

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

Eight Hundred and Sixtieth Meeting

January 11, 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)
Wendi-Starr Brown	Department of the Interior (Bureau of Indian Affairs)
Jessica Campbell	Department of the Interior (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)
Thad Ellerbe	Department of Commerce (Office of Coast Survey)
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)
Christopher 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)
Patrick Mahoney	Department of the Interior (Bureau of Land Management)
Veronica Ranieri	Library of Congress
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 and Energy Management)
Timothy St. Onge	Library of Congress (Chair)
Michael Tischler	Department of the Interior (U.S. Geological Survey) (Vice Chair)
Tara Wallace	Department of Commerce (Office of Coast Survey)
Marilyn Withers	Department of Defense (National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency)

Ex-Officio

Robert Glover, Executive Secretary, U.S. Board on Geographic Names / Domestic Names (Acting)

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

Staff

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

Guests

Janet Agin, Smithsonian Institution

Gina Anderson, U.S. Geological Survey Office of Communications and Publishing
Apple Maps observers
Alex Fries, National Park Service
Foreign Names Committee observers
Ken Gallagher, New Hampshire Board on Geographic Names
National Geographic Society observers
Jesse Nett, U.S. Forest Service
Jan Neish, Idaho State Journal
Deb Nordeen, National Park Service
Trent Palmer, Department of State
Brigitta Urban-Mathieux, U.S. Geological Survey
Wendy Hawley, Bureau of the Census

1. Opening

Chair St. Onge opened Meeting 860 of the Domestic Names Committee (DNC) at 9:33 a.m. He noted that motions would pass by a simple majority of votes. Staff conducted a roll call of members and staff.

Anderson reminded attendees of the USGS media policy and asked any attendees from the media to identify themselves for the record.

Members were invited 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. Review and Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as submitted.

3. Minutes of Meeting 859

The minutes of Meeting 859, held November 9, 2023, were approved as submitted.

4. Reports

4.1 BGN Chairman (Tischler)

There was no written report.

Quarterly Meeting 291 of the Full Board will take place (virtually) on Tuesday, January 16 at 1:00 p.m.

USGS continues to conduct interviews for the permanent Executive Secretary for Domestic Names position. Tischler extends his thanks to those who have served on details in the position.

Late last year, during the review of the Department of the Interior appropriations bill, an amendment was introduced that would have zeroed out funding for the BGN. Following some debate, the amendment passed by a voice vote but was ultimately defeated on a written vote. This highlights the need for increased education regarding the role of the BGN.

Following the DNC's recent approval of a name for a summit in Arkansas, Representative Bruce Westerman (Chair of the House Committee on Natural Resources) contacted the BGN Chair to inquire about the review process and to question why his office was not made aware of the proposal. This resulted in some discussions within USGS as to whether and how Members of Congress might be made aware of the BGN's activities.

On December 11, Tischler briefed the new (acting) Department of the Interior Assistant Secretary for Water and Science on the roles and responsibilities of the BGN.

The Federal Advisory Committee (FAC) on Reconciliation in Place Names, established in response to Secretary's Order 3405, is comprised of a number of subcommittees. Tischler, Glover, and staff were invited to participate in the January 5 meeting of the Subcommittee on Processes and Principles to further acquaint FAC members with existing BGN processes. More discussions are expected.

It was reported that a few member appointment letters for the 2023-2025 term are still outstanding; Tischler asked members to check on the status within their departments.

The USGS National Map liaison team is preparing a series of training videos, one of which will provide instructions on the use of GNIS.

4.2 Executive Secretary for Domestic Names (Glover)

There was no written report. Glover reported that his detail as acting Executive Secretary for Domestic Names will conclude on January 19. He thanked the BGN staff for their support in helping him to learn about the BGN and its processes. He regretted that he had little interaction with the GNIS support team.

Once the Executive Secretary is in place, the staff and members expect to continue the revision of the *Principles, Policies, and Procedures* (PPP) document.

4.3 Executive Secretary for Foreign Names (Hoffman)

There was no written report.

In late 2023, members of the FNC participated in a virtual meeting with their counterparts at the British Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (PCGN). Plans are underway for an in-person meeting with PCGN in November at NGA Washington (Springfield, Virginia). The analyst exchange program with PCGN has been restarted.

Foreign Names Committee Meeting 417 is scheduled for March 12.

4.4 Special Committee on Communications (Ellerbe)

See attached report. Ellerbe noted that the report includes a link to the latest bulletin of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN). He attended a November 14 meeting of the U.S.-Canada Division, during which plans for the next virtual summit with Canada were discussed.

4.5 Staff (Runyon)

See attached report. It lists all proposals received during the reporting period. The staff questioned whether the DNC wished to consider the proposal for Paltrow Lake (Utah), noting that the name could be construed to refer to a living person. The members asked that staff share a copy of the application and they will respond via email.

Quarterly Review List 454 is underway and will be distributed soon.

4.6 GNIS and Data Compilation Program (Runyon for Decker)

There was no written report. On Decker's behalf, Runyon reported that updated Antarctic names files are ready for download.

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

There was no written report. The committee will not be meeting following this meeting but will resume on February 8.

5. Docket

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

Review List 450

Feather Lake, Alaska

A motion was made and seconded to defer a vote to allow time for DNC staff to contact the Chickaloon Native Village and to clarify their recommendation to the Alaska State Names

Authority. The staff was also instructed to provide information to the Village regarding submitting a counterproposal if it wishes to do so.

Vote: 19 in favor
0 against
0 abstentions

Review List 451

Change **Mount Washington** (FID [871352](#)) to **Agiocochook**, New Hampshire (White Mountains National Forest / Appalachian National Scenic Trail / Mount Washington State Park)

A motion was made and seconded not to approve the change, citing local and State opposition, as well as a reluctance to change a longstanding name, and in deference to the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), which noted a lack of any input from Abenaki-speaking federally recognized Tribes.

The DNC thanked the staff for the extensive writeup, and recognized the proponent's concerns regarding the existing name and those of the State agencies that opposed the change. Kanalley noted that the USFS and the U.S. Department of Agriculture are supportive of efforts to restore native names when there is active engagement from Tribes that are affected by and associated with the geographic feature.

Hammond noted that several Abenaki words have been applied to the summit and that the USFS had done due diligence in its efforts to contact Tribes. Brown reported that she had asked a member of the Penobscot Tribe about use of the Abenaki name and was told they defer to the Odanak in Canada on such matters.

It was noted that the proposed name is already recorded in GNIS as a variant name, and as such, can be used in Federal products, provided it appears in conjunction with the official name.

Vote: 18 in favor
0 against
2 abstentions

Review List 452

Pine Creek, Georgia (FID 2831415)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the name.

Vote: 19 in favor
1 against
0 abstentions

The vote against the motion was made because the name is not distinct to this feature; there are pine trees throughout Georgia. In addition, both the County Commissioners and the Georgia State Names Authority stated “no opinion,” so “there is no reason for the BGN to approve the name.”

Change **Swastika Lake** (FID [1595236](#)) to **Knight Lake**, Wyoming (Medicine Bow-Routt National Forest)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the change. Members were sympathetic to the non-offensive use of the swastika symbol in many religions and cultures worldwide, but noted its present-day negative connotation.

Vote: 20 in favor
0 against
0 abstentions

Review List 453

Petes Peak, Idaho (FID 2831416)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the name.

Vote: 20 in favor
0 against
0 abstentions

McKinley Creek, Kentucky (FID 2831417)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the name.

Vote: 20 in favor
0 against
0 abstentions

Change **Brown Island** (BGN 1971, 2012) (FID [614648](#)) to **Crowninshield Island**, Massachusetts

A motion was made and seconded to approve the change.

Vote: 18 in favor
2 against
0 abstentions

The votes against the motion cited a reluctance to change a longstanding name.

One member left the meeting, and one member joined.

Change **Aanikegamaa Lake** (BGN/Secretarial Decision 2022) (FID [638682](#)) to **Swan Lake**, Michigan

A motion was made and seconded not to approve the change, in support of retaining the name that is endorsed by the Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians.

Vote: 10 in favor
7 against
3 abstentions

It was noted that the name "Aanikegamaa" was not submitted by a Tribe during the S.O. 3404 process, but was chosen by the Derogatory Geographic Names Task Force. Nonetheless, it is now the official name for Federal use, and the DNC appreciates that the Lac Vieux Desert Band had responded to the review list notice. To change the name would contradict the wishes of a federally recognized Tribe.

The votes against the motion cited the local and State support for the change.

One member left the meeting.

Fox-Hunter Bay, Minnesota

A motion was made and seconded to approve the name.

Vote: 17 in favor
0 against
2 abstentions

6. Other Business

Staff reminded the DNC that it has received a new proposal to apply the name Druid Hill to a geographic feature in DeKalb County, Georgia. In 2019 the DNC rejected a proposal to apply the name to a summit, citing a lack of county and State support and possible confusion with other features in the area with similar names. The new proposal has been submitted by a different individual and the application refers to a slope rather than a summit, but that same parcel of land is involved. The members reviewed the new request, determined there is no new evidence, and recommended that the staff inform the proponent that it did not wish to consider the new proposal.

7. Closing

The meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m. The next meeting of the DNC is scheduled to be held on February 8, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. Eastern Time.

(signed)

Robert Glover
Executive Secretary (Acting)
Domestic Names Committee

APPROVED
(signed)

Timothy St. Onge, Chair
Domestic Names Committee

Special Committee on Communications Report

The Chair (Thad Ellerbe) attended the UNGEGN Bureau and Divisional Meeting on November 14, 2023. The main items covered were an update on the results of the UNGEGN 2023 Session evaluation summary. Attendees were also encouraged to share themes to be considered for future UNGEGN bulletins. During the meeting, participants identified the following three topics of interest: 1) Standardization of minority names; 2) Micro-toponyms; and 3) the use of AI in geographical names. Presentations were given on the World Geographical Names Database and presentations by the Baltic and Latin American divisions on their operations and work being done. I can provide a link if requested. Future meeting times were also set. Here is a link to the latest UNGEGN bulletin:

https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/pubs/Bulletin/UNGEGN_bulletin_no.66.pdf

Steve Westley and I meeting in the third week of January to plan for the next virtual summit.

Monthly reminders/ updates:

Jennifer Runyon (research staff USGS) was contacted by the Pima County Genealogy Society to see if someone could give a presentation on geographic names at one of their meetings in 2024 via Zoom. They are looking for a 45 min to 1 hour presentation. If you are interested in this, please let me know. We have slides from a few presentations collected on the Collaboration Site that could be helpful with this.

- The Special Committee on Communications has not met since the last report.

- I am still compiling submissions for Annual Reports. I will give a status update when I have rough drafts ready. This is taking longer than the time I have budgeted for it.

- We are asking that anyone who has a slide deck for presentations regarding the BGN and is willing to share, please send them to me via email. I will upload them to the BGN Collaboration Site under Documents > Briefing Material. We have already gotten a couple of submissions.

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## Staff Report

The DNC meeting scheduled for December 14 was canceled due to a lack of proposals ready for a decision.

Since the DNC's last meeting on November 9, the BGN has received 41 new name and name change proposals:

- Uypi Creek, CA (counter proposal to Boomer Creek, Review List 452)
- Spring Creek Reservoir, CO (new name)

- Bell Creek, Ohio (new name, refers to a school bell found in the creek; proponent's surname and business name are Bell)
  - Nanvarpak, AK (make official Native name)
  - Loch Heed Martin, FL (new name, on Lockheed Martin property)
  - Abbey Brook, CT (new name)
  - Anna Run, PA (counter proposal to Glacier Run, Review List 451)
  - Tabeguacha Ute Peak, CO (counter proposals to Frustum Peak [Review List 442], Lawrence Peak; name changes for Kit Carson Mountain)
  - Gibson Meadow, MT (new commemorative name)
  - Curran Canyon, Curran Creek, CA (name change for Kern Canyon, new name, respectively); received FOIA request for details on Kern Canyon.
  - Lake Oolenoy, SC (make official name used by State Parks)
  - 14 Cheltenham Township, PA stream names
  - Canvasback Island, Moonlight Island, Powrie Island, Steamboat Island, IL (new names from USACE Upper Mississippi River Restoration Program)
  - North Elbow Fork, UT (name change for Elbow Fork)
  - Big Creek, Ohio (new name)
  - Lost Sheepherder Gulch, CO (counterproposal to Jose Belardi Gulch, name change proposal for Dead Mexican Gulch (Review List 447); Jose Belardi Gulch withdrawn by proponent)
  - Tëmakwehane, Maryland (new name)
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- Rejected Scherder Bayou, MS; violates Commemorative Names Policy
  - Rejected Guth Lake, IL; violates Commemorative Names Policy
  - Rejected Ward Knob, NC; violates Commemorative Names Policy
  - Received and rejected proposal to name a stream in Clarion County, PA for present-day property owners
  - Toruk Makto, AZ; new name for summit on Gila River Indian Reservation, directed proponent to work with Tribe's leadership; name references character from the 2009 movie *Avatar*
  - Electric Storm Creek, UT; requested Wilderness Names Policy justification
  - Lake Barbara, FL; proponent states "I would like to add the name to this lake as a surprise gift to my friend"; requested additional biographical details
- 
- Rename Kingston Peak, San Bernardino County, CA to Carolingian Peak. The proponent's justification is "Changesmagne [sic] was the emperor of the Frankish empire, also know [sic] as the Carolingian empire, he was a strong, fearless, leader, who ran his kindom [sic] of great strength and power. The Carolingian empire was very successful." Proponent does not offer reason why the current name should be changed; research shows the peak was named by a member of Fremont's second expedition for the community of Kingston in New York.

The staff also responded to inquiries/correspondence:

- Update with proponent, local governments on Cathys Creek, NC-SC proposal
- Naming unnamed stream in Alaska, directed to Alaska BGN website
- Proponent re: local input for Ais River, FL proposal (the proponent also commented that the name of nearby Negro Cut “should not be on any document from the federal Government.” He was advised to submit a name change proposal to the BGN).
- Received Summit County, CO opposition to Dylan Lake (Review List 453); county coordinated with County Director of Open Space
- Review of Cherokee Creek, SC proposal with DOD member (Review List 452); concerns regarding commercial names policy and lack of Tribal input; shared with county government, South Carolina State Names Authority, U.S. Forest Service
- Review of pending cases with Missouri Board on Geographic Names
- Pending proposal to rename Kemp Lake to Cady Lake, MI
- Availability of information and comments related to several high-profile cases
- Proponent re: status of Gray Rock Creek, PA; follow up with Cheltenham Township; also township’s efforts to name 14 additional streams
- Process for naming a peak on inquirer’s property for deceased daughter
- Local creek naming project, Oneonta, NY
- Communication with Indiana State Names Authority re: local contacts for Bird Hollow Lake
- Update to Utah Names Committee on Caliche Peak, new name proposal
- Stream naming process, Kennett Township, PA
- Received local opposition to renaming Ward Pond, MA (no proposal submitted yet)
- Local and SNA outreach for McKinley Creek, KY
- New England Water Science Center inquiry re: history of BGN changes (2011) from Sq \_pan to Scopan for seven features in Maine
- Virginia Board on Geographic Names re: 19th century tract map showing “Walnut Branch” for proposed Augustine Run; county government asking to make Walnut Branch official
- Wisconsin SNA re: GNIS search tools; status of “phantom populated place” updates; prepared Map Blog showing 20 years of BGN decisions:  
<https://www.sco.wisc.edu/2023/11/30/wisconsin-toponyms/>
- Discussion with Virginia Board on Geographic Names, U.S. Forest Service regarding geographic extent of proposed name Hopkins Mountain
- Proponent of Lackhove Creek, DE (BGN 2023) re: when name might appear on Google Maps
- Status of Clingmans Dome, NC-TN name change proposal; none received
- Rec’d letters of support from Senator Mike Reese and State Representative Charles Owen for Koenck Coteau, LA; proposal on hold pending biographical details
- *Conway (NH) Daily Sun* re: status of Mount Washington name change
- Monocacy River Commission re: BGN 2015 approval of three tributary names; provided background material; commission considering submitting additional proposals
- Forest Service review of proposal to rename Dead Injun Creek, OR to Numu Creek; Burns Paiute Tribe prefers “Neme” spelling, proponent agreeable to amendment

- Carol Juneau, former Montana State Legislator, re: status of Sq \_\_\_ Creek (Fort Berthold Indian Reservation), ND name change (renamed Sept. 2022 to Sakakawea Creek).
- Process for renaming island in Massachusetts
- Naming of three falls in City of Rochester; discussed with City of Rochester historian
- Colorado Geographic Naming Advisory Board (CGNAB) member re: status of proposal to rename Chinamans Canyon to Toisan Canyon; CGNAB approved August 2023, but awaiting Governor's review
- Process for naming stream in PA
- Inquiry addressed to Secretary Haaland regarding the process for renaming the City of Fort Bragg, CA
- New Hampshire Commission on Native American Affairs and Squam Lakes Association supportive of renaming Eastman Cove, NH (name approved through S.O. 3404 effort) to Senskwa Cove

New case briefs are being prepared and the compilation of Quarterly Review List 454 is underway; it will be released in mid-January.

The BGN continues to receive input to the proposals to change the names of Mount Washington (on today's docket) and the Baker River in New Hampshire. The U.S. Forest Service and the Mount Washington Commission do not support the changes.

The staff participated on November 17 in a discussion with the Michigan State Names Authority regarding two proposals submitted to the BGN in response to S.O. 3404: 1) renaming of Sq \_\_\_ Lake to Aanikegamaa Lake (new proposal received from the PST Lake Association to change the name to Swan Lake; on today's docket); and 2) renaming of Sq \_\_\_ Beach to Mino-kwe jiiigibiik (new proposal from Powell Township Board for Burns Landing Beach). In the latter case, further research by the staff and correspondence with township officials suggests that there are two distinct beaches and so both names could be applied concurrently.

Staff attended (virtually) the three-day meeting of the Federal Advisory Committee (FAC) on Reconciliation in Place Names, held November 14-16 in Hawaii. Updates continue to be posted at the FAC's website: <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1892/advisory-committee-on-reconciliation-in-place-names.htm>. On January 5, Tischler, Shelton, Glover, and the staff participated in a meeting of the FAC's Subcommittee on Process and Principles to provide an overview of the BGN's existing (re) naming processes.

Staff participated in meetings of the Alaska Historical Commission (State Names Board) (November 16); Utah Geographic Names Committee (December 7); and the Washington Committee on Geographic Names (WCGN) (December 11).

At the Alaska Board meeting, the members voted to recommend disapproval of the proposal to rename Dago Frank Creek (Review List 440), citing local objections.

At its recent meeting, the WCGN considered and rejected a proposal to change the name of Hood Canal to Salish Fjord; the proponent believes the feature is more accurately a fjord and wished to recognize the Salish people of the area. The WCGN declined to move the proposal forward for final consideration, citing the widespread and longstanding use of the existing name and the need for considerably more public and Tribal engagement.

The staff met November 21 with the chair and staff of the Colorado Geographic Naming Advisory Board (CGNAB) and the proponent of the name Frustum Peak regarding the confusion surrounding the application of names related to the Kit Carson Mountain name change. The attendees reviewed maps of various peak, ridge, and range names in the area, as well as past BGN decisions. The *Valley Courier* (Alamosa, CO) inquired regarding the confusion; see <https://alamosanews.com/article/kit-carson-mountain-may-get-a-new-name> and <https://kdvr.com/news/local/kit-carson-mountain-could-have-its-named-change/>.

A subsequent article reported that the Town of Crestone Board of Trustees has recommended to Colorado Governor Jared Polis that the name be changed to Mount Crestone or Crestone Mountain (both names are mentioned): <https://alamosanews.com/article/kit-carson-peak-name-change-discussed-by-town-of-crestone-trustees>. Another, <https://alamosanews.com/article/submitting-comments-to-geographic-renaming-process-is-valued-and-confusing>, suggested that “public comment and suggested names and local comment [are] highly valued.”

To date, the BGN has received five emails from area residents asking that the locally used name Crestone Peak be made official; these individuals have been advised that Crestone Peak is already the name of another peak just to the southwest and part of the larger Crestone Peaks. One of the individuals added the comment, “Get it right this time and quit wasting ink & electrons trying to be ‘woke’, whatever that is.”

An individual with the surname Carson submