

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

Eight Hundred and Fifty-sixth Meeting

August 10, 2023 – 9:30 a.m.

(Virtual Meeting)

Members and Deputy Members in Attendance

Kenia Allen	Department of Commerce (Office of Coast Survey)
Meghan Barrett	Department of Homeland Security
Marielle Black	Department of the Interior (U.S. Bureau of Reclamation)
Jessica Campbell	Department of the Interior (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)
Thad Ellerbe	Department of Commerce (Office of Coast Survey)
David de Hosson	Department of Defense (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) (not voting)
Melanie Riley	Department of Agriculture (U.S. Forest Service)
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)
Alexander Stum	Department of Agriculture (Natural Resources Conservation Service)
Michael Tischler	Department of the Interior (U.S. Geological Survey)
Tara Wallace	Department of Commerce (Office of Coast Survey)

Ex-Officio

Derek Hoffman, Executive Secretary, U.S. Board on Geographic Names / Foreign Names Committee

Staff

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

Guests

Ohona Ahmed, U.S. Geological Survey student volunteer  
Gina Anderson, U.S. Geological Survey Office of Communications and Publishing  
Alex Fries, National Park Service

Tenielle Gaither, U.S. Geological Survey  
Jesse Nett, U.S. Forest Service  
Deb Nordeen, National Park Service  
Brigitta Urban-Mathieux, U.S. Geological Survey  
Council of Geographic Names Authorities (CoGNA) observers  
Foreign Names Committee staff  
National Geographic Society observers

### 1. Opening

The Vice-Chair opened Meeting 856 of the Domestic Names Committee (DNC) at 9:34 a.m. and asked the staff to introduce Gina Anderson from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Office of Communications and Publishing (OCAP).

Anderson noted that her role in OCAP is to assist the USGS Core Science Systems mission area, which includes supporting the BGN. She works with Tischler and BGN staff to manage media inquiries related to BGN issues. Given the increased attention toward the BGN's process and some high-profile cases, Anderson will attend DNC meetings to better understand the process and to hear the discussions.

The Vice-Chair requested a roll call of the members. He noted that motions would pass by a simple majority of votes.

The Vice-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 855

The minutes of Meeting 855, held June 8, 2023, were approved as submitted.

### 3. Reports

#### 3.1 BGN Chairman (Tischler)

There was no written report.

Tischler reminded members about the upcoming [2023 Annual Conference of the Council of Geographic Names Authorities](#), to be held September 12-16 in Portland, Oregon.

Tischler thanked Urban-Mathieux and Runyon for their efforts toward completion of the BGN member appointment process.

Tischler attended a recent meeting of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM). The UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) has requested that UN-GGIM provide members to form an “Expert Body Joint Task Team” to collaborate and develop best practices for national geographic naming bodies. Tischler offered to serve as the representative for the United States.

USGS recently hosted members from the [Canada Centre for Mapping and Earth Observation](#) (CCMEO), under which the [Geographical Names Board of Canada](#) (GNBC) operates. CCMEO and GNBC will be working through the UNGEGN United States / Canada Division and with the BGN to produce a large wall map showing indigenous names along the U.S.-Canada border. The map will be displayed at the 2025 GNBC Conference in Vancouver.

Tischler reported that a concerned citizen emailed the USGS Director about a name for a stream in Hawaii that was erroneously applied on Google Maps to a stream in Puerto Rico. The USGS National Hydrography Dataset has the correct name, which was collected from GNIS. The name was eventually corrected in Google Maps.

### 3.2 Executive Secretary for Domestic Names (Lyon)

There was no written report. The Executive Secretary for Domestic Names position continues to be vacant, although Lyon announced that she would be starting on a detail as the Acting Executive Secretary next week. She will focus her time on reviewing and updating the BGN’s [Principles, Policies, and Procedures](#) (PPP) and the BGN’s [Bylaws](#). Flora has offered to help with the PPP review, and Lyon asked any other volunteers to contact her.

### 3.3 Executive Secretary for Foreign Names (Hoffman)

There was no written report. The BGN’s Foreign Names Committee (FNC) will hold Meeting 415 on Tuesday, September 12.

The FNC has been conducting meetings with the United Kingdom Permanent Committee on Geographical Names and also participated in an online collaborative training session with the Republic of Korea.

### 3.4 Special Committee on Communications (Ellerbe)

See attached report. The next virtual discussion forum for the UNGEGN United States / Canada Division will focus on database issues; the USA/Canada transboundary agreement; and the naming and renaming of undersea features.

### 3.5 Staff (Runyon)

See attached report. The six proposals to change the name of [Mount Evans](#) in Colorado will be on the DNC’s September docket.

### 3.6 GNIS and Data Compilation Program (McCormick)

There was no written report. GNIS has been running well, other than two instances where it was down for a few days due to a flood that damaged a fiber line between USGS centers in Denver and Rolla, and an issue with a failed air conditioner in the USGS Denver Center.

GNIS download files have recently been updated.

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

There was no written report. Members of the Special Committee will present at the CoGNA meeting on the recently approved Cultural Sensitivity Guidance on Native American Names. The committee is also reviewing how updates are made to the PPP's Appendix G: *Characters Approved for Use in Geographic Name Proposals*. The committee will meet following this meeting.

## 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 **Chesquaw Branch** (FID 983094) to **Tsi-squa-hi Branch**, North Carolina (Great Smoky Mountains National Park) (Review List 447)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the change.

One member asked why a longstanding name should be changed when it wasn't considered derogatory under Secretary's Order 3404. Shelton responded that the Derogatory Geographic Names Task Force removed this name from its list (because it was not considered to be a derogatory use of the word "sq\_\_\_") on the condition that the National Park Service submit a proposal to the BGN to change the name to a more accurate rendering of the Cherokee name.

Vote: 17 in favor  
 0 against  
 0 abstentions

## II. Disagreement on Docketed Names

Change **Woods** (FID 1617954) to **Woods-of-Gilmore**, Michigan (Review List 451)

A motion was made and seconded not to approve the change, citing the opposition of the township, county, and State Names Authority.

Vote: 17 in favor  
0 against  
0 abstentions

Members agreed to make the name Woods a 2023 BGN decision.

**Atsadi Falls** or **Bemis Camp Falls**, North Carolina (Nantahala National Forest) (Review List 444, 445) (FID 2831276)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the name Bemis Camp Falls.

Vote: 17 in favor  
0 against  
0 abstentions

**Wet Paws Creek**, North Carolina (Review List 449)

A motion was made and seconded not to approve the name, citing the opposition of the village, town, and State Names Authority.

Vote: 14 in favor  
0 against  
3 abstentions

**Cedar Glen Creek**, Washington (Review List 445) (FID 2831283)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the name.

Vote: 16 in favor  
1 against  
0 abstentions

The vote against the motion cited the recommendation of the State Names Authority.

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

**Mount Mitchell**, Kansas (Review List 451) (FID 2831271)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the name.

Vote: 17 in favor  
0 against  
0 abstentions

**Just Creek**, Kentucky (Review List 451) (FID 2831272)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the name.

Vote: 17 in favor  
0 against  
0 abstentions

**Jaroslow Reef**, Massachusetts (Review List 449) (FID 2831273)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the name.

Vote: 17 in favor  
0 against  
0 abstentions

**Winns Pond**, New York (Review List 451) (FID 2831279)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the name.

Vote: 17 in favor  
0 against  
0 abstentions

**Perkins Creek**, South Carolina (Review List 449) (FID 2831282)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the name.

Vote: 17 in favor  
0 against  
0 abstentions

**Brevelle Lake**, Texas (Review List 442) (FID 2831284)

A motion was made and seconded not to approve the name, citing a lack of direct association between the intended honoree and the feature, and because the name could be construed to commemorate the proponent. Members discussed whether the honoree's mapping and exploration of the region near the lake would satisfy the "significant contribution to the area, community, or State in which [the feature] is located" part of the Commemorative Names Policy.

The motion and second were withdrawn. A motion was made and seconded to approve the name.

Vote: 11 in favor  
2 against  
4 abstentions

The votes against the motion cited the concerns expressed above.

