNIS staff of an update to a Civil entity, the associated PPL entry will be updated accordingly and the DNC will not be asked to render a decision on the change. Any updates must be reflected in GNIS before being considered official for Federal use. Those features under the DNC's purview include all natural features, plus reservoirs, canals, and channels, and unincorporated PPLs.

### *May 12 (668th) FIPS 55*

In a follow up to a meeting held in February between the DNC staff and Bureau of the Census representatives, where the restructuring of the Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) 55 guidelines were discussed, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) announced the retirement of the FIPS 55 code. NIST will no longer maintain this code in its current form and a new coding standard using the GNIS Feature ID is proposed instead. October 1, 2005 has been established as the target implementation date. An announcement of this change will be posted online, pending the Census Bureau's review of the wording and timing. GNIS will be modified to accommodate additional data that is currently part of the separate FIPS database. The establishment of the GNIS ID as the feature standard code will enable GNIS to be used in the data transfer of additional feature types, most notably those in the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) Governmental Unit Boundary standard. [On August 1, the Federal Information Processing Standard (FIPS) 55 database, currently a separate file, will be merged with GNIS.]

### *Proposed FGDC Subcommittee for Geographic Names*

Bonnie Gallahan (USGS), Betsy Kanalley (USFS), and Doug Vandegraft (FWS) are members of the FGDC Coordination Group. Kanalley informed the DNC that FGDC is considering retiring some of its inactive committees, and where necessary, establishing new ones. She asked the DNC whether there might be a benefit to establishing a working group or subcommittee for geographic names. Roger Payne suggested it could increase awareness of GNIS and promote maintenance of the data by other Federal and State agencies. He will give a presentation to FGDC management and attempt to determine requirements and possible outcomes. FGDC should be able to provide the BGN with a template of the charter that would be required should the BGN decide to pursue the matter. Payne will contact FGDC with a request to be added to the agenda for an upcoming meeting. [No FGDC Subcommittee for Geographic Names was established.]

*Jun. 9 (669th) PPP Review*

The DNC discussed the status of the PPP revision, the possible use of a private editorial service, and how the final product should look. It was agreed that the PPP should continue to serve as a policy document, and that the latest draft still needs a thorough review. Copies will be available at the COGNA conference, and perhaps a more user-friendly version or a “quick reference guide” can be completed at a later date. Tony Gilbert, as the DNC’s representative from the Government Printing Office (GPO), has volunteered to review the document. Payne mentioned that the PPP will be posted at the BGN website once the Secretary of the Interior has given her approval.

*Jul. 14 (670th) “Docket” and “Review List” Terms Redefined*

Staff noted that in recent years several individuals have expressed confusion regarding the use of the terms “Docket” and “Review List.” In the early years, every name issue pending before the DNC was presented for consideration at every meeting (hence, “the Docket”), although most were deferred (or redeferred) pending further investigation. Over time, however, the staff limited the names on the monthly agenda to only those that were determined to be ready for a vote (“the docket review list”). Because of the apparent confusion, the staff has decided to reverse the terms. Beginning August 1, the term “Review List” (or “Quarterly Review List”) will refer to the quarterly distribution list of newly-received name proposals, while the “Docket” will be the names on the monthly agenda that are ready for a decision.

*Aug. 22-Sep. 2 17th PAIGH Geographic Names Course, Panamá City, Panamá*

The 17th annual geographic names course, offered under the auspices of the Pan American Institute for Geography and History (PAIGH), was held in Panamá City. There were 30 students from numerous offices and agencies of the national government, as well as from academia. Students were instructed in methods of automated processing of toponymic data, and were offered guidance on how to establish an integrated digital gazetteer for Latin America.

*Sep. 8 (671st) Due Process for Every Proposal*

DNC members discussed whether the staff ought to continue to process *every* proposal it receives (with the exception of commemorative names for living persons or names that are considered obviously derogatory). Several State Names Authorities (SNAs) representatives have suggested that the DNC should reserve the right to reject a proposal if it is “obvious” that the name has little to no chance of approval, such as whimsical names or names that might be construed to be “self-serving,” or where the proponent has not offered a sufficient rationale for the name. The DNC reiterated its long-standing policy that allows every person and proposal due process; that is, the decision for or against approval should only be made after all interested parties have been provided an opportunity to comment. If an SNA elects not to consider a proposal, its lack of input will be noted in the case brief, but the DNC is still obligated to consider the request.

*Sep. 14-16 6th Annual GNBC Meeting, Edmonton, Alberta*

The Geographical Names Board of Canada (GNBC) held its 6th annual meeting in Edmonton. Curt Loy represented the BGN.

*Oct. 11-15 29th Annual Meeting of COGNA, Portland, OR*

The Council of Geographic Names Authorities (COGNA) held its 29th annual meeting in Portland, Oregon, hosted by Lewis McArthur and the Oregon Geographic Names Board (OGNB). The 96 registered attendees included 13 BGN members and eight BGN staff members. The keynote address by Albert Théberge (NOAA) discussed the naming of underwater features off the Oregon coast. BGN presentations included one on *The National Map* by Dwight Hughes (USGS) and on the U.S. Forest Service GNIS maintenance program by Betsy Kanalley (USFS). Activities included a meeting of the OGNB; the monthly meeting of the DNC (the 672nd, held on Oct 12th); the State/Federal Roundtable; the COGNA business meeting; and a toponymic tour to Astoria, Oregon, with the theme of "Following Lewis and Clark's Footsteps." A special excursion to Mount Hood took place before the meeting.

*Oct. 12 (672nd) State Names Authority Abolished in Utah*

The staff reported at last year's COGNA conference that there is a State Geographic Names Authority (SNA) in all 50 States. However, in the past year, the Governor of Utah abolished all standing committees in that State, which included the Utah Committee on Geographic Names (UCGN). The Governor's Office has assumed the role of SNA, but it is hoped that the UCGN will be reinstated in the near future.

*Proposals to Rename Mount Diablo, CA, to Mount Miwok, Mount Ohlone, or Mount Yahweh*

The DNC did not approve proposals to change the name of Mount Diablo in California to Mount Miwok, Mount Ohlone, or Mount Yahweh. These decisions cited the negative recommendations of many local residents, numerous local and regional organizations, the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors, and the California Advisory Committee on Geographic Names. In addition, the existing name serves as the name of a Meridian line in the Public Land Survey System. The members also cited a lack of evidence that the existing name is derogatory, as well as a reluctance to change a name in longstanding and widespread verbal and published usage.

*Nov. 10 (673rd) Deferring Names for Additional State Names Authority Input*

Some SNAs are not providing sufficient detail regarding their decisions, and so the DNC discussed whether decision should be deferred for a reasonable period of time pending additional information. The SNAs should be asked to provide a specific reason why and how its decision(s) was reached. After some discussion, the members agreed that the DNC should defer a name for no more than one month for the SNA to provide the necessary information.

*Dec. 8 (674th) Proposal to Change Mount Saint Helens to Volcano Saint Helens, WA*

The DNC members rejected the proposal to change Mount Saint Helens to Volcano Saint Helens, citing longstanding and well-established usage.



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 Trent Palmer, Executive Secretary, Foreign Names Committee  
 Gale Norton, Secretary of the Interior

### *Jan. 12 (675th) State Names Authority Reestablished in Utah*

The Utah Governor ordered the reestablishment of the Utah Committee on Geographic Names (UCGN). The DNC staff apprised the UCGN of the status of the Utah proposals that are pending. One of the proposals, to change Chinamans Arch to Chinese Arch, has the support of the Governor and was scheduled to be included on the DNC's February docket. However, with the reestablishment of the UGNC, it is appropriate to allow that body an opportunity to vote on the name change.

### *Citation of Voting Member Agencies in Notification Letters*

Following each decision of the DNC, the staff notifies all interested parties regarding the outcome. Currently, the letters indicate that the decisions were made "in agreement with the findings and recommendations" of the appropriate local and County governments, the State Names Authorities (SNAs), and Federal land management agencies. The staff asked the members if it was appropriate to cite these Federal land management agencies, particularly if it might be construed that the opinion of the one member representing the Federal agency was the deciding factor. One member commented that the DNC's decisions are made after a review of the Federal policies and that to cite an agency's specific position is not relevant.

### *Discussion of the Commemorative Names Policy*

Roger Payne requested that the DNC should keep in mind all aspects of the Commemorative Names Policy when rendering a decision on a commemorative name proposal. Specifically, if such a name is denied, the DNC cannot state simply that the intended honoree had no direct or long-term association with the feature, but must also consider whether he or she was of local notoriety or made significant contributions to the community. Payne requested that SNAs should also evaluate all relevant criteria if they are citing the DNC policy.

*Feb. 9 (676th) Vintage Proposals*

The members discussed the issue of vintage proposals, those for which no local, State or Federal response has been received over a year after their receipt. There are approximately 150 proposals that have been pending before the DNC for at least eighteen months. Payne noted that although it has never been strictly enforced, there has long been an unwritten rule that once the one-year waiting period is reached, the DNC should vote on the issue, even if a local, State, and/or Federal agency has not come forth with its recommendation.

As an example, it was noted that several Oklahoma names (specifically, proposals to change the names of Dead Indian Lake and Dead Indian Creek) have been pending for almost nine years. The Oklahoma Board on Geographic Names (OKBGN) wished to know if the DNC would consider removing the names from consideration, citing the lack of willingness by all parties to come to an agreement. The members discussed the issue, but decided that once a name is on a Quarterly Review List, they have an obligation to vote on it. If the OKBGN chooses not to provide a recommendation, the DNC will take that into consideration and will vote based on whatever other information is available.

Members agreed that the staff should establish a timeline for future cases so that the backlog does not continue. Jenny Runyon (DNC Staff) was asked to compile a listing of the pending cases and to advise all interested parties, including SNAs and Federal agencies, that they must make every effort to develop a more efficient review process.

*Mar. 28-Apr. 4 23rd Session of UNGEGN, Vienna, Austria*

The 23rd Session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) took place from March 28 to April 4, 2006, in Vienna, Austria. Payne, Lou Yost (DNC Staff), Curt Loy (NOAA), Meredith Westington (NOAA), and Kanalley were in attendance, along with representatives of the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency and the Department of State. The conference was especially helpful in understanding international aspects of geographic names.

*May 11 (678th) BGN Executive Secretary's Retirement*

Payne announced his retirement as Executive Secretary of the BGN and the DNC. He noted that he will continue to assist the staff during the transition period by monitoring and responding to e-mails addressed to the GNIS Manager and to the Executive Secretary. He will also continue to serve as instructor for the Pan-American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH) geographic names courses. Jane Messenger (DNC Staff) presented Payne with a wooden plaque of Antarctica as a memento of thanks and appreciation for his years of service to the BGN. Kanalley announced the Full Board's approval of the name Mount Payne, in honor of his contributions in Antarctica and to the field of toponymy. Payne was only the third Executive Secretary of the BGN since its reorganization in 1947. Lou Yost (DNC Staff) will become the Executive Secretary of the DNC.

*Jun. 5-6 (679th) Vintage Proposals*

The DNC met at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, WV. Fifty-five proposals were brought before the DNC for decisions, including approximately one-third of the longstanding proposals, i.e., proposals that had been pending before the DNC for over 18 months.

*Jun. 14 Acting BGN Executive Secretary Named*

The BGN Executive Committee held an ad hoc meeting in June to discuss the future of the BGN Executive Secretary position. The Chair of the BGN asked that the Executive Secretaries for the DNC and FNC provide input regarding how their respective agencies were positioned to support the Secretariat in the future. Randall Flynn (NGA), who was recently appointed as the Department of Defense member, relinquished that role and once again assumed his previous position as Executive Secretary of the FNC. After reviewing the situation, the Chair appointed Lou Yost (DNC Staff) as Acting BGN Executive Secretary until the position can be filled permanently. [On Oct. 16, 2007 the BGN revised its bylaws and created the Executive Secretariat. The BGN sent the bylaws to the Secretary of the Interior (SOI) but no action was taken at this time to approve the revisions. The BGN sent the revised bylaws to the SOI again, in 2015, and they were approved Sept. 28, 2015.]

*Jun. 21-24 7th Annual GNBC Meeting, Ottawa, Ontario*

The Geographical Names Board of Canada (GNBC) held its 7th annual meeting in Ottawa. Lou Yost represented the BGN. The GNBC has undertaken a project to delineate the boundaries of natural features, and with the help of the provincial names boards is making good progress.

*Aug. 26-Sep. 10 18th PAIGH Geographic Names Course, Santiago, Chile*

The Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH) annual geographic names training course took place in Santiago. Payne and George Troop (NGA) served as instructors, conducted demonstrations, and provided classroom training.

*Sep. 14 (682nd) Proposals to Name Features Under Construction*

The DNC received a proposal for the new name Whispering Lake that would apply to a reservoir that has not yet been constructed. Staff asked the members whether they should proceed with the proposal or wait until the feature has been constructed. The DNC members requested that staff should ask the proponent for further details about the construction schedule and for evidence that State and local regulations have been satisfied.

#### *Sep. 14 Procedures for Recording Spanish Translations in GNIS*

Yost reported that the National Park Service is planning to publish its brochure of the San Juan National Historic Site in both English and Spanish, which has led to questions as to how the Spanish names should be recorded in GNIS. The DNC discussed whether the Spanish translations of English names should be considered variants. [A decision to include translated foreign names as variants was reached in June 2007.]

#### *Oct. 17-21 30th Annual Meeting of COGNA, Boulder, CO*

The Council of Geographic Names Authorities (COGNA) held its 30th annual meeting in Boulder, Colorado, hosted by the Colorado Board on Geographic Names (CBGN). The 76 registered attendees included 11 DNC members, three FNC members, and seven BGN staff. The keynote address by Albert Theberge (NOAA) discussed surveying in the American West by the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey. BGN presentations included a GNIS session with Yost, Bill Carswell (USGS), and Dwight Hughes (USGS), and a panel discussion on name processing by Federal land management agencies by Chick Fagan (NPS), Kanalley, Doug Vandegraft (FWS), Bob Bewley (BLM), and Robin Bellmard (BIA). The panel focused on how these agencies interpret DNC policies and processing procedures. Activities included a meeting of the CBGN; the monthly meeting of the DNC (the 683rd, held on Oct 18th); the State/Federal Roundtable; the COGNA business meeting; and a toponymic tour to Rocky Mountain National Park.

#### *Oct. 18 (683rd) Quarterly Review, Monthly Docket, Action, and Decision Lists*

In an earlier discussion (July 14, 2005), the terms for labeling the BGN proposal documents were switched. In a continuation of that discussion, it was determined there is no longer a need for an Annual Decision List, as the information can be obtained from the redesigned GNIS website. The Action List, a listing of the DNC's decisions at a specific meeting, has been suspended indefinitely due to a lack of resources. [The Action List was reactivated in early 2013.]

#### *Transition from FIPS 55 Place Code to the GNIS FID*

The USGS prepared a Memorandum of Understanding with the Office of Management and Budget and the General Services Administration regarding the transition from the Federal Information Processing Standard (FIPS) 55 place codes to the GNIS Feature ID. These agencies have also agreed to maintain features within their domain in the GNIS.

#### *NHD/GNIS Coordination*

The National Hydrography Dataset (NHD) staff is working with the GNIS staff to improve the synchronization of names between the two systems. In the past few months, the NHD program implemented a new hydrographic layer that displays stream features as line strings based on the GNIS points. All streams must have at least two points: a primary point at the mouth and an additional point at the source, with secondary points in every USGS topographic map through

which the feature passes. There are still a few stream records in the GNIS for which the source coordinates were not recorded.

*Nov. 9 (684th) Derogatory Names in South Dakota*

Jenny Runyon (DNC Staff) provided DNC members with an update on the South Dakota proposals on Quarterly Review List 390, which would change the specific terms “Negro” and “Squaw” in 35 geographic names. The South Dakota Legislature passed a law in 2001 prohibiting the use of either word in State government publications. The staff believed that county and local governments were contacted for their opinions but later learned that many were not aware of the renaming effort nor were they involved in the process. The DNC members directed staff to process the proposals as submitted and each would be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

## Officers of the Board on Geographic Names

Gregory Boughton, Chair  
 Betsy Kanalley, Vice Chair  
 Betsy Kanalley, Chair, Domestic Names Committee  
 Leo Dillon, Chair, Foreign Names Committee  
 Karen Wood, Chair, Publicity and Publications Committee  
 Lou Yost, Acting Executive Secretary, U.S. Board on Geographic Names  
 Lou Yost, Executive Secretary, Domestic Names Committee  
 Randall Flynn, Executive Secretary, Foreign Names Committee  
 Dirk Kempthorne, Secretary of the Interior

### *Jan. 11 (685th) DNC Staff Organizational Changes*

Lou Yost reported that the closure of the National Geospatial Technology Operations Center (NGTOC I) in Reston on January 5th resulted in the majority of employees of the USGS Geographic Names Office leaving Federal service, either through a Reduction in Force or retirement. USGS transferred the majority of GNIS support functions to the USGS in Denver (NGTOC II), with additional support being provided by the USGS in Rolla, Missouri (NGTOC III).

### *Hiking and Backpacking Guides as sources for Names, and Colorado Mountain Club Input*

Yost introduced a discussion on the relevance of hiking and backpacking guides and related websites in the DNC review process. In the past, the USGS Mapping Centers maintained that these were not valid sources for GNIS compilation. The GNIS staff concurs and has stated that these guides and websites should not be used for GNIS Phase II compilation unless the name can be corroborated through additional and more reliable maps and documents. However, the DNC Staff suggested that these guides and websites do serve as evidence of local use of a name, albeit informal and unofficial, and therefore should be noted in the case briefs. Staff also noted that although it is not an official State government agency, the opinion of the Colorado Mountain Club (CMC) is typically sought when a Colorado summit is proposed to be named or renamed. The CMC has had over 90 years of association with the BGN and its input on proposals seems justified as an interested and knowledgeable party.

### *Apr. 23-May 3 23rd BGN/PCGN Conference, Washington, DC*

The 23rd BGN and British Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (PCGN) conference took place from April 23rd to May 4th at the Department of State. Dwight Hughes (GNIS Staff) reported on the status of the GNIS development and maintenance.

*May 10 (688th)*

*Proposal to Name a Feature for a Pet*

The DNC received a proposal to name a stream in Washington for a proponent's living cat. Jenny Runyon (DNC Staff) asked the members whether this request should be processed as it is still unclear how the DNC regards pet names. The latest review of the PPP resulted in a statement that such names are not commemorative and are to be processed and evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Citing this evidence, the DNC advised the staff to proceed with the proposal. [The proposal was closed in August 2012 after the proponent did not respond to a request for further details.]

*Generics and Tribal Names*

The DNC received a request from the Crow Nation to rename two streams that contain the word "Squaw" and are located on the Crow Indian Reservation. The proposed replacement names are Dawussuua Ashkaate and South Fork Dawussuua Ashkaate. The word "Ashkaate" reportedly means "creek" in the Crow language, so the staff asked the members whether in responding to the proposal, the DNC should require or simply suggest the addition of an appropriate generic in the English language. After some discussion, the members agreed that the staff should contact the proponent regarding English generics, but that the names could be processed as submitted if the proponent is not agreeable to adding a generic term. [Both names were approved as submitted at the September 3rd, 2008 DNC meeting.]

*May 8-17 19th PAIGH Geographic Names Course, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil*

The Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH) geographic names course in applied toponymy was taught in Rio de Janeiro.

*Jun. 11-12 (689th) Channel Names*

The DNC reaffirmed that the (re)naming of channels falls under its purview. Meredith Westington (NOAA) noted that the DNC has voted on channel names in the past. Runyon (DNC Staff) will contact the proponent concerning the proposal to apply the new commemorative name Rear Admiral Richard E. Bennis Reach to two features which are currently listed in GNIS as Shutes Reach and Folly Reach. These two existing names will be combined into one named feature which will be listed as Shutes-Folly Reach. The proponent will be advised that the proposal for Rear Admiral Richard E. Bennis Reach can be considered by the DNC after the five-year waiting period. He will also be asked to consider shortening the name. [The DNC approved the name Bennis Reach on August 14, 2008.]

*Translating Official Names into Other Languages*

The National Park Service and the U.S. Forest Service publish several of their visitor maps and brochures in foreign languages. The members have been asked whether this violates the BGN's policy of univocity, since a name translated and published in a foreign language is not the name listed as official in GNIS. It was noted that for educational purposes, some geographic names are shown in a foreign language, sometimes as a literal translation, and other times as explanatory text.

DNC members decided that only official names should be used on the maps and in the text, but that it was acceptable to provide a translation in the text provided the official name was also displayed. DNC members also agreed that translated names published on Federal products should be entered into GNIS as variants. [See also: September 14, 2006 (682nd).]

#### *Handling of Civil and Populated Place Feature Classes*

Joseph Marinucci (Census) noted that incorporated populated places are stored in the GNIS as either “civil” or “populated place” (PPL) feature classes, but sometimes as both. This lack of consistency causes considerable confusion and makes it difficult for Census to incorporate the GNIS FID into its datasets. In some cases, legal incorporated names are not the same as the official PPL name recognized in GNIS. Census requested that every incorporated PPL be listed as a separate feature, labeled with the feature class “civil”. An example would be to list Shepherdstown as a PPL, with a second civil entity with the name Town of Shepherdstown. Any ancillary data related to the incorporated entity would be included in and linked to the civil entry. Census agreed to assist in the update and maintenance of the data, and to suggest a method whereby civil entries are coordinated with incorporated PPL entries.

#### *Jul. 31 PATTON Alliance Gazetteer Evaluation Report*

Sandia National Laboratories published the Sandia Report SAND2007-5260, Final Report: PATTON Alliance Gazetteer Evaluation Project, which evaluated the requirements of users in the Intelligence Community for authoritative geographic names. The report identified the need to develop a common standard for domestic and foreign gazetteer data, as well as to develop a web feature service to disseminate the names.

#### *Aug. 8-10 8th Annual GNBC Meeting, Yellowknife, Northwest Territories*

The Geographical Names Board of Canada (GNBC) held its 8th annual meeting in Yellowknife. Yost represented the BGN. The GNBC discussed the ongoing effort by Canada to delineate polygon boundaries around natural geographic features, a topic of interest to the DNC.

#### *Aug. 20-31 9th UNCSGN and 24th Session of UNGEGN, New York, NY*

Yost attended the 24th Session of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN), held from August 20th to 31st, in New York. Kanalley, along with Yost, Curt Loy (NOAA), Westington (NOAA), and Runyon and several members and staff of the Foreign Names Committee (FNC) attended the 9th UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNCSGN). The conference provided an opportunity to interact with many representatives of naming authorities from other nations who face many of the same challenges as the United States. A number of papers highlighted the importance of geographic names in cultural awareness, particularly as a way to preserve and promote Native cultures. DNC members and staff met with a representative from Google Earth, who made a presentation on the use and standardization of geographic names in their products. An exhibit dedicated to former BGN Executive Secretary Meredith “Pete” Burrill was on display at the conference.



*Sep. 11 Publicity and Publications Committee Replaced with Special Committee on Communication*

The Executive Committee (EC) recommended that the Publicity and Publications Committee be abolished and replaced with a Special Committee on Communication (SCC), which will report to the EC. This will allow for more flexibility and encourage additional participation. The new committee will provide an increased focus on communication and outreach, particularly within and among Federal agencies. All agencies, particularly those not involved directly with the BGN, need to be aware that the BGN is the authority for geographic names. Yost noted that the committee has historically been focused on producing hardcopy publications, but with the increased use of the web, this should no longer be its primary responsibility.

*Sep. 13 (691st) Tribal Names in Idaho*

The Coeur d'Alene Tribe recently conducted a three-day workshop on Native names preservation and Federal naming policies at the Tribe's offices in Idaho. Representatives from approximately eight Tribes from throughout the U.S. attended. At the workshop, the Coeur d'Alene's GIS office demonstrated how unrecorded names might be added to the GNIS as well as the process for submitting name changes to the DNC.

*"Squaw" Name Changes in Montana*

The DNC received 25 proposals from the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation to rename geographic features in Montana that contain the word "Squaw." The proposed replacement names are from the Salish language.

*Proposal to Change Saint Marys Nipple to Saint Marys Knoll, ID*

The DNC members voted 7-6 to rename Saint Marys Nipple to Saint Marys Knoll. This was the third time the members voted on the proposed change, following tie votes in June and July. Discussions revolved around the extent of local support, whether or not the name was offensive, and the potential removal of a historical name.

*Oct. 2-6 31st Annual Meeting of COGNA, Lexington, KY*

The Council of Geographic Names Authorities (COGNA) held its 31st annual meeting in Lexington, Kentucky, hosted by the Kentucky Geographic Names Committee (KGNC). The 70 registered attendees included 10 DNC members and six BGN staff. The keynote address by Kenny Ratliff discussed Kentucky GIS. BGN presentations included the status of GNIS by Bill Carswell and GNIS data entry by Maria McCormick (GNIS staff). Activities included a meeting of the KGNC; the monthly meeting of the DNC (the 692nd, held on Oct 3rd); the State/Federal Roundtable focusing on past discussion topics as well as a BGN presentation by Jane Messenger (DNC Staff) and Ken Fox on determining Tribal contacts for name proposal processing; State Names Authority (SNA) reports from 24 states on activities since the last

COGNA meeting (a new feature at this meeting); the COGNA business meeting; and atoponymic tour of Kentucky Bluegrass Country and the capital city of Frankfort. The limited time available for the State/Federal Roundtable caused some frustration, as several topics were not given sufficient attention and as a result, lacked closure.

● *Oct. 3 (692nd) Commemorative Names for Celebrities*

The DNC discussed a proposal to name a stream in Pennsylvania Neruda Run to commemorate Pablo Neruda, the Chilean Nobel Prize winning poet. The staff asked whether the proposal should be accepted, since it is presumed Neruda had no association with the stream in question. The DNC responded that because of his international celebrity, one of the criteria of the Commemorative Naming Policy, the proposal should be considered.

*Proposal to Name Mount KIA/MIA, CO*

The DNC approved a proposal to apply the name Mount KIA/MIA to a summit in the San Isabel National Forest. The name, submitted by a military veteran, honors the nation's "Killed in Action" and "Missing in Action" who served in all of America's wars. The proponent's first attempt to apply the name in 2003 by changing the existing name Sheep Mountain was rejected due to local opposition. The proponent's second attempt, the year before, to name an unnamed feature Mount Kiamia, was also rejected due to concerns that "the form of the name would be meaningless to anyone not familiar with the military acronym." The approved name is unusual in including two acronyms separated by a solidus punctuation mark.

● *Oct. 16 BGN Approval of Revised By-Laws*

At the Full Board meeting on October 16th, the BGN's revised bylaws were approved. Kanalley provided a summary of the most significant changes, including: 1) the two Executive Secretaries (Foreign and Domestic) jointly comprise the Executive Secretariat of the BGN; and 2) the addition of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as a member. The revised document will be forwarded to the Secretary of the Interior (SOI) for final approval. [Note: this version of the bylaws was not submitted to or signed by the SOI.]

*Dec. 13 (694th) Proposal to Change Mount Rainier to Mount Tacoma, WA*

The NPS determined that the management of Mount Rainier National Park has not received any objections to the current name and has asked that the proposal not be processed until such time as the proponent develops a stronger justification. The Washington State Board on Geographic Names also spoke with the proponent, advising him that it would prefer to see more evidence of support for the change before considering the proposal. The proponent indicated he will work toward building a stronger proposal. Staff reminded the DNC that once a proposal is added to the Quarterly Review List, there is an obligation to bring it forward for a vote, unless it is withdrawn by the proponent. Citing the recommendations of the NPS and the WSBGN, the DNC agreed no action should be taken at this time, but that they might be willing to review the proposal in the future. The DNC has been asked on at least two previous occasions to change the existing name.

## Officers of the Board on Geographic Names

Betsy Kanalley, Chair  
 John Hebert, Vice Chair  
 Curtis Loy, Chair, Domestic Names Committee  
 Leo Dillon, Chair, Foreign Names Committee  
 Vacant, Chairman, Special Committee on Communication  
 Lou Yost, Acting Executive Secretary, U.S. Board on Geographic Names  
 Lou Yost, Executive Secretary, Domestic Names Committee  
 Trent Palmer, Executive Secretary, Foreign Names Committee  
 Dirk Kempthorne, Secretary of the Interior

### *Feb. 20-22 ESRI Federal Users Conference, Washington DC*

The ESRI Federal Users Conference was held at the Washington Convention Center. The BGN booth, which was set up to promote and publicize the BGN's mission both for domestic and foreign names, saw many visitors. Regrettably, the BGN panel and the DNC meeting, scheduled for the Friday of the conference, had to be canceled due to inclement weather conditions.

### *Mar. 13 (696th) Electronic Scanning of BGN Files*

Lou Yost and Jenny Runyon (DNC Staff) previously met with Greg Allord (USGS) at the Library of Congress to discuss the scanning of all BGN files and records dating back to 1890. The plan is to have these files accessible online, with each decision file attached to the GNIS entry. This will allow the public and other interested parties to view original documentation. There are many issues to be resolved, including the timeframe and available funding. Some funds have been allocated in the Fiscal Year 2008 budget to start the project.

### *Populated Place Files*

The USGS Geographic Names Office received several large files from the Census Bureau to correct and update GNIS entries for populated places and civil features.

### *USACE Attends DNC Meeting*

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) represented the Department of Defense (DoD) at the DNC meeting after an undetermined hiatus from the BGN.

### *Mar. 28 US/New Zealand Protocol*

Betsy Kanalley signed a protocol between the BGN and Land Information New Zealand, regarding the naming of geographic features in Antarctica.

*Mar. 29-Apr. 12 20th PAIGH Geographic Names Course, Quito, Ecuador*

Roger Payne (BGN Executive Secretary Emeritus) and George Troop (NGA) conducted the annual PAIGH geographic names training course in Quito from March 29th to April 12th.

*Apr. 10 (697th) Proposal to Change Squaw Peak to Piestewa Peak, AZ*

The DNC approved the name change from Squaw Peak to Piestewa Peak. The proposal was originally submitted by the Governor of Arizona in 2003 in an effort to eliminate a “Squaw” name. The name honored U.S. Army Pfc. Lori Piestewa, a Hopi Indian woman who died in the Iraqi conflict on March 23, 2003. Pfc. Piestewa was reported to be the first American Indian woman killed in combat. The Arizona State Board on Geographic and Historic Names (ASBGHN) approved the change on April 17, 2003. Although the Arizona Governor requested that the DNC approve the name at the time, the vote was deferred until the commemorative naming requirement that an individual be deceased for five years was met. The name proposal generated significant public interest and both strong positive and negative opinions. The negative votes were cast in the belief that the intended honoree did not have a long term or direct association with the summit in question, and also in the belief that the State Names Authority’s renaming process was flawed.

Following the BGN’s approval of the change to Piestewa Peak, the guests in attendance at the meeting asked that they be given an opportunity to express their appreciation. Hopi Tribal Chairman Nuvamsa thanked the members on behalf of the Hopi Tribe and the Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona, while Ernest Martinez, maternal uncle of Pfc. Piestewa, expressed the appreciation of the family. Cinda Hughes of the National Congress of American Indians thanked the DNC for allowing her to attend the meeting and invited them to work closely with her organization in the future to address other issues of mutual concern.

*Apr. 28-May 2 24th BGN/PCGN Conference, London, England*

Yost attended the 24th conference of the BGN and British Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (PCGN) in London during the week of April 28.

*May 8 (698th) Proposal to Change Mobile Bay to Bay of the Holy Spirit, AL*

The proponent who submitted an unsuccessful proposal to rename Mobile Bay in Alabama to Bay of the Holy Spirit in 1996 indicated that he wished to resubmit his proposal. He claimed that the Alabama Historical Association recently placed a plaque on a bridge over the bay; this plaque reportedly provides historical information on the naming of the bay, indicating that it was once named “Bahia del Espiritu Santo,” which translates as “Bay of the Holy Spirit.” In early June, he will host an event called the “Blessing of the Bay,” at which he claims he and many of the participants will refer to the bay as “the Bay of the Holy Spirit.” Runyon asked the DNC members whether they considered this sufficient evidence to warrant revisiting their previous decision. Several members remarked that to be historically accurate, the proposal would have to be for the

Spanish rendition of the name, not the English translation. The DNC members indicated that the plaque referring to historical usage of the name did not constitute new evidence to revisit the proposal.

*Proposal for a Universal Change from “Squaw” to “Indian Woman”*

Chick Fagan (NPS) announced that he is considering recommending a proposal to unilaterally replace the word “Squaw” with “Indian Woman” in geographic names. He first wanted to know if there would be support for the idea from the DNC. He noted that scholars who have studied the origins of the word have concluded that “Squaw” was not originally intended to be pejorative, but nevertheless it is now widely perceived as an objectionable word.

Although he preferred to leave the “Squaw” word intact, it has become a foregone conclusion that the DNC will be inclined to approve requests to change such names. If the DNC continues to approach each proposal on a case-by-case basis, it will require a long and laborious effort and impose a considerable burden on the DNC staff. It will also result in proposed substitute names that are difficult to pronounce and/or have no relationship to the original meaning. Substituting “Indian Woman” would avoid both these problems, and anyone who did not like “Indian Woman” would still be free to propose a name change in the usual manner. He noted that the DNC, if it should approve the proposal and enact such a universal change, should post a notice of its intent to do so in the Federal Register, and be prepared to receive extensive public comment. Since Tribes with languages of Algonquian origin apparently do not find the word offensive, the DNC protocol should give staff the authority to return the name to “Squaw” whenever requested by Tribal authorities.

The DNC protocol, if approved, would not extend to the names of administrative features, the renaming of which would be under the purview of the agency that administers them. Several of the members shared their views both for and against such a proposal, but all agreed that it should be considered and that more investigation and analysis is needed. Fagan agreed that it would be prudent to discuss the issue with the Secretary of the Interior’s (SOI’s) office and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA).

*Jun. 12 (699th) Commemorative Names Honoring Former President Ronald Reagan*

Mike Fournier (Census) noted that the DNC should anticipate the possibility of receiving numerous proposals to name and/or rename geographic features in honor of the late President Ronald Reagan. He noted that the Reagan Legacy Project intends to submit a proposal to name a natural or administrative geographic feature in every county in the nation for the late president once the five-year waiting period has passed, which will be in June 2009.

*Sep. 2-6 32nd Annual Meeting of COGNA, Oklahoma City, OK*

The Council of Geographic Names Authorities (COGNA) held its 32nd annual meeting in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, hosted by Wayne Furr (COGNA) and the Oklahoma Board on Geographic Names (OKBGN). The 45 registered attendees included 11 DNC members and 10 BGN staff members. The keynote address by Dr. Steven Sadler discussed Oklahoma places and geographic names. BGN presentations by Fagan discussed a possible universal change of “Squaw” to “Indian Woman” in geographic names, and by Yost and Runyon titled “The Doctor is In” to discuss BGN policies and procedures. Activities included a meeting of the OKBGN; the monthly meeting of the DNC (the 701st, held on September 3rd); the State/Federal Roundtable; SNA reports from 14 states; the COGNA business meeting; and atoponymic tour of Oklahoma City including the memorial and Capitol complex, Guthrie (the first State capital), and Langston (an African-American pioneer community).

*Sep. 3 (701st)*

*Proposal for Neruda Run, PA, Withdrawn*

DNC staff reported that the proposal received in October 2007, to name a stream in Pennsylvania Neruda Run in honor of Pablo Neruda, the Chilean Nobel Prize winning poet, was withdrawn from consideration in favor of another name that would honor a longtime member of the community. DNC staff received an objection to the proposal because of Neruda’s association with the Communist Party.

*Oct. 2-3 9th Annual GNBC Meeting, Québec, Québec*

The Geographical Names Board of Canada (GNBC) held its ninth annual meeting in Québec. Kanalley, Bonnie Gallahan (USGS), and Runyon attended. The program included sessions on international activities, liaison and promotion of GNBC and its mission, undersea feature naming policies, historic records preservation, and Native naming efforts. Gallahan presented a short paper on how the DNC deals with Native names and Tribal consultation.

*Oct. 9 (702nd) Procedures to Revisit Decisions*

The DNC staff asked the members to consider when it is appropriate to revisit a decision. The staff asked if they should make the determination that there is sufficient new evidence and/or information that was not available at the time of the original vote. The DNC members agreed that in instances when the new evidence is overwhelming, the staff can decide that the case should be reopened but if in doubt, the staff should continue to seek the DNC’s guidance. A specific example was presented this month; in 2006 the DNC rejected a proposal to change the name of Blackman Peak in Idaho to Blackmon Peak. An amateur historian in Idaho (not the original proponent) has conducted additional research and uncovered considerable new evidence, including signed documents and land records, which the staff believes does corroborate the claim that the name might be misspelled. The case will be reopened, and after the Idaho Geographic Names

Advisory Council revisits the issue, it will be presented once again to the DNC. [The DNC approved the change of Blackman Peak to Blackmon Peak on November 12, 2009.]

*Proposal to name a Feature and 16 Counterproposals, CT*

After a proposal was submitted to apply the new name Mason Bay to an unnamed bay in Connecticut, 16 counterproposals were submitted. The name Mason Bay was intended to honor Major John Mason (c.1600–1672), for whom nearby Mason Island was named. Major Mason was involved in the Mystic Massacre which virtually destroyed the Pequot Tribe. Responding to an online newspaper article, numerous local residents suggested that it would be inappropriate to name the feature for Mason. The article provided a link to the DNC's online application and as a result, the 16 counterproposals were submitted (Bay of Chippechaug, Bay of Tears, Body of Water at Mason Island, Chippechaug Cove, Chippechaug Inlet, Howe Bay, Huskie Cove, Nutmeg Cove, Pequot Cove, Pequot Sound, Riding Way Cove, Saint Edmunds Bay, Sheep Cove, Shepherd Cove, Sheeps Cove, Shepherds Cove, Whalers Bay). The DNC voted to leave the cove unnamed citing a lack of significant local support for any of the proposed names.

*Lake and Reservoir Feature Classification*

Members discussed the issue of whether an impounded body of water should be classified as “lake” or “reservoir.” The DNC decided that even if a body of water was once a natural lake, the fact that it is later impounded by artificial means warrants it being reclassified in the GNIS as a “reservoir.”

*Tribal Consultation*

Fagan (NPS) presented his concerns regarding the process by which the BGN staff is consulting with Tribal authorities on proposals. He suggested it might be more efficient if a notice were sent to a list of Tribal contacts whenever a new Quarterly Review List is released, inviting them to comment on any proposal in which they have an interest.

The DNC agreed this appears to be a viable option, but recognized that preparing a comprehensive list of authoritative contacts for every Tribe could prove to be challenging. The staff relies currently on the BIA Tribal Leaders Directory, but only half of the Tribes have a valid e-mail address and so if each Tribe is to be notified once a quarter, the workload will still be considerable. Fagan suggested that posting a notice in the Federal Register might be another option, but the costs and logistics might prove to be prohibitive.

*Proposal for a Universal Change from “Squaw” to “Indian Woman”*

After further review, the DNC determined that to institute a global change of “Squaw” to “Indian Woman” would not be feasible at this time. Some members expressed concern that “Indian Woman” might not be a suitable replacement and the logistics involved in consulting and informing all affected parties would be overwhelming. Fagan noted that after hearing the

discussion at COGNA, the Oregon Geographic Names Board (OGNB) decided it might wish to try something similar in that State and so the DNC concluded it would be best to wait to see the results of the Oregon efforts.

### *Wilderness Names Policy Exceptions*

Citing the restrictions of its Wilderness Names Policy, the DNC staff will ask a proponent to provide a reason why he/she believes an exception to the policy is warranted. The proponent will be told that the proposal will be on hold and not processed further until a reason is given.

### *Oct. 31 GNIS FID Approved by ANSI*

The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) announced that the GNIS Feature Name, Location, and Feature ID were approved as an official ANSI standard. The InterNational Committee for Information Technology Standards (INCITS) 446-2008 is described as “Information Technology-Identifying Attributes for Named Physical and Cultural Geographic Features (Except Roads and Highways) of the United States, Territories, Outlying Areas, and Freely Associated Areas, and the Waters of the Same to the Limit of the Territorial Zone.” Further, “This standard applies to selected named physical and cultural geographic features, geographic areas, and locational entities, except roads and highways, that are generally recognizable and locatable by name (i.e., have achieved some landmark status) and are of interest to any level of government and to the public for any purpose that would lead to the representation of the feature in printed or electronic maps and/or geographic information systems.”

### *Dec. 11 (704th) The National Map*

Yost recently attended a meeting of *The National Map* Products and Services leads at the USGS in Denver, Colorado. Discussions covered various aspects of data integration, including the integration of GNIS, the National Hydrography Dataset (NHD), and the National Elevation Dataset (NED). Yost noted that the NHD stewards are primarily State agency employees and that it is presumed that the majority of U.S. Forest Service (USFS) data is already incorporated into NHD. Kanalley reported that she had received an inquiry regarding the naming process from the USFS hydrographic data help desk manager, and was pleased to report that the hydrographic data stewards now have incorporated procedures to correct names in GNIS as part of their helpdesk information toolset. Bob Bewley (BLM) noted that the BLM is the steward for NHD data on BLM lands, but suggested more training is needed for those who are participating in the effort. Kanalley noted that the USFS is also the NHD steward for NHD data on National Forest System Lands but that there are areas of overlap with the States.



## Officers of the Board on Geographic Names

Betsy Kanalley, Chair  
 John Hebert, Vice Chair  
 Curtis Loy, Chair, Domestic Names Committee  
 Leo Dillon, Chair, Foreign Names Committee  
 Meredith Westington, Chair, Special Committee on Communication  
 Lou Yost, Acting Executive Secretary, U.S. Board on Geographic Names  
 Lou Yost, Executive Secretary, Domestic Names Committee  
 Randall Flynn, Executive Secretary, Foreign Names Committee  
 Dirk Kempthorne, Secretary of the Interior

### *Jan. 8 (705th) Exception to Waiting Period for Not Approved for Commemorative Name*

The DNC received a proposal to change Squaw Creek in Blaine County and Phillips County in Montana (outside Fort Belknap Indian Reservation) to Kills At Night Creek. The proposed name would honor a member of the Gros Ventre Nation who died in 2007. The Montana House Bill 412 “Squaw Name Change” Committee asked that the DNC consider waiving its rule requiring a five-year waiting period following the death of an honoree. After some discussion, the members decided it would not be appropriate to grant an exception to the Commemorative Names Policy and asked that the proposal be returned to the proponent until the policy requirements are satisfied. [Kills At Night Creek was approved by the DNC on September 10, 2015.]

### *Feb. 20 (706th) BGN and PAIGH Collaboration*

Richard Randall (BGN Executive Secretary Emeritus) spoke to the DNC about the BGN’s involvement in the Pan-American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH). Randall reported that the PAIGH’s annual geographic names training course began in 1987 and continues today. Mark DeMulder (USGS), speaking as president of the United States’ national section of PAIGH, expressed his appreciation for the importance of cooperation and global toponymic standardization.

### *Tribal Names*

The DNC staff completed its preparation of an up-to-date file of Tribal contacts, intended for use in notifying each Tribal authority of the availability of the online Quarterly Review List. DNC members reviewed the letter that will be sent to the Tribes. Lou Yost asked the DNC members to review the latest version, paying particular attention to the additional sentence that outlines the procedure whereby the DNC will treat proposals for features located on present-day Tribal lands. [Tribal-submitted names for features on Tribal lands are to be accepted “as-is”.] Chick Fagan (NPS) reviewed the DNC’s policy requirements as set forth in Executive Order 13175:

Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments requiring Tribal Consultation. He suggested that further review would be needed before the letter can be sent.

*Discussion of Proposal to Change Mount McKinley to Denali, AK*

In recent weeks, there has been increased media coverage of the effort to change the name of Mount McKinley in Alaska to Denali. Although representatives of the State of Ohio have reintroduced legislation to retain the name Mount McKinley for Federal use, a contingent from Alaska has indicated it will be proceeding with legislation to have it changed to Denali. In responding to inquiries, staff reiterates the BGN's policy that if an issue is pending before Congress the DNC will not address it.

*Mar. 12 (707th) Commemorative Names Policy and Groups*

The DNC received an inquiry regarding the possible naming of a geographic feature in honor of the individuals who served as submariners during World War II. The proponent has not yet identified a specific location or name, but since several of the intended honorees are still living, the staff asked the DNC whether a name such as Submariners Cove might be in violation of the Commemorative Names Policy. A similar question has arisen because the DNC received a proposal for Scout Key, to recognize a place frequented by Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. After a discussion of the intent of the policy, it was agreed that as long as the name does not mention specific individuals by name, it is not considered strictly commemorative. [A proposal for Submariners Cove was never received; the proposal for Scout Key was approved on June 10th, 2010.]

*Staff Processing of Unincorporated Community Names*

DNC members discussed the correct spelling of the name of La Salle, an unincorporated community in Illinois. The two-word form was made official by the BGN in 1910 and that spelling applies to the populated place. However, the community is legally incorporated as LaSalle, and that form is applied to both the township and county. Yost reminded the members that the DNC has retained its purview over the names of unincorporated communities and asked whether the members wish to vote on proposals which involve incorporated communities that are also DNC decisions. The DNC responded that the staff should have the authority to resolve these cases. The staff will update the record for La Salle in the GNIS to reflect the incorporated name and mark it as a 2009 BGN decision.

*Apr. 9 (708th) Electronic Scanning of DNC Records*

The DNC's records are being scanned, both for preservation and for future posting to the DNC website. There is some concern that the project is falling behind schedule, but discussions are underway with the contractor to rectify the situation. During the course of preparing the files for scanning, some interesting situations were uncovered. For example, several names in Alaska were submitted to the BGN but were rejected, and yet were published in *The Dictionary of Alaska Place Names* (USGS Professional Paper 567, 1967). These names have subsequently been entered into GNIS as official names. Other names, also rejected by the DNC, have been applied to U.S. Forest Service (USFS) maps and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

charts. Staff inquired of the DNC members whether these should be marked “Not Official” in GNIS. One member asked how many names were at issue (unknown), and another indicated he would like to see a list. [No further action on this issue was documented.]

### *Tribal Consultation*

The DNC members continued to review a proposed letter that will be sent to each of the federally recognized Tribes, informing them of the online availability of the BGN’s Quarterly Review List. Lee Fleming (BIA) reminded the members that the letter should be considered informational; that is, it advises the Tribes of a new procedure, not a new policy.

Fleming distributed a copy of the BIA’s guidelines, which are quite extensive regarding policy development. It is generally agreed that wherever possible, Tribal authorities should be involved in policy development as early in the process as is feasible. The basic question is whether the DNC is informing Tribes of an existing policy or involving them in the development of a new policy. If the former, the letter as written is sufficient as it reaffirms existing procedures. He suggested that the proposed new procedure should be formalized in the DNC’s PPP.

Fagan (NPS), once again citing Executive Order 13175: Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments, noted that it is appropriate for the letter to distinguish between features in which a Tribe might have a general interest, and those located entirely on Tribally-owned land. In the latter situation, he believes the DNC should always defer to the Tribal government. There is still the ongoing issue of how to refer to these lands, and thus the DNC should try to locate a definitive source for such information. Mike Fournier (Census) reminded the DNC that Census has maps showing current Tribal lands.

One representative of the Department of the Interior legal staff does not believe it is appropriate to grant “carte blanche” to the Tribes, but instead, Tribal authorities should be encouraged to develop their own toponymic policies and procedures. Meredith Westington (NOAA) reiterated her concern that directly accepting Tribal input might lead to situations where a proposed name conflicts with existing DNC policy, such as naming a feature for a living individual or a duplicate name. Another member noted that these names are being proposed for use on Federal maps and products, and so they should comply with Federal-naming policies. Fagan (NPS) disagreed, contending the DNC should accept the names without exception.

DNC members agreed that the new consultation procedures are for federally recognized Tribes only, although as stated in the PPP, staff will continue to consult State recognized Tribes and other entities if it determines they might have a specific interest in the geographic feature in question.

A member asked how the DNC would handle proposals from non-Tribal individuals or groups for features wholly on Tribal lands. Yost responded the DNC receives very few of these, but in accordance with Fagan’s request, the DNC would defer to the preferences of the Tribe. [The letter was drafted, but never sent to the Tribes.]

*Review of Policy Regarding Names Being Considered by Congress*

Policy I: Names Being Considered by Congress currently reads, “The U.S. Board on Geographic Names will not render a decision on a name or its application if the matter is also being considered by the Congress of the United States.”

The Secretary of the Interior (SOI) received a letter from Alaska Representative Scott Kawasaki, requesting that the DNC revisit this policy and revise it to state that if Congress does not act on the issue by the end of six years, the DNC will proceed with a vote. This question arose because of the increased interest in changing the name of Mount McKinley to Denali. It is not clear whether the policy was developed as a result of that issue, although recent staff research suggests it was already in place before the Denali proposal was initiated. A member observed that simply rewording the legislation essentially keeps the issue active.

The SOI has asked the DNC to respond to Representative Kawasaki’s letter, but the consensus of the members is that this needs further analysis. [There was no follow-up to this request. No change was made to the policy.]

*May 5-12 25th Session of UNGEGN, Nairobi, Kenya*

From May 5th to 12th, Betsy Kanalley and Yost, along with representatives from the FNC, attended the 25th Session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) in Nairobi, Kenya. The meeting drew almost 200 attendees. One of the keynote speakers, representing the UN’s Statistical Division, addressed the importance of geographic names in other UN efforts. Another, from the UN Habitat, discussed “the urbanization of poverty,” noting that without the use of geographic names as reference points, many of the vast and largely unnamed slums around the world go unrecognized and underserved.

*May 27 (709<sup>th</sup>) Derogatory Names in South Dakota*

South Dakota derogatory names remained a topic of interest due to the longstanding effort by the State Legislature to eliminate the use of “Squaw” and “Negro” in geographic names. Although many names have been changed by the DNC, some remain, primarily due to a lack of input from one or more interested parties. In addition, several proposals to change the “Negro” names have been rejected due to a reluctance by DNC members to view “Negro” as a universally derogatory term. Four proposals to change Squaw Humber names are still pending and the DNC is awaiting a recommendation from the NPS. Staff also noted that two of the Squaw Humber features fall partially on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Because the Oglala Sioux Tribe has not provided an official recommendation on the changes proposed by the State Legislature, the DNC decided it would prefer not to proceed with a vote without Tribal input. [All four of the Squaw Humber names were changed to the proposed Tribal names on June 11, 2015.]

### *Wilderness Names Policy and Proposed Wilderness Areas*

The Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 designated an additional two million acres in nine States as “wilderness.” DNC staff asked whether this would have any impact on proposals that are already pending on land that was not previously classified wilderness. The DNC members, who represent the Federal land management agencies, suggested this should not be an issue since the acreage involved would already have been classified as “proposed wilderness” and so the Wilderness Names Policy should already be in effect for those proposals.

### *GNIS and Data Compilation Program*

As the Geographic Names Program approaches the completion of its 30-plus year Phase II data compilation program, there is an increased effort to collect what are referred to as “microtoponyms,” specifically such items as buildings and other structures. There is also an increased demand for more precise geographic coordinates and polygons for features already in the database. These are needed for the new USGS graphics program and for use in other *The National Map* datasets. There is an effort to establish state stewardship agreements.

### *Jun. 1 Changes in the Executive Secretary of the Foreign Names Committee*

Randall Flynn retired as Executive Secretary of the FNC. [Marcus Allsup (NGA) became Executive Secretary of the FNC from June until October when he returned to serving as a FNC staff member. Trent Palmer (NGA) became the Executive Secretary of the Foreign Names Committee in October.]

### *Jun. 8-12 25th BGN/PCGN Conference, Washington, DC*

Representatives of the British Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (PCGN) were in Washington, DC the week of June 8th to 12th to meet with the BGN and staff.

### *Jul. 9 (710th) Arctic Village Tribal Council Proposals*

The Arctic Village proposal to apply new names or name changes for 226 features in the Arctic Village’s traditional lands led to a discussion regarding what defines a standard orthography and what exactly comprises the Roman script. Robert Hiatt (LC) clarified the definitions of “orthography” and “Roman script.” Members agreed that the DNC should seek additional guidance from the FNC, principally their linguistics staff. The FNC has considerable experience working with foreign language scripts but the DNC needs assistance regarding American Indian languages and writing systems. A member noted that the FNC often recognizes two or more official names for a feature, particularly in cases where a country has multiple official languages or the feature passes through multiple countries. [Note: At time of publication, these proposals are still pending, awaiting details from the proponent and further review by the Alaska Board on Geographic Names.]

### *Staff Processing of Administrative Names*

The DNC received a proposal from the Prince William County (Virginia) Supervisors to make official the name Potomac Town Center for a newly-developed commercial and residential area. The staff asked the DNC members if this should be placed on a Quarterly Review List for its review or if the name should be considered administrative. The members agreed it should be administrative. DNC members and staff discussed proposals and requests to make official names for unincorporated communities and locales. Although the members reaffirmed they have the purview to decide on unincorporated community names, they also recognized that many of these are planned and named through local and State ordinances, and that by the time the DNC is made aware of the name, it is already well-established and in verbal and published use. If an established name is brought to the attention of the staff and there is no apparent conflict, the staff has the authority to determine the most efficient approach to resolve the issue. Fournier (Census) and Andy Flora (Census) confirmed that any “new” unincorporated community names should be forwarded to Census so that the necessary Census and Class codes can be assigned to the GNIS record.

### *Jul. 11-12 Water Damage at DNC Office in Reston, VA*

The Geographic Names Office at USGS in Reston flooded during the weekend of July 11th. Fortunately, the damage was limited to a few boxes of out-of-date CDs, duplicates copies of old decision lists, and one shelf of toponymic books. This raised the issue of precautions against future incidents.

### *Aug. 6-8 10th Annual GNBC Meeting, Iqaluit, Nunavut*

The Geographical Names Board of Canada (GNBC) held its 10th annual meeting in Iqaluit. Yost represented the BGN. There was discussion of Native names and on the delineation of vector polygons for physical features, both of which are of interest to the DNC.

### *Aug. 13 (711th) Arctic Village Tribal Council Proposals*

Jenny Runyon (DNC Staff) reported on a meeting with Dr. Suzette Kimball (USGS, Acting Director), who had recently returned from a meeting of the Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council, where she was asked about the status of a proposal that the Arctic Village Tribal Council has submitted to the DNC. The proposal is to make official 226 names in the Gwich'in language for geographic features in the Council's traditional area. Several of the names are being presented as changes to existing names, while others would apply locally-used names to features that are not currently named on Federal maps. Virtually none of the names contain established generic terms, and many include writing marks that may or may not be from a standard orthography that is recognized by the DNC.

*Sep. 8-12 33rd Annual Meeting of COGNA, Charleston, SC*

The Council of Geographic Names Authorities (COGNA) held its annual meeting in Charleston, South Carolina, hosted by the South Carolina Committee on Geographic Names. The 64 registered attendees included ten BGN members and four BGN staff members. The keynote speaker was Roger Stroup who outlined South Carolina's history, emphasizing the interrelationships between people, land, and geography. Three talks were given by BGN members or staff: DeMulder (USGS) presented on "125 Years of Topographic Maps," Doug Vandegraft (FWS) on "Virtual Globes," and Greg Allord (USGS) on "Digitizing BGN Records." Activities included a meeting of the Southeastern geographic names boards and authorities; the monthly meeting of the DNC (the 712th, held on September 9th); the State/Federal Roundtable; State Names Authorities (SNAs) reports from 20 states; the COGNA business meeting; and a toponymic tour to Drayton Hall, Middleburg Plantation, and Fort Moultrie. Day tours for guests of meeting attendees were arranged by the spouses of the hosts.

*Sep. 15 USGS Becomes Official Repository for DNC Files*

The BGN Executive Committee met on September 15th at the Library of Congress. Members agreed that DOI, specifically the USGS, should to be the official repository of the files.

*Oct. 8 (713th) Tribal Issues*

Roberta Conner, Director of the Tamástslikt Cultural Institute in Pendleton, Oregon and a member of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indians (CTUIR), and Douglas Herman, Senior Geographer of the Smithsonian Institute National Museum of the American Indian, attended the meeting to participate in discussions on the Tribal names policy.

Conner opened her remarks by expressing appreciation to the DNC for its approval in 2008 of the Umatilla name Iskuulpa Creek (and three related features). She noted that the Oregon Geographic Names Board (OGNB) had approved the "street" or lay spelling (Iskuulpa), while the DNC recognized the significance of the Native form of the name, which was very important to the Tribe.

Conner announced that the CTUIR, which comprise the Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla peoples, are in the process of preparing a volume containing 549 names of places in the Tribes' traditional area. The publication will capture the history as described by the Tribal elders. There are many features in the area that still contain the word "Squaw" and a list of 46 replacement names is being prepared. It is important to note that for the Tribes these are not *new* names but have been in use for many years, often over several generations. The proposed names will include an appropriate English generic term and the Tribes are making every effort to comply with established toponymic guidelines. Some of the names should not be a challenge to non-Umatilla language speakers, while others will likely be difficult to comprehend. The Tribes regard this as "an effort to restore, not invent names."

With regard to Executive Order (EO) 13175: Consultation and Coordination With Indian Tribal Governments), Conner noted that some have suggested it is not the DNC's mission to preserve culture. However, in considering proposals for native names, she implied that the DNC's decisions should be based on laws that pre-date the Constitution. EO 13175 says the Federal

Government should defer to Tribes for features on Tribal lands. Some SNAs have expressed a reluctance to approve names that cannot be spelled or easily pronounced. Many Tribes, on the other hand, wish to preserve their ancestral languages and applying Native names to places is one way to accomplish this. It has long been recognized that the process is slow and deliberate.

She noted that most names do not apply specifically to geographic features, but include the area surrounding the feature. It should be noted that in many Tribal cultures it is customary to name places, not features, and that Tribes may have a different perception of "place."

Members asked if Tribes consider the issue of emergency preparedness when proposing names; that is, if unfamiliar names might be an issue when a non-native speaker needs to locate a place. The Tribes do recognize this can be an issue, so increased communication is critical. This can be particularly critical when naming roads.

The staff provided an example of a recent decision by the DNC not to approve some names in the Salish language because the county government, speaking on behalf of some local residents, had proposed names translated into English instead. The local residents had argued that if they could not spell or pronounce the Native words they would continue to use the previous word, which contained the word "Squaw." Conner responded that she recognized the difficulty the DNC faces in such situations, and noted that the Tribes are willing to be patient. It can take time for such changes to be accepted.

Conner noted that it will be necessary for both sides to compromise, and so rather than have the DNC simply approve or reject a name that is being proposed, a decision should be deferred to allow for further negotiation. It should also be recognized that some Tribes will submit names that are not in a standard orthography; some will compromise, while others may not.

Fleming (BIA) questioned at what point in the development of policy the DNC should involve the Tribes. Conner responded it would ideally be as soon as possible. She described two recent situations in which early consultation had been successful, although it is still customary for Federal and State agencies to consult with Tribes as an afterthought. She added that the annual meeting of the National Congress of American Indians is a good place to start, and often provides a venue to get the word out to interested parties. Determining what constitutes Tribal land can be difficult, as some features are on "adjudicated land," while others are on "fee land," "trust land," within ceded boundaries, and so on. The Umatilla land is a checkerboard of land types, but the Tribe continues to seek absolute jurisdiction over its lands.

Herman noted that legislation in the State of Hawaii requires the use of Hawaiian geographic names. Many Native languages are being lost, and the SI is undergoing a concerted effort to perpetuate them, both in written and spoken format. Under the International Phonetic Alphabet



American system, some characters beyond the conventional A to Z are included. In some cases, it has taken 50 years to develop a standard orthography for native languages.

*Oct. 19-30 21st PAIGH Geographic Names Course, Madrid, Spain*

The Pan American Institute of Geography and History's annual geographic names training course took place from October 19th to 30th in Madrid. Payne and George Troop (NGA) led the training team.

*Nov. 12 (714th) Tribal Issues*

The DNC meeting focused on the issue of rendering native names and writing marks on Federal products. Yost invited FNC staff to comment on the DNC principle that names be shown in the Roman alphabet. They noted that the FNC defers to the foreign country for its geographic names, using Roman (Latin) characters with writing marks to "anglicize" words. Dillon noted that there is an extensive family of non-Roman (non-Latin) alphabets, and therefore many foreign languages need to be transliterated.

A member commented that on the Flathead Reservation in Montana, geographic names appear in English and Salish, although one name may not be a literal translation of the other. There are clearly technical challenges, but it should be possible to render most characters in databases and on maps.

Dillon reminded the members of the "principle of univocity," i.e. one official name for one feature. The FNC tries to limit the number of conventional names (e.g. Rome, Moscow, etc., where the name has been anglicized), preferring to recognize the name used by the foreign country. There are three basic approaches to how foreign names are presented: they can be transcribed (rendered phonetically), transliterated, or translated.

Westington (NOAA) noted that in the mid-1980s, the BGN established a Native American Names Subcommittee, and suggested that it might be worthwhile to do so once again to address these issues. DNC members voted to establish a Special Committee "to gather input, develop a strategy, and formulate procedures for how native names will be handled by the DNC." Kanalley offered to chair the committee.

*Proposal to Name Salish Sea, WA*

The DNC members approved the name Salish Sea for the body of water that straddles the U.S.-Canada border and which comprises collectively the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the Georgia Strait, Puget Sound, and numerous other bays and bodies of water. None of the aforementioned names would be impacted by the decision, which identifies the toponymic complex, not any individual feature. Prior to the vote, the British Columbia Names Office recommended approval of the name. The Washington Geographic Names Committee approved the name at its October 2009 meeting and recommended BGN approval of the name. The Geographical Names Board of Canada (GNBC) approved the name at its August

2009 meeting but delayed an official announcement until after the BGN voted. In December 2009, both the British Columbia Provisional Naming Authority and the GNBC approved the name.

*Dec. 10 (715th) Proposal to Change Mount Rainier to Mount Tacoma, WA*

The DNC received a proposal to change the name of Mount Rainier to Mount Tacoma. Runyon reminded the members that the same proponent submitted a similar request in 2007, at which time the DNC declined to revisit the issue “without more evidence of local support.” The members reviewed the latest proposal, and citing a lack of compelling new evidence, decided once again not to consider the proposal.

*Confusion in Classification of Hydrographic/Hypsographic Features*

DNC members discussed concerns that hydrographic (water) features and hypsographic (valley) features are misrepresented in the GNIS and on Federal maps. For example, features named “Gulch” are classified as valleys in GNIS and labeled as such on maps; however, there are individuals within the National Hydrography Dataset (NHD) community who believe the term refers to the stream and not the valley or to both features collectively. There is some desire within NHD to either change the GNIS classification, or to apply the valley name to the stream as well. Other examples include features named “Draw” and “Arroyo.” The DNC understands the NHD’s concerns, but it is reluctant to apply large numbers of “new” names to “unnamed” features without due process.

*Tribal Issues*

In response to the recent Presidential directive concerning Tribal consultation, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has asked all Federal agencies to provide a report on what efforts they have and will undertake to address Executive Order 13175: Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments.

Members suggested that the DNC should move quickly and incorporate a report on its activities into the broader DOI response to OMB. DOI has already established an aggressive schedule of hearings and meetings to review the situation. Fleming met with Tracie Stevens (Counsel to the Assistant Secretary, DOI, on Indian Affairs), to brief her on the DNC’s approach to consultation.

## Officers of the Board on Geographic Names

John Hebert, Chair  
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 Meredith Westington, Chair, Special Committee on Communication  
 Lou Yost and Trent Palmer, Executive Secretariat, Board on Geographic Names  
 Lou Yost, Executive Secretary, Domestic Names Committee  
 Trent Palmer, Executive Secretary, Foreign Names Committee  
 Ken Salazar, Secretary of the Interior

### *Mar. 11 (716th) Commemorative Names Honoring Former President Ronald Reagan*

The DNC staff continues to receive numerous e-mails commenting on the two proposals that are pending to change the name of Mount Diablo, CA to Mount Reagan, and to change Mount Clay, NH in to Mount Reagan.

Staff inquired if it is necessary to consult with the Ronald Reagan family estate on these proposals. DNC members agreed that rather than contact the family on each case, it would be appropriate to send a courtesy letter welcoming their input. Members noted that it is important to explain the difference between proposals to name unnamed features and those to change existing names, given that the DNC is reluctant to change long-standing names.

### *South Dakota State Names Authority Reactivated*

After a hiatus of several years, the South Dakota State Legislature re-established the South Dakota Board on Geographic Names (SDGNB) “to recommend replacements for offensive names for geographic features and to process requests from the public regarding names for geographic features. In some cases, this may be proposing a name for a currently unnamed feature or requesting renaming for a geographic feature.” The DNC staff received a letter from the new SDBGN chair, expressing a desire to resolve the remaining “Squaw” and “Negro” name change proposals. The DNC staff noted that the DNC has changed many of the “Squaw” names and one “Negro” name in South Dakota, but that the remaining cases are open pending feedback from interested parties.

### *Proposal to Name a Feature for a Pet*

The DNC staff received a proposal to apply a new name to an unnamed stream in California in honor of the proponent’s dog. The staff asked the DNC if the proposal should be processed, given its past reluctance to approve names for pets. After some discussion, the members determined there was no policy that precludes the approval of pet names and requested that the proposal be processed. [The name was not approved by the DNC on March 10, 2011, based on a lack of local support.]

### *Archeological Site Names Blocked from GNIS Public Access*

In response to Federal regulations prohibiting the release of the locations of sensitive archaeological sites and ruins, public access to the “Archaeological Site” category of features is now blocked at the GNIS website. The GNIS staff is not able to determine which features are considered “sensitive” so it is incumbent upon Federal agencies to inform the DNC and GNIS staff if a specific database entry or group of features needs to be blocked from public access.

### *Apr. 14-18 Association of American Geographers Conference*

The BGN panel session on April 15 provided conference attendees with an overview of domestic and foreign names processes and the domestic and foreign names databases. The presenters included John Hébert (LC), Lou Yost (USGS), and Jenny Runyon (DNC Staff), as well as Leo Dillon (State) and Marcus Allsup (NGA) representing the Foreign Names Committee. Richard Randall (BGN Executive Secretary Emeritus) served as the panel moderator.

### *May 13 (718th) Washington State Board on Geographic Names Authority Abolished*

The Washington State Board on Geographic Names (WSBGN) was abolished by State legislation. As a result, the WSBGN staff has forwarded the DNC staff eighteen pending proposals, which are in various stages of review. The DNC staff will contact each proponent to explain the DNC’s geographic name proposal process. The DNC staff will also send a copy of each proposal to the governor of Washington, asking her to provide a recommendation on behalf of the State.

### *Proposal to Change Mount Clay to Mount Reagan, NH*

Citing a reluctance to change a longstanding historical name, DNC members voted not to approve the proposed name change from Mount Clay to Mount Reagan. The members asked that the minutes note that the rejection of the name change should not be seen in any way as a negative reflection on President Reagan’s legacy. A member also noted that the existing name is considered a “high honor” and so removing it could be regarded as a dishonor. Because a 2003 New Hampshire law approved the name for State use, Mount Reagan has been added to GNIS as a variant name.

### *Jun. 10 (719th) Reservoir Names as Natural or Administrative Features*

At a recent DNC meeting, the staff asked the members whether geographic features classified as “reservoir” should be considered natural or administrative. If man-made reservoirs are considered administrative, their names would no longer come before the DNC for consideration and would instead be reviewed and processed by the staff for inclusion into GNIS. Doug Caldwell (USACE), who was asked to review the issue, reported that although the USACE maintains the official inventory of reservoirs and dams, it is not typically responsible for the naming of such features and so it would defer to the DNC’s recommendation.

Newly constructed dams and reservoirs are typically named in the legal documentation that authorizes their construction and so by the time the DNC is made aware of the names, they are well established. The DNC already defers to the administering agency for the names of dams. DNC members voted to allow the staff to consider the names of new reservoirs to be beyond the DNC's purview and thus administrative, but *changes* to existing reservoir names should continue to be brought before the DNC for consideration and approval.

### *Tribal Geographic Names Policy*

At the June meeting of the Special Committee on Native American Names Policy and Tribal Consultation, Tracie Stevens (Senior Advisor to the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs), recommended that the DNC defer any final decisions on a Tribal consultation policy until after the Department of the Interior (DOI) has established its own policy. She noted that the Tribes are already inundated with requests for input on policy development and there would be confusion if the DNC approaches them with another request which potentially could be in conflict with the DOI's efforts.

The Census Bureau prepared a white paper outlining its definition of "Tribal Lands" and recommends that their boundary files should be accepted as the authoritative source.

### *Jul. 5-9 26th BGN/PCGN Conference, London, England*

BGN staff and members met July 5th-9th in London with the British Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (PCGN). This meeting immediately followed a conference in Edinburgh on "Trends in Toponymy."

### *Aug. 12 (721st) Proposal to Change Mobile Bay to Bay of the Holy Spirit, AL*

The DNC staff received a request to revisit its 1996 decision not to approve a name change from Mobile Bay to Bay of the Holy Spirit. This proposal was denied in 1996 because of widespread local and regional opposition to the change and a reluctance to change a longstanding name. The proponent asked the DNC to reopen the case because a sign was placed on the shore of the bay in 2008 that commemorates the history of the feature. The sign reports that a 16th-century Spanish expedition referred to the bay as "Bahia del Espiritu Santo" ("Bay of the Holy Spirit" is the English translation). The proponent's latest request was accompanied by copies of several proclamations and commendations signed by the mayors and councils of some of the surrounding communities, who recognized the significance of the early Spanish settlement in the area. The staff contacted each of these communities to ask if their recognition of the sign constituted official endorsement of the name change. Several expressed informal opposition, although only the City of Mobile submitted a formal letter expressing strong opposition. The DNC members reviewed the new information and determined that the erection of a historical marker did not constitute new evidence in support of the name change. DNC members voted to not to revisit the earlier decision. They agreed that the name Bay of the Holy Spirit could be added to the existing GNIS entry as a variant name of Mobile Bay.

*Review of Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes Appeal Letter*

DNC staff noted that it has been a year and a half since the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) submitted a letter requesting that the DNC explain recent decisions regarding changes to “Squaw” names in Montana. The CSKT believes the DNC was inconsistent in its reasoning and requested that some of the decisions should be revisited. The DNC members discussed the nature of “new evidence” and noted that the PPP does not provide any guidance regarding its appeal process and that all appeals are evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

The DNC reviewed the CSKT letter and agreed that the decision to change one of the names might draw attention to a sacred Indian site. The members agreed that this constitutes new evidence and agreed to revisit the case. Once the CSKT is apprised of the Committee’s decision to revisit, all interested parties must once again be notified before the issue can once again be presented to the DNC for a vote. Federal agencies were requested to consult guidance regarding the dissemination of information on archeological sites with reference to the Archaeological Resource Protection Act of 1979. [No further action on this issue is documented; the BGN did not reconsider the decision.]

The DNC members then discussed some of the other names on the CSKT list. In several cases, names proposed by the local county commissioners were approved over the Salish names and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) supported that decision. DNC members requested that the USFS member further explain the agency’s justification. With this information, the members would decide if the cases should be reopened.

In addition, the proposal to change the names of Squaw Creek and two of its tributaries in Madison County, Montana might also be in violation of the restriction against the display of sacred sites, because the new names include words of potential archeological significance. The possibility that the proposed names might violate any Federal policies was never considered during the original discussion of the proposals.

*Sep. 9 (722nd) Review of Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation “Squaw” Names*

DNC members discussed the practicality of the names in Oregon submitted by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) in 2009, noting that many are unpronounceable. A DNC member suggested that the OGNB should encourage the CTUIR to render the names phonetically and the writing marks should be removed. The CTUIR should also be asked to provide a copy of the font set that was used to render the names, as it is not clear that all of the characters are from a standard Roman alphabet.

*Proposal to Name a Feature for a Pet*

The DNC received a proposal to name a beach in Vermont in honor of the proponent’s recently deceased dog. Given the DNC’s reluctance to name features for pets, the staff asked whether it should accept the proposal. The DNC responded that the PPP does not specifically prohibit such names, so there was no reason not to consider the proposal. [The proponent never submitted the

required petition to the Vermont Board of Libraries and did not reply to communication from BGN staff. The case was closed in December 2014.]

*Oct. 5-8 34th Annual Meeting of COGNA, Springfield, MO*

The annual conference of the Council of Geographic Names Authorities (COGNA) was held in Springfield, Missouri, hosted by the Missouri Board on Geographic Names (MOBGN). The 70 registered attendees included ten BGN members and five BGN staff members. The keynote speaker was Edd Akers (Silver Dollar City). Lou Yost and Jenny Runyon (DNC staff) served on a National Hydrography Dataset/GNIS panel. Mike Fournier (Census) gave a presentation titled “The Genesis of a Place Name: Jay, Maine.” Activities included a meeting of MOBGN; the monthly meeting of the DNC (the 723rd, held on October 9th); the State/Federal Roundtable; State Names Authorities SNA) reports from 25 states; the COGNA business meeting; and a toponymic tour to Branson.

*Oct. 7 (723rd) Congressionally Approved Names*

The U.S. Congress previously expressed a desire to name a geographic feature for the late Senator Ted Stevens. [On September 30, 2010, Congress passed legislation to name Mount Stevens in Denali National Park and Ted Stevens Icefield in the Chugach National Forest. Signed by the President, this bill became law on October 18, 2010, and these names became official for Federal use.]

*DNC Processing of Reservoir Name Proposals*

The DNC staff received a proposal to name an unnamed pond on the proponent’s property for the proponent’s dog. In accordance with the DNC’s recent decision to designate man-made or impounded bodies of water (reservoirs) as administrative, staff believes the name does not need to be considered by the DNC and will simply be added to GNIS. [In January 2011, the DNC decided that reservoir names were under its purview. The DNC approved the name on December 8, 2011.]

*Special Committee on Native American Names Policy and Tribal Consultation*

The Special Committee on Native American Names Policy and Tribal Consultation voted to use Census boundary files for determining the extent of lands under Tribal jurisdiction and approved the use of Census’s TIGER/Line shape files. The committee also reviewed a paper that outlined the various options regarding names on Tribal lands, ranging from complete deference to the Tribal authorities to the use of dual names, or “super variants.”

*Proposal to change Mount Diablo to Mount John Muir or Mount Reagan, CA*

The proponent of the name change from Mount Diablo to Mount John Muir or Mount Reagan found the name Mount Diablo “derogatory and profane.” He observed that the current name violated the Commemorative Names Policy because the “Devil” is a living person. This was his second attempt to change the name. In 2005, he proposed changing the name to Mount Yahweh.

DNC members voted not to approve either of the proposed name changes. They reaffirmed the name Mount Diablo with a 2010 BGN decision.

● *Oct. 21-22 11th Annual GNBC Meeting, Moncton, New Brunswick*

The Geographical Names Board of Canada (GNBC) held its 11th annual meeting in Moncton.

*Dec. 9 (724th) Policy on Reservoir Names*

At its June 2010 meeting, the DNC determined that man-made bodies of water, classified in the GNIS as “reservoir,” should be considered administrative features rather than natural features. As such, the naming of such features would no longer fall under the DNC’s purview (although proposals to *rename* reservoirs would still need to come to the DNC).

When reservoirs are constructed, typically through the creation of some sort of impoundment, the property owner often applies a name of his/her choosing and then notifies the DNC. This would be the situation whether the feature is a small pond on private land or a large reservoir used for city water supply. DNC members discussed the practicality of this practice.

For example, the DNC recently received a proposal to name an unnamed pond Woof Lake; the proposed name refers to the owner’s pet. In another example, a landowner in Connecticut asked the DNC to rename Rizzo Pond, an 8.5-acre man-made pond on his property, to Nepenthe Pond. The name “Rizzo” is presumed to be that of the individual that built the dam and pond several decades ago. In the first instance, the current policy would permit the owner to name the pond on his property, whereas in the second case he would need DNC approval.

Doug Caldwell (USACE) suggested it is appropriate to make a distinction between new names for newly-created features versus name changes, since a name proposed to be changed has already been established as official for Federal use. He noted also that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) does not determine and cannot dictate whether a body of water is classified as a reservoir or a lake. USACE no longer maintains an inventory of reservoirs, only dams. Andy Flora (Census) questioned whether a distinction might be made between those bodies of water that are permitted and those that are not, although this might be difficult for staff to determine. The DNC agreed to continue this discussion next month.



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 Lou Yost, Executive Secretary, Domestic Names Committee  
 Trent Palmer, Executive Secretary, Foreign Names Committee  
 Ken Salazar, Secretary of the Interior

### *Jan. 13 (725th) Policy Reversal on Reservoir Names*

At the December 2010 meeting, the DNC discussed its June 2010 decision to classify the names of reservoirs as administrative and therefore no longer requiring DNC approval. After receiving several new proposals for reservoir names, the staff questioned whether this practice is reasonable, and at the last meeting some examples were cited and reviewed. Members noted that it would not be equitable or practical to differentiate between newly constructed features (that the owner/administrator could name at will) versus existing ones that would require DNC approval in order to be renamed. After further discussion the members reinstated the former policy; that is the names of all reservoirs, as well as canals and ditches, will continue to require DNC review.

### *Feb. 17 (726th) Commemorative Names Honoring Former President Ronald Reagan*

On the occasion of the centennial of Ronald Reagan's birth, there was increased media coverage of the Reagan Legacy Project's efforts to name geographic features in honor of the late president. The Nevada Board on Geographic Names has been advised that a proposal may be forthcoming to name or rename a summit in that State, but to date nothing has been submitted. A recent article in *The Washington Post* by a Reagan biographer noted the former President's disinterest in having features named for him.

### *Mar. 10 Man-made Geographical Feature Changes*

Jenny Runyon (DNC Staff) reported that a new proposal, for Shame Flat, OR, has been withdrawn by the proponent. The name was proposed in reaction to efforts to begin quarrying on a hillside that the proponent felt was "shameful." Related to this, the members inquired about mountaintop removal mining efforts in West Virginia and eastern Kentucky and how this impacts the naming of features. A DNC member noted that one source reported 500 such features were permanently altered in West Virginia. The members were informed that when notified, the DNC staff would classify the named features as "historical." It was noted that the mining process could also render some named valleys or named streams as "historical."

*Apr. 14 (728th) Use of Non-Roman Alphabet*

Runyon asked the DNC to consider a proposal for the name Mééxsem Héepey from the Umatilla Tribe in Oregon; the name included the non-Roman character χ. This led to a lengthy discussion of the implications of character standards and the impact on Principle I: Use of the Roman Alphabet. Members discussed the potential mispronunciation or misrepresentation of a non-Roman character that closely resembles the Roman character X. The DNC recognized the desire by the proponents to preserve the linguistic integrity of the name, but suggested the use of a non-Roman character that appears to be a Roman character could undermine this effort. A letter from a Umatilla tribal official specified the non-Roman character was synonymous with the Roman diacritical “dot x.” The DNC rejected the naming proposal for violation of Principle I, and agreed to return the proposal to the Oregon Geographic Names Board (OGNB) with an explanation. [The OGNB requested input from the Umatilla Tribe, which responded to the DNC that it would be acceptable to amend the name in accordance with the Principle I. The name was approved on October 27th, 2011, as Mééxsem Héepey Butte.]

*May 2-6 26th UNGEGN Session, Vienna, Austria*

The United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) 26th session took place in Vienna, Austria. The program included discussions on toponymic files and gazetteers. Trent Palmer (NGA) attended and presented a paper on the Web Feature Services-Gazetteer Protocol.

*May 12 (729th) Status of State Names Authorities*

The State of Tennessee recently expanded its State Names Authority (SNA) by establishing the Tennessee Committee on Geographic Names with sixteen members.

The Washington State Legislature approved the re-establishment of the Washington State Board on Geographic Names (WSBGN), although budgetary issues still need to be addressed. The WSBGN hopes to be back in operation in the next few months.

*First DNC Teleconference Meeting*

Lou Yost thanked the DNC members who participated either in person or by teleconference in the DNC meeting held at *The National Map* Users Conference held recently in Denver, CO. This teleconference was the first meeting of its type by the DNC.

*Jul. 14 (731st) Variant Names*

The DNC staff received a proposal to apply the new name Blue Heron Island to an unnamed island in Minnesota. The proposal, forwarded by the Minnesota Geographic Names Authority, included a comment from the Saint Louis County government that “there was a desire by the St. Louis County Board to have an Anishinaabe word for Blue Heron as a variant name.” The SNA asked the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) of the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa

Indians whether the tribal elders had a name for the island. The Tribe responded that they did not think it had a name but asked that “Gashagi” be recorded as a variant (the original request spelled the variant “Zhashagi,” but the THPO later determined that that name means ‘stork,’ whereas “Gashagi” means ‘blue heron.’). Runyon noted that the proposed variant was clearly an ‘invented name,’ and asked whether it met the definition of a variant. After a lengthy discussion, the DNC agreed that if the proposed name is approved, the Anishinaabe name could be recorded as a variant.

*Aug. 11 (732nd) Administrative Names on The National Map*

On August 9th-10th, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) National Geospatial Program (NGP) hosted a two-day Technical Exchange Meeting to address issues related to the mission and staff support for the USGS geographic names program. One of the primary concerns was the issue of collecting and maintaining administrative (non-physical) feature names. Although the DNC has always considered itself responsible for promulgating all feature names, in accordance with the 1947 Public Law, there are some who believe this is an unrealistic goal, given the limited DNC and GNIS staff resources.

USGS management also questioned the promulgation of names not under BGN decision purview, as well as the usefulness of historical features and variant names. Yost reminded the attendees that the GNIS is used by a wider community of users and as a gazetteer, it not “merely” a cartographic database. The National Hydrography Data (NHD) program reaffirmed the importance of accurate stream names and locations. After considerable discussion, NGP suggested that collection efforts should be reprioritized, with a focus on the more useful and pertinent features, primarily those that are of importance to the homeland security community (fire stations, police stations, EMS, schools, etc.). This will by necessity result in less emphasis on other administrative feature types. The proposed model will rely more heavily on existing national datasets, which will ideally be provided, endorsed, and maintained by authoritative sources. Examples include the Department of Justice’s (DOJ’s) police station file and the Department of Education’s (ED’s) national school dataset.

*Aug. 28-Sep. 1 12th Annual GNBC Meeting, Dawson, Yukon*

The Geographical Names Board of Canada (GNBC) held its 12th annual meeting in Dawson City.

*Sep. 26-30 27th BGN/PCGN Conference, Washington, DC*

The 27th BGN/British Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (PCGN) conference was held in Washington, DC. The first three days included technical discussions between the FNC staff and the PCGN, while the last two days focused on over-arching policy discussions.

*Oct. 25-29 35th Annual Meeting of COGNA, Honolulu, HI*

The Council of Geographic Names Authorities (COGNA) held its annual meeting in Honolulu, Hawaii, hosted by the Hawaii Board on Geographic Names (HBGN). The theme of the meeting

was “Geographic Names of Indigenous People” And the keynote speaker was Derek Masaki (USGS). The program focused on issues related to native names, with several presentations on Alaskan, Hawaiian, and South African names. Several BGN members gave presentations: Betsy Kanalley (USFS) on the Native American Names Policy; Bill Logan (USCG) on the revision of the DNC’s PPP document; Doug Caldwell (USACE) on matching names from the National Inventory of Dams with GNIS; and Roger Payne (BGN Executive Secretary Emeritus) on Antarctic names. Activities included a meeting of HBGN; the monthly meeting of the DNC (the 734th, held on October 27th); the State/Federal Roundtable; SNA reports; the COGNA business meeting; and atponymic tour of Oahu.

*Nov. 10 (735th) Special Committee on Native American Names Policy and Tribal Consultation*

The Special Committee on Native American Names Policy and Tribal Consultation continues to wait for the final version of the Department of the Interior (DOI) Consultation Policy, and therefore can only develop a draft policy of its own. Once complete, the policy will be presented to the newly-appointed Tribal Governance Officer (TGO) for review, comment, and guidance.

The DNC agreed that native names in Alaska are covered by the Names of Native American Origin Policy, and that Hawaiian names will be addressed outside the policy. It was clear from the presentation on Tribal consultation that was given at the recent COGNA conference that there is a lack of understanding and some confusion regarding the DNC’s approach to the issue. [The interpretation that the policy applies to Alaska Native Names was changed at the January 12, 2012 DNC meeting.]

*Dec. 8 (736th) Variant Names*

Yost asked DNC members whether names that are not in local or published use, and which do not become the official name, should be recorded as variants in the GNIS. He noted that there were three proposed names for which a Tribal authority has requested that their traditional names be considered variants. Traditional names, even those in strictly verbal usage, are legitimate variants and are not an issue; however, there is concern that translations or “contrived” names that have never been used are being submitted.

In some instances, the names are submitted as a compromise when there is disagreement between two proposals. There was a lengthy discussion regarding the implications of approving variant names and whether these “compromise names” should in fact be treated as separate counter-proposals. Also, the question was raised as to whether the DNC should be voting on variant names. One member suggested the proposed name and any variants should not be treated as a single “package” and that the issue of whether a variant is legitimate should be determined by the staff. Another noted that translated names are not technically variants but could be noted as a footnote in the GNIS history field. Another member observed that it is vital that the Tribes’ requests not be ignored, and several members agreed that the history and meaning of a name should be preserved. Among the reasons for concern is the potential impact on historical research and the false impression that these translations and “contrived” variants would appear to have been in use.

The DNC members agreed they should not make decisions on variant names, that the staff will liberally accept variant names, and that, where appropriate, a notation will be made in the GNIS record indicating the nature of the variant name.

*Special Committee on Native American Names Policy and Tribal Consultation*

Monique Fordham (USGS) reported that on December 1st, the Secretary of the Interior (SOI), Ken Salazar announced the release of the new DOI Policy on Consultation with Tribes. The announcement stated, "The new policy emphasizes trust, respect and shared responsibility in providing tribal governments an expanded role in informing federal policy that impacts Indian Country." On December 2nd, during the third White House Tribal Nations Conference, President Obama announced the release of the policy and issued an order that provides 180 days for agencies to review and to prepare a report on how they will comply with the policy.

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### *Jan. 12 (737th) Alaskan Native Names*

The DNC and the Secretary of Interior (SOI) were recently copied on a letter sent by the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) to the Alaska Congressional delegation. At its recent annual convention, the AFN passed a resolution entitled *The Naming of Geologic Landmarks on Native-Owned Lands*, in which it “support[s] efforts to allow the exclusive right of Alaska Native entities and individuals to name the geographic landmarks and place names on Native-owned lands.” The letter seeks the Congressional delegation’s support of the resolution, “even if it means amending the Federal statute that created the U.S. Board on Geographic Names in 1947.” Monique Fordham (USGS) reminded the DNC that under existing law, and with the exception of the Metlakatla Indian Reservation, native-owned lands in Alaska are not reservations and the Federal Government retains ownership. Furthermore, the changes that the DNC is considering to the Names of Native American Origin Policy would not apply to these lands in Alaska. [The interpretation that the policy does not apply to Alaska Native Names is a change from the November 12, 2011 interpretation of the policy.]

### *Proposals to Rename Unincorporated Communities*

DNC staff asked the DNC to clarify its procedures regarding the renaming of unincorporated communities. This was in response to an inquiry that noted that the community of Bottom in Surry County, North Carolina “has always been known locally as Beulah.” Although USGS topographic maps have always labeled the community Bottom, the inquirer reported that according to the county government this was the name of a historical post office and that the name had fallen out of use many years ago. The DNC staff asked the DNC members whether such a change requires a formal decision or if it might be considered a staff-processed correction. The members agreed the database may be corrected if staff has conducted the necessary investigation. No BGN decision date will be assigned to the record. However, it is important that an appropriate notation be added to the history field of the GNIS entry.

### *Completion of GNIS Phase II Data Compilation Project*

The 30-year Phase II GNIS data compilation project was nearing completion in late 2011. Through this effort, new names and variants were collected for all fifty states and U.S. territories, resulting in over 1.4 million additional entries in GNIS.

### *Tribal Input on Proposals*

The DNC was advised that federally recognized tribes will be notified of the availability of the online Quarterly Review List and provided with an opportunity to comment on any proposal that it believes it has an interest in.

### *Feb. 9 PPP Review*

Bill Logan (USCG) gave an overview of the latest revisions to the draft Tribal Geographic Names Policy and proposed changes to Principle I: Use of the Roman Alphabet and Principle V: One Name for One Geographic Entity.

The DNC approved the draft, interim Tribal Geographic Names Policy. The revised policy addresses the rights of Tribal authorities to establish names for features on lands under their jurisdiction, and recognizes that such names might not comply with established DNC principles and policies. These names also will not come before the DNC for a vote but will simply be recorded in the GNIS as official for Federal use. One topic of significant interest to the DNC is the acceptance of “Equivalent Names” for features on tribal lands. Tribes will be asked to provide an “Equivalent Name” when the name that is submitted is not rendered in the Roman alphabet. The revised policy also requires that non-Tribal proponents coordinate with Tribal governments for geographic name proposals for features on Tribal lands. The policy is a draft interim policy. After approval by the Secretary of the Interior, it will become an interim policy, subject to consultation with Tribes.

The DNC approved Principle I: Use of the Roman Alphabet and Principle V: One Name for One Geographic Entity.

### *Feb. 20–Mar. 2 22nd PAIGH Geographic Names Course, Tegucigalpa, Honduras*

Roger Payne (BGN Executive Secretary Emeritus) and George Troop (NGA) recently conducted the annual course in applied toponymy in Tegucigalpa, under the auspices of the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH).

*Mar. 8 (739th) Elimination of the Draft Protected Names Policy*

After a lengthy discussion, DNC members agreed that the proposed policy on protected names (trademarked, registered, internet domain, copyrighted) should be eliminated.

*Apr. 12 (739th) Congressional Bill to Change Mount McKinley to Mount Denali, AK*

Senator Lisa Murkowski (Alaska) introduced a bill into the U.S. Senate “To designate a mountain in the State of Alaska as Mount Denali.” Details were not available, but preliminary research suggests the feature in question is the one already officially named Mount McKinley. If Congress should pass legislation, the name would become official for Federal use. Alaskans commonly use the name Denali, without a generic term.

*Commercial Names Policy Approved*

The DNC approved the proposed Commercial Names Policy. Under this policy, names for features with a longstanding association with a commercial enterprise may be approved, but names construed to promote a commercial product or enterprise will usually be rejected.

*PPP to be Released in Digital Form*

The revised PPP will no longer be a published hardcopy document, so there is an opportunity to include an expanded explanation of each step of the process, while at the same time providing embedded links to the more detailed policy statements.

*May 10 (741st) Eliminating Administrative Feature Names from the GNIS*

Yost reported that the USGS National Geospatial Program (NGP) is considering whether to limit the types of features maintained in the GNIS as a result of resource cutbacks. This is despite the fact that Public Law (1947) defines the BGN’s purview to promulgate all geographic names for use by the Federal Government. Also, in 1987 the BGN proclaimed that GNIS would be its promulgation vehicle. Despite these actions, there is a perception within the NGP that this purview applies only to the names of natural features, which would not be impacted.

The NGP believes the standardization of administrative feature names would be better served by establishing Federal and State stewardship agreements and acquiring national authoritative datasets. These datasets would only be acquired as needed for USGS topographic map production. All records currently in GNIS, including historical entries, variant names, and related descriptive and historical details could be deleted. The issue resulted in a lengthy discussion, with several DNC members protesting the elimination of GNIS, the one authoritative data source which all Federal agencies have relied on and helped maintain for many years. There was also a concern that there are very few national datasets and that the names they contain often do not comply with established DNC writing guidelines.



*Jun. 25-29 28th BGN/PCGN Meeting, London, England, UK*

Logan attended the annual meeting of the BGN and British Permanent Committee on Geographical Names held at the Royal Geographical Society in London. General principles of toponymic standardization were discussed, with emphasis on Romanization of Arabic and Persian languages. Seventy papers were presented, with Logan presenting one on the proposed revisions to the PPP document and another prepared by Betsy Kanalley (USFS) on the draft interim Tribal Geographic Names Policy.

*Jul. 30 and Aug. 9 10th UNCSGN and 27th Session of UNGEGN, New York, NY*

Kanalley (USFS) prepared a synopsis of the DNC's draft interim Tribal Geographic Names Policy, which was presented at the UNCSGN conference and included in the report of the UN Working Group on the Promotion of Recording and Use of Indigenous, Minority and Regional Language Group Geographical Names.

*Jul. 31 - Aug. 8 United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN), New York, NY*

Yost attended the five-year conference of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN), as did Trent Palmer, Leo Dillon, Iain Crawford (Department of State), Derek Hoffman (NGA), and Jennifer Runyon (DNC Staff).

*Aug. 20-22 (744th) Special Committee on Native American Names Policy and Tribal Consultation*

The DNC and staff held a two-day offsite meeting at the FWS National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, WV.

Different opinions remain within the DNC membership on the use of the Census Bureau's Topologically Integrated Geographic Encoding and Referencing (TIGER)/Line files as the authoritative source for defining Indian Country. There was a discussion of the possible use of Tribal realty data as a supplemental source among other non-related sources. The DNC noted that authoritative data sources can change over time and it is preferable to avoid naming specific databases in the policy. The DNC also felt that ownership of property alone is not a determinative factor in name decisions. The discussion led to the decision by the DNC members to remove specific references to data authorities.

#### *Proposals Submitted by Foreign Nationals*

A DNC member suggested that foreign nationals should have no standing to petition the DNC and that the DNC is responsible exclusively to U.S. citizens. Commenting on a recent proposal submitted by a Canadian citizen, the member contended that the proper procedure should be for that individual to work with the Geographical Names Board of Canada, which would then coordinate between the two national naming authorities.

Other DNC members noted that the statutes under which the BGN operates make no reference to citizenship, and in accordance with the Public Law 80-242, the mission of the BGN is to serve the interests of the Federal Government. Foreign nationals living in the U.S. are permitted to petition Federal agencies for various purposes. DNC members agreed that no changes to current procedures were required at this time.

### *Counterproposals*

The DNC members discussed the timing and procedures DNC accepting counterproposals, which offer alternative names that differ from the name specified in an initial proposal. A member prepared a list of four options for handling counterproposals for the DNC's consideration:

- Any time prior to the DNC vote. This is the current process.
- Once submitted, no counterproposals would be permitted. Any counterproposal would be processed as a name change *after* the decision
- Up until X days after the Review List is released
- X days prior to the DNC vote

[The DNC did not take specific action on the options and the current process remained in effect through 2015.]

### *NGP Geographic Names Policy Directive and Administrative Names*

Mark DeMulder, USGS National Geospatial Program Director and DOI member, presented an overview of the changes proposed by the NGP regarding the future maintenance of GNIS. The NGP Policy Directive on Geographic Names and the latest Data Life Cycle Management Plan spreadsheet were distributed. These documents highlighted the need to re-evaluate the mission of the DNC regarding the compilation and promulgation of administrative geographic names. Citing significantly decreased staffing and financial resources, the new policy proposes that the USGS focus on the acquisition of national authoritative datasets for all feature types that are not under DNC purview. Within that group of features, USGS should further focus on those needed for current topographic map production. If a category of features is determined to be not needed by any Federal agency, it could cease to be maintained. DeMulder further noted that Hydrography and Elevation data are the highest priority for the USGS NGP and that Geographic Names are considered a "moderate investment." The NGP is currently focusing on the requirements of its four "Communities of Use" which have been identified by USGS as central to its mission: Water, Natural Hazards, Geologic Mapping, and National Resource Conservation.

Specifically, the NGP proposed that the DNC would continue to compile and render decisions on the names of natural features but would abrogate its authority for updating the names and locations of man-made ("cultural" or "administrative") features to the national authoritative source for that class of feature. For example, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) would provide on a periodic basis a national file of school names and locations, which would be "ingested" into GNIS with little to no additional analysis or enhancement. The providers of this data would be educated on how to develop data sources that comply with Federal naming

standards, thus removing the need for extensive GNIS staff review. No existing features in GNIS would be removed but they would no longer be maintained. If a user indicated that a name or location needed to be added or updated, the user would be advised to provide the information to the authoritative data source, which would then provide the addition or update to the GNIS on a pre-defined revision cycle.

#### *DNC Approves PPP*

DNC members approved the PPP version dated August 15, 2012 (amended August 20-22), with the exception of the Appendices that address Terms and Definitions; Acronyms; and the Roman Character Set.

#### *Sep. 13 (745th) Abbreviations of State Names*

Bruce Johnson (LC) presented a table of U.S. State name abbreviations that was distributed at the last FNC meeting. Although it appears the table was endorsed by the BGN a dozen years ago, Yost informed the committee this was intended only as a recommendation to cartographers, and while there are no specific issues with the table, the DNC will continue to use the two-character abbreviations in the retired FIPS 5-2 for staff work and in the GNIS. This practice is in agreement with U.S. Postal Service (USPS) abbreviations and the Government Printing Office's (GPO's) Style Manual.

#### *Roman Character Set*

Lou Yost distributed a list of diacritics and writing marks currently found in GNIS, identifying those that fall outside the basic American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII) character set.

A member suggested that the past approval of a diacritic mark in a name should not govern whether or not future proposals with such marks will be considered, noting the importance of geographic names for emergency response situations.

The DNC discussed differing perspectives on the development of a Roman Character Set. Although Principle I: Use of the Roman Alphabet states that all names must be in the Roman (Latin) alphabet, it is not clear what constitutes that alphabet. Names must be rendered correctly on Federal maps, and as such, must be useful to the Federal user community. There was further discussion as to whether or not an approved character set was needed. Some members preferred that each proposal be considered case-by-case, while others preferred a specified list of acceptable characters. A member suggested that the DNC should state its preference for the standard character set (i.e. A-Z and a-z), with a cautionary note that anything else might not be accepted by the DNC or the local population. DNC members discussed the use of an ASCII, ANSI, or Unicode standard, but they did not reach a consensus. In accordance with the draft interim Tribal Geographic Names Policy, names for features located entirely on tribal lands would not have any restrictions.

*Sep. 20-22 13th Annual GNBC Meeting, Québec, Québec*

The Geographical Names Board of Canada (GNBC) held its 13th annual meeting in Québec. Yost and Palmer represented the BGN. One report addressed the exclusive use of Inuit names on maps and the resulting “pushback.” Attendees noted that map users could determine the type of feature from a recognizable generic term.

*Oct. 11 (746th) DNC Response to NGP Geographic Names Policy Directive*

Logan sent a letter to the Director of the USGS NGP expressing the DNC’s concerns regarding the new NGP policy directive on the maintenance of administrative features in the GNIS.

Yost confirmed that the USGS NGP’s policy directive was signed on September 24th with an effective date of October 1st. The NGP Director requested that the DNC Executive Secretary and the Director of the USGS National Geospatial Technology Operations Center work together to develop a transition plan for implementation of the policy.

*Nov. 8 (747th) NGP Geographic Names Policy Directive*

Yost informed the DNC that he had met with DeMulder regarding the policy directive recently implemented by the USGS National Geographic Program concerning the maintenance of selected administrative features in the GNIS. DeMulder is preparing a response to the DNC to address its concerns with the policy. One member questioned the procedures by which non-recorded administrative names are added to GNIS, and whether such names could be used on Federal products. Yost reiterated that all names in the GNIS are official for Federal use and that any name used on a Federal product must be in GNIS.

*“Squaw” Name Changes in Oregon*

Jenny Runyon (DNC Staff) provided a status report on the “Squaw” name changes in Oregon and noted that several counterproposals were received in response to the proposals submitted by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR). To date, 13 such proposals have been received, for 15 “Squaw” names in Grant County.

Mark Webb (Grant County Judge) spoke to the DNC and expressed concerns that the efforts by the Oregon Geographic Names Board (OGNB) are motivated solely by a misunderstanding of the Oregon Statute that stipulated only that names should be changed on State and local, not Federal lands, and that only native names should be considered. He also noted that the legislation did not provide guidance as to how replacement names should be solicited. The Grant County Court is concerned that the counterproposals will be “dismissed” by the OGNB just as they did the few proposals for non-native names previously submitted by the county. He contended that the names suggested by residents of the county have merit. In closing, he urged the DNC to evaluate the names on their merits and asked that they consider the difference in interpretation of the legislative intent.

Yost reminded the DNC that State legislation is not binding on the Federal Government and that in accordance with the DNC's policies anyone who considers a name to be offensive may propose a change. In response, Webb noted that the OGNB will be compelled to comply with the legislation, which necessarily will influence its decisions. Kanalley (USFS) also noted that the State legislation was initially passed in 2001, with further revisions in 2003, but that it had languished for almost a decade until the CTUIR submitted the name change proposals. Runyon (DNC Staff) reported that the OGNB met on November 3rd and agreed to consider the counterproposals.

Other members assured Judge Webb that the DNC will evaluate all proposals fairly and equitably, and will make an informed decision, but also that there is an increased emphasis on the recognition of native cultures. Some noted that while it could be argued that the native names are "contrived" it could also be argued that the county's proposed names are also "contrived."

#### *Determining Tribal Lands for Consultation*

The Special Committee on Native American Names Policy and Tribal Consultation met to discuss which authoritative sources would be used to determine Tribal lands. The committee affirmed its previous decision to use the Census Bureau Topologically Integrated Geographic Encoding and Referencing (TIGER)/Line files. Bureau of Indian Affairs realty title status reports could be made available in the future if needed.

#### *Proposal for a New Name Ponce de Leon Island and Counterproposals for Ais Island and Coacoochee Island, FL*

The DNC members voted to reject all proposed names for the unnamed barrier island citing a lack of significant local support. The name Ponce de Leon Island would have honored Spanish explorer Don Juan Ponce de Leon (c.1460-1521), who led the first European expedition to Florida and reportedly landed at the barrier island in 1513. The name Ais Island would have honored the Ais Indians who inhabited the coast of Florida until the 1700s. The name Coacoochee Island would have honored Seminole chief Coacoochee (c.1812-1857). There was controversy associated with the names Ponce de Leon Island and Ais Island, with divided opinion among the local governments and Tribes. Coacoochee Island received little support.

#### *Dec. 13 (748th) NGP Geographic Names Policy Directive*

Yost reported that DeMulder (DOI), NGP Director, was finalizing the NGP response to the BGN's letter in which the DNC expressed its concerns regarding the new policy under which the names of administrative features are to be maintained in the GNIS. The letter is expected to ask each member agency to identify which features they require to be maintained in GNIS. Several members expressed an opinion that the new policy must allow for known errors to be corrected in GNIS. A DNC member observed that because the DOI funds the USGS, which in turn provides support for the maintenance of GNIS, the USGS has assumed ownership of the DNC's data.

*Roman Character Set*

Bruce Johnson (LC) distributed a proposed Roman alphabet character set for use in geographic names. The character set was a subset of the Unicode character set. Members were reminded that if a name is approved containing any of the characters in the set, they must be used on Federal products. The approval of “non-standard” characters will make the DNC and GNIS more relevant to a broader group of users, including speakers of Native languages. However, this will also present challenges to producers not familiar with Unicode.

Runyon (DNC Staff) distributed a Canadian topographic map, as an example of how native names would appear on United States maps when the revised policies are put into effect. The names were provided by Nunavut language experts, with each map showing the English translation of the Inuit name. Although the names were rendered in Unicode, they would be unfamiliar to non-native language speakers.

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 Lou Yost, Executive Secretary, Domestic Names Committee  
 Trent Palmer, Executive Secretary, Foreign Names Committee  
 Ken Salazar, Secretary of the Interior

### *Feb. 14 (749th) Personally Identifiable Information in Geographic Name Proposals*

The PPP editors added a statement regarding Personally Identifiable Information (PII) in proposals to conform with Federal policies. The statement notes that all correspondence associated with a proposal may be made publicly available and cautions proponents against submitting personal identifying information.

### *Apr. 30-May 4 36th Annual Meeting of COGNA, Minneapolis, MN*

The Council of Geographic Names Authorities (COGNA) held its annual meeting in Minneapolis. Due to travel restrictions placed upon Federal agencies during the Federal Government sequestration, the DNC and staff did not attend the meeting and the conference did not include a monthly DNC meeting for the first time since 1977. Betsy Kanalley attended as a representative of the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and served on a panel of USFS employees to discuss the handling of geographic names issues in their regions and their interactions with State Names Authorities.

### *May 9 (752nd) DNC Response to NGP Geographic Names Policy Directive*

Bill Logan distributed a copy of the letter he had sent on April 29th, on behalf of the DNC, to Mark DeMulder, regarding the NGP Data Lifecycle Management Plan. NGP is currently reviewing the list of “administrative” feature classes to determine which agencies could provide and maintain the data. As an example, the various Federal land management agencies would maintain campgrounds on their properties; but, campgrounds on non-Federal lands would no longer be maintained.

### *Batch proposals for names from students of the College of DuPage, IL*

The DNC has begun to receive a significant number of proposals from geography students at the College of DuPage (Illinois). The proposals are the result of a class project that asked the students to review the BGN’s policies and locate an unnamed geographic feature that the student believed should be named. The professor indicated that his goals are to “contribute to the area’s

cultural and historical geographies,” “name places we are documenting,” and “honor worthy individuals when appropriate.” Some of the proposals were well-researched, with correct geographic coordinates and a valid justification for the name, while others required additional investigation. Some proposals did not provide coordinates or a feature description; provided incorrect coordinates; proposed names for features that were already named in GNIS; proposed names for features that already had names in local use; were for an administrative feature; duplicated a name proposed for a nearby feature proposed by another student; or duplicated a proposal sent by a different student.

The DNC members expressed concern that given limited staff resources, the project will prove challenging to process. It was suggested that if the class wished to conduct a similar project in the future, the students could nominate several names, then have the class vote (through a “mock BGN”), resulting in just one proposal being submitted to the BGN. Several members commented that the class project might prove to be an educational opportunity for others, and might be of interest to the Association of American Geographers (AAG). [The professor of the course had proposed the name Wine Cellar Islands for a collection of eight artificial planters in a reservoir on the college campus. In September 2012, the DNC determined that these were not islands and that the proposal would not be processed. Students of the professor or the professor himself submitted over 120 names to the DNC between the spring 2013 and fall of 2015. Many of the names were withdrawn or closed due to a lack of communication from the proponent and/or insufficient biographical details. Some counterproposals were submitted by local communities, land owners, and residents; these counterproposals were approved. See other entries: Nov. 14 2013, Mar. 13, 2014, Apr. 9 2015, Jun. 11 2015, Oct. 8 2015]

*Proposal to Name Rio Run Creek, MO*

The DNC approved the name Rio Run Creek, an unusual name composed of three generic terms for a stream.

*Jun. 18 Single Point of Entry Global Gazetteer Engineering Report*

The Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC) published a report titled “OGC® OWS-9 Engineering Report – CCI – Single Point of Entry Global Gazetteer,” which demonstrated the integration of GNIS and the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency’s GEOnet Names Server (GNS) into a single, virtual gazetteer available as a Web Feature Service. Semantic mediation resolved differences in the feature types of the two databases. Currently, users of geographic names must consult one database for domestic names and another for foreign names, each comprising different feature classes and formats that are difficult to integrate. This option is an alternative to the effort that would be required to reconcile GNIS and GEOnet, which is considered cost prohibitive.



*Jul. 15 - 19 23rd PAIGH Geographic Names Course, Panamá City, Panamá*

The Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH) held its Geographic Names Course in Applied Toponymy in Panamá City, Panamá. 32 students attended the course, hosted by the Instituto Geográfico Nacional Tommy Guardia. For the first time, the field exercise was eliminated because the Panamá names program has an active and well-developed field collection process in place. The primary focus was the design and development of a national automated system for the national geographic names program. The course was taught by Roger Payne, George Troop (NGA), and an instructor from Honduras.

*Aug. 14 (754th) Discussion of NGP Geographic Names Policy Directive*

The DNC discussed agency responsibilities for maintaining certain categories of administrative features in GNIS. Doug Caldwell (USACE) noted that USACE could provide a file of existing dam data, but the agency does not have the resources to also maintain it within the GNIS, nor does the data necessarily meet DNC standards in regards to gazetteer format. Kanalley affirmed that the USFS also does not have the resources to maintain data on a regular basis and in the gazetteer format.

*Possibility of “Blended” Names for “Squaw” Name Changes in Oregon*

The Oregon Geographic Names Board (OGNB) indicated that a possible compromise to the stalemate would be to combine the proposed names submitted by the Tribes and local counties. The DNC members offered a range of opinions on the matter. Several expressed hope that the local population would settle on a single name for a feature and that blended names should only be considered if there is an impasse. A member noted that there is no requirement that a name approved by the DNC must be used locally and that “local citizens can use any name they want,” although after further discussion there was general consensus that this does not promote the BGN’s mission of standardization. The use of different names for a single feature can also present challenges during search and rescue efforts. The DNC also considered the impact of its Long Names Policy on the acceptance of combined names. [As of the date of publication of this document, no “blended” names have been submitted to the DNC.]

*Sep. 12 (755th) Discussion of NGP Geographic Names Policy Directive*

The DNC continued to discuss the USGS NGP Geographic Name Policy Directive and the Data Life Cycle Management Plan (DLCMP). DNC members were concerned that the USGS may not be able to maintain quality standards in the future. Andy Flora (Census) noted that Census does an internal review of its data.

Maria McCormick (DNC staff) responded that data provided by an authoritative source will not be reviewed by the GNIS staff. Currently, there are insufficient resources to do a systematic review of every submission. The GNIS staff are reactive and do not “seek out” potential issues. Furthermore, the GNIS tolerance for geographic coordinates was always plus/minus five seconds, which is acceptable for gazetteer purposes but may not be for GIS applications.

Several members noted that even if it were possible for Federal agencies to maintain “their” data, the DLCMP does not address features that are not on Federal land. The members affirmed that they interpret Public Law 80-242 to mean that the GNIS is the official source for *all* geographic names and that it is the responsibility of the Department of the Interior to provide this service for the Federal Government. Kanalley (USFS) noted that the long-standing USTopo and FSTopo agreement might provide some opportunities to seek guidance, although this does not address non-Federal lands. Furthermore, because GNIS was established over 30 years ago as the BGN’s official names repository for domestic names, individual agencies have not needed to develop their own databases. A member noted that GNIS maintenance is a labor-intensive process and no agency has the resources to assume the responsibility that the BGN long ago delegated to USGS. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the USFS continue to enter limited amounts of data using the GNIS maintenance forms, while Census regularly submits batch updates.

*Oct. 3-5 14th Annual GNBC Meeting, Winnipeg, Manitoba*

The Geographical Names Board of Canada (GNBC) held its 14th annual meeting in Winnipeg. Due to continued budget constraints and sequestration, no DNC members attended the meeting.

*Nov. 14 (756th) NGP Geographic Names Policy Directive Response*

DeMulder responded to the DNC’s latest concerns about the NGP Geographic Names Directive and its Data Life Cycle Management Plan (DLCMP), noting that since the DNC member agencies have stated that they are unable to maintain the selected administrative data, the NGP will only maintain those feature categories that are identified in the DLCMP as required for USGS topographic mapping.

*Derogatory Name Changes in South Dakota*

The South Dakota Board on Geographic Names (SDBGN) continues to address the issue of offensive names. In an effort to comply with legislation passed in 2001, the SDBGN is working with local communities and interested parties to address the remaining “Negro” and “Squaw” names. However, in the course of soliciting input, the SDBGN has learned that many individuals, including representatives of the South Dakota African American History Museum, do not find the word “Negro” offensive. As a result, the SDBGN has suspended its review of the pending proposals and has indicated it will ask the State Legislature during its 2014 session to amend the previous legislation to remove the word “Negro” from consideration.

*Batch proposals for names from students of the College of DuPage, IL*

The BGN received several new proposals this month and was also copied on another list of approximately 36 new names that were proposed directly to the Illinois Board on Geographic Names. The SNA stated that it will decline to review the list and any future submissions because the naming project “trivializes” the Federal naming process. The professor who is overseeing the project indicated that if the SNA would not consider the names, he would submit them to the BGN instead. [See May 9, 2013 entry.]

*GNIS Map Links Changed from Google Maps to Esri*

For several years, GNIS provided a link to Google Maps from the Feature Detail Report. However, Google notified the USGS that effective September 18th, the Department of the Interior would be assessed a fee for using the Google Maps Applications Programming Interface. USGS adopted the Esri web map service as a replacement for Google Maps.

*Nov. 18-22 29th BGN/PCGN Annual Conference, Washington, DC*

The BGN met with the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names for British Official Use (PCGN) at the Department of State in Washington, DC.

*Dec. 12 (757th) Impact of NGP Geographic Names Policy Directive*

The USGS NGP Data Life Cycle Management Plan (DLCMP) identifies feature categories that are necessary for USGS topographic mapping. The staff provided an example of a recent request by a Federal agency to add and update several records in GNIS. Under the proposed plan, the GNIS staff could no longer make these updates because the features in question are not included in the DLCMP. The members questioned why they are not considered trusted partners. If the staff cannot correct names, agencies would cease to rely on GNIS as the authoritative source for names.

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 Lou Yost, Executive Secretary, Domestic Names Committee  
 Trent Palmer, Executive Secretary, Foreign Names Committee  
 Sally Jewell, Secretary of the Interior

### *March 2014 BGN Annual Report*

The BGN sent its first modern Annual Report of its activities to the Secretary of the Interior.

### *Mar. 13 (758th) Batch Proposals for Names from Students of the College of DuPage, IL*

DNC staff continued to communicate with the Illinois Board on Geographic Names regarding the large number of proposals the BGN received to name unnamed features in and around DuPage County. These proposals have been submitted by students in a geography class at the College of DuPage. The staff continued to solicit comments from the appropriate local jurisdictions. Runyon received a call from the mayor of one community, who expressed his concern that individuals can submit names and that the BGN will consider them. He also stated that the students should be encouraged to work with the communities directly. After learning more about the process, he indicated he could appreciate the need for such a process and suggested his office might submit counterproposals for some of the name. He will also contact the other local governments to encourage them to respond to BGN's letters. [See the May 9, 2013 entry.]

### *Continued Discussion of NGP Geographic Names Policy Directive*

One of the DNC's primary concerns with the implementation of the new directive is the matter of conflation and data maintenance. Existing processes are very labor intensive. Maria McCormick (DNC Staff) described the current process whereby large files are submitted without extensive quality control or conflation with the National Structures Dataset. Instead of an added name becoming a replacement or variant of the existing name, a duplicate record is created. It was unclear whether the NGP would conflate the data sources and check for duplicates.

If there is disagreement over the NGP's support of the DNC, the DNC believes it must confer with the Secretary of the Interior (SOI). The DNC also believes that any future policy must continue to accommodate situations where a Federal agency submits a small number of additions and/or updates. If not, the only recourse is for an agency to present each of these to the DNC for a formal decision, which would require considerably more DNC staff time and resources.

DeMulder agreed with the need to get the SOI involved whenever there are substantial changes, and offered to assist in this effort, although he noted that it can be difficult to bring issues to the Secretary's attention.

Meredith Westington (NOAA) observed that there are features that appear on NOAA charts that are not the responsibility of her agency, such as airports. Rather than have GNIS staff update these as they are discovered, sending them to the Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) is not likely to get timely results. Andy Flora (Census) commented that if GNIS is not actively maintained, users will no longer rely on it as a dependable source. Federal agencies believe there is a need for a centralized authority.

DeMulder suggested that the DNC focus on the data that can reasonably be maintained. As an example, the new USTopos show far fewer feature types than were depicted on the previous versions. USGS is focusing on hydrography and elevation data and relies on other agencies to maintain the other data layers, such as Structures, Transportation, Boundaries, and Geographic Names. He assured the DNC members that geographic names were not being singled out in the ongoing "right-sizing" efforts.

Lou Yost stressed the importance of focusing on GNIS as a gazetteer, and stated that a small investment upfront could yield significant long term benefits. DeMulder agreed that the designation of GNIS as a gazetteer is an important consideration.

*Apr. 10 (759th) DOI Solicitor Approves Draft Interim Tribal Geographic Names Policy*

The DOI Solicitor's Office approved the draft interim Tribal Geographic Names Policy, which will be incorporated into the revised PPP document for transmittal to the SOI. [See Feb 9th, 2012 entry.]

*BGN and NGP Meeting Concerning NGP Geographic Names Policy Directive*

Doug Caldwell, Doug Vandegraft, and Yost recently met with DeMulder to discuss the DNC's concerns. They agreed on several high level points and each made compromises. The major points of agreement are: 1) NGP recognizes the legislated authority of the BGN over all names; 2) conflation of names among various data sources and layers is important, even if it involves additional cost; 3) the DNC and GNIS staff can continue to add or edit small numbers of records as needed by Federal agencies; and 4) the BGN will limit the number of feature types that it maintains in the near term to conform with the NGP's policy on administrative names.

It is important to emphasize that GNIS will continue to serve as the Nation's gazetteer; even if it must focus on fewer features, the quality should be greatly improved. DNC agencies need to be more proactive in data maintenance, i.e., any lists of updates should be reviewed before being submitted to the GNIS staff.

*Apr. 28-May 2 28th Session of the UNGEGN, New York, NY*

Trent Palmer and Iain Crawford (DOS) attended the 28th Session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN).

*Apr. 29-May 3 37th Annual Meeting of COGNA, Austin, TX*

The Council of Geographic Names Authorities (COGNA) held its annual meeting in Austin, Texas, hosted by the Texas Geographic Names Committee. The theme of the meeting was “Our Past is Present” And the keynote speaker was Dr. John L. Davis. BGN member Caldwell gave a presentation titled “People Have Friends, So Should Your Data!” Activities included the monthly meeting of the DNC (the 760th, held on April 30th); the State/Federal Roundtable; State Names Authorities Reports from 14 States; the COGNA business meeting; and a toponymic tour of the Texas Hill Country.

*Apr. 30 (760th) Proposed Geographic Names Improvement Program*

In a further effort to address the concerns of both the DNC and the USGS National Geospatial Program, the DNC proposed a Geographic Names Improvement Program (GNIP). Because of the way GNIS data has been collected over the past 30-plus years, there are inconsistencies. The GNIP lays out a four-year, interagency effort that focuses on both existing and incoming data and makes the entire process more efficient. It encourages the development of software tools that can be used to evaluate the existing GNIS data, as well as to standardize feature classes, abbreviations, punctuation, etc. These tools would be developed in line with other ongoing needs of the USGS National Geospatial Technology Operations Center. USGS agreed to explore methods for obtaining joint funding, hopefully with input from DOI. There is clearly a need for increased staff support, especially as the maintenance of a national authoritative names dataset can never be fully automated. [The GNIP capabilities were not established as a separate program, but integrated with the GNIS software development cycle.]

*Jul. 16 Virtual Global Gazetteer Engineering Report*

The Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC) published a report titled “OGC® Testbed 10 Virtual Global Gazetteer Engineering Report,” which demonstrated the linking of GNIS, the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency’s GNS, a New Brunswick provincial gazetteer, and the crowdsourced GeoNames gazetteer. Using the semantic web to enhance the basic information, the four gazetteers were connected with each other and with other data sources such as OpenStreetMap and Wikipedia.

*Aug. 14 Meeting with the Assistant Secretary for Water and Science*

BGN leadership met with Anne Castle, DOI Assistant Secretary for Water and Science (ASWS). The meeting was intended to start a dialog between the BGN and the SOI, who through coordination with ASWS, serves as the conjoint head of the BGN.

*Aug. 14 (763rd) Proposals to Name Features for Pets*

The DNC received two proposals to name features for animals: a stream and two tributaries in Vermont are proposed to be named for a horse named Garth, and a lake in Connecticut is proposed to be named for a dog that recently passed away. Jenny Runyon (DNC Staff) asked the DNC members to clarify whether these names should be processed. After some discussion, DNC members agreed that the staff should process them, while cautioning the proponent that animal and pet names are rarely approved.

Runyon also asked the DNC members to comment on whether proposals should ever be considered “too frivolous.” Examples include the aforementioned animal names, but also there seems to be a trend toward naming very small and/or insignificant features. Caldwell reported that the matter of features named for animals was raised in the morning’s meeting with Assistant SOI Castle; she noted that pets and animals are important culturally. The general consensus of the DNC was that the BGN exists “to serve the public” and that all proposals should be treated equally as long as they adhere to PPP requirements.

*Handling Proposals to Reverse Specific and Generic Terms*

The DNC members approved the change of O’Neill Lake to Lake O’Neill for a lake in California. Following the vote, the DNC discussed the handling of proposals where the change only involves the reversal of the specific and the generic terms. Runyon noted that in many instances the discrepancies are between two Federal sources, which is one of the primary reasons the BGN was originally established. DNC members generally concurred that these cases are appropriate for a DNC decision, and that the staff may determine on a case-by-case basis which ones warrant the full review process. They noted that the staff should be able to process cases where there is a discrepancy between two existing GNIS entries and there is a preponderance of evidence to support one of the entries.

*Aug. 18-23 24th PAIGH Geographic Names Course, Aguascalientes, Mexico*

Roger Payne (BGN Executive Secretary Emeritus), and George Troop (NGA), taught the course.

*Aug. 29 Revised NGP Geographic Names Policy Directive Signed*

DeMulder signed a revised NGP Geographic Names Policy Directive, which incorporates the changes discussed by the DNC and NGP representatives. [See April 10, 2014.] The directive takes effect on October 1, 2015.

*Sep. 11 (764th) NGP Geographic Names Policy Directive*

DeMulder spoke briefly about the process to get the directive signed and stated that the two years it took to work out the details was time well spent. He expressed a hope that the directive will serve the BGN and the USGS well for years to come. The BGN staff is preparing a statement that will be posted to the BGN and GNIS web pages announcing the policy and summarizing the impacts on GNIS maintenance in the future.

*Oct. 1 New Policy on Handling of Non-Maintained Administrative Data in the GNIS*

The following statement was added to the GNIS website:

New Policy Regarding the Maintenance of Administrative Feature Names in The National Map, Effective October 1, 2014:

As a result of reprioritized budgets and resources, the decision has been made to suspend the maintenance of some administrative (i.e. cultural or manmade) feature names in The National Map and to discontinue the maintenance of all administrative names through the GNIS public interface at this site (<http://geonames.usgs.gov>). The features that will continue to be maintained in The National Map will be updated in GNIS on a periodic revision cycle through submissions from authoritative sources or based on input from volunteers through The National Map Corps.

If you are interested in participating in The National Map Corps, which encourages citizens to collect structures data by adding new features, removing obsolete points, and correcting existing data for The National Map, please visit the following Web site: <http://navigator.er.usgs.gov>. To identify the administrative features to be maintained through The National Map Corps program, click "Structures List" located on the left-hand side of the page.

*Oct. 2-3 15th Annual GNBC Meeting, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada*

The Geographical Names Board of Canada (GNBC) held its 15th annual meeting in Halifax. No BGN members attended.

*Nov. 13 (766th) Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation*

Roberta Conner, Director of the Tamástslikt Cultural Institute and representative of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR), thanked the DNC for approving four Umatilla names in 2008, and for using the preferred tribal orthography rather than the phonetic spelling suggested by the Oregon Geographic Names Board (OGNB). She described her Tribe's frustration with the process, as well as the negative comments concerning the names submitted in their language. She expressed appreciation for the DNC's deliberate process and recognized that the work can be difficult and tedious.



Conner stated that, like many Tribes, the Umatilla have an oral tradition, and therefore there is a lack of written documentation for their names. She also stated that because of the U.S. Government's policy of relocating tribes away from their traditional lands, the names may not be used on a daily basis today, but they are still used by Tribal members when there is a need to refer to the features. She then addressed the issue of the DNC consulting with the Nez Perce Tribe on the pending proposals from the CTUIR. She understands that the DNC relies on the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) Native American Consultation Database to determine which tribes might have an interest in a specific geographic area, but she questioned why the Nez Perce were given over eighteen months to provide input. Runyon responded that the Nez Perce indicated on three occasions that additional time was needed to review the matter, and in accordance with the DNC's standard procedures, extensions were granted.

Yost noted that it is not uncommon for individuals to misinterpret the intent of the BGN's principles and policies, adding that the DNC attempts to ascertain not only local usage but also local acceptance for proposed names. The OGNB represents one level of local opinion.

Kanalley (USFS) reported that the USFS is very sensitive to local and regional opinions and has already removed many of the "Squaw" names from its maps. [Agencies are not required use all official names, but if a name is used, it must be the official name.] The USFS has also been supportive throughout the process of the CTUIR proposals, provided no other tribal interests came to light.

#### *Dec 11 (767th) Bear Lodge proposals*

Proposals were received to change the name of the summit and nearby populated place of Devils Tower to Bear Lodge. They were submitted by a "neutral mediator" on behalf of Chief Arvol Looking Horse, a Spiritual Leader of the Lakota/Nakota/Dakota Nations. The proponent also sent letters to the Secretary of the Interior, the Assistant Secretary of the Interior, and the Director of the National Park Service, requesting a change to the name of Devils Tower National Monument. Shelton (NPS) noted that bills have been introduced in Congress several times since the 104th to retain the name Devils Tower for the summit. Regardless of any potential bill concerning the name of the summit, the proposal to change the name of the populated place will come to the DNC for a decision. The Wyoming Board of Geographic Names and the U.S. Postal Service have been apprised of the proposals.

## Officers of the Board on Geographic Names

Douglas Caldwell, Chair  
 Tony Gilbert, Vice Chair  
 Douglas Vandegraft, Chair, Domestic Names Committee  
 Leo Dillon, Chair, Foreign Names Committee  
 Meredith Westington, Chair, Special Committee on Communication  
 Lou Yost and Trent Palmer, Executive Secretariat, Board on Geographic Names  
 Lou Yost, Executive Secretary, Domestic Names Committee  
 Trent Palmer, Executive Secretary, Foreign Names Committee  
 Sally Jewell, Secretary of the Interior

### *Feb. 12 (768th) Request to Revisit Mount William & Mary proposal, Colorado*

Dr. Kenneth Kambis (Professor, Department of Kinesiology & Health Sciences, The College of William and Mary) and Dr. Merritt Blakeslee spoke to the DNC about the proposal to apply the name Mount William & Mary to an unnamed summit in Colorado. This proposed name was rejected by the DNC in September 2001 but the proponents have requested that the DNC revisit the matter.

### *Mar. 12 (769th) Mount William & Mary, CO, Proposal*

Jenny Runyon (DNC Staff) asked the DNC if it wished to reopen the Mount William & Mary, Colorado proposal based on information presented at the February meeting. The members reviewed the original proposal along with the proponent's new evidence, primarily the claim that there is a direct association between the College of William & Mary and the State of Colorado because of the Louisiana Purchase. A motion to reopen the case failed because DNC members considered the evidence of direct association to be too broad to apply to this specific feature.

### *Batch proposals for names from students of the College of DuPage*

The DNC approved one name proposed by a student from the geography class at the College of DuPage and did not approve eleven others. Only one of the names was supported by the county commissioners. The Illinois Board on Geographic Names did not support any of the names and stated "the fulfillment of academic requirements is not part of the function or mission of [our board]; for a student to be required to submit a geographic names proposal to fulfill an academic requirement is completely counter to the spirit and desires of the Illinois Geographic Names program. The Illinois Board views this activity as unacceptable as well as abusive; a legitimate request or proposal should come from the heart with forethought and reverence." The SNA also objected to the quantity of names being proposed without involving the local municipalities in the process. The DNC approved one counterproposal to a proposal submitted by a student; it had the support of the county and the SNA. [See the May 9, 2013 entry.]

*Mar. 14 Richard Randall death*

Dr. Richard R. Randall (1925-2015) passed away on March 14th. He served as Executive Secretary of the BGN from 1973 to 1993.

*Apr. 9 2015 (770th) Batch proposals for names from students of the College of DuPage, IL*

The DNC approved seven names proposed by students from the geography class at the College of DuPage and did not approve 23 others. The approved names had the support of the DuPage County Commissioners. The SNA continues to be opposed all of these proposals. [See the May 9 2013 entry.]

*Apr. 28-May 2 38th Annual Meeting of COGNA, Anchorage, AK*

The annual meeting of the Council of Geographic Names Authorities took place in Anchorage, and was attended by DNC members and staff. On the first day, Gary Holton and Lawrence Kaplan (Professors of Linguistics, University of Alaska Fairbanks and Directors, Alaska Native Language Archive) co-chaired a Tribal Names Workshop on policies and issues surrounding Native geographic names in Alaska and the Yukon Territory. It brought together representatives of many Alaska Native groups who have been working to collect names from their elders in an effort to preserve native culture and languages. The focus of the presentations was to share lists, maps, and experiences. A number of groups have recorded sound files and developed websites that include photographs of the features, but it is unclear whether the names will be recorded as variant names or as non-recorded names for unnamed features. The DNC discussed the criteria for variant names from native languages as well as the nature of native names. That is, names often refer to places where events took place, while others may apply to just a portion of a larger feature that the DNC would consider a single feature, such as a stream, summit, or valley. The primary point of a stream in a native culture might be its headwaters rather than its mouth, as is recorded in GNIS.

The COGNA program also included a presentation on the Mount McKinley/Denali issue. The presenter stated that many people in Alaska are “tired of waiting for the name to be changed” although it was apparent that most are unfamiliar with the DNC’s policies. There was some discussion of seeking an Executive Order to change the name.

*Apr. 30 (771st) Proposal to Change Devils Tower to Bear Lodge, WY*

The Crook County Commissioners advised the DNC that they anticipate a vote in the fall on the proposal to change the names of the summit and populated place in Wyoming from Devils Tower to Bear Lodge, prior to the Wyoming Board of Geographic Names November meeting. DNC staff received the first written objection to the change from a local campground operator. All interested parties are being reminded that the name of Devils Tower National Monument was established by Congress and therefore only an act of Congress or Executive Order can change it. The National Park Service prepared a statement outlining the DNC’s procedures on the monument’s webpage. The DNC staff has also been coordinating with the U.S. Postal Service member on the DNC to

determine how the proposed change for the community name might impact the name of Devils Tower Post Office.

*Jun. 11 (772nd) Batch proposals for names from students of the College of DuPage, IL*

The DNC did not approve 31 names proposed by students from the geography class at the College of DuPage due to a lack of support from county governments and opposition from the ISBGN. [See the May 9, 2013 entry.]

*Jul. 9 (773rd) Proposal to Change Mount McKinley to Mount Denali, AK*

In the recent Senate Appropriations Committee report accompanying the Department of the Interior (DOI) appropriations bill (Senate Report 114-70), Senator Lisa Murkowski (Alaska) inserted the following wording:

The Committee disagrees with the U.S. Board of Geographic Names' continued reliance on Policy I regarding applications for geographic name changes. This policy was originally adopted in 1981 by the U.S. Board of Geographic Names to prevent confusion by possible conflicting actions of Congress and the Board, but instead has been used as a tool to indefinitely delay and prevent consideration by the Board of applications for geographic name changes. Leaving these applications in limbo indefinitely is unfair to the applicants who deserve a decision on their applications. If the Congress disagrees with the decision of the Board it retains the authority to take action on the name change through legislation.

The DNC discussed how best to address Murkowski's comments regarding the DNC's policy on Names Being Considered by Congress, while also deferring to Congress and recognizing that Congress authorized the BGN to develop policies. In some instances it is clear that DNC policies may conflict with each other (such as local usage, Tribal preferences, deferring to Congress, and preserving long-standing names). There is a perception that the DNC is a "roadblock," while in fact it is the inability of Congress to address the issue that is preventing the DNC from voting on the proposed name change.

The Secretary of the Interior (SOI) has been invited to attend an event in Alaska in August that will focus on the ongoing efforts by USGS to prepare updated maps for Alaska, but during which the issue of the name of the summit may also be raised. The DNC agreed it would be appropriate to prepare background information for the SOI on the matter. There was some discussion as to whether the 1975 proposal from the then-Governor of Alaska to change Mount McKinley to Denali is still an active case. Lou Yost reported that it was never formally withdrawn but was put on hold by the DNC staff because of the repeated activity in Congress.

*Proposal to Change Saint John to St. John, KS*

The DNC approved a proposal to change the name Saint John to St. John for a populated place and 13 associated features. Typically, the DNC spells out abbreviations, but in this case the

community was named for an individual named St. John and there was no evidence that his name was ever spelled “Saint.”

*Aug. 13 (774th) Federal Use of Third Party Web Mapping Services*

The USGS historic topographic map website uses base maps provided by a non-Government mapping company. A member noted that the map displays a derogatory name that the BGN had previously changed. [The company changed the name after being informed of the issue.]

This raised the more general issue of Federal agency use of third-party mapping services. There is no guarantee that they will use BGN-approved names even though Federal agencies are required to use such names in all their products, applications, and reports. It is hoped that any name discrepancies will be accommodated, although it was recognized that BGN decisions only apply to the Federal Government.

*Proposal to Change Mount McKinley to Denali, AK*

Yost noted that the DNC recently submitted a Mount McKinley/Denali white paper to the SOI.

*Aug 30 Secretarial Order Changes the Name of Mount McKinley to Denali, AK*

On August 30, Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell changed the name of Mount McKinley to Denali by Secretarial Order Number 3337, noting that “The requested name change is consistent with the Board’s substantive policies and is supported by the State of Alaska.” While the BGN does have a policy of deferring action when a matter is being considered by Congress, contradictory bills on this issue have been proposed by various members of Congress since the late 1970s. Under 43 U.S.C. §§ 364-364f, the SOI may take action in matters “wherein the Board does not act within a reasonable time.” The statute also directs the SOI to “promulgate in the name of the Board ... decisions with respect to geographic names and principles of geographic nomenclature and orthography.”

The Secretarial Order directed the DNC to follow “its usual procedures to immediately implement this name change, including changing the mountain’s name in the DNC’s GNIS and notifying all interested parties of the name change.”

This was the first time since Congress reestablished the BGN by Public Law 80-242 in 1947 that the SOI has changed an official name by Secretarial Order.

*Sep. 10 (775th) Actions Related to Denali, AK Name Change*

In accordance with the instructions of the SOI, the DNC staff updated the entry in the GNIS and prepared notification letters to send to interested parties. The newly surveyed elevation for Denali was recorded in the description field in the GNIS.

Yost thanked Jon Campbell (USGS) for writing the news as the top story on the USGS web site and thanked Matt O'Donnell (DNC Staff) for locating the 1897 Coast Survey chart that showed the first published instance of the name Mount McKinley. Yost noted that despite some reports to the contrary, the approved name is not Mount Denali.

The GNIS staff will update the names of the digital topographic maps related to the Denali name change. The updates will be published as each new map in the 1:24,000-scale coverage of Alaska continues. A new decision type category for Secretarial Order will be added as an option to the GNIS.

*Sep. 18 125th BGN Anniversary Celebration, Washington, DC*

The BGN celebrated its 125th anniversary with a one-day symposium at the Library of Congress. The program presentations were divided into two parts: *Traditions* and *Transitions*.

The *Traditions* segment featured presentations by noted author Dr. Mark Monmonier (Syracuse University); Helen Kerfoot (former UNGEGN Chair); Capt. Skip Théberge National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Corps (Ret.), and Sandra Shaw (First Female Chair of the BGN and FNC Chair). The *Transitions* included presentations by Dr. Luis Bermudez (Open Geospatial Consortium), David Stage (Former Florida State GIS Coordinator), and Juan José Valdés (National Geographic Society).

The Geography and Map Division of the Library of Congress held an Open House with the theme of *Power of Names*, which included sections on "Early Geographic Names," "Traditions and Practices of the BGN," and the "Power of Names." Artifacts spanned history from Ptolemy's early work on geographic names to the recently updated NPS brochure showing the name Denali.

*Sep. 21-25 30th BGN/PCGN Meeting, London, England*

A joint meeting of the BGN and the British Permanent Committee on Geographical Names took place September 21-25 in London.

*Sep. 28 BGN Bylaws Approved*

The BGN's revised bylaws were approved by the SOI. The bylaws replace the 2001 version, which was the last one approved by the SOI. A different version was approved by the Full Board in 2007, but was never approved by the SOI. The revised bylaws establish an Executive Secretariat including the Executive Secretary for Foreign Names and the Executive Secretary for Domestic Names, gave the Executive Secretariat voting rights on the Executive Committee, named the BGN chair as the primary spokesperson for the BGN, eliminated the Publicity and Publications Committee, and clarified voting procedures.

**Oct. 8 (776th) Actions Related to the Denali, AK, Name Change**

The majority of actions relating to Secretarial Order Number 3337 to change the name of Mount McKinley to Denali have been completed, and changes to topographic map names will be completed shortly.

**Batch proposals for names from students of the College of DuPage, IL**

BGN staff received ten new proposals from students in a geography class at the College of DuPage. Due to concerns from previous batches of proposals from students, staff asked the proponents to solicit and provide support for the proposed name before they would be processed. No further communication with the proponents was received, so the cases were closed. No proposals from students in this geography class were received after this batch. [See the May 9 2013 entry.]

**Oct. 29-30 16th Annual GNBC Meeting, Ottawa, Canada**

The Geographical Names Board of Canada (GNBC) held its 16th annual meeting in Ottawa. The BGN was not represented.

**Nov. 12 (777th) Handling of Non-Maintained Administrative Data in the GNIS**

The DNC discussed the documentation of non-maintained data in the GNIS. A number of feature classes are being collected, updated, and conflated with GNIS through the National Geospatial Program (NGP) Structures program, while others are not. The NGP recommends that the non-maintained data be flagged so that users will be aware that it is potentially out of date.

DNC members offered four options, the first of which is to flag each individual record that is no longer being maintained. According to the NGP, this would require minimal effort; however, the GNIS staff contends it would require manual checking and a significant amount of work. The second option is to provide detailed information in the metadata as to which features are currently being maintained. A third option is to delete all features that are no longer maintained, and a fourth is to leave the database as is with no changes, i.e., without any information on non-maintained features.

The DNC expressed a preference for Option 1, flagging the status of individual GNIS records in the long term, but citing ongoing resource challenges, they supported Option 2, updating the GNIS metadata, in the near term. All agreed that options 3 and 4 are not desirable.

**Nov. 16-20 National Tribal GIS Conference, Albuquerque, NM**

Jenny Runyon (DNC Staff) and Betsy Kanalley (USFS) attended the National Tribal GIS Conference. Runyon provided a general overview and background on the

BGN and GNIS, while Kanalley discussed examples of the USFS's involvement with the DNC and Tribes.

*Dec. 10 (778th) Handling of Non-Maintained Administrative Data in the GNIS*

The USGS NGP will estimate the effort to individually mark each record that will no longer be maintained in GNIS. A global change would be difficult because some feature classes contain both maintained and non-maintained features. One addition to the metadata statement should be that the names on Federal lands will be maintained, while the names of State forests and parks would not. [Note: see new policy statement - October 1, 2014.]



# Appendices



## **U.S. Board on Geographic Names**

### **Organization**

#### *Offices*

BGN Chair

BGN Vice-Chair

#### *Committees and Membership*

Executive Secretary for Domestic Names Committee (DNC)

Executive Secretary for Foreign Names Committee (FNC)

Members (Appointed Every Two Years)

Department of Agriculture (DNC)

Central Intelligence Agency (FNC)

Department of Commerce (DNC and FNC)

Department of Defense (DNC and FNC)

Government Publishing Office (Formerly Government Printing Office, DNC)

Department of Homeland Security (DNC and FNC)

Department of the Interior (DNC)

Library of Congress (DNC and FNC)

Postal Service (DNC)

Department of State (FNC)

#### *Advisory Committees:*

Antarctic Names (ACAN)

Undersea Features (ACUF)

Extra-Terrestrial Features

## U.S. Board on Geographic Names

Executive Order, September 1890

### Executive Order

*As it is desirable that uniform usage in regard to geographic nomenclature and orthography obtain throughout the Executive Departments of the Government, and particularly upon the maps and charts issued by the various Departments and bureaus, I hereby constitute a Board on Geographic Names and designate the following persons, who have heretofore co-operated for a similar purpose under the authority of the several Departments, Bureaus, and Institutions with which they are connected, as members of said Board:*

*Prof. Thomas C. Mendenhall, United States Coast and Geodetic Survey,  
Chairman;*

*Andrew H. Allen, Department of State;*

*Capt. Henry L. Howison, Light-House Board, Treasury  
Department;*

*Capt. Thomas Turtle, Engineer Corps, War Department;  
Lieut. Richardson Clover, Hydrographic Office, Navy  
Department;*

*Pierson H. Bristow, Post-Office Department;*

*Otis T Mason, Smithsonian Institution;*

*Herbert G. Ogden, United States Coast and Geodetic Survey;*

*Henry Gannett, United States Geological Survey;*

*Marcus Baker, United States Geological Survey.*

*To this Board shall be referred all unsettled questions concerning geographic names which arise in the Executive Departments, and the decisions of the Board are to be accepted by these Departments as the Standard Authority in such matters.*

*Department officers are instructed to afford such assistance as maybe proper to carry on the work of this Board.*

*The members of this Board shall serve without additional compensation, and its organization shall entail no expense on the Government.*

*Benj Harrison*

*Executive Mansion, September 4. 1890*

## Public Law 242-80th Congress

[Chapter 330 -- 1st Session][S.1262]

### AN ACT

[To provide a central authority for standardizing geographic names for the purpose of eliminating duplication in standardizing names among the Federal departments, and for other purposes.]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Secretary of the Interior, hereinafter called the Secretary, conjointly with the Board on Geographic Names, as hereinafter provided, shall provide for uniformity in geographic nomenclature and orthography throughout the Federal Government. The Secretary may exercise his functions through such officials as he may designate, except that such authority as relates to the final approval or review of actions of the Board on Geographic Names shall be exercised by him, or his Under or Assistant Secretaries.

sec. 2. There is hereby established a Board on Geographic Names, hereinafter called the Board. The membership of the Board shall include one representative from each of the Departments of State, War, Navy, Post Office, Interior, Agriculture, and Commerce, and from the Government Printing Office, and the Library of Congress. The Board may also include representatives from such Federal agencies as the Secretary, upon recommendation of the Board, shall from time to time find desirable, even though these agencies are in the departments otherwise represented on the Board. The members of the Board shall be appointed by the respective heads of the departments or independent agencies that they represent. Each member shall be appointed for a two- year term but may be reappointed to successive terms. The members of the Board shall serve without additional compensation. The Board shall nominate a Chairman to be appointed by the Secretary, and shall establish such working committees as are found desirable.

sec. 3. The Board, subject to the approval of the Secretary, shall formulate principles, policies, and procedures to be followed with reference to both domestic and foreign geographic names; and shall decide the standard names and their orthography for official use. The principles, policies, and procedures formulated hereunder shall be designed to serve the interests of the Federal Government and the general public to enlist the effective cooperation of the Federal departments and agencies most concerned, and to give full consideration to the specific interests of particular Federal and State agencies. Action may be taken by the Secretary in any matter wherein the Board does not act within a reasonable time. The Board may make such recommendations to the Secretary as it finds appropriate in connection with this Act.

sec. 4. The Secretary shall cause such studies and investigations to be made and such records to be kept as may be necessary or desirable in carrying out the purposes of this

Act, and he shall provide a place of meeting and staff assistance to the Board. The staff shall be responsible to the Secretary, who shall prescribe its relations to the Board and the committees of the Board. The Secretary may establish from time to time, upon recommendation of the Board, advisory committees of United States citizens who are recognized experts in their respective fields to assist in the solution of special problems arising under this Act.

sec. 5. For the guidance of the Federal Government, the Secretary shall promulgate in the name of the Board, from time to time and in such form as will carry out the purposes of this Act, decisions with respect to geographic names and principles of geographic nomenclature and orthography. The Secretary shall also furnish such additional information with respect to geographic names as will assist in carrying out the purposes of this Act.

sec. 6. With respect to geographic names the pertinent decisions and principles issued by the Secretary shall be standard for all material published by the Federal Government. The United States Board on Geographic Names in the Department of the Interior created by Executive order, is hereby abolished, and the duties of said Board are transferred to the Board herein created, and 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.

sec. 7. Nothing in this Act shall be construed as applying to the naming of the offices or establishments of any Federal agency.

sec. 8. There are hereby authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act.

Approved July 25, 1947.



## United States Department of the Interior

U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
Office of the Director  
Reston, Virginia 20192

AUG 14 2015

### Memorandum

To: Secretary

Through: Jennifer Gimbel *Jennifer Gimbel*  
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Water and Science

SEP 18 2015

From: *SK* Suzette M. Kimball  
Acting Director

Subject: Approval of the revised bylaws for the U.S. Board on Geographic Names

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and the U.S. Board on Geographic Names (Board) are requesting your approval of the revised bylaws for the Board.

The Board is a Federal body created in 1890 and established in its present form by Public Law 80-242 in 1947 to maintain uniform geographic name usage throughout the Federal Government. The Board comprises representatives of Federal agencies concerned with geographic information, population, ecology, and management of public lands. Sharing its responsibilities with the Secretary of the Interior, the Board promulgates official geographic feature names with locative attributes as well as principles, policies, and procedures governing the use of domestic names, foreign names, Antarctic names, and undersea feature names.

The current bylaws were approved by the Secretary of the Interior in 2001. Given the growth in the membership, changes in communications technology, and experience gathered over the past decade, the Board would like to update the existing bylaws to formally address these important developments. Significant changes include:

- Establishing the Board Chair as the principal representative to the Board.
- Creating an Executive Secretariat comprising the Executive Secretaries for the Domestic and Foreign Names Committees, who will also be voting members of the Board's Executive Committee.
- Granting authority for Board Committees to appoint new members to their Committees.

We recommend that you approve the attached revised bylaws for the Board. Attached for your review is a reference document that highlights the changes between the existing bylaws and the proposed bylaws.

2

We will be pleased to answer any questions you may have regarding the functions of the Board, its membership, and proposed changes to the existing bylaws. For additional information, please contact Mr. Lou Yost, Executive Secretary, at (703) 648-4552 or [lyost@usgs.gov](mailto:lyost@usgs.gov).

Attachment

 SEP 28 2015  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Approve Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Disapprove Date



## **UNITED STATES BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES BYLAWS**

Adopted by the Board on May 25, 1948; revised July 21, 1953; July 21, 1959; October 15, 1963; March 22, 1975; December 17, 1979; July 30, 1982; July 17, 1984; October 15, 1985; July 17, 2001; draft revision (approved by US BGN Oct 16, 2007, submitted to Secretary of the Interior (SoI), but no action taken); new revision date TBD (approved by US BGN January 15, 2013; SoI approval pending).

### **Article I – Name, Objective and Authority**

#### *Sec. 1*

The name of the organization is the United States Board on Geographic Names (the “Board”).

#### *Sec. 2*

The objective of the Board is to provide for uniformity in geographic nomenclature and orthography throughout the Federal Government.

#### *Sec. 3*

The Board functions conjointly with the Secretary of the Interior (“the Secretary”) as provided in the Act of July 25, 1947, P.L. 80-242, 61 Stat. 456 (codified at 43 U.S.C. 364) (“the Act”).

### **Article II – Members**

#### *Sec. 1*

The membership of the Board must conform to the provisions of Section 2 of the Act. It is based on the need, interest, and expertise of departments and agencies in the use and development of standard geographic names. At the time of the latest version of the bylaws, the following departments and agencies were represented on the Board:

Department of Agriculture  
Department of Commerce  
Department of Defense  
Department of Homeland Security  
Department of the Interior  
Department of State  
Central Intelligence Agency  
Government Publishing Office

Library of Congress  
Postal Service

*Sec. 2*

The Board is comprised of principal members and deputy members. The head of each department and agency represented on the Board shall appoint one principal member and also may designate one or more deputy members. A deputy member may attend and participate in meetings of the Board (see Article V section 2 concerning voting privileges).

*Sec. 3*

A department or agency represented on the Board, in the absence of its principal member or deputy members, may have an observer at a meeting of the Board or of a committee except the Executive Committee. On specific request of the department or agency concerned, the Board or committee may give such observer the status of deputy member for that meeting.

*Sec. 4*

Only a principal Board member is eligible for election as Chair or Vice Chair of the Board. A principal or deputy member is eligible to serve as any other officer of a standing committee.

*Sec. 5*

Principal members and deputy members are appointed for two-year terms and may be reappointed to successive terms. The term of office expires on September 30 of the odd-numbered year. All appointments run concurrently. Appointment to a vacancy is for the remainder of the term. In the event a department or agency has not appointed its members by the September 30 deadline, the former members continue to represent the agency until they are appointed or replaced by new representatives.

**Article III – Officers**

*Sec. 1*

The officers of the Board are the Chair, Vice Chair, Executive Secretary for Foreign Names, and Executive Secretary for Domestic Names.

The Chair is elected from the membership of the Board and subsequently appointed by the Secretary as provided by the Act. The Vice Chair is elected from the membership of the Board. They are chosen by vote at the regular meeting of the Board in October of each odd-numbered year. They serve for two years or until their successors are chosen and enter on duty.

The Chair and Vice Chair are chosen from the membership of the Domestic Names Committee and the Foreign Names Committee. The Chair and Vice Chair rotate between these two standing committees but may not be from the same Committee.

The Executive Secretary for Foreign Names is appointed by the Director, National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency. The Executive Secretary for Domestic Names is appointed by the Director, United States Geological Survey.

*Sec. 2*

The Chair:

Presides at meetings of the Board.

Performs the usual duties of a Chair and other duties that may be assigned by the Board.

Serves ex officio as a member, without a vote, of all committees of which he or she is not a regular member.

Assigns duties and provides direction to the Executive Secretariat as appropriate.

Serves as principal representative of the Board at any national or international session, meeting, or conference.

*Sec. 3*

The Vice Chair:

Acts as Chair in the absence of that officer.

Serves as Chair of the Executive Committee and presents reports thereof at meetings of the Board.

May attend ex officio, without a vote, meetings of any committee of which he or she is not a member.

*Sec. 4*

The Executive Secretary for Foreign Names:

Maintains non-archived records of the Foreign Names Committee, including the correspondence files that pertain to foreign names, excluding names in the United States and its current dependencies, and Antarctica.

Provides a meeting place for the Committee and advises the members as to time and place of meetings.

Attends meetings of the Committee, prepares and distributes the minutes of the meetings, and conducts related correspondence of the Board and the Committee in accordance with procedures formulated by the Board and approved by the Secretary.

Serves as consultant to the Board in matters pertaining to foreign names.

May participate with a vote in Executive Committee meetings. May participate without a vote in all other meetings of the Board.

Serves as the principal Board point of contact in any matter concerning foreign geographic names.

*Sec. 5*

The Executive Secretary for Domestic Names:

Maintains non-archived records of the Domestic Names Committee, including the correspondence files that pertain to names in the United States and its current dependencies.

Provides a meeting place for the Committee and advises the members as to the place of the meetings.

Attends meetings of the Committee, prepares and distributes the minutes of the meetings, and conducts related correspondence of the Board and the Committee in accordance with procedures formulated by the Board and approved by the Secretary.

Serves as consultant to the Board in matters pertaining to domestic names.

May participate with a vote in Executive Committee meetings. May participate without a vote in all other meetings of the Board.

Serves as the principal Board point of contact in any matter concerning domestic (U.S.) geographic names.

*Sec. 6*

The Executive Secretariat of the Board

The two Executive Secretaries jointly comprise the Executive Secretariat of the Board. The Executive Secretariat and the Board Chair collaborate to organize the Board's work program and agenda, to arrange meetings of the full Board and Executive Committee, and to maintain the Board's records and to provide organized representation at national and international sessions, meetings, or conferences.

**Article IV – Committees**

*Sec. 1*

The standing committees are: (1) the Executive Committee, (2) the Domestic Names Committee, and (3) the Foreign Names Committee. Additional standing committees may be established and discharged by the Board. There must be at least three members on each standing committee.

*Sec. 2*

The Executive Committee consists of the Chair and the Vice Chair of the Board, the Chair (or in their absence, the Vice Chair) of the Domestic Names Committee, the Chair (or in their absence, the Vice Chair) of the Foreign Names Committee, the Executive Secretary for Foreign Names and the Executive Secretary for Domestic Names. It may act for the Board on urgent matters normally referable to the Board when time is not available to follow the procedure outlined in Article V, Section 3. The Chair of the Board decides which procedure to follow. Action by the Executive Committee in such instances must be communicated in writing to all Board members as soon as possible. The Committee also acts on matters brought to its attention by the Chair of the Board.

*Sec. 3*

At the time of the latest version of the bylaws, the following departments and agencies were represented on the Board:

(a) The Domestic Names Committee:

Department of Agriculture  
Department of Commerce  
Department of Defense  
Department of Homeland Security  
Department of the Interior  
Government Publishing Office  
Library of Congress  
Postal Service

(b) The Foreign Names Committee:

Department of Commerce  
Department of Defense  
Department of State  
Central Intelligence Agency  
Library of Congress

*Sec. 4*

The Domestic Names Committee operates in accordance with principles, policies, and procedures approved by the Board and the Secretary. The Committee utilizes staff services provided by the United States Geological Survey and renders decisions on domestic geographic names. The Committee performs such other duties as may be assigned by the Board. The Committee keeps the Board informed concerning the current and anticipated programs of their department or agencies that have a bearing on domestic geographic names.

*Sec. 5*

The Foreign Names Committee operates in accordance with principles, policies, and procedures approved by the Board and the Secretary. The Committee utilizes staff services provided by the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency and renders decisions on foreign geographic names. The Committee performs such other duties as may be assigned by the Board. The committee keeps the Board informed concerning the current and anticipated programs of their department or agencies that have a bearing on foreign geographic names.

*Sec. 6*

Special committees, with membership not necessarily restricted to Board members or deputies, may be created by the Board or by one of the standing committees. Each committee may be discharged by the body that created it.

*Sec. 7*

Advisory committees may be established by the Board to deal with special problems concerning geographic names. Members of advisory committees are appointed by the Secretary on the recommendation of the Board and serve until they resign or until the committees are abolished by the Board. Members normally are not members of the Board, and are to be selected for their individual qualifications to serve in the specified capacity. Staff support for a committee is provided by the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency or the United States Geological Survey, depending on whether the subject matter is considered foreign or domestic in nature, or both. The Chair will appoint one of the two Executive Secretaries as the Executive Secretary of an advisory committee, as appropriate to the subject, to attend and participate in meetings of that advisory committee and to coordinate its work with other national or international bodies, as required.

*Sec. 8*

Each standing, special, or advisory committee appoints its own officers, except as otherwise provided by action of the Board.

*Sec. 9*

The principles, policies, procedures and actions of any committee are subject to review and approval by the Board as follows:

Standing committees must submit quarterly reports to the Board at its meetings.

Advisory committees must submit quarterly reports, recommendations for decision, or both for Board approval.

The Board must forward decisions to the Secretary for concurrence.

**Article V – Meetings**

*Sec. 1*

Parliamentary procedures at meetings of the Board and its committees must conform to Robert's Rules of Order, revised, unless otherwise provided.

*Sec. 2*

At meetings of the Board, each participating member department and agency shall have a single vote on any decision. The vote may be cast by the principal member or authorized deputy member.

In any meeting of the Board or of its standing committees other than the Executive Committee, a majority of the member departments and agencies constitutes a quorum. Except as otherwise specified, a majority vote of the members present is sufficient for any action.

The Chair of the Board or of a standing committee has the choice of voting or not voting on any matter that comes before the Board or of a standing committee. If not voting, the Chair of the Board or standing committee may break a tie vote even though another representative of the Chair's organization has voted, unless a member of a department or agency, other than that of the Chair, requests the question be deferred or referred to the Executive Committee or to the full Board for resolution.

The Domestic Names Committee and the Foreign Names Committee, at their discretion, may extend voting privileges to deputy members, and the specific procedure must be a matter of written record. The nature and procedure for such privileges for deputy members representing the same agency is at the discretion of the Standing Committee.

Deputy members, serving as committee chairs on the Domestic Names Committee or the Foreign Names Committee, have voting privileges when participating in Executive Committee meetings.

*Sec. 3*

Meetings of the Board are held on the third Tuesday of January, April, July, and October of each year, or at such time as the Board may determine. Special meetings may be called by the Chair.

*Sec. 4*

Between meetings, urgent Board matters may be decided by by electronic mail, facsimile, telephone, or written vote, on the initiative of the Chair of the Board or his or her representative. A quorum is the majority of the member departments and agencies. A majority vote of the responding quorum is required for a decision. Pertinent written material applicable to the urgent matter must be in the hands of the Board members before such action is taken. Such action must be recorded in the minutes of the next Board meeting.

**Article VI – Principles, Policies and Procedures**

*Sec. 1*

Statements of principles and basic policies governing geographic nomenclature to be followed by the Board, by its committees and staffs, and by departments and agencies of the Government, must be formulated by the Board and approved by the Secretary in accordance with statutory requirements. These statements may be revised or amplified as often as necessary.

*Sec. 2*

The Board and its committees and staffs must in their working procedures implement the provisions of the Act that “the principles, policies, and procedures formulated hereunder shall be designed to serve the interest of the Federal Government and the general public, to enlist the effective cooperation of the Federal departments and agencies most concerned, and to give full consideration to the specific interest of particular Federal and State agencies.”

**Article VII – Communications**

*Sec. 1*

Formal actions or resolutions of the Board that require validation by the Secretary must be submitted to the Secretary in writing by the Chair of the Board or another officer designated by the Chair.



*Sec. 2*

Communications to and from the Board are to be conducted in accordance with procedures formulated by the Board and approved by the Secretary.

**Article VIII – Amendments**

*Sec. 1*

Amendments to these bylaws proposed by a standing committee or by any member of the Board or by its Chair are to be submitted to the Executive Committee for review. The Executive Committee will present its recommendations to the Board for action.

*Sec. 2*

Amendments to these bylaws may be adopted in any duly called meeting of the Board by a two-thirds vote of the members present (notice of such proposed amendments having been communicated to the members of the Board 30 days in advance of the meeting) and are to take effect upon approval by the Secretary.

August 29, 2014

## USGS NATIONAL GEOSPATIAL PROGRAM

### NGP Policy Directive on Geographic Names

This revised directive clarifies NGP's policy as it relates to the planning, acquisition, maintenance, and promulgation of Geographic Names information. The need for this policy is driven by the NGP Strategic Plan for 2012-2017, its prioritized Communities of Use (COU's) and data theme layers in *The National Map*, and the ongoing budget challenges in USGS. The Geographic Names layer is a "moderate" investment, one of eight theme layers in *The National Map*.

The previous directive, dated August 16, 2012, was the subject of several meetings with the United States Board on Geographic Names (BGN) and comment and response letters between the NGP Director and BGN during the time period September 2012 through April 2014. This revision reflects due diligence changes agreed upon during those interactions, and resolves the difficulty of insufficient NGP resources needed to address the growing needs of BGN for promulgating and maintaining natural and administrative feature names.

Consistent with its Strategic Plan, NGP has reviewed Geographic Names activities and how they fit into mission and investment priorities. A unique aspect of the Geographic Names function is its support of the statutory responsibilities of the BGN. This policy directive does not change NGP's interaction with and support for the BGN. It recognizes the BGN's authority to promulgate geographic names, including natural and administrative feature names, for official Federal government use. This is done through the Geographic Names Information System (GNIS).

Effective October 1, 2014, NGP adopts the following practices related to Geographic Names activities to accomplish the program's mission.

#### NGP Geographic Names Management

NGP has developed a comprehensive Data Life Cycle Management Plan (DLCMP) that defines the geographic feature and Names content that NGP will support in terms of updating and maintaining National Databases. (See the DLCMP for the complete list of defined features including names to be included in *The National Map* products for coverage and revision cycle, standards, supplier organizations, usage and operations, and data retention strategy.)

The data from the authoritative sources will be conflated with the data in the GNIS. The GNIS-ID is the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standard and should not be replaced with every data load. If a GNIS feature is identified that no longer serves the function identified by its feature type in the GNIS, it will not be deleted, but will be retained and labeled as historical.

Historical and variant names are required for gazetteer cross referencing purposes.

Beginning October 1, 2014, new data acquisition and partner agreements that involve Geographic Names will be focused only on natural features, populated places, and man-made structures (such as schools) which are defined in the DLCMP. The agreements will use consistent descriptions of what types of Geographic Names will be updated.

For administrative features not covered in the DLCMP and not classified as a natural feature or a populated place, additions and updates will no longer be accepted unless specifically requested by a BGN-member agency for use on a Federal product. Requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and the number the USGS will act upon is expected to be limited in scope. Agencies requiring larger collections of selected administrative names not covered by the DLCMP will be required to enter the data directly in the GNIS, import data using the GNIS import tool, or provide funding to meet the requirement.

Feature categories that are not updated, such as churches, museums, and libraries, will remain in the GNIS as legacy data and will no longer be maintained. They will be available to the Federal Government and public, subject to BGN policy.

## Areas of Change

This directive changes the current NGP operational process related to Geographic Names in the following ways:

- (1) Historically NGP and its predecessor organizations had a broad policy that aimed to satisfy a wide range of users and their needs for standardized names for many kinds of features, including man-made structures, administrative, historical and variant names, and landforms. This directive establishes a change in policy to acquire updated Geographic Names for The National Map feature content consistent with the DLCMP from authoritative sources to the maximum extent possible. This will drive an acquisition strategy where NGP will target only those geographic features defined within the DLCMP for active update and maintenance.

- (2) From an operational perspective, the directive changes how geographic names information is processed into the GNIS and other National Databases comprising The National Map.

## BGN Executive Secretariat Responsibilities Remain Unchanged

Public Law 80-242 (1947) established the BGN as the recognized Federal authority for standardizing and approving official geographic names either by decision or through its policies. Members include representatives of the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense,

Homeland Security, Interior, and State; Central Intelligence Agency, Government Printing Office, Library of Congress, and U.S. Postal Service.

The BGN currently standardizes Domestic Names in the United States and its territories, Foreign Names for countries outside of the United States, as well as Antarctic Names and

Undersea Feature Names. By agreement, the USGS provides the staff to support Domestic and Antarctic Names, while the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency provides staff support for Foreign Names and Undersea Feature Names.

The BGN's Domestic Names Committee (DNC) adjudicates the names of natural features, populated places and unincorporated localities in the U.S. and its territories and outlying areas. Generally, the BGN does not resolve issues concerning the names of cultural features such as churches, schools, or post offices unless asked to do so, but it promulgates names of cultural features through the GNIS. The DNC promulgates official geographic feature names with locative attributes through the GNIS, as well as establishes the principles, policies, and procedures regarding geographic names. The decisions and principles issued by the Secretary of Interior are the standard for all material published by the Federal Government.

Through the BGN Executive Secretariat, NGP will continue to support BGN meetings, studies, and investigations, record the business of the BGN to adjudicate, standardize, and publish official Domestic and Antarctic Names in the GNIS, and promote Names management by authoritative sources.

## Definitions

**Authoritative source** - refers to a data provider that has been determined to be the final decision authority on the feature and names content for a given feature or class of features. For example, the Department of Education would be considered the authoritative source for school names.

**Conflation** - the process of comparing new data to existing data in the GNIS and taking action based on the result of the comparison. New data is compared with existing information to determine whether or not an entry for the feature already exists in the GNIS. If no entry exists, a new record for the feature is created in the GNIS. If there is an existing feature, the existing GNIS record is updated and no new record is created. If the name of the feature has changed, the existing name in the GNIS must be added as a variant name. If it is determined that an existing record no longer serves the function of its feature type, it is rendered historical. Conflation is necessary to avoid duplicate entries for a single feature in the GNIS.

**Data Life Cycle Management Plan** – Complete list of defined geospatial features in The National Map for coverage and revision cycle, standards, supplier organizations, usage and operations, and data retention strategy. It contains definitions of the geographic features and Names content that NGP will support in terms of updating and maintaining National Databases. The DLCMP is accessible on the Confluence collaboration site for the moment. NGP will place it on a more functional Google site in the near future.

**Gazetteer** - an index or list of geographic names and their locations.

**Geographic Names Information System** – an umbrella term for a collection of database tables, applications, and procedures under the direction of the NGP Geographic Names Program for the BGN.

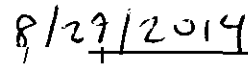
Promulgate – An action to make official geographic names data publically available. The BGN promulgates official geographic names through the GNIS to Federal agencies and the public.

### Time Frame for Directive

This directive will be in effect starting October 1, 2014, until further notice.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark DeMulder", is written over a horizontal line.

Mark DeMulder, NGP Director

A handwritten date "8/29/2014" in black ink is written over a horizontal line.

Date

## FIPS Code Replacement Chart

September 22, 2015

Withdrawn FIPS	Replacement Standard <sup>1</sup>
FIPS 5-2 (May 28, 1987) -- Codes for the Identification of the States, the District of Columbia and the Outlying Areas of the United States, and Associated Areas <b>Withdrawn September 2, 2008.</b>	INCITS 38 – 2009 – (Reaffirmed 2014) Information technology - Codes for the Identification of the States and Equivalent Areas within the United States, Puerto Rico, and the Insular Areas. For more information on the status of this standard, contact <a href="mailto:geo.geography@census.gov">geo.geography@census.gov</a> .
FIPS 6-4 (August 31, 1990) -- Counties and Equivalent Entities of the U.S., Its Possessions, and Associated Areas <b>Withdrawn September 2, 2008.</b>	INCITS 31 – 2009 – (Reaffirmed 2014) Information technology - Codes for the Identification of Counties and Equivalent Areas of the United States, Puerto Rico, and the Insular Areas. For more information on the status of this standard, contact <a href="mailto:geo.geography@census.gov">geo.geography@census.gov</a> .
FIPS 8-6 (March 1995) -- Metropolitan Areas (Including MSAs, CMSAs, PMSAs, and NECMAs) <b>Withdrawn February 8, 2005.</b>	INCITS 454 – 2009 – (Reaffirmed 2014) Information technology - Codes for the Identification of Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas and Related Statistical Areas of the United States and Puerto Rico. For more information on the status of this standard, contact <a href="mailto:geo.geography@census.gov">geo.geography@census.gov</a> .

<p>FIPS 9-1 (November 30, 1990) -- Congressional Districts of the U.S. <b>Withdrawn February 8, 2005.</b></p>	<p>INCITS 455 – 2009 – (Reaffirmed 2014) Information technology - Codes for the Identification of Congressional Districts and Equivalent Areas of the United States, Puerto Rico, and the Insular Areas. For more information on the status of this standard, contact <a href="mailto:geo.geography@census.gov">geo.geography@census.gov</a>.</p>
<p>FIPS 10-4 (April 1995) -- Countries, Dependencies, Areas of Special Sovereignty, and Their Principal Administrative Divisions <b>Withdrawn September 2, 2008.</b></p>	<p>A USG stakeholder group, the Country Codes Working Group (CCWG) has developed a U.S. Government Profile of ISO 3166 -- Codes for the representation of names of countries and their subdivisions. The Geopolitical Entities, Names, and Codes (GENC) Standard Ed3.0 was published and available for use as of June 2015. The GENC Ed3.0 provides the U.S. Government with a profile of the ISO 3166-1, the country level names/codes, and ISO 3166-2 subdivision names/codes. For more information on the status of this activity, contact Ernest Suggs or Patricia Flowers at <a href="mailto:ccwgsecretariat@nga.mil">ccwgsecretariat@nga.mil</a> or Brian Hagan at <a href="mailto:ccwgchair@nga.mil">ccwgchair@nga.mil</a>.</p>