

**U.S. BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES
DOMESTIC NAMES COMMITTEE**

Eight Hundred and Fifty-first Meeting

January 12, 2023 – 9:30 a.m.

(Virtual Meeting)

Members and Deputy Members in Attendance

Meghan Barrett	Department of Homeland Security
Jessica Campbell	Department of the Interior (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)
Thad Ellerbe	Department of Commerce (Office of Coast Survey)
Elizabeth Flake	U.S. Postal Service (not voting)
Andrew Flora	Department of Commerce (Census Bureau)
Brenda-Anne C. Forrest	Government Publishing Office
Andrew Griffin	Department of Defense (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)
Chris Hammond	Department of the Interior (U.S. Geological Survey)
Elizabeth Kanalley	Department of Agriculture (U.S. Forest Service)
Susan Lyon	Department of Defense (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) (Chair)
Patrick Mahoney	Department of the Interior (Bureau of Land Management)
Veronica Rainieri	Library of Congress
Mike Shelton	Department of the Interior (National Park Service)
Jeremy Smith	Department of the Interior (Bureau of Ocean Energy Management)
Timothy St. Onge	Library of Congress (Vice Chair)
Michael Tischler	Department of the Interior (U.S. Geological Survey)
Tara Wallace	Department of Commerce (Office of Coast Survey)

Ex-Officio

Vacant

Staff

Josefa Baker, U.S. Geological Survey
Julie-Ann Danfora, U.S. Geological Survey
Maria McCormick, U.S. Geological Survey
Matthew O'Donnell, U.S. Geological Survey
Sergio Rodriguez, U.S. Geological Survey
Jennifer Runyon, U.S. Geological Survey

Guests

Elizabeth Peace, Department of the Interior
Brigitta Urban-Mathieux, U.S. Geological Survey
Joseph Younkle, Department of the Interior

1. Opening

The Chair opened Meeting 851 of the Domestic Names Committee (DNC) at 9:33 a.m. and requested a roll call of the members. She noted that motions would pass by a simple majority of votes.

The meeting was held virtually, due to ongoing concerns regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. The Chair invited members to review the reports that were distributed previously and to email any questions or comments to the staff. (Please note the reports appended hereto may have been edited for length and/or clarity.)

2. Minutes of Meeting 850

The minutes of Meeting 850, held December 8, 2022, were approved as submitted.

3. Reports

3.1 BGN Chairman (Tischler)

There was no written report.

Trent Palmer, Executive Secretary for Foreign Names, will be leaving NGA next week and has accepted a new position at the State Department. In addition, Glenn Guempel, Executive Secretary for Domestic Names, retired at the end of December. Brigitta (Gita) Urban-Mathieux, USGS, will be serving in a 120-day detail as Executive Secretary for Domestic Names beginning on January 15. Tischler thanked Urban-Mathieux for taking on the role and asked her to introduce herself.

Although there are few items pending at the Full Board level, BGN Quarterly Meeting 288 will be held virtually on Tuesday, January 17, 2023.

Tischler has been asked to present on the issue of derogatory name changes at the May 2023 Third Session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN).

Tischler was pleased to report that after many years as a contractor supporting the BGN, O'Donnell has been hired as a Federal employee, effective January 29. The members expressed their congratulations to O'Donnell and thanked him for his previous contributions to the BGN.

3.2 Executive Secretary for Domestic Names

There was no report.

3.3 Executive Secretary for Foreign Names (Palmer)

There was no report.

3.4 Special Committee on Communications (Lyon)

Ellerbe has taken on the role of chair of the Special Committee on Communications.

A meeting is scheduled to be held on February 22 with representatives of the Geographical Names Board of Canada, where the topic will be derogatory names. Tischler will provide an overview of past and ongoing efforts in the U.S.

3.5 Staff (Runyon)

See attached report.

A question has arisen as to the definitions of “derogatory” vs. “offensive.” noting that the DNC’s *Principles, Policies, and Procedures* does not make a clear distinction. Only three words have been declared derogatory and these are identified under Policy V. Tischler noted that this was a topic at the first meeting of the Advisory Committee on Reconciliation in Place Names (established under [Secretary’s Order 3405](#)); the committee is attempting to define “derogatory” for the purposes of the Order.

3.6 GNIS and Data Compilation Program (McCormick)

There was no written report.

The U.S. Geological Survey was recently hit with a “denial of service” attack, which impacted access to various websites and prevented any updates being made to GNIS.

Updates to the Antarctica database and its structure have been completed and should be made available shortly.

Two names recently made official through congressional legislation ([Mount Young](#), AK and [Brennan Reef](#), CA) have been added to GNIS.

The Census Bureau has provided a list of updates, which are expected to be loaded into GNIS the week of January 23. NOAA has also submitted some Alaska updates, which are being coordinated with the National Park Service.

3.7 Special Committee on Native American Names and Tribal Communication (Kanalley)

See attached report. The committee met in December and continued its review of the guidance document entitled Cultural Sensitivity for Native American Names. The committee will meet following this meeting to discuss its implementation.

4. Docket

Please refer to the attached Docket for a description of each proposal.

I. Staff-Processed New Names, and Name and Application Changes agreed to by all interested parties

Change **Negro Ridge** (FID 1155223) to **Malvin Brown Ridge**, Oregon (Umpqua National Forest) (Review List 446)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the change.

Vote: 16 in favor
0 against
0 abstentions

II. Disagreement on Docketed Names

Change **Sq Hill** (FID 1659849) to **Woodson Bridge**, **Loybas Hill**, or **Mi'tenek Hill**, California (Review Lists 448, 449)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the change to **Loybas Hill**, citing the support of the county government and the California Advisory Committee on Geographic Names.

Vote: 16 in favor
0 against
0 abstentions

Change **Sq Gap** (FID 1035183) to **Sun Dance** or **Homesteaders Gap**, North Dakota (Review Lists 448, 449)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the change to **Homesteaders Gap**, citing the support of the county government.

Vote: 15 in favor
0 against
1 abstention

Change **Sq__berry** (FID 1646886) to **Partridgeberry**, Tennessee (Review List 448)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the change, citing the support of the Tennessee Geographic Names Committee.

Vote: 13 in favor
2 against
1 abstention

The votes against the motion cited the local opposition to changing the name.

Change **Sq__ Mountain** (FID 1380594) to **Lynncreek Mountain** or **Lynn Creek**, Texas (Review Lists 448, 449)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the change to **Lynn Creek**, citing the support of the county government and the Texas Geographic Names Committee.

Vote: 14 in favor
0 against
2 abstentions

III. New Commemorative Names and Changes agreed to by all interested parties

Change **Buckman Head** (FID 563120) to **Bucknam Head**, Maine (Review List 448)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the change.

Vote: 16 in favor
0 against
0 abstentions

Deacon Peak, Nevada (Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge) (Review List 446) (FID 2831006)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the name.

Vote: 16 in favor
0 against
0 abstentions

Kitty Payne Creek, Pennsylvania (Review List 443) (FID 2831007)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the name.

Vote: 16 in favor

0 against
0 abstentions

Reverend Mountain, South Carolina (Review List 448) (FID 2831009)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the name.

Vote: 15 in favor
0 against
1 abstention

IV. Revised Decisions

Change **Sq Valley** (BGN 1957, 1967) (FID 1659853) to **Yokuts Valley**, **Wootona**, or **Bear Mountain**, California (Review Lists 448, 449)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the change to Yokuts Valley, citing the support of the California Advisory Committee on Geographic Names.

Vote: 14 in favor
0 against
2 abstentions

V. New Names agreed to by all interested parties

Coyote Creek, Alabama (Review List 448) (FID 2831005)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the name.

Vote: 16 in favor
0 against
0 abstentions

Coldstream Creek, Pennsylvania (Review List 448) (FID 2831008)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the name.

Vote: 16 in favor
0 against
0 abstentions

5. Other Business

The staff requested a discussion on how to manage proposals submitted to the BGN where there is not likely to be county or State input. Specifically, for geographic features in Minnesota, the proponent is required to provide a petition signed by 15 registered voters and to arrange a county hearing; without this, the State Names Authority cannot issue a recommendation. If the proponent chooses not to abide by the State's requirements, should the BGN proceed with a vote, given that the proposal is submitted for Federal use?

It was agreed that the proposal should be processed (review listed), with the understanding that a lack of county and State input lowers the chance of approval.

The PPP should be updated to reflect that there are some differences between State and Federal procedures, but this should not preclude a name from being considered. It was reiterated that input from local governments and State Naming Authorities is a significant factor in the BGN's deliberations.

6. Closing

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

The next Domestic Names Committee meeting is scheduled to be held on March 9, 2023, at 9:30 a.m.

(signed)

Brigitta Urban-Mathieux,
Executive Secretary (Acting)
Domestic Names Committee

APPROVED
(signed)

Susan Lyon, Chair
Domestic Names Committee

Special Committee on Communications Report

Thaddeus Ellerbe, Sergio Rodriguez and Glenn Guempel met with Canadian representatives Steve Westley and Carla Jack to plan for February's UNGEGN USA-Canada Division meeting, decide who will write the divisional report which is due to the UNGEGN Secretariat on January 20 and determine how to keep lines of communication in place after Glenn's retirement.

The next meeting will be held on February 22 and the topic will be derogatory names. Glenn was hoping Christine Johnson and Mike Tischler could speak on behalf of the U.S.

Steve Westley created a DRAFT Summary Report of the USA-Canada Division which Trent Palmer recommended be sent to the DNC for comment.

Until there is a replacement for Glenn in his role with the UNGEGN USA-Canada Division, Thad and Sergio will keep attending the planning meetings to keep lines of communication up.

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### Staff Report

On December 12, staff met with the new research staff for the Texas Geographic Names Committee to review the list of proposals pending in that State. On December 14, staff attended virtual meetings of the Oklahoma Board on Geographic Names and the Arizona State Board on Geographic and Historic Names. The ASBGHN continues to debate whether it will accept the recently approved "sq\_\_\_\_" changes for State use.

Following DNC Meeting 850, staff participated in a meeting of the Special Committee on Native American Names and Tribal Communication.

Review List 451, comprising approximately 30 new name and name change proposals, is close to completion and will be released and posted online shortly. Notices will be sent to all federally recognized Tribes.

Research and outreach were completed for the name changes for the five UPPLs named "sq\_\_\_\_." The relevant county governments and State Names Authorities were asked for input, and federally recognized Tribes were notified of the Review List, with 60 days to comment. The Department of the Interior has requested that these UPPL names be changed within six months; as such, they have been added to the January 12 docket.

The first meeting of the Advisory Committee on Reconciliation in Place Names was held on December 7-8: <https://www.doi.gov/pressreleases/interior-department-host-first-meeting-advisory-committee-reconciliation-place-names> and <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1892/advisory-committee-on-reconciliation-in-place-names.htm>. The BGN chair provided a briefing on existing policies and procedures and an overview of Secretary's Order 3404.



The USGS National Geospatial Program/User Engagement team is continuing its effort to collect the translations and pronunciations of the native names that were submitted and approved as a result of Secretary's Order 3404. BGN staff are supporting the effort.

Inquiries were received from a group called Citizens for Healing and a local attorney regarding the possibility of renaming the unincorporated community of Kelseyville in Lake County, California. The community was named for Andrew Kelsey (d. 1850), who is known to have kept native people in slavery and for his involvement in and death during the Bloody Creek Massacre. The staff provided an overview of the process; the inquirers indicated they would consult with local Tribes on the matter. Kelsey Creek and Old Kelsey Creek are also located in the area.

At its December meeting, the Oregon Geographic Names Board (OGNB) voted to recommend approval of a proposal (Review List 448) to change the name of Swastika Mountain to Mount Halo. During the meeting and in a follow-up letter, the Hindu American Foundation (HAF) expressed its disappointment in the decision, most notably a concern that the change is being considered in the belief that the swastika symbol is offensive. The HAF asked that it be clarified that "it has been a sacred symbol for Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, and Zoroastrians for 4,000+ years. It is used in cultural and religious contexts to invoke peace and prosperity." They added, "[It] also [has] positive significance for many Native American cultures." An individual who agrees with the HAF statement contacted the BGN staff directly to express frustration with the OGNB decision. This proposal will be on a future DNC docket.

The staff continues to receive public and media inquiries regarding the status of the proposals to change the name of Mount Evans in Colorado (there are six pending proposals). The Clear Creek County government, the Colorado Geographic Naming Advisory Board (CGNAB), the U.S. Forest Service, a number of Tribal authorities, and many organizations and individuals recommend changing the name to Mount Blue Sky. The BGN was copied on a letter from the Northern Cheyenne Tribe addressed to Colorado Governor Jared Polis, expressing opposition to that name (the Tribe has proposed Mount Cheyenne-Arapaho). In accordance with CGNAB procedures, the BGN is awaiting a recommendation from the governor before adding the proposals to a future DNC docket.

The staff was copied on an email from a member of the CGNAB to the Advisory Committee on Reconciliation in Place Names regarding the use of the word "Chinaman" in geographic names. He noted, "It is time to rid the landscape of this pejorative name and replace it with one that truly honors the Chinese who have contributed so much to the country's development."

Flora contacted the BGN chair and staff to inquire about the DNC's definition of "derogatory" vs. "offensive." The DNC's Principles, Policies, and Procedures do not provide a clear distinction between the terms.

The BGN has received a proposal to apply a new name to a small lake in a suburb of Minneapolis. This proponent has also proposed new names for three bodies of water and a stream in Colorado; those are being processed by the staff. He also proposed (July 2022) a name for

another lake in Minnesota. Because the State of Minnesota has a specific process for managing geographic names (requiring a petition signed by 15 local residents and a county hearing) and because that name happens to be the same as the proponent's first name (as well as that of a nearby community), the BGN staff referred him to the Minnesota State Names Authority for further guidance. With the newly received proposal, he is asking the BGN to consider his request because "This proposal is for the USGS, not for the State of Minnesota." The staff is seeking DNC guidance on how to proceed. Note: there are a number of other Minnesota proposals on hold indefinitely due to a failure by the proponents to follow the State's requirements. As such, the State Names Authority cannot issue a recommendation. Does the DNC wish to vote on these proposals without county or State input?

The staff was asked by a representative of the Maryland Department of Transportation whether Negro Mountain (Somerset County, PA and Garrett County, MD) is on federally managed land, and if not, whether [Secretary's Order 3405](#) will apply to the name because "In the FAQs on the Derogatory Geographic Names Task Force, it appears that the BGN would only be ruling on derogatory names on federal lands [sic]." She was advised that the Task Force was established in response to [S.O. 3404](#) (and that its work addressing "sq\_\_\_\_" names is essentially complete), while S.O. 3405 resulted in a Federal Advisory Committee. She was also informed that both orders address names on all lands not just Federal lands. Negro Mountain is not on Federal land, and the two proposals submitted to the BGN to change the name (Review List 437) are still pending.

The BGN chair and staff were made aware of a letter from a resident of Concord, Massachusetts, addressed to Secretary of the Interior, expressing concerns that a local street named Sq\_\_\_\_ Sachem Trail was to be renamed. She contends that the name is "an honorary title and not offensive. Sq\_\_\_\_ Sachem was a great woman whom you should honor. Please retract your inaccurate designation." The USGS staffer who received the letter was advised that the names of streets are outside the BGN's purview.

A request has been received from a resident of New Orleans to change the name of Agassiz Peak in the San Francisco Mountains of Arizona to Oomawki; the existing name is for the biologist and geologist Jean Louis Rodolphe Agassiz, whose theories, according to one online account, "have been criticized as implicitly supporting scientific racism." The proposed replacement is reported to be from the Hopi language. The BGN staff's initial research shows that the San Francisco Mountains are sacred to many Tribes, and so the proponent will be advised to consider the DNC's guidance on Cultural Sensitivity For Native American Names. Recent media coverage reported that a group of local students have expressed a concern with the "Agassiz" name and so the staff will also suggest that the inquirer coordinate her efforts with them.

Staff met with the Maine Geographic Names Authority to review the ongoing efforts to change the names of Lower Negro Island, Upper Negro Island, and Negro Islands in the Town of Castine. Proposals were submitted (June 2020) to change the names to "Bagaduce" (the islands are at the mouth of the Bagaduce River); see Review List 441. The Town of Castine conducted a number of meetings about the issue and has counterproposed names that will be added to Review List 451. A representative of Friends of Castine has written to the BGN to express frustration with the

Town's review process and to suggest the existing names should not be changed. In addition, the name proposed by the Town as a replacement for Negro Islands is from a native language; as such, it is assumed the DNC's guidance on Cultural Sensitivity for Native American Names should be applied.

A proposal was submitted to change [sic] the name of a reservoir in Pennsylvania to one that would recognize the proponent's business. He was informed that the reservoir is not listed in GNIS and so is officially unnamed (there is some question as to whether the name he cited refers to a park facility rather than a body of water, although there may be some evidence of the latter). He was also informed that the name he proposed would violate the Commercial Names Policy, and as such, the BGN cannot proceed.

Staff provided input into the text of [S.5066 – The Don Young Recognition Act](#), which changed the name of Mount Cerberus in the Aleutian Islands of Alaska to Mount Young; this name honors Senator Don Young, who died March 18, 2022. The bill was signed into law by President Biden on January 5, 2023.

The staff provided technical assistance to the USGS Congressional Affairs Office and staffers of Rep. Greg Murphy (North Carolina) regarding efforts to apply new commemorative names to six tidal creeks in Carteret County. The individuals being honored died in a plane crash in February 2022, so the BGN would not be able to consider the names until early 2027. Legislation has been drafted to establish the names, which led to discussions regarding the definition of tidal creeks along the coast. Although named "Creek," these are classified in GNIS as "bay" and the geographic coordinates are recorded at a single central point rather than the conventional mouth and source. The staffers thanked the BGN staff for the clarification and assistance.

The Indiana State Names Authority inquired if an artificially created island in the City of Indianapolis has an official name. The island was formed by the construction of a canal adjacent to the White River. The SNA was informed that according to GNIS the island is unnamed, and that the BGN would consider a proposal to name it. Given the significant population on the island and its urban location, the BGN would like to see evidence of local support and a general agreement that an official name is needed.

The staff has been contacted by a glaciologist at Portland State University inquiry about glaciers that are recorded in GNIS. He asked how the BGN and GNIS manager are managing the change in characteristics, i.e., with significant melting/retreat, are the GNIS entries being updated? He was informed that many of the existing GNIS entries were collected during Phase I (1978-1982) from USGS topographic maps and that unless an update has been submitted since, the entries, including their locations, are unlikely to have been changed. This would be an intensive effort and there are no GNIS staff resources to manage it. He indicated he is developing a file of corrections and asked if he might make a presentation on the topic to the DNC.

A Freedom of Information Act request was received for the minutes of the DNC's 2021 meetings. These are not currently online due to Section 508 compliance concerns. The documents were provided.

On January 3, staff attended a virtual meeting with the chair and support staff of the United Kingdom Antarctic Place-Names Committee (UK-APC). The attendees reviewed each nation's interpretations of the commemorative naming guidelines and agreed to work together to bring them into closer alignment. There was also a brief discussion of the ongoing efforts to change derogatory names in the U.S. and whether they should apply to names in Antarctica. The UK-APC reported that it had conducted a review of its names file and did not find any words requiring a change, which led to a question as to how they defined "derogatory." It was noted that there are likely some "inappropriate" names on the continent.

On December 31, 2022, Glenn Guempel, USGS and BGN Executive Secretary for Domestic Names, retired from Federal service. The USGS National Geospatial Program is in the process of assigning someone to be detailed into the position.

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Special Committee on Native American Names and Tribal Communication

The BGN/DNC Special Committee on Native American Names and Tribal Communication met on Thursday, December 8, 2022.

The meeting was focused on developing a plan for implementing the Cultural Sensitivity for Native American Names guidance document which has been approved by the DNC. The proposed guidance is intended for non-tribal proponents of geographic names that are either in a tribal language or in some way related to tribal culture, ancestry, history, or heritage. The guidance was circulated through the National Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (NATHPO) network in September 2022, with a request for comment within 60 days. The two responses received from Tribes were supportive and the special committee has agreed that the guidance is ready for implementation.

The special committee will meet today following the DNC meeting to continue developing a plan to implement this guidance.

**U.S. BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES
DOMESTIC NAMES COMMITTEE
DOCKET
January 2023**

Unless otherwise specified, in accordance with the BGN’s Policy X: Tribal Geographic Names, a link to the Quarterly Review List containing each proposal was sent to all federally recognized Tribes, and to Tribal Historic Preservation Officers for which an email address was available. The Tribal authorities were given 60 days to comment on any proposal. The Otoe-Missouria Tribal Historic Preservation Office responded to the Review List 443 notice, stating it has “no objection to the proposed name changes on Review List 443.” If no response(s) were received regarding a proposal, it is presumed to indicate a lack of opinion.

I. Staff-Processed New Names, and Name and Application Changes agreed to by all interested Parties

Change **Negro Ridge** (FID 1155223) to **Malvin Brown Ridge**, Oregon
(Umpqua National Forest)
(Review List 446)

<https://edits.nationalmap.gov/apps/gaz-domestic/public/summary/1155223>

Local government	Douglas County Commissioners	No Opinion
State Names Authority	Oregon	Support
Federal Agency	U.S. Forest Service	Support
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

This proposal, submitted by the Oregon Geographic Names Board (OGNB) on behalf of Oregon Black Pioneers (OBP), is to change the name of **Negro Ridge** in Douglas County to **Malvin Brown Ridge**. The 3.4-mile-long ridge trends north-northeast from Red Butte to the Little River and within Umpqua National Forest, on both federally managed land and private inholdings.

The ridge lies between **Negro Creek** (proposed as **Freedom Creek** or **Triple Nickles Creek** (BGN Review Lists 437 and 448, respectively)) and White Creek; a nearby tributary of the Little River is named Black Creek.

Negro Ridge was labeled on the 1974 Umpqua Drainage Basin map published by the Oregon Water Resources Department and first appeared on USGS topographic maps in 2014. The proponent states that the name was changed from the more pejorative form to **Negro Ridge** in 1986, but staff could find no record of this change or any use of the pejorative form.

The replacement name would commemorate Private First Class (PFC) Malvin L. Brown (1920-1945), an African-American medic who was the first casualty in the U.S. Forest Service (FS)

Smokejumper Program in Oregon. He was part of the 555th Parachute Infantry Division, an all-Black division assigned to fight fires in Oregon during World War II, and known as the Triple Nickles. The proponent believes it would be appropriate to rename the ridge in honor of PFC Brown because it is within the same watershed as the location of his death. (The incident occurred near Lemon Butte, which is in Lane County 20 miles northeast of the ridge.)

Malvin L. Brown was born in Baltimore and enlisted in the U.S. Army in Philadelphia in 1942. He volunteered for the 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion, which following training, was sent to Pendleton, Oregon in 1945. The battalion was on a highly classified mission to recover and destroy Japanese fire balloons, along with suppressing forest fires. PFC Brown was one of ten smokejumpers who jumped at the fire. He landed in a tree (which was the standard procedure at the time) but fell to his death while descending. An extensive account of the battalion's experience in Oregon and Brown's death appeared in the July 2006 edition of [Smokejumper](#), the magazine of the National Smokejumper Association; the article suggested that the Army may have supplied ropes that were too short to be used in the taller trees.

PFC Brown was the first smokejumper to die in the line of duty since the program began in 1939. Plaques honoring the 30 smokejumpers who have died have been presented to each of the Nation's nine smokejumper bases. OBP adds, "A historical marker was installed at the Siskiyou Smokejumpers Base Museum in Cave Junction in 2017 to honor the work of the 555th and Malvin Brown." PFC Brown is [buried](#) in Anne Arundel County, Maryland.

OBP has requested that the honoree's full name be used to clarify that the name is not simply descriptive. OBP is also expected to initiate an additional proposal to change [sic] the name of nearby [Negro Creek Falls](#) to [Smokejumper Falls](#) (or [Smokejumper Waterfall](#)); the falls are not listed in GNIS and research is ongoing. The OGNB and FS are also continuing to research the proposals to rename [Negro Creek](#) to [Freedom Creek](#) or [Triple Nickles Creek](#).

II. Disagreement on Docketed Names

Change [Sq Hill](#) (FID 1659849) to [Woodson Bridge](#), [Loybas Hill](#), or [Mi'tenek Hill](#), California
(Review Lists 448, 449)

<https://edits.nationalmap.gov/apps/gaz-domestic/public/summary/1659849>

Woodson Bridge

Local government	Tehama County	Opposed
State Names Authority	California Advisory Committee on Geographic Names	Opposed
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response
	Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians	Opposed
Other	Tehama County Genealogical & Historical Society	Opposed

Loybas Hill

Local government	Tehama County	Support
State Names Authority	California Advisory Committee on Geographic Names	Support
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response
	Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians	Support
Other	Tehama County Genealogical & Historical Society	Opposed

Mi'tenek Hill

Local government	Tehama County	Opposed
State Names Authority	California Advisory Committee on Geographic Names	Opposed
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response
	Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians	Opposed
Other	Tehama County Genealogical & Historical Society	Support

These proposals are to change the name of the unincorporated populated place (“UPP” or “UPPL”) of Sq___ Hill in Tehama County. The renaming effort was initiated as a result of Secretary’s Order 3404, “Declaring ‘Sq___’ a Derogatory Term and Implementing Procedures to Remove the Term from Federal Usage.”

The community of Sq___ Hill is located on the west side of the Sacramento River, south of the mouth of Kopta Slough, and 4.6 miles southeast of Corning. Sq___ Hill has been labeled on USGS topographic maps since 1904, although there is some question as to whether the name referred to a hill or a populated place. It was clearly labeled as a community in 1950.

The first proposal, for Woodson Bridge, was proposed to the BGN by the Derogatory Geographic Names Task Force, as Woodson Bridge State Recreation Area is located nearby.

A 1913 *Sacramento Daily Union* article reported that “Henry Jenkins, a magazine writer of note . . . is domiciled in a house of W. N. Woodson, situated on Sq___ hill [sic] which is seen immediately on the left as you cross the ferry coming into Corning from Vina. . . . Sq___ hill was once quite an Indian village”

Construction of the associated Woodson Bridge was completed in 1922; it replaced the former Sq___ Hill Ferry that had operated across the Sacramento River. The bridge was named for Warren N. Woodson (1863-1951), a businessman from nearby Corning who promoted the economic development of the area and helped fund the bridge’s construction. In 1963, California State Parks opened the recreation area, which was dedicated in Woodson’s honor. A road through the community is named Sq___ Hill Road. A 1922 *Red Bluff Daily News* article described “the new Warren N. Woodson Bridge” as “spanning the Sacramento river at Sq___ hill, six miles southeast of Corning. . . .”

A 1949 Fish and Wildlife Service report on water temperatures labeled Sq Hill as a location at the confluence of Deer Creek and the Sacramento River. *Metsker's Map of Tehama County* (1975) labeled the location as "Sq Hill." In both cases, it is unclear if the name refers to a hill or the community.

A Corning area history website includes a page titled "[Sq Hill a River Crossing Since Gold Rush Days](#)," attributed to Marguerite Dietz in 1985, that describes the area that "came to be Sq Hill:"

I know of no boundary for the area but will give a short history of the important parts. . . . Sq Hill itself is at the west end of the Woodson Bridge. [It] was named in the early days of the steamers. Two Indian ladies too feeble to return to the mountains in the spring with the rest of the tribe were left in a small shack at their camping site. They enjoyed watching the river boats and the river captains named the spot Sq Hill. . . . It had been the custom of the Indians before the white man came to spend the winters in the valley along the river, fishing, hunting the plentiful wild game and gathering acorns. The Indians from the western mountains camped on the west side of the river. The Indians from the eastern mountains camped on the east side. Sq Hill was a favorite place. . . .

Following receipt of the proposal for Woodson Bridge, the Tehama County Board of Supervisors was contacted for its opinion. The proposal was also added to BGN Review List 448, which provided an opportunity for federally recognized Tribes to comment.

The Chairman of the Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians submitted a proposal to change the name to Loybas Hill, stating:

Due to the offensive nature of [sq___] . . . and the location of this populated place in the Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians' ancestral territory, the replacement name should be informed and supported by Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians leadership and community Loybas translates to Young Lady and honors the past, present, and future Native women from and living [in] the area. Changing the offensive name to Loybas Hill recommended by the Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians will provide some healing to our community and begin to address the historical wrongs inflicted on our members, lands, and community.

The Paskenta Band added that they had also submitted this recommendation to the California Advisory Committee on Geographic Names (CACGN) in April 2022 in response to a call for input to S.O. 3404. The CACGN solicited input from federally recognized Tribes and other groups in California and submitted the results through [the public comment period announced in the Federal Register](#). The Tehama County Board of Supervisors recommends approval of the change to Loybas Hill.

The BGN then received a third proposal, to change the name to Mi'tenek Hill. This was submitted by the Vice-President of the Tehama County Genealogical & Historical Society, who suggests this name is more appropriate as it refers to a major River Nomlaki village that existed at the site pre-contact; the name translates approximately as "Mother on top of the hill." Regarding the two

earlier proposals, she notes there is no direct connection between the community and Warren Woodson and as such the name Woodson Bridge would cause confusion. She also suggests “‘Loybas’ does not fit in this context because there was no ‘young lady’ present (literally or figuratively) in the ethnographic or historical documentation, and therefore, the term has no known connection or meaning to the area.”

The name of nearby Sq_____Hollow (valley) was changed by the BGN in September 2022 to Table Hollow. The Paskenta Band has submitted a proposal to the BGN to change that name to Loybas Hollow; it is included on BGN Review List 449 and the BGN’s outreach has been initiated.

Change Sq_____Gap (FID 1035183) to Sun Dance or Homesteaders Gap, North Dakota
(Review Lists 448, 449)

<https://edits.nationalmap.gov/apps/gaz-domestic/public/summary/1035183>

Sun Dance

Local government	McKenzie County	Opposed
State Names Authority	North Dakota Geographic Names	Opposed
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

Homesteaders Gap

Local government	McKenzie County	Support
State Names Authority	North Dakota Geographic Names	No objection
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

These proposals are to change the name of the unincorporated populated place (UPPL) of Sq_____Gap in McKenzie County. The community is located 4.8 miles northwest of Flat Rock Butte, 37 miles southwest of the county seat of Watford City.

The proposal for Sun Dance was submitted by the Derogatory Geographic Names Task Force, which reported that the name was suggested as a replacement during the S.O. 3404 public comment period.

USGS topographic maps first labeled the community of Sq_____Gap in 1974. A Wikipedia page reports:

The unincorporated village comprises a school and a community center (the Sq_____Gap Multipurpose Center), with the center listed by the State as a polling place. An architectural report of buildings in the community published in 2021 by the State Historical Society of North Dakota appears to have redacted the “Sq_____Gap” part of the building’s name but includes directions to the site that read “[d]rive to the town of Sq_____Gap.”

Wikipedia also notes that the community extends into Montana as “West Sq___ Gap,” but no other evidence of this name could be found.

A 2006 *Bismarck Tribune* article titled “Tiny McKenzie County school hanging on with two students” referred to the “Sq___ Gap school.”

Aside from the public comment suggesting the change to Sun Dance, one person who said they lived near the community asked that the name not be changed and stated, “There are many families that live in the Sq___ Gap area.” Some local news articles were published in response to the Task Force work. One in the *Billings Gazette*, titled “ND residents lukewarm on name change for town of Sq___ Gap,” reported:

The Bismarck Tribune reported recently that the hamlet [Sq___ Gap] is little more than a community hall and an old schoolhouse.

The community is named for a rock formation that was said to resemble an Indian woman carrying a child, according to the book “North Dakota Place Names” by Douglas A. Wick.

[The] McKenzie County Commission Vice Chair grew up in the Sq___ Gap area. She said her friends and family thought the renaming effort was a joke. She said she doesn't think the name was ever meant to deride any ethnicity. People will have to live with the name change, she said, but the area will always be Sq___ Gap to residents.

The Sun Dance is a sacred ritual of some Great Plains Tribes. Between 1883 and 1934, the U.S. Government outlawed the practice.

When asked to comment on the proposed change to Sun Dance, the McKenzie County Board of Commissioners submitted the proposal for Homesteaders Gap, noting that it was “selected by the community in the populated area . . . [which] is relevant to their history and represents their community better than the proposed name.”

Change Sq___ berry (FID 1646886) to Partridgeberry, Tennessee
(Review List 448)

<https://edits.nationalmap.gov/apps/gaz-domestic/public/summary/1646886>

Local government	Carter County	Opposed
State Names Authority	Tennessee	Support
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response
Other	Tennessee State Senate	Opposed

This proposal is to change the name of the unincorporated populated place of Sq___ berry to Partridgeberry. The small community, which comprises a few dozen buildings, is

located at the confluence of several small tributaries of Heaton Creek, and just outside the boundary of an area co-managed by the U.S. Forest Service (Cherokee National Forest) and the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (State Conservation Area).

The community was added to GNIS in 1991, citing a 1985 county highway map. It has never been labeled on USGS topographic maps and most online references seem to derive from the GNIS entry.

A 1969 U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare directory of “Nonpublic Elementary and Secondary Day Schools” listed the Roan Mountain Seventh-Day Adventist School with an address of “RFD 1 Sq____berry.”

The Derogatory Geographic Names Task Force chose the name Partridgeberry because it is another common name for the plant for which the community is currently named. There were no suggestions from the S.O. 3404 public comment period or Tribal consultation.

The plant (*Mitchella repens*) is a small non-coniferous evergreen vine that is reported to be eaten by birds such as grouse and turkeys (which can be colloquially referred to as partridges). The plant was reportedly used by native women to make a tea consumed during childbirth. The plant is common throughout the eastern U.S. and Canada.

The Carter County Attorney responded on behalf of the Board of County Commissioners stating that the name should not be changed. The commissioners passed a resolution objecting to the proposal that reads:

WHEREAS, the U.S. Board on Geographic Names and a resulting “task force” acting on an order from the U.S. Secretary of the Interior have determined that the term “[sq____]” is derogatory. . . .

WHEREAS, the Carter County Mayor received a request from the U.S. Board on Geographic Names seeking the input of the county legislative body regarding the proposal to rename the Sq[____]berry community to “Partridgeberry” due to this alleged offensive name; and

WHEREAS, according to the documentation received, multiple levels of additional bureaucracy have been created within the federal government to address this important issue which yielded no public input whatsoever during public and tribal comment periods; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners and the citizens of Carter County are proud of the rich history of this county and the heritage of all who have inhabited the lands that are now known as Carter County; and

WHEREAS, the Board does not find the name of the community to be derogatory or offensive and rejects the proposed renaming of the Sq[____]berry community; and

WHEREAS, regardless of any action taken by the federal government the Board and the citizens of Carter County will continue to recognize the community as Sq[___]berry.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners for Carter County, Tennessee, meeting in regular session on this the 17th day of October, 2022, with a lawful quorum of said Board being present and with a majority voting in the affirmative that the Board hereby adopts this Resolution rejecting the proposed renaming of the Sq___berry community.

The Tennessee State Senate also wrote to the BGN with:

[Our] enthusiastic support for Carter County Mayor Woodby & Resolution 839 adopted by the Carter County Board of Commissioners on October 17th to reject the renaming of the Sq[___]berry Community in Carter County, Tennessee.

We agree with the Board’s decision that the name of the community is not derogatory or offensive in any way and wholly support their decision to reject the proposed renaming.

The Tennessee Committee on Geographic Names (TNCoGN) voted to support the proposal, stating that “[m]embers of the TNCoGN agree that a name change is necessary” while also expressing concerns that the county was not given enough notice or time to select a different name that might be locally supported. They suggested that one more attempt should be made “to reconsider and decide if they want to propose an alternate name more to their liking.”

On December 7, 2022, BGN staff notified both the county and the State Senate that the BGN would proceed with its vote on January 12, 2023, and asked for any further comments or an alternative name by December 31, 2022. No further responses were received.

Change **Sq___ Mountain** (FID 1380594) to **Lynncreek Mountain** or **Lynn Creek**, Texas
(Review Lists 448, 449)

<https://edits.nationalmap.gov/apps/gaz-domestic/public/summary/1380594>

Lynncreek Mountain

Local government	Jack County	Opposed
State Names Authority	Texas	Opposed
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

Lynn Creek

Local government	Jack County	Support
State Names Authority	Texas	Support
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted	No response

	under Policy X	
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These proposals are to change the name of the unincorporated populated place of Sq___ Mountain in Jack County. The small community, comprising a dozen or so buildings, is located at the intersection of Farm-to-Market Road 2190 and Lynn Creek Road, southeast of Antelope.

USGS maps first labeled the community as Sq___ Mountain in 1964. A historical marker put in place in 1998 by the Texas Historical Commission reads:

Legend tells of a mountaintop skirmish between Native Americans and Texas Rangers in 1875. A woman was accidentally killed; the Rangers buried her on the mountain and named the place for her. In 1877 pioneers began to settle here, and in 1892 a post office and a stagecoach relay station were established. At its peak the Sq___ Mountain community included two cotton gins and a thresher, a general store, blacksmith shop, school, and church. By 1917 a flowing water well and two coal mines had been discovered. In 1997 only the Sq___ Mountain church and a few scattered buildings remained.

Some online sources refer to the community as a ghost town. Sq___ Mountain Ranch and Sq___ Mountain Assembly of God are located nearby. The 2017 Jack County Community Guide, published by the *Jacksboro Herald-Gazette*, lists the church in the community of Sq___ Mountain.

A nearby summit named Sq___ Mountain was renamed by the BGN on September 8, 2022 to Satanta Mountain; this name had been proposed by the East Jack County Fire Department and honors Satanta (ca. 1820–1878), a Kiowa chief (<https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/satanta>).

The proposal for Lynncreek Mountain was submitted by the Derogatory Geographic Names Task Force. The Jack County government was asked to comment on the name; speaking on behalf of the County Judge and Commissioners, the Jack County Historical Commission submitted a counterproposal for Lynn Creek, stating:

[We] met on October 7th in this regard and advise you that we, as members of our community, oppose the proposed action to change the name of this community in our county to “Lynn Creek Mountain” [*sic*]. We would provide the following points:

1. No effort was made by this U.S. Board of Geographic Names to give actual notice to the people most directly affected by this proposed name change and seeking of by the people most directly affected who reside in the area of the Sq___ Mountain Community;
2. One of our members asked 11 members of this very small community what their opinion was and all said they did not want to change the name;
3. The word “Sq___” following a Google search on the internet is actually derived from an old Algonquin word which translates to “woman” which is not per se a derogatory term; that connotation seems to be supplied by the hearer;

4. The naming of the so-called mountain and thus the community named in tribute of the Indian woman who died there and left behind after a battle with a group of Texas Rangers;
5. The County Commission questions whether or not the U.S. Naming Agency [sic] will provide the \$2,500 necessary to recast and replace the Texas Historical Commission marker now there dedicated to the community; and,
6. Regardless of the action of the U.S. Board of Geographic Names on the matter, the people here will most likely continue to call it “Sq___ Mountain.”

If the U.S. Board of Geographic Names should choose to change the name of community, the County Historical Commission favors the name be changed to “Lynn Creek” in honor of Isaac Lynn who lived on the creek nearby that bears his name and who suffered the bloody loss of his daughter, her husband, and at least one child in 1858 to a white and Indian raiding party.

III. New Commemorative Names and Changes agreed to by all interested parties

Change **Buckman Head** (FID 563120) to **Bucknam Head**, Maine
(Review List 448)

<https://edits.nationalmap.gov/apps/gaz-domestic/public/summary/563120>

Local government	Eastport City Council	No response
	Washington County Commissioners	No response
State Names Authority	Maine	Support
Federal	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration	No objection
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response
Other	Border Historical Society [Eastport, Maine]	Support

The cape on the southeastern side of Moose Island, in the City of Eastport in Washington County, has been labeled as Buckman Head on USGS maps since 1908 and on Coast Survey charts since 1892 (Buckman’s Head was on the 1876 chart). The proponent of the change to Bucknam Head reports that it is the original name and the one in current local use.

Other than the 2016 City of Eastport tax map, which labels the cape as Buckman Head and Buckmans Head, all present-day and historical references use Bucknam Head. There has been variation in the possessive form of the name and in the use of “Head” vs. “Point.”

The 1888 volume *Eastport and Passamaquoddy: A Collection of Historical and Biographical Sketches* reported that “The Bucknam house, which stood near the shore below Shackford’s Cove, abreast of Bucknam’s Point and Bucknam’s Ledge, was built in 1807 by Benjamin and Seward Bucknam, two enterprising young merchants, whose stores were near at hand.” (GNIS does not list Shackfords Cove or Bucknams Ledge. The 1903 *United States Coast Pilot: Atlantic Coast Parts I-II* reported that “Buckman Ledge makes out about 250 yards southwest from

Buckman Head . . .” The Coast Survey Superintendent Report for 1864 may refer to the same ledge as Billing’s Ledge, “a large flat-topped rock, nearly one hundred feet in diameter, which crowns a sandy shoal spot within 200 yards of Bucknam’s Head. . .” NOAA maintains a buoy named “Buckman Ledge Buoy 2” near the feature.)

The Dictionary of Maine Placenames (1970) listed Buckman Head, noting it was “named for Benjamin and Seward Bucknam, merchants who lived there by 1802. The spelling variation is accounted for by metathesis.”

Deacon Peak, Nevada
 (Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge)
 (Review List 446)

36.435824, -116.29451

Local government	Nye County Commissioners*	No response
State Names Authority	Nevada	Support
Federal	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Support
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response
Other	Former student of honoree**	Support
	Honoree’s daughter and son-in-law**	Support

* contacted by SNA

** received by SNA

The new commemorative name Deacon Peak is proposed for an unnamed 3,713-foot summit in Nye County and within Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge.

The name would commemorate Dr. James E. Deacon (1934-2015), who studied and advocated for the Devils Hole pupfish and for the recognition of other species of desert fish in the Ash Meadows area. As a professor of biology at University of Nevada-Las Vegas, chair of the Department of Biological Sciences, and later, founding director of the Department of Environmental Studies, “his research focused on regional ecology, the biology and conservation of desert fishes, and sustainable water supply and use. He published more than 90 peer-reviewed articles and chapters and numerous interpretive articles, reports, and advocacy essays.” Dr. Deacon was “a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and received major awards from the American Fisheries Society, the National Wildlife Federation, and The Nature Conservancy. He was a founding member of the Desert Fishes Council (in 1970) and its chair from 1976 to 78. In 2012, he received the E.O. Wilson Award for Outstanding Science in Biodiversity Conservation from the Center for Biological Diversity.” Two local species are named for him: the Spring Mountains springsnail (*Pyrgulopsis deacon*) and the Las Vegas dace (*Rhinichthys deacon*), now extinct.

In July 2020, the BGN approved the new name Pupfish Peak for a summit 7.7 miles southeast of the summit in question.

Kitty Payne Creek, Pennsylvania
(Review List 443)

Mouth: 39.911983, -77.24386 / Source: 39.94352, -77.25921

Local government	Butler Township Supervisors	No opinion
	Biglerville Borough Council	No opinion
	Adams County Commissioners	No opinion
State Names Authority	Pennsylvania	Support
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response
Other	Adams County Historical Society	Support

The new name Kitty Payne Creek is proposed for an unnamed 2.8-mile-long tributary of Conewago Creek in Adams County. The stream’s source and mouth are in Butler Township and it flows through the Borough of Biglerville.

The name would commemorate Catherine “Kitty” Payne (1816?-1850?), a formerly enslaved woman who lived nearby, was captured and returned to Virginia, and then won back her freedom in court. The National Park Service provides [a summary of Kitty Payne’s life](#) on its Gettysburg National Military Park website. Kitty Payne was born in Rappahannock County (Virginia), the daughter of her owner, Samuel Maddox. When he died, his enslaved persons were inherited by his wife Mary Maddox who emancipated them in 1843. Mary moved with Payne and her family to southwestern Adams County to ensure their freedom. Kitty Payne settled on Bear Mountain in northern Adams County, approximately 2.5 miles from the source of the stream proposed as Kitty Payne Creek. Mary’s nephew contested Samuel Maddox’s will, and when legal methods failed, hired “slave catchers” to kidnap Kitty Payne and her children and imprison them in Virginia. Quakers from the Gettysburg area helped hire a lawyer who argued for Payne’s freedom. After a long legal process, her freedom was restored and she moved back to settle in Gettysburg (about six miles south of the mouth of the stream), where she died in 1850 or 1851.

The Biglerville Borough Council “discussed this recommendation and has decided to let [the BGN] know that they have taken no action on this request.” The Butler Township Supervisors also took no action, although they asked if the BGN contacted the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) about the proposal. USACE confirmed that there are no projects along the stream or in the area and as such had no comment. The Adams County Commissioners deferred to the township and borough.

The Pennsylvania Geographic Names Committee (PGNC) initially did not support the proposal, citing the lack of local support.

At its November 2022 meeting, the DNC deferred a vote to allow staff to ask the Adams County Historical Society to comment on the proposal. After the society notified staff that “we think this is a great idea,” the PGNC revisited the issue and now recommends approval.

Reverend Mountain, South Carolina

(Review List 448)

34.968064, -82.635259

Local government	Pickens County Council	No response
State Names Authority	South Carolina	No objection
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response
Other	Pickens County Historical Society*	Support

* contacted by SNA

The new name Reverend Mountain is proposed for a 1,383-foot summit in Pickens County, seven miles northeast of the community of Pickens. The name is intended to commemorate the Reverend Willis Anthony (1919-2005), who according to the proponent, “was very well known and respected in the area. He is still known as ‘The Reverend’ in the area, so ‘Reverend Mountain’ seems appropriate. He and his wife owned all of this property and [he] was very much attached to it while he was alive. As economic circumstances dictated during his life and afterwards, almost all of this land was sold to non-relative neighbors.”

Rev. Anthony attended North Greenville College and Fruitland Baptist Seminary. He pastored several churches in Pickens County and in North Carolina, was a member of Griffin Baptist Church, and served his country with the U.S. Army in France during World War II.

IV. Revised Decisions

Change **Sq** **Valley** (BGN 1957, 1967) (FID 1659853) to **Yokuts Valley**,
Wootona, or **Bear Mountain**, California
(Review Lists 448, 449)

<https://edits.nationalmap.gov/apps/gaz-domestic/public/summary/1659853>

Yokuts Valley

Local government	Fresno County	Opposed
State Names Authority	California Advisory Committee on Geographic Names	Support
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response
Other	Fresno Branch of Women’s International League of Peace and Freedom	Support
	Residents for Renaming S Valley / change.org petition with 36,663 signatures	Support

	ACLU - Northern CA	Support
	Fresno Branch of Women's International League of Peace and Freedom	Support
	Four commenters to the SO 3404 Federal Register Notice	Oppose

Wootona

Local government	Fresno County	Opposed
State Names Authority	California Advisory Committee on Geographic Names	Opposed
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

Bear Mountain

Local government	Fresno County	Support
State Names Authority	California Advisory Committee on Geographic Names	Opposed
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

These proposals are to change the name of the unincorporated populated place of Sq__ Valley in Fresno County. The community is located within a natural basin that until September 8, 2022 was also named Sq__ Valley; it was renamed Yokuts Basin by the BGN in September 2022.

The Census Bureau tabulates data and has purview over the name of Sq__ Valley Census Designated Place.

The name Sq__ Valley for the community, along with the basin, Sq__ Creek School, and a local road named Sq__ Valley Cutoff, were first labeled on an advance sheet of the USGS topographic map in 1922. The first post office in Sq__ Valley opened in 1879; of the five proposals on this docket, only this community has a post office and uses the name as its mailing address.

The BGN made the name Sq__ Valley official for the community in 1957 and for the basin in 1959. In the 1960s, the community moved to its current location, and in 1967 the BGN revised its previous decision to reflect the move.

The community is often confused with a more well-known Placer County community that is located within a valley that was previously named Sq__ Valley but renamed Olympic Valley by the BGN on September 8, 2022. The locations are approximately 175 miles apart. The Placer County community does not have an official name for Federal use, although the local post office is named Olympic Valley, and many assume it is also the name of the community. The latter name dates back to 1960 when the Winter Olympics were held at a local ski resort. In 2021, following discussions with the Washoe Tribe of Nevada & California, the Sq__ Valley Ski Resort in Placer County changed its name to Palisades Tahoe.

The community in Fresno County was shown on a 1944 General Land Office map of California as Sq valley. Meanwhile, Sq Valley was shown for the community in:

- *California As It Is* (1888)
- A map in *The San Joaquin Valley of the State of California* (1901)
- A National Park Service brochure titled “General Information Regarding Sequoia and General Grant [Kings Canyon] National Parks” (1919)
- *History of Fresno County California* (1919), which reported “In the early days the Indians left their sq___s in this beautiful spot while they went to do battle with the foe, and to gather meat from the hunt for the coming winter.”
- A California Division of Highways Fresno County map (1935)
- A California State Automobile Association map, “Routes to Yosemite National Park” (1948)
- *California Place Names* (Gudde, 1949)
- many other sources

Use of the former name Sq Valley for the basin dates back to at least 1873, although some sources applied the name to the narrow valley connecting the basin with San Joaquin Valley to the west.

The first proposal, for Yokuts Valley, was proposed to the BGN by the Derogatory Geographic Names Task Force, which stated “During the public comment period, numerous individuals and organizations expressed the desire to rename the feature in question ‘Yokuts Valley’ (‘Yokuts’ means people in the Yokuts language).”

In January 2022, a representative of the “Rename S-Valley Coalition,” who is a lifelong resident of Fresno and a member of the Dunlap Band of Mono Indians and Choinumni tribes (not federally recognized), submitted a proposal to the BGN to rename the community to Nuum Valley, a word that derives from the Western Mono language and means “a human being” or “the people.” He submitted the application as a private citizen, stating that the existing name is “deeply offensive, racist, misogynistic, and derogatory.” Further, “The word ‘sq___’ is unequivocally divisive to the entire community and is problematic beyond its community namesakes’ borders. Even if unintentional, the current name furthers negative stereotypes about Indigenous people and causes harm and embarrassment for non-native residents. It is clear that the word is now offensive due to its pejorative usage over time, despite the lack of awareness by Non-Native Americans.”

More details on the previous Nuum Valley application may be found on Review List 446.

In February 2022, two weeks after the release of the BGN’s quarterly review list, the proponent of Nuum Valley requested that his application be withdrawn and amended to Yokuts Valley. He was informed that all “sq___” name changes had been transferred to the Derogatory Geographic Names Task Force in January, and that the BGN was unable to proceed with the amended application.

There has been considerable local disagreement regarding the name change, with some long-term residents adamantly opposed. Some of the resistance may originate from the confusion with the Placer County community in the late 1950s and 1960s, when residents took issue with the other community “taking the name” when the Fresno County community “had existed much longer.”

During the third of three Department of the Interior (DOI) Tribal listening sessions, held in March 2022 in response to S.O. 3404, the Vice Chair of the Dunlap Band of Mono Indians (not federally recognized) suggested the name Bear Mountain Valley, a reference to a summit that overlooks the valley.

Public comments submitted in response to the DOI Federal Register notice also suggested the name Yokuts Valley, including the ACLU of Northern California and the group “Residents for Renaming in Fresno County.” At least five individuals who described themselves as residents of the community expressed support, although one noted the costs involved and questioned if there would be compensation for changing addresses, deeds, and other documents.

In 2020, the proponent of the change to Yokuts Valley initiated a change.org petition, “Rename Sq___ Valley Fresno County,” which to date has generated 36,662 signatures. He noted also that in September 2022, California Governor Newsom enacted [Assembly Bill 2022](#), which states, “The term ‘sq___’ is a racist and derogatory term that has historically been used as an offensive ethnic, racial, and sexist slur, particularly for indigenous women. Commencing on January 1, 2025, this bill would require the term ‘sq___’ to be removed from all geographic features and place names in the state.”

After the proposal for Yokuts Valley was added to BGN Review List 448, the BGN received a second proposal, to change the name to Wootona. The proponent is a fourth-generation resident of the area; she offered four possible replacement names, but her preference is for Wootona, noting:

[It] is a local Native word meaning ‘woman’s footprint’ and is part of a documented legend regarding how Sq___ Valley got its name. There is a granite rock at the western edge of the valley with a footprint shaped depression in it, designating the valley as woman’s land. I know where this rock is, and the depression is indeed the shape and size of a woman’s footprint. The story of the footprint and its name is recounted in the local history book ‘Oak to Pine to Timberline’ by Helen Clingan and is cited in the *Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology* in the article ‘Indian Names and Naming Practices in the Sierra Nevada Foothills’ by Linda E. Dick Bissonnette. Wootona would be a beautiful name for our town.

She added, “The designation ‘Yokuts’ encompasses many different geographic areas and subtribes and is a somewhat generalized name. For a name that specifically acknowledges the Chukimena Yokut people and geographic places that were meaningful to them, please consider Wootona or Tucheu.”

Bissonette's volume suggested that the community might have been named Sq___ Valley "by white hunters when Indian men were absent."

The proponent of Yokuts Valley responded to the concerns expressed by the Wootona proponent:

In our local language classes we teach the word with a spelling that is more phonetically closer to accurate pronunciation: 'Yokutch.' The term 'Yokuts' has been used interchangeably and accepted as it has found a commonplace of familiarity amongst non natives. The word 'Yokuts' is not English and therefore cannot be subjugated to the same grammatical rules. 'Yokuts' is a word that simply means the people or a human being, depending on its use. The 's' at the end of the word does not denote a pluralism. The term refers to a collective people with distinct bands comprising the 'Yokuts' people. For instance we have the Chuckchansi Yokuts north of us and the Tachi Yokuts south of us. Also belonging to this same language family are the Choinumni, Wukchumni, and Wuksachi tribes, considered Sierra Foothill Yokuts. The Yokuts are tribally one people with many bands of tribes.

The statement that the proponent of '[W]ootona' makes is not an accurate reflection of the local indigenous tribal nations, does not honor the valley's first inhabitants, and only serves to further perpetuate a false narrative that preserves and honors the history of the valley's early settlers. If chosen this word will cause immediate confusion as the word is unrecognizable and is not attributed to any tribal language indigenous to the area.

The Fresno County Board of Supervisors was asked to comment on the proposals for Yokuts Valley and Wootona. The County conducted a public town hall meeting ([click for YouTube video](#)), attended by over 100 individuals. The proponent of Yokuts Valley also attended to present his case and to explain why the existing word is offensive to native people, especially native women. The majority of individuals who spoke at the town hall, including some native women, voiced strong opposition to any change, with many disputing the claim that the word ever had negative intent in the area ("American Indians suffered 'true injustices' in other communities. Just not here."). Many also expressed frustration at being "required" to change business and road names and mailing addresses. A change.org petition titled "Keep Sq___ Valley, CA 93675" has to date generated 2,316 signatures. The petition reported that the word "simply means woman or wife. [Also], taking away the name of our town is like erasing parts of [our] history."

The County Board conducted a survey by mail of local residents. From a population of 3,511, 554 responses were received, of which 87% stated they did not support a name change. The Yokuts Valley proponent commented, "The one thing that we can safely conclude from the informal survey is that the residents are greatly indifferent to a name change."

A recent email from a sender called "Save Sq___ Valley" to the BGN and a number of State and Federal elected officials commented, "This has been a multiyear battle and a source for concern

and frustration for the thousands affected. Not only those who live in Sq___ Valley, but those surrounding areas and attractions such as Scenic Hwy 180 which transects our community and the 2 National Parks directly East of us including Foreign Visitors to our area. We are a minimum of 90% in favor of No Name Change as stated in the correspondence received by your members [sic].” The email included a petition with approximately 200 signatures.

At the County Board’s Oct 11 meeting ([click for county video](#), and select item 7), 31 members of the public were in attendance to address the matter; 14 spoke against the name change and 17 were supportive of it. The board then issued a resolution opposing the “already final federal decision to change the names of all locations entailing the derogatory word “sq___.” They noted also that the new California law (A.B. 2022 [q.v.]) “usurps local control.” The Board, recognizing that a change was “inevitable,” proposed that the community be renamed to Bear Mountain.

Fresno County Supervisor Nathan Magsig noted (lightly edited for spelling, grammar, clarity, etc. from the County Board meeting video closed captions):

A name change for the community has been discussed for over a decade. There have been people trying to change the name and it hasn't gotten any traction. For me, and my position through the years I've been on the Board of Supervisors, is if there is to be a name change it needs to be organic—it needs to come from the community because I believe in local control as the supervisor who represents the east side of Fresno County. I'm elected to represent you and your voices matter to me.

The Department of the Interior made this decision based on information they had, and they wanted input. My office organized a community meeting through social media sites and we let people know we were having a community meeting at the Bear Mountain library. That took place on September 20 and there were hundreds of individuals from Sq___ Valley and some residents who could not attend. There were opinions exchanged both for the name change and against the name change. It became clear we needed to have additional dialogue with the community.

I shared with all of you at that meeting that I would send out ballots. During that process in the few weeks that followed, some people did not get ballots. The mailing list we came up with was based on the 2020 census. I tried to use the most current mailing list we had for Sq___ Valley. There were 1435 ballots mailed out to different people’s homes. Some people asked why didn’t you send multiple ballots to each home because there are husbands and wives and other family members that live within a household. But it's impossible to know how many people live in homes. People move frequently, and we found there were a number of individuals that passed away since 2020. But we used the best tools at our disposal so I could hear the voices of residents in Sq___ Valley.

I want to share with you the results we found. With the ballots that were faxed back to us or we received in the office, 87 percent said do not change the name of Sq___ Valley. Out of the

other 13 percent that responded, the top three names people identified, if the name is to be changed, are Bear Mountain, expand Dunlap, or Bear Valley.

I listed on that ballot card sent to all of you nine different names potentially that it could be. These are names I've heard many of you suggest over the last six months. Yokuts Valley was on there as well because that's what the Department of Interior suggested but that name did not make the top three suggested back to us.

635 ballots came back but not everybody voted on wanting a name change. Some just answered the question saying they don't want the name changed. I also received a document that was a petition circulated from folks that had close to 500 names that was separate from the ballots sent out. 87 percent only represents the proportion of the ballots that were received. I know the individuals who wanted to change the name of Sq___ Valley have done their own petition they circulated. For me what has been lacking in the processes hearing from the people who live directly in the community. So I attempted to do that in the last six weeks.

While the process I used over the course of five weeks is not scientific, it was the best I could come up within the limited amount of time we had. When we received the letter from USGS, even though it is dated 25 August we received it in early September and they indicated they wanted to hear from us by October 21.

I spoke to representatives with the Department of the Interior, letting them know we need more time. They let us know we needed to hurry up and communicate back to them what residents wanted. The reason for the short notice is simply because we are dealing with a short period of time. The ballots were sent out using the 2020 census, and we had to pick some type of methodology so that's what I used. One ballot was sent out per household. As of yesterday, we received 120 undeliverable ballots. Also, I know that the Sq___ Valley post office also had ballots that people could fill out and fax back to the office and some people did that. While the process is not perfect, I wanted to find out what the residents wanted and I allowed people to send emails, to circulate their own petitions. While my process is not scientific, I used all the methods at my disposal that I thought would be reasonable.

An October 13, 2022 letter sent to the BGN, copied to DOI and CACGN, and signed by "Sq___ Valley CA Citizens," stated

We hereby request an Extension of Time for Public Comment and Analyzing of Both orders [sic] listed above [Secretary's Order 3404 and California [Assembly Bill 2022](#)] as we, the citizens of the unincorporated area of Sq___ Valley (and others et al[.]) were not [a]fforded either [n]otice or [t]ransparency as to your intended actions.

1. Whereas the originally stated date for compliance was January 2025, which has been expedited unfairly to November 18, 2022. [Note: Assembly Bill 2022 introduced the January 2025 deadline to change any "sq___" names there were not addressed by SO 3404.]

2. Whereas we the general public were purposely neglected in due process [the accompanying email protested the “Abandonment of Transparency to the Public for Inclusion [because] NOTICE TO PARTICIPATE WAS GIVEN TO TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS ONLY,” mistakenly saying that the Federal Register only published [Reconciliation of Derogatory Geographic Names Tribal Consultation](#) and not [Reconciliation of Derogatory Geographic Names](#), the venue for general public comment; incidentally, the SO 3404 Task Force only received one comment during a Tribal consultation listening session that came from an elder of a non-federally recognized group; see above.]
3. Whereas the order states: “Public Notice”
4. Whereas the purpose of public notice is to display information in places where the public is likely to come into notice. The important premise is that information about government activities must be accessible in order for people to make well-informed decisions. Public notice laws in this country serve to outline the most effective method of reaching the Public.
5. Whereas Tribal Councils were included widely, even [n] on-[federally] recognized tribes
6. Whereas, Sq___ IS a Native word for “Woman” (Algonquin used by colonists. We know this as Sq___ was used as the English spelling before Mohawk contact was ever made) by Natural History Museum
7. Whereas [t] he Simplest Solution is to Drop The “w”
8. Whereas [t] he CA community of Sq___ Valley in no way aids in missing Indigenous Women
9. Whereas by altering the [n]ame . . . [h]omeowners [i] nsurance may be at risk of cancellation and or [t]ripling in [c]ost as it has done in recent years.
10. Whereas [h]ealth [c]overage in rural areas is determined by address
11. Whereas altering ALL personal identifiers would be an overwhelming cost to our residents

As is legally appropriated to us the [c]itizens and [t]axpayers of the United Sates, [f]airness in [g]overning is a [l]egal [r]ight. This is not defined by area of origin nor [h]eritage. We are a Nation of Integrated Peoples;

We all shall expect our Rights and Participation in our Democracy.

The “Save Sq___ Valley” email also protested that the revised [Task Force candidate name list](#) marked certain features “that will not be renamed under SO3404” because they are not under BGN purview, are historical, or have unknown locations” but mistakenly refers to [Sq___ Valley Census Designated Place](#) being highlighted, a name under Census Bureau purview but maintained in GNIS.

A brief summary of the comments from the County Board hearing:

- the proposed name change is a 10th Amendment issue or a 1st Amendment issue
- residents’ ancestors of Native descent were involved in the original naming and that no derogatory intent was meant
- changing the name would be erasing the past native culture and history of the community
- incredulity that anyone could find “sq___” derogatory because it just means “woman”
- the name honors Native women

- Other names in California could be changed next because some people don't like them, citing the example of non-Catholics objecting to the name Los Angeles
- Some residents didn't receive the county ballot sent by Magsig and that his effort, especially communicating a lot of the details through Facebook Live, were insufficient
- Some residents are embarrassed by the community's name and tell people they are from Fresno rather than say the name
- The land around the community was stolen from Native Americans and that California has recently recognized the genocide of Native Americans
- The ballots sent out don't represent the majority of residents
- That the word is a graphic reference to female genitalia and is as reprehensible as the "n-word" or a homophobic slur
- An offer of financial help for residents to change their addresses and other legal documents affected
- Mention of past insurance costs and changes when part of neighboring Dunlap was merged into the Sq___ Valley ZIP Code
- That a name such as Bismarck (North Dakota) should be changed because it was named for a Nazi battleship [the city was named for German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck (1815-1898)]

In recommending approval of the name Yokuts Valley to replace Sq___ Valley, the California Advisory Committee on Geographic Names (CACGN) noted "Name change [is] required due to SO 3404; [the] name was submitted by a local Native American Tribe [sic], which is consistent with AB2022; wide Tribal and community support." (As noted above, the proposal was submitted by a member of a non-recognized Tribal group, not a Tribal government.) The CACGN also cited the widespread support for Yokuts Valley and noted that there are already a Bear Valley and Bear Mountain in California, "so it would be confusing to call this community Bear Mountain."

V. New Names agreed to by all interested parties

Coyote Creek, Alabama (Review List 448)

Mouth: 31.25533, -87.48537 / Source: 31.27063, -87.45833

Local government	Escambia County Commission	Support
	Monroe County Commission	No response
State Names Authority	Alabama	Support
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

This proposal is to make official the name Coyote Creek for a 2.1-mile-long tributary of Little River Lake. The stream heads in Escambia County, flows through the proponent's property and Little River State Forest, managed by the Alabama Forestry Commission, and into Monroe County. The

proponent reports that the name “refers to prolific wild dogs and coyotes in the area.” GNIS does not list any other geographic features in Alabama named “Coyote.”

Coldstream Creek, Pennsylvania
(Review List 448)

Mouth: 42.03317, -80.33891 / Source: 42.028413, -80.323872

Local government	Girard Township Supervisors*	Support
	Borough of Girard*	Support
	Borough of Lake City*	Support
	Erie County Executive and Council	Support
State Names Authority	Pennsylvania	No objection
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

* obtained by proponent

A resident of Girard Township in Erie County is proposing the new name Coldstream Creek for an unnamed 1.2-mile-long stream that flows into Lake Erie. The mouth of the stream is on his property. The name refers to the temperature of the water and the fact that it does not freeze in winter and steelhead trout can be found in the stream.

Early USGS maps show the stream’s source three miles to the east-southeast; however, the flow was disrupted by construction of a railroad. The National Hydrography Dataset shows water flowing in a canal or ditch from the railroad to the current stream, but aerial imagery and later USGS maps suggest that flow is not continuous, and historic stream data from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection show water being diverted along the railroad tracks. The stream now begins at or near a small farm pond.

The proponent initially submitted the name as “Cold Stream.” There are eight streams in Pennsylvania recorded in GNIS that have the generic “Stream.”

The Pennsylvania Geographic Names Committee (PGNC) has no objections to the new name but reported that Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) Bridge Management System data apply the name “Willow Brook” to this stream. This name is not recorded anywhere else and originated on a 1982 PennDOT form where the name was changed from “unknown” to “Willow Brook.” The PGNC’s member from PennDOT believes the name may have been chosen by a bridge inspector and that “[w]e have cleaned up most of these incorrectly identified stream names, however some are still being identified.”