One member left the meeting.

Change **Grass Lake** (FID 1523607) to **Nathaniel Sargent Lake**, Washington (Review List 451) and new name **Rodney White Slough**, Washington (Review List 451)

A motion was made and seconded to consider these proposals together and to defer a vote until the Washington State Board of Natural Resources and the Washington State Committee on Geographic Names could be asked to clarify the incorrect statements in their minutes regarding the history of these names.

Vote: 8 in favor  
7 against  
1 abstention

The votes against the motion cited sufficient evidence to proceed with a vote.

One member left the meeting.

IV. **Revised Decisions**

Change **Eagle Island** (BGN 1968) (FID 984468) to **Eagles Island**, North Carolina (Review List 447)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the change.

Vote: 13 in favor  
0 against  
2 abstentions

One member left the meeting and one returned.

V. New Names agreed to by all interested parties

**Brooklyn Creek**, North Carolina (Review List 449) (FID 2831278)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the name.

Vote: 15 in favor  
0 against  
0 abstentions

One member left the meeting.

**Lower Vernal Falls** and **Upper Vernal Falls**, North Carolina (Nantahala National Forest) (Review List 444) (FIDs 2831274, 2831275)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the names.

Vote: 14 in favor  
0 against  
0 abstentions

**Paw Paw Branch**, North Carolina (Review List 448) (FID 2831277)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the name. Members discussed the lack of any local response and the State Name Authority's lack of formal opinion while adding that they "consider it nonsensical."

Vote: 11 in favor  
2 against  
1 abstention

The votes against the motion cited the lack of local support.

**OK Run**, Ohio (Review List 451) (FID 2831280)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the name.

Vote: 14 in favor  
0 against  
0 abstentions



**Twin Top Peak**, Pennsylvania (Susquehannock State Forest) (Review List 451) (FID 2831281)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the name.

Vote: 14 in favor  
0 against  
0 abstentions

**Bumblebee Brook**, Vermont (Review List 451) (FID 2831285)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the name.

Vote: 14 in favor  
0 against  
0 abstentions

**5. Other Business**

Johnson and Hammond spoke briefly about their recent attendance at the [2023 Tribal Self-Governance Conference](#) in Tulsa, Oklahoma. They agreed it was very worthwhile, well attended, and that it provided an excellent opportunity to brief the attendees on the role of the BGN and State naming authorities.

Johnson provided details about the upcoming CoGNA conference (q.v.) and thanked everyone who has registered thus far. CoGNA is anticipating a number of Tribal attendees, for which the organization is grateful to the U.S. Forest Service for its support.

Forrest reported that legislation was introduced, then withdrawn, that would have impacted the name of Richard B. Russell Lake and its associated dam.

Members discussed the request to revisit the BGN's 2016 decision not to approve a change from Cocheco River to Cochecho River in New Hampshire. After reviewing the material from 2016 and the proponent's latest submission, members determined there was no new evidence to warrant reopening the case. They noted that the purported new evidence was that the decision had been the result of misinformation about the validity of the State's recommendation. The proponent questioned the authority of the New Hampshire Board on Geographic Names to advise the BGN on name proposals. Since 1976, a New Hampshire agency has served as the "New Hampshire Geographic Names Authority," first, the Office of State Planning and more recently (20+ years), the Council on Resources and Development (CORD). The Commissioners of each of the 12 State agencies within CORD are authorized to make recommendations on issues that affect the State, including official geographic names.

## 6. Closing

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled to be held on September 15, 2023, at 4:30 p.m. Eastern Time, during the annual meeting of the Council of Geographic Names Authorities (CoGNA).

(signed)

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[Vacant]  
Executive Secretary (Acting)  
Domestic Names Committee

APPROVED  
(signed)

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Susan Lyon, Chair  
Domestic Names Committee

### **BGN/Domestic Names Committee Meeting 856 Staff Report**

The Domestic Names Committee did not meet in July, so this report covers the period since the June 8 meeting.

Staff participated in FNC Meeting 414 (June 13), and a meeting of the Executive Committee held on June 21.

The annual Council of Geographic Names Authorities (CoGNA) conference will take place September 12-16 in Portland, Oregon; see <https://cogna50usa.org/conferences>. The program includes a number of sessions dedicated to issues of interest and important to Tribal groups, along with the State-Federal Roundtable. There will be an opportunity for each State Names Authority to provide an update on its past year's activities, and several DNC members will participate in panel discussions. On Friday, September 15, CoGNA will host DNC Meeting 857, which will be conducted as a hybrid meeting. Call-in details (via Teams) will be made available shortly.

**Quarterly Review List 452**, comprising 51 new name and name change proposals, was completed and released on July 24. A notice was sent to Federal partners and State Names Authorities, as well as to all federally recognized Tribes and approximately 200 Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPOs), inviting them to comment on any proposal in which they have an interest.

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation has nominated Marielle Black to represent the agency on the BGN. Ms. Black was formerly with the U.S. Forest Service and provided support to the

Derogatory Geographic Names Task Force. This is the first time the USBR has been appointed to serve on the BGN.

On June 30, Gita Urban-Mathieux's detail as BGN Executive Secretary for Domestic Names ended; arrangements are underway to bring on a new detailee. The announcement for the permanent position opened and closed last week.

The BGN staff is pleased to welcome Shelby Bourquein, a contractor with XTS, as a new member of the team. Shelby started in the position in early July and has begun to prepare case briefs and conduct local and State outreach for a number of pending proposals.

The appointment letters for the 2023-2025 term were finalized and are being reviewed by the Department of the Interior (DOI). The letters will be sent very soon from DOI to each Department head, requesting that members and deputies be appointed for the new term.

The **Advisory Committee on Reconciliation in Place Names**, established in response to S.O. 3405, held its first in-person public meeting on June 14-15 at Grand Canyon National Park. The meeting was announced via a Federal Register Notice, and more details are available at <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1892/advisory-committee-on-reconciliation-in-place-names.htm>.

On July 19, a virtual meeting took place between representatives of the BGN and the **Geographical Names Board of Canada** (GNBC). This was a follow up to the meeting that was held during the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) session in May. Topics included an overview of the upcoming COGNA and GNBC annual meetings; the need to review the Trans-Boundary Agreement; names dissemination, harmonization, and data modernization efforts; the preparation of the Division Report for the next UNGEGN session; and the development of collaborative projects highlighting both countries' indigenous names efforts.

DNC members and staff attended a **USGS-Census Bureau Management Oversight Group meeting** held on July 25. Tischler provided an overview of activities related to Secretary's Order 3404 ("sq\_\_\_" name changes), while Flora spoke about the BGN's recently developed Cultural Sensitivity Guidance on Native American Names. There was also a report on attendance at the UNGEGN session.

During the reporting period, staff participated in several **State Names Authority meetings**: the Colorado Geographic Naming Advisory Board (June 20 and August 1), the Utah Geographic Names Committee (June 29), the California Advisory Committee on Geographic Names (August 4), and the Arizona Board on Geographic and Historic Names (August 8). Two of the States, California and Colorado, have hired individuals who will be responsible for managing local and Tribal outreach and engagement. BGN staff had an opportunity to meet with each of them to review Federal and State naming policies and the proposals that are pending in each of the States.

Tribal consultation related to the proposals to change the name of [Mount Evans](#) in Colorado, and led by the Department of the Interior, took place over the summer. BGN members were invited to observe the sessions. The proposals will be on the docket for Meeting 857, scheduled for September 15.

As reported previously, the BGN has received three proposals to change the name of [Chinaman Creek](#) in Tuolumne County, California: to [James Wong Howe Creek](#) (Review List 440), [China Creek](#) (Review List 443), or [Chinese Miners Creek](#) (Review List 451). The U.S. Forest Service has withdrawn [China Creek](#) and now endorses [Chinese Miners Creek](#). The proponent of [James Wong Howe Creek](#) has been informed of the new proposal but to date has not responded. The Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors was asked to comment on the proposals; one supervisor responded that perhaps it would be more appropriate to rename the stream for a specific individual from the Chinese community rather than the more generic “Chinese Miners.” The California Advisory Committee on Geographic Names (CACGN) and the U.S. Forest Service are reviewing the matter.

The CACGN has received a number of responses to its request to all State and local agencies to provide a list of all remaining geographic features and places within their jurisdiction that contain the word “sq\_\_\_.” This request was made as a result of [Assembly Bill 2022](#). Further research by the BGN staff has determined that all of the natural features on the list were already changed as a result of S.O. 3404. CACGN will continue to consider changes to the names of administrative features.

Two proposals have been submitted to the BGN to change names that had previously included the word “sq\_\_\_” and which were changed by the BGN in September 2022. The first is to rename [Habematolel Valley](#) to [Kilkenny Valley](#) (Review List 452); the proponents are members of the Kilkenny family who have owned a ranch in the valley since 1907. They submitted the name [Kilkenny Valley](#) to the Derogatory Geographic Names Task Force in April 2022, but the name [Habematolel Valley](#) was chosen instead; this name is associated with that of [Habematolel Creek](#), which was proposed by the Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake. The Tribe did not include the valley name in its submission, while the proposal from the Kilkenny family does not reference the stream.

The second proposal has been submitted by the Zoning Administrator of the Charter Township of Fenton (Michigan) on behalf of the PST Lake Association, to rename [Aanikegamaa Lake](#) in Michigan to [Swan Lake](#). The name “Aanikegamaa” was chosen by the Task Force and is an Ojibwe word meaning “chain of lakes.” The PST Lake Association conducted a survey of property owners and suggests “the name [Swan Lake](#) is much more representative of our water feature.”

In 2016, the BGN rejected a proposal to change the name of the [Cocheco River](#) (BGN 1911) in New Hampshire to [Cochecho River](#). The proponent of the change has expressed his displeasure and also questions the authority of the New Hampshire Board on Geographic Names (NHBN) to issue recommendations to the BGN. The staff is seeking the DNC’s guidance as to whether there

is sufficient new evidence to reopen the case. The staff also met with the chair of the NHBGN to review the background of the 2016 decision.

Review List 451 includes proposals to change the names of [Mount Washington](#) and the [Baker River](#) (New Hampshire) to [Agiocochook](#) and [Asquamchumauke River](#), respectively. The NHBGN, after consulting with a number of State agencies, does not support the change, citing longstanding use of the existing name, its historical and cultural value, and if changed, impacts to the State's tourism industry. There are no federally recognized Tribes in New Hampshire; however, the NHBGN has contacted the New Hampshire Commission on Native American Affairs for input. The Mount Washington Commission, which "consults and advises the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources in the management of the summit property owned by the State of New Hampshire," met on May 19 to review the proposal but deferred a decision to its next meeting. As of August 8, the BGN has received 65 emails from individuals, 14 in support of renaming [Mount Washington](#) and 51 opposed; many of these also referred to the [Baker River](#) change.

The proposal listed on Review List 452 to change the name of [Negro Marsh](#) in Washington County, New York to [Poquoson](#) has been withdrawn by the proponent; no reason was given.

In 2019, the BGN rejected a proposal to apply the name [Druid Hill](#) to a feature in the suburbs of Atlanta. In May 2023, the proponent contacted the BGN to ask that it revisit its decision. The description of the feature in the new proposal clearly limits the extent to the bounds of the proponent's property, which is not a geographic feature, and so the proponent was informed that the BGN would not be considering his request. In July, a new proposal was received, from a different individual, asking that the name be made official as it appears on Google Maps and in local documents, including a county corridor study. In the newest proposal, the feature is described generally as a slope encompassing the original proponent's property. The proponent was informed that the area in question is not a geographic or topographic feature that the BGN would name.

A request was received to apply the name [Point Gloria](#) to the angled point in Lake Tahoe where the States of California and Nevada meet. The individual wished to honor his mother. He was informed that a location in a lake marked simply by geographic coordinates is not a feature that the BGN would name.

A resident of North Carolina proposed the name [Sarah Island](#) to commemorate his niece who died of cancer at the age of nine. The location proposed to be named was described as a small island that "forms when groundwater rises and surrounds it." The proponent was informed that the BGN does not name temporary features.

The BGN has received a proposal to change the name of [Cadillac Mountain](#) in Acadia National Park in Maine to [Wapuwoc Mountain](#), to recognize an early Abenaki name for the feature. This proposal will be added to the next Quarterly Review List.

At DNC Meeting 855, the DNC deferred a decision on a proposal to apply the new name Glenwood Creek to an unnamed stream in Johnson County, Iowa, after concerns were expressed that the name could lead to confusion with a prehistoric culture complex in western Iowa that is named Glenwood. The proponent was contacted and agreed to amend the proposal to Woodglenn Creek.

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) inquired about the process whereby an unincorporated community within its reservation could be renamed. The CSKT was informed that in accordance with Policy X: Tribal Geographic Names, the BGN would defer to the Tribe regarding the name of an entity on lands under its jurisdiction.

Review List 451 includes a proposal to change the name of Agassiz Peak in Coconino County, Arizona and on the Coconino National Forest to Öo'mawki. A change.org petition has been initiated and to date has 213 signatures. The summit is located in an area of cultural and traditional significance to many Tribes and the Arizona State Board on Geographic and Historic Names and the U.S. Forest Service are continuing to review the request.

The staff received an inquiry regarding the status of efforts to change the names of features in the Adirondacks (New York) that are currently named "Negro."

An inquiry was received regarding the possibility of renaming Custer State Park in South Dakota. The individual was advised that the BGN does not have the purview to rename state parks.

A number of **media inquiries** were received during the reporting period; these related to the proposal to rename Swastika Lake, Wyoming; the status of pending proposals in Michigan; efforts to rename the City of Fort Bragg, California; and the input received regarding the Mount Washington renaming effort.

The staff and chair of the BGN's **Special Committee on Communications** continue to meet to address updates to the BGN's webpages, factsheets, and the BGN and USGS FAQs. A postcard with QR codes directing users to the BGN and GNIS webpages has been produced and was distributed at the Esri User Conference in July.

**U.S. BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES  
DOMESTIC NAMES COMMITTEE  
DOCKET  
August 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. 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 Chesquaw Branch (FID 983094) to Tsi-squa-hi Branch, North Carolina  
(Great Smoky Mountains National Park)  
(Review List 447)

<https://edits.nationalmap.gov/apps/gaz-domestic/public/summary/983094>

Local government	Swain County Commissioners	No response
State Names Authority	North Carolina	Support
Federal	National Park Service [proponent]	Support
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

This proposal is to change the name of Chesquaw Branch, a one-mile-long stream that flows into Fontana Lake in Swain County, to Tsi-squa-hi Branch. The stream flows entirely within Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

The Derogatory Geographic Names Task Force established by Secretary’s Order 3404 determined that the name Chesquaw Branch did not fall under its purview because the name was not a derogatory use of “sq\_\_\_,” and removed it from their list of feature names to address.

The BGN deputy member from the Department of the Interior, National Park Service, submitted the proposal for Tsi-squa-hi Branch, citing the Chenocetah’s Weblog post titled “Cherokee Place Names, Part 8” (<https://chenocetah.wordpress.com/2010/12/20/cherokee-place-names-in-the-southeastern-us-part-8/>), which reports “. . . Chesquaw is from the Cherokee Tsi-squa-yi or Tsi-squa-hi [“bird place”]. These days, it would be called Birdtown, but it is not the same as the Birdtown on the Eastern Cherokee Reservation.”

The Cherokee word for bird is ᎠᎹᎠ. The name Chesquaw Branch was first shown on USGS topographic maps in 1940.

A number of variant spellings of the name and the Cherokee word meaning “bird” have been found (listed chronologically by source):

- Mooney, “Myths of the Cherokee”, 1900  
<https://books.google.com/books?id=1NfiAAAAMAAJ>
  - **Tsi’skwa**, meaning “bird”
  - **Tsiskwa’hi**, meaning the town “Bird place”
- Smithsonian Institution Bureau of American Ethnology, *Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico*, 1912 <https://books.google.com/books?id=UOwpAQAAMAAJ>
  - **Tsiskwahi**, meaning the town “Bird place”
    - “One of the 5 districts or ‘towns’ which William H. Thomas, in his capacity of agent for the Eastern Cherokee, laid off on the East Cherokee res., in Swain co., N. C., after the removal of the rest of the tribe to Indian Ter. in 1838.”
- Smithsonian Institution Bureau of American Ethnology, “Circular of information regarding Indian popular names”, 1915 <https://library.si.edu/digital-library/book/circularofinform00smith>
  - **Tsiskwáhi**, meaning the town “Bird place”
- Jarret, *Occoneechee, The Maid of the Mystic Lake*, 1916,  
<https://archive.org/details/occoneecheemaido00jarr> (includes “Glossary of Cherokee Words”)
  - **Tsi’skwa**, meaning “bird”
  - **Tsiskwa’hi**, meaning the town “bird place”
    - “Chisca—mentioned in the De Soto narratives as a mining region in the Cherokee country. The name may have a connection with Tsi’skwa, ‘bird,’ possibly Tsiskwa’hi, ‘Bird place.’”
    - “Tsiskwa’hi—‘Bird place,’ from tsi’skwa, bird, and hi, locative. Birdtown settlement on the East Cherokee reservation, in Swain county, N. C.” (this location is not near the stream; other entries in this source give the locative as “yi”)
- Pickens, “A Comparison of Cherokee and Pioneer Bird-Nomenclature”, *Southern Folklore Quarterly*, 1943, [https://archive.org/details/sim\\_southern-folklore-quarterly\\_1943-12\\_7\\_4](https://archive.org/details/sim_southern-folklore-quarterly_1943-12_7_4)
  - **Tsisqua**, meaning “bird”
- Walker, Cherokee Primer, 1965 (included in “First and Second Sessions on the Study of the Education of Indian Children, Ninetieth Congress”)
[https://books.google.com/books?id=eSb\\_st3tL00C](https://books.google.com/books?id=eSb_st3tL00C)
  - **Jisgwa’**, meaning “bird”
- Cherokee Planning Board, *Comprehensive Plan, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Volume III*, 1974
  - **Tsiskwahi**, meaning the town “Bird Place”
- Conley, *A Cherokee Encyclopedia*, 2007,  
<https://books.google.com/books?id=Jifu4rAAyU8C>



- **Tsisqua**, from “Ani-tsisqua”
  - “One of the seven Cherokee clans: the Bird Clan”
- Western Carolina University Cherokee 101 webpage, 2007  
[https://paws.wcu.edu/chokeelanguage/Cherokee\\_ts\\_consonants.html](https://paws.wcu.edu/chokeelanguage/Cherokee_ts_consonants.html)
  - **Tsigwa**, meaning “bird”
- Cherokee Nation Language Department word list, <https://language.cherokee.org/word-list/>
  - **Tsisqua**, meaning “bird”
    - phonetic spelling “tsi-s-qua”
- Cherokee-English Dictionary Online Database, <https://www.cherokeedictionary.net/>
  - **Jisgwa**, meaning “bird”
    - from the “Cherokee English Dictionary”
  - **Thisqua**, from “dodo thisqua”, meaning “dodo bird”
    - from the “Consortium Word List”
  - **Tsigwa**, meaning “bird”
    - from the “Raven Rock Dictionary”
  - **Tsisqua**, from “hilvsgi tsisqua”, meaning “birds”
    - from the “Noquisis Word List”

## II. Disagreement on Docketed Names

Change **Woods** (FID 1617954) to **Woods-of-Gilmore**, Michigan  
(Review List 451)

Local government	Gilmore Township Board	Opposed
	Isabella County Commissioners	Opposed
State Names Authority	Michigan	Opposed
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

This proposal is to change the name of the small unincorporated community of Woods in Gilmore Township in Isabella County to Woods-of-Gilmore.

A local resident is proposing the change in an effort to apply “a more aesthetically sounding” name. The current name refers to the Woods family who operated Woods General Store from 1872 to 1956, specifically Jesse H. Wood (1838-1934) and his son James E. Wood. Jesse Wood settled in Gilmore after the Civil War and served as its first postmaster from 1891 to 1906. Gilmore Township is named for Civil War Union General and engineer Quincy Adams Gilmore (1825-1888).

The Michigan Ghost Towns website states “Not much is known about this curious non-village in Isabella County. It’s known by three names: Woods, Gilmore, and Woods of Gilmore,” adding “only a couple of structures remain.” The proponent states “The [proposed] name, Woods-of-

Gilmore, is hyphenated because it is a compound modifier made up of two or more words that function as one adjective. The words work together as a unit of meaning with equality being important with a flowing quality ensued.”

An 1899 township plat labeled the area “Gilmore P.O.” The name Woods has been published on USGS topographic maps since 1959; it is not labeled on the current county highway map.

The Gilmore Township Supervisor reported that “No one in Gilmore Township has ever heard anyone call this area of the township ‘Woods-of-Gilmore’ or anything similar.

When informed of the local and State objections, the proponent responded:

My family and I who reside in Gilmore have been using the term Woods-of-Gilmore on letterheads, apparel, and in our residential address since 2010 to describe the area in which we reside. In Gilmore Township, with a population of just under 1,500 residents, I hardly see it accurate that the Gilmore Township officials would know of who uses the term “Woods-of-Gilmore.” Regardless of whether the BGN votes in favor or against the name change proposal I will continue to utilize the name Woods-of-Gilmore to describe the historical place in which I and my family reside.

**Atsadi Falls or Bemis Camp Falls, North Carolina**  
 (Nantahala National Forest)  
 (Review List 444, 445)

35.341111, -84.0025

**Atsadi Falls:**

Local government	Graham County Commissioners	Oppose
State Names Authority	North Carolina	Oppose
Federal	U.S. Forest Service	No objection
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

**Bemis Camp Falls:**

Local government	Graham County Commissioners [proponent]	Support
State Names Authority	North Carolina	Support
Federal	U.S. Forest Service	No objection
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

The BGN received two proposals to apply an official name to an unnamed 35-foot-high falls on Santeetlah Creek in Graham County. The waterfall is located in the Unicoi Mountains in Nantahala National Forest.

A Georgia-based waterfall photographer and author of several books about waterfalls in the southeastern U.S. proposed the name Atsadi Falls, which he claims is used by waterfall enthusiasts. Atsadi is a Cherokee word that means fish. A photo of the falls was posted in 2017 to the “Waterfall Chasers” Facebook group by someone other than the proponent.

When asked to comment, the Graham County Commissioners submitted a counterproposal for the name Bemis Camp Falls, which they state “refers to the old Bemis Logging Camp, located approximately three-fourths of a mile upstream from the falls.” The U.S. Forest Service confirms that the name Bemis Falls is already in local use.

The proponent of Atsadi Falls also submitted the names Lisas Falls and Little Huckleberry Falls for nearby falls; the county’s counterproposals for Stewart Falls and Santeelah Bluff Falls were approved by the BGN in August 2022. The North Carolina Board on Geographic Name requested more time to review the Atsadi Falls and Bemis Camp Falls proposals to ensure that the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) did not object to the latter name. The EBCI did not respond to requests for comment.

**Wet Paws Creek**, North Carolina  
(Review List 449)

Mouth: 35.26395, -79.37845 / Source: 35.242842, -79.400382

Local government	Whispering Pines Village Council	Oppose
	Southern Pines Town Council	Oppose
	Moore County Commissioners	No opinion
State Names Authority	North Carolina	Oppose
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

The new name Wet Paws Creek is proposed for an unnamed 2.1-mile-long tributary of the Little River in Moore County. The stream heads in the Town of Southern Pines, flows into the Village of Whispering Pines, through Spring Valley Lake, and into Thagards Lake.

The proponent, who lives along the stream near its source, states:

Many animals / wildlife here must wet their paws to stay alive. The feature requires a name so it can eventually be protected from encroaching development and pesticide use nearby and to bring education, awareness, and outreach to how many small jewels in nature we have here in this area that are simply just passed by because no one knows it is there. The neighborhood is excited to have it named and it brings the community together being able to see a tiny stream could be important just like a huge nature area - both are important for us and wildlife.

The Whispering Pines Village Council stated:

The Council is opposed to the proposed name or any other naming of the portion of the creek within the Village municipal boundary. The Council believes there is no benefit to the Village and could cause confusion with the two named (2) Village lakes that the creek would run through. The Council is neutral with regards to naming the portion of the creek outside of the Village municipal boundary. [There is no section of the stream outside the boundary that can be named under BGN Principles.]

The Southern Pines Town Council deferred to the Whispering Pines Village Council, and added “If the creek is to be named, ‘Paws Creek’ would be preferred over ‘Wet Paws.’ The council did not submit a counterproposal.

The North Carolina Board on Geographic Names, in opposing the proposal, stated that the stream “is already named in the official State database as Spring Valley Lake [sic]. Changing the name will cause issues to local ordinances.” When asked to clarify, the chair replied that “The local government is responsible for enforcing the water supply rules in this watershed and in rule [sic] the description is Spring Valley Lake and all connecting streams to Thagards Lake. The rules apply to all waters in the watershed named or unnamed. I think it will cause some confusion at the local level and we would probably need to make some changes to the ordinance [if the name were approved by the BGN].”

**Cedar Glen Creek**, Washington  
(Review List 445)

Mouth: 48.0725, -121.96135 / Source: 48.0821518, -121.958105

Local government	City of Granite Falls	Support
	Snohomish County	No response
State Names Authority	Washington	Oppose
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response
Other	Wild Fish Conservancy	Support

The new name Cedar Glen Creek is proposed for an unnamed stream that flows in part through the City of Granite Falls in Snohomish County and into Coon Creek.

The proponent, who owns land around the mouth of the proposed Cedar Glen Creek, states that the stream “deserves to be named because it is active salmon spawning habitat.” The name is descriptive of the cedar-filled glen the streams flow through. The cedars are presumably western red cedars (*Thuja plicata*).

The proponent originally submitted the proposal with the spelling “Glenn” and the explanation “the word glenn is of Irish/Scottish origin and means ‘a secluded and narrow valley’ . . . . The settlers that homesteaded here were mainly of Irish/Scottish origins and the terrain that the

creek flows through is a glenn.” When asked about the unconventional spelling, the proponent amended it to Glen so as to “alleviate any confusion with personal names.”

According to GNIS, there are no features in Snohomish County with “Cedar” or “Glen” in their names.

The Washington State Committee on Geographic Names (WSCGN) rejected this proposal for initial consideration (which means they conduct no local or Tribal outreach) for the following reasons:

- the proposal was similar to another one (“Cedar Creek”) which the WSCGN had considered and rejected earlier in the same meeting for a stream elsewhere in the State (this proposal has not been submitted to the BGN)
- members felt that cedars are not unique enough to the feature to warrant this name
- the stream was “only 2.3 miles long” and “probably only flowed intermittently” (the proponent didn’t describe the water flow)
- the State of Washington already has several streams named “Cedar Creek” (GNIS lists 45, and five other streams with “Cedar” as the specific. None are in Snohomish County).

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

#### **Mount Mitchell**, Kansas (Review List 451)

39.14538, -96.2979

Local government	Wabaunsee County Commission	Support
State Names Authority	Kansas	No objection
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response
Other	Mount Mitchell Prairie Guards, Inc.	Support

This proposal is to make official the name Mount Mitchell for a 1,220-foot summit in Wabaunsee County, 14 miles east of Manhattan. The proponent reports that the name has been used locally since 1953 and that it commemorates Captain William I. Mitchell (1825-1903), a native of Scotland who moved to Kansas as a part of the Connecticut-Kansas Colony, a group of Connecticut abolitionists who wished to ensure that Kansas became a free State. General Land Office records note Mitchell’s acquisition of 160 acres at the location of the summit in 1860. He also served as a State legislator and continued to farm his land until 1881, when he operated a general store in Wabaunsee.

According to the website of the Mount Mitchell Heritage Prairie Park, “Across the road to the north of the park, there is the log cabin farmstead of Captain Mitchell, who with his sister

Agnes, sheltered freedom seekers on their perilous journey to freedom in Canada.” Mount Mitchell Road, Mitchell Prairie Lane, and the Mount Mitchell Historic Trails are located nearby.

The proponent reports that in 1953, “the land containing the summit was willed to the Kansas State Historical Society by Captain Mitchell’s son to be used as a park. He left a stipulation that the park, and by extension the summit, be named ‘Mount Mitchell’ in honor of his father.” Capt. Mitchell is buried in Wabaunsee Cemetery.

**Just Creek**, Kentucky  
(Review List 451)

Mouth: 38.29201, -85.45491 / Source: 38.27861, -85.42008

Local government	Shelby County Fiscal Court	Support
State Names Authority	Kentucky	Support
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

The new name Just Creek is proposed for a 2.4-mi-long tributary of Floyds Fork in Shelby County. The proponent reports that the name would honor his father, Elmore Anthony Just, Jr. (1947-2001), founder of the Professional Golf Club Makers Society and a U.S. Army veteran of the Vietnam War. In 1974, he founded Louisville Golf, one of the industry leaders in persimmon golf clubs, and on April 29, 2015 was inducted into the Kentucky Athletic Hall of Fame. In the early 1980s, Mr. Just purchased 765 acres of land in western Shelby County, through which this stream flows. The proponent has confirmed that there is no commercial intent in the naming.

**Jaroslow Reef**, Massachusetts  
(Review List 449)

41.7636979, -70.6125641

Local government	Bourne Town Selectmen	Support
	Barnstable County Commissioners	Support
State Names Authority	Massachusetts	Support
Federal Agency	NOAA	No objection
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

This proposal is to make official the name Jaroslow Reef for an approximately 2.5-acre reef of northern coral (*Astrangia poculata*) located between Gibbs Narrows and Little Buttermilk Bay in the Town of Bourne in Barnstable County.

The name would commemorate Dr. Gary Jaroslow (1958-2017), a professor at the Massachusetts Maritime Academy (MMA) from 2012 to 2017. He earned a Ph.D. from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology/Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute joint program in

Oceanography, and taught at Cornell University, Woods Hole, and the Sea Education Association. The proponent states that in the months before his death, Dr. Jaroslow and his students found this “unique reef structure seldom found in New England waters” and that they wish to name the feature after him “due to his impact as a teacher and researcher that he had on his students.”

The proponent describes the reef as:

the underwater 2.5 acres in Gibbs Narrows . . . . The reef impedes navigation as the bottom depth rises from 4 feet MLLW [mean lower low water] to as shallow as 0.5 feet MLLW in the reef’s highest point. . . . There is no other shallow water concentration of this northern coral identified to date in Massachusetts. MMA marine biology faculty, Professor Bill Hubbard, has coordinated this extensively with MA state and academic sources, as well as the federal agencies [unconfirmed], and all agree this is a highly unique ecological feature. Most Northern Coral is found within rocky areas with individual coral “stones” distributed widely apart on the seafloor. The high flows in the narrows and optimal water quality parameters allow centuries of this coral to build into a reef. The underwater area is a dense covering of northern stone coral, impeding navigation, and meets the definition of a reef.

**Winns Pond**, New York  
(Review List 451)

43.24417, -75.92655

Local government	Constantia Town Council	Support
	Oswego County Legislature	Support
State Names Authority	New York	Support
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

This proposal is to apply the new name Winns Pond to a 0.25-acre pond located along Crandell Creek in the Town of Constantia in Oswego County.

The proposal was originally submitted to make official the name Winns Falls for a 12-foot-tall waterfall at the edge of the pond. However, after the BGN staff questioned whether the "falls" was in fact a dam spillway (as shown on imagery), the proponent agreed to withdraw that name and is proposing to name the pond instead.

The proposal was submitted by an Oswego County Legislator on behalf of a resident of Bernhards Bay, who reports that the Winn family “were early settlers of the North Shore of Oneida Lake having arrived about 1829.” A lifetime resident of the area, Courtney Clough “Corky” Winn, Jr. (1921-2011) served in the Army Air Corps from 1942 to 1945. Upon his return from France, he started concrete and lumber companies, and in 1955 acquired property along the shore of Oneida Lake including the location of the falls. Mr. Winn served as commander of

American Legion Post 858 for two terms and as a councilman in the Town of Constantia for eight years. According to the proponent, “He was a beloved member of the community, and an avid amateur historian who shared his recollections and photographs in several books about Oneida Lake by author Jack Henke. At the site of the falls, Mr. Winn set up a water wheel that spins to this day. The name Winns Falls has been in use since the early 1970s.”

In 2011, the New York State Legislature issued a resolution, “Congratulating Courtney Clough Winn Jr. as a distinguished citizen of Oswego County, New York”; in addition to noting his military service and involvement in the town government, it stated, “[He] is a life member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7325, American Legion Post 858, the Forty and Eight, Sportsman Club and the Lions Club; he received the 1993 Tug Hill Sage Award from the Tug Hill Commission.”

**Perkins Creek**, South Carolina  
(Review List 449)

Mouth: 34.842702, -82.094189 / Source: 34.85768, -82.12828

Local government	Spartanburg County Council	Support
State Names Authority	South Carolina	No objection
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

This proposal is to apply the new commemorative name Perkins Creek to an unnamed 2.9-mile-long tributary of Bens Creek in Spartanburg County. The proponent reports that the name would commemorate her grandfather, John Henry Perkins (1901-1966), who approximately 80 years ago acquired 44 acres along the lower half of the stream. He farmed the land, growing oats, wheat, corn, and cotton, as well as a large vegetable garden.

Mr. Perkins and his family helped dig a pond along the stream, and he also helped build the first bridge over the stream on Greenpond Road. The property is still owned by the Perkins family.

**Brevelle Lake**, Texas  
(Review List 442)

33.430138, -94.885174

Local government	Red River County Judge	Support
State Names Authority	Texas	Support
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

The new name Brevelle Lake is proposed for an unnamed one-acre lake in Red River County. The name would commemorate Jean Baptiste Brevelle (1674-1754), who was born in Paris, France, and was an early explorer of the area; his name is also spelled Brevel. He operated out of Fort St.



Jean Baptiste des Natchitoches in present-day Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana, and married a woman from the Caddos known as Anne of the Caddos or Anne des Caddo; or possibly Marie des Cadeaux. The proponent reports that Brevelle explored much of northeast Texas and southeast Oklahoma and mapped the Red River basin and areas under Caddo control. Online documents report that Brevelle was stationed at the Poste des Cadodaquious in present-day Bowie County, Texas along the Red River.

Jean Baptiste Brevelle’s son Jean Baptiste Brevelle, Jr. was also an explorer associated with Poste des Cadodaquious and may be the source of the name Isle Brevelle and Bayou Brevelle in Natchitoches Parish.

The proponent’s last name is Brevelle, and a search of online property records shows that he owns the property on which the lake is located. There is no evidence that the intended honoree had any direct association with the lake in question.

Change Grass Lake (FID 1523607) to Nathaniel Sargent Lake, Washington  
(Review List 451)

<https://edits.nationalmap.gov/apps/gaz-domestic/public/summary/1523607>

Local government	Mason County Commissioners	Support *
State Names Authority	Washington	Support
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response
Other	U.S. Representative Derek Kilmer	Support*
	Resident	Support*

\* provided to or solicited by SNA

This proposal is to change the name of Grass Lake, near Tahuya in Mason County, to Nathaniel Sargent Lake. The new name would commemorate Nathaniel Sargent (1863-1954) who was “a well-known and well-liked Black homesteader, writer, artist, and justice of the peace” in the Seabeck-Crosby area, about 15 miles north-northeast of Grass Lake.

The proponents do not object to the existing name but wish to recognize the regional Black community because the lake had formerly been called Negro Slough and N \_\_\_\_\_ r Slough. They also report that the change would be “corrective/restorative history to honor a black pioneer who didn’t receive the recognition he deserved during his lifetime.”

According to a [digital exhibit from the Kitsap History Museum](#) on Black Trailblazers of Kitsap County:

Nathaniel J. Sargent was known as “Nat” to his friends. He was born into slavery and after emancipation was adopted by a white family in the north. They sent him to the University of Illinois where he graduated, then came west with his family to Oregon.

Because Oregon laws forbade Negroes, he came to Kitsap County where he earned a living working in the woods as a logger. He homesteaded in Crosby [approximately 15 miles north-northeast of Grass Lake] after his arrival in 1882, and as settlers started arriving, he worked as a handyman alongside the homesteaders, building their homes, starting their orchards, butchering, harvesting. He was their friend although he never “imposed” and was often an invited guest. . . .

He returned to his home in the East one year to seek a bride, but returned home empty-handed. He filled his lonely hours by writing poetry (which was published) and oil painting. Until four years before his death, he would walk over the hills to Bremerton [~22 miles northeast of Grass Lake] and back again in one day. In 1894, he was elected Justice of the Peace at Seabeck. He also donated land for a school in the Seabeck-Crosby area.

Nathaniel Sargent died in 1954. Everyone from Crosby showed up for his funeral. . . .

The former names of the lake (potentially a misapplication of the “slough” names) may have been a reference to Rodney White (q.v.), a Black man who homesteaded the land around the lake and the adjacent swamp.

Federal maps labeled the slough as N\_\_\_\_\_r Slough as early as 1943; however, on a 1952 map the name was transferred to the lake, and the slough was unnamed. In 1970, the name became Negro Slough, a result of the 1963 Secretary of the Interior directive to replace “n\_\_\_\_\_r” with “negro” when maps were reprinted. A 1985 USGS map labeled the lake as Grass Lake, presumably based on local use recorded during field work; the name was added to GNIS in 1992 citing this 1985 map. None of these names have been the subject of BGN review or a BGN decision.

State sources and commercial maps have variously labeled each waterbody with the names Grass Lake, N\_\_\_\_\_r Slough, and Negro Slough, resulting in much confusion.



*Proposed names in blue; current official names are shown on the USGS basemap*



*Selected Federal sources (left) and local private and State sources (right) showing the various names applied to the two waterbodies*

The new proposals for Nathaniel Sargent Lake and Rodney White Slough (q.v.) were submitted to the Washington Committee on Geographic Names (WCGN) by the Living Arts Cultural

Heritage Project, in an effort to reflect the Black history of the local community and of the larger Great Peninsula region (locally called Kitsap Peninsula), as well as to address the former official and unofficial names of these features.

Historical records show that Rodney White homesteaded on the land around the lake and swamp, while Nathaniel Sargent homesteaded about 15 miles away in Kitsap County.

The Chair of the WCGN reported that the full names of both individuals should be used in the feature names:

The case of Rodney White should be clear to BGN: naming something “White Slough” to commemorate a Black man would be nonsensical. In the case of Nathaniel Sargent Lake, the justification is . . . the need to make it clear who is being commemorated. I think if we were to shorten one of them, this would be the one, but given that the proponent wanted to advance the full name on Rodney White Slough, I think everyone [on the WCGN] felt it was useful to maintain the parallel construction.

An [August 4, 2022 Kitsap Sun article](#) erroneously reported that in 1992, the BGN had established Grass Lake as a new name for the slough, adding that “the entry in its database notes the area was known by the previous name of ‘Negro Slough.’” [Negro Slough is recorded as a variant name.]

The February 7, 2023 minutes of the Washington Board of Natural Resources (which formalizes the recommendations of the WCGN) reported:

Two names are proposed for areas in Mason County that were previously considered during a similar renaming process intended to remove names derogatory towards Black people. The federal government undertook a similar process [sic] and submitted names that did not reference Black people, which represented an erasure of the community's history. To rectify that situation, community members working with the Living Arts Cultural Heritage Project in Poulsbo took advantage of the current renaming process to recommend names reflective of the area’s Black history. The committee recommends replacing the names of two bodies of water with the names of the actual Black pioneers. The names proposals include Rodney White Slough and Nathaniel Sargent Lake both located in Mason County. Both gentlemen were early pioneers in Mason County and were residents in those locations.

Neither the Department of the Interior nor the BGN has ever conducted a renaming process similar to the recent S.O. 3404 process; that is, there was no effort to rename all features that contained the word “negro” or “n\_\_\_\_r”; in 1963, the Secretary of the Interior instructed USGS to replace “n\_\_\_\_” with “negro” during the normal map revision cycle. Similarly, there was no Federal “erasure of the Kitsap Peninsula’s Black history” when the name Grass Lake came into use. The latter name dates back to at least 1955 and was used in a 1961 Washington State document (which also included the name “N\_\_\_\_r Lake” for the lake). In addition, there is no evidence that Nathaniel Sargent lived at or near the features, but resided in Kitsap County about 15 miles to the north.

**Rodney White Slough, Washington**

## (Review List 451)

47.3981717, -123.052788

Local government	Mason County Commissioners	Support *
State Names Authority	Washington	Support
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response
Other	U.S. Representative Derek Kilmer	Support*
	Resident	Support*

\* provided to or solicited by SNA

This proposal is to apply the new name Rodney White Slough to an unnamed swamp in Mason County near Tahuya. The name would commemorate Rodney White (1861-1913), a Black farmer, rancher, and road builder whose homestead included the swamp. The proponents report that the name is proposed for “corrective history: reconciliation and healing of oppressive and harmful history that African Americans endured during that period [Rodney White’s lifetime].” The proposal included an [August 4, 2022 Kitsap Sun article](#) which reported:

Born into slavery in Missouri, White went on to develop his own ranch and farm in Mason County while cutting roads through the peninsula that remain in use today. . . .

White arrived in the area in 1890 on the steamer *Delta* and survived a capsizing skiff that ferried six Black men to the shore where they hoped to homestead. Two men died and White appears to be the only survivor that remained in the area.

Atop a high-wheeled wagon, White plowed and rode the hinterlands of the Tahuya River Valley, pushing a team of oxen to build the road to Dewatto [3.5 miles northwest of the swamp] and create a ranch and homestead out of the untamed wilderness from the time after the boat accident to his death in 1913.

With “a voice like a foghorn,” he’d command his livestock, especially his two leading donkeys. . . . After White’s death, the animals were transported to the Woodland Park Zoo in Seattle to live out their days. . . .

White came to Tahuya seeking acreage under the federal Homestead Act, passed during the Civil War with the aim of distributing western lands. His “four forties,” the nickname for the total of 160 acres, were divided between the area west of Maggie Lake and the Tahuya River valley. . . .

White built a barn, cabin, root cellar and chicken coop out of logs and farmed an orchard of fruits that included apples, prunes, pears and peaches. . . .

There were great challenges to farming in the 19th and early 20th centuries on the timber-covered Tahuya River valley. Logged or not, the stumps made it next to impossible to plant fields. So sometimes farmers, like White, would empty ponds and small lakes with the aim of farming their basins.

[It is] believed that was how White shaped the land in the area that became known as the slur-named slough.”

#### IV. Revised Decisions

Change **Eagle Island** (FID 984468) (BGN 1968) to **Eagles Island**, North Carolina  
(Review List 447)

<https://edits.nationalmap.gov/apps/gaz-domestic/public/summary/984468>

Local government	Belville Town Commissioners [Brunswick Co.]	Support
	Leland Town Council [Brunswick Co.]	No objection
	Brunswick County Commissioners	No response
	New Hanover County Commissioners	No response
State Names Authority	North Carolina	Support
Federal	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration	No opinion
	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	No objection
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

This proposal is to correct the name of Eagle Island (BGN 1968) to the locally used name Eagles Island. The island is located between the Cape Fear River and the Brunswick River, west of Wilmington in Brunswick County and New Hanover County. Parts of the island are within the Town of Leland and the Town of Belville, and the land is owned by many parties including the North Carolina State Ports Authority, the North Carolina Department of Transportation, and the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) manages part of the island as a dredge spoil deposit.

A National Geographic Society cartographer notified BGN staff about the discrepancy between the official name and the local name, and BGN staff initiated the proposal, citing overwhelming local and published use of the name Eagles Island. The proposal also clarifies that the island was named for an individual with the surname Eagles rather than the bird.

Office of Coast Survey charts published in 1856 and 1933 applied the name Eagle’s Island. Beginning in 1938, they showed Eagle Island. Army Map Service (AMS) maps from 1942 to 1965 used the name Eagles Island.



In 1960, the U.S Coast and Geodetic Survey (CGS) submitted a proposal to the BGN to make official the name used on its charts (Eagle Island). They noted that although most other publications used the plural form, “a CGS field party in 1933, after discussing the existing conflict in spelling, recommended continued use of Eagle Island on the charts.” The summary prepared by BGN staff at the time stated, “Unless it can be shown that this is a family name, the singular form would seem more correct.” The BGN approved Eagle Island in 1968.

The first USGS map of the area was published after the decision, so the name has always appeared as Eagle Island. Following the BGN decision, Army Map Service maps also used the name Eagle Island.

Current USACE documents from the Wilmington District use Eagle Island, as does the current North Carolina Department of Transportation map of Brunswick County. Most online use is for Eagles Island, with some instances of Eagle’s Island (sometimes in the same source) or Eagle Island.

An organization called Renaissance Wilmington Foundation refers to Eagles Island on its website, with Eagle Island shown on the accompanying map; the Audubon Society uses the name Eagles Island; and an article posted by WHQR in January 2022 noted “We know that Eagles Island was developed for industrial use by the second quarter of the 19th century. . . .” Other local organizations that use Eagles Island include [Preserve Eagles Island](#) and the [Eagles Island Coalition](#), as well as a number of local kayaking and adventure tour operators. In 2011, the New Hanover County Soil and Water Conservation District published a report “Eagles Island: History of a Landscape.”

The name Eagle Island is used by a local fruit and seafood company and a riverboat tour company. A 2008 report on the dredging of Wilmington Harbor, under contract to USACE, referenced the Eagle Island Confined Disposal Facility.

The following is an incomplete list of names and spellings used historically:

- Cranes Island - in part and Longs Island - in part
  - Ogilby *A New Discription of Carolina* [map], 1672
  - Gascoyne, *A New Map of the Country of Carolina*, 1682
  - Lea, *A New Map of Carolina*, 1695
  - Lawson, *A Map for the Lords Proprietors of Carolina in America*, 1709
- Eagle Island
  - James and Brown, *Map of New Hanover County*, 1869
  - War Department Civil War maps, 1895
  - U.S. Bureau of Soils New Hanover County map, 1906
- Eagles Island
  - Colton maps, 1863, 1886
  - U.S. Bureau of Soils Brunswick County map, 1937
  - NC Highway and Public Works Commission county maps, 1938, 1967
  - Federal Writers’ Project, 1939

- Eagle's Island
  - The Vestry Act of 1754
  - Laws of North Carolina, 1765
  - "Plan of the Town of Willmington [sic] in New Hanover County", 1769
  - Supreme Court of North Carolina, 1859
  - USACE map, "Eastern portion of the Military Department of North Carolina", 1862
  - Gilmer Civil War Maps, 1863, 1864
- Eagles' Island
  - Office of Coast Survey Report to Congress, 1854
  - Moss, *Map of New Hanover County*, ca 1886
  - Sprunt, *Chronicles of the Cape Fear River 1660-1916*, 1916

The 1982 *The North Carolina Gazetteer* (Powell) reported that Eagles Island is "a group of swampy islands in W New Hanover County between Cape Fear and Brunswick Rivers opposite Wilmington. Named for Joseph and Richard Eagle [sic], eighteenth-century settlers in the vicinity . . ." Powell also noted that Ogilby's 1671 map had labeled the two parts of the island as Cranes Island and Longs Island.

The island was named for Richard Eagles, a British plantation owner who in 1737 was granted land on a large part of the island. A history of Eagles and his descendants is given in the work by Claude V. Jackson, III, "[The Cape Fear — Northeast Cape Fear Rivers Comprehensive Study](#)," published by the North Carolina Division of Archives and History and USACE:

The Forks [a plantation on Eagles Island] was first owned by Richard Eagles Sr., one of the first settlers to come to the Wilmington vicinity about 1725. [He] was originally from Bristol in England but had come to the lower Cape Fear from Charles Town (Charleston), where he had been a merchant and planter. On February 17, 1737, King George II granted Richard Eagles the major portion of a 'big island' across the Cape Fear River from the small village of Newton (later called Wilmington). On January 12, 1738, John Watson of Newton deeded 540 acres at The Forks to Richard Eagles, adding more acreage to his original grant . . .

At his death by about 1758, Richard Eagles Sr. left all of his 'lands, cattle, horses, and slaves . . .' to Richard Eagles Jr. To Thomas Eagleson, Richard Sr. left £100 and a plantation called 'Cowans.' To his son Richard Eagles Jr., he bequeathed his Wilmington lots and unspecified plantation lands, along with seventy-three slaves and a large quantity of plantation implements and household furnishings . . .

## V. **New Names agreed to by all interested parties**

**Brooklyn Creek**, North Carolina  
(Review List 449)

Mouth: 35.3287, -82.45607 / Source: 35.3196, -82.46465



Local government	Henderson County Commission	No objection
State Names Authority	North Carolina	Support
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

The new name Brooklyn Creek is proposed for an unnamed 0.9-mile-long tributary of Mud Creek in the City of Hendersonville in Henderson County. The name is proposed by RiverLink (“a non-profit organization focused on the environmental and economic vitality of the French Broad River watershed”) as part of their ongoing “Name that Creek” initiative. RiverLink sponsors efforts for communities to suggest and vote on new names.

The name Brooklyn Creek refers to the historic African American community known as Brooklyn. The stream flowed by the community and reportedly was a place where residents played and relaxed. The name Brooklyn may have referred to this stream. By the 1970s, due to “urban renewal” programs to make space for the new Green Meadows community, the community was mostly demolished. RiverLink states, “By naming the stream Brooklyn Creek, the history of a displaced community and their connection to the waterway can be honored and shared.”

**Lower Vernal Falls and Upper Vernal Falls, North Carolina**  
(Nantahala National Forest)  
(Review List 444)

Lower Vernal Falls: 35.262778, -82.971111

Upper Vernal Falls: 35.263333, -82.972222

Local government	Jackson County Commissioners	No response
State Names Authority	North Carolina	Support
Federal	U.S. Forest Service	No objection
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

The new names Lower Vernal Falls and Upper Vernal Falls are proposed for a pair of unnamed falls located along an unnamed tributary of Wolf Creek in Jackson County. The falls are located west of Wolf Mountain in Nantahala National Forest. The names refer to spring plant growth around the falls.

**Paw Paw Branch, North Carolina**  
(Review List 448)

Mouth: 35.787948, -78.943667 / Source: 35.789189, -78.940552

Local government	Chatham County Commissioners	No response
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State Names Authority	North Carolina	No opinion
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

The new name Paw Paw Branch is proposed for an unnamed 0.2-mile-long tributary of Rocky Ford Branch in Chatham County near B. Everett Jordan Lake. The stream heads on the proponent’s property but according to county land records is primarily on land owned by Fort Mill Investments LLC.

The proponent describes the stream as “Wet most of the year but fed by runoff along its entire length,” adding that it is home to a variety of wildlife and plants. Further, “Frogs are especially fond of the branch, singing their catcalls into the night after each summer shower. Having a name will help protect the waterway from being erased by development and justify additional riparian buffers around it. This will help keep flooding under control and preserve the diversity of wildlife nearby.”

When asked to clarify the meaning of the name and if the name referred to a specific pet cat, he replied “It’s not a reference to a specific animal. The creek is in a partly rural, partly suburban neighborhood with lots of cats and dogs inside, and coyotes, deer, opossums, raccoons, and foxes outside. All the animals outside are threatened by encroaching development, as is our clean drinking water. The name is evocative of all our four-legged friends in the area.”

Names currently recorded in GNIS that contain “Paw Paw,” “Pawpaw,” or variations presumably refer to the pawpaw tree, common throughout the central-eastern United States. These place names fall within or near the tree’s range.

The North Carolina Board on Geographic names reported that they are “neutral on this recommendation . . . [and we] consider it nonsensical.”

**OK Run**, Ohio  
(Review List 451)

Mouth: 40.01302, -80.92892 / Source: 40.01134, -80.95445

Local government	Smith Township Trustees	Support
	Belmont County Commissioners	Support
State Names Authority	Ohio	No response
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

The new name OK Run is proposed for a 1.85-mile-long tributary of McMahan Creek in Smith Township in Belmont County. The proponent, a member of the Friends of Hutchinson Run, states that the name was chosen because the downstream section of the stream flows alongside OK Road. She adds that applying an official name is important “in the context of watershed

restoration and clean-up efforts, especially for researchers, environmentalists, and other stakeholders who are interested in studying or working on restoration efforts in the area.” Furthermore, “Naming the tributary can also help engage the local community in watershed clean-up and restoration efforts . . . [and] a named tributary can also serve as a valuable educational tool for school and other organizations. By learning about the tributary, its aquatic life and unique characteristics, people can gain a better understanding of the importance of protecting our water resources.”

The proponent conducted additional research into the name and reports that “OK Road was dedicated in 1821” and was named “from an old one-room schoolhouse named ‘OK School.’” She provided a copy of a map showing the locations of 226 schoolhouses that operated throughout the county beginning in the late 1700s (*Yesterday’s Schools*; Marguerite Davern, 1976). The Belmont County Historical Museum and Belmont County Engineer Office added that “The O.K. school was built around 1815 on McKelvey land. Albert McKelvey named the O.K. school, meaning “all right.”

**Twin Top Peak**, Pennsylvania  
(Susquehannock State Forest)  
(Review List 451)

41.582088, -77.810939

Local government	Abbott Township Supervisors	No response
	Potter County Commissioners	Support
State Names Authority	Pennsylvania	Support
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response
Other	Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources	Support

The new name Twin Top Peak is proposed for a 2,101-foot summit in Susquehannock State Forest in Abbott Township in Potter County. The name refers to the summit’s double peak.

The proponent originally proposed Stony Peak and Camel Hump Knob for two summits. In March 2023, the BGN approved the former name. The proponent hikes in the area and found the two summits that had been logged within the last five years and which “provide rare 360-degree views of Potter County’s mountainous plateau” (<https://myhikes.org/trails/stony-peak-twin-top-peak>). He adds, “My hope is that by naming some currently unnamed natural features in Potter and Tioga county [sic], Pennsylvania, it might help drive some outdoor-related tourism like hiking and backpacking to these places.”

The Pennsylvania Geographic Names Committee asked for input from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), which manages Susquehannock State Forest. The committee reported “DCNR does not think camel hump knob is really

appropriate. They have suggested Twin Top Peak. We concur that of the four they suggested, this would be best.” Neither DCNR nor the committee wished to formally propose the name, but the proponent agreed to amend his proposal.

Neither Abbott Township nor Potter County responded to requests for input on the previous proposal for Camel Hump Knob.

**Bumblebee Brook**, Vermont

(Review List 451)

Mouth: 44.37192, -73.21542 / Source: 44.3805, -73.20418

Local government	Shelburne Town Selectboard	Support
State Names Authority	Vermont	Support
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

The new name Bumblebee Brook is proposed for a one-mile-long tributary of the La Platte River in the Town of Shelburne in Chittenden County. The stream flows in part through land managed by the Town of Shelburne.

The Vermont Board of Libraries (BOL), which serves as the Vermont State Names Authority, submitted the proposal to the BGN with its support. Vermont law requires that proponents submit a name to the BOL with a petition of at least 25 supporters.

The proponent states, “a new trail [that crosses the stream] now has frequent hikers . . . so it seems that it deserves a name despite its relatively small size.” The name was selected “to honor a local fauna, [and] since the alliterative sound Bumblebee Brook is as delightful as the brook itself.” The proponent noted that there are seventeen species of bumblebees found in Vermont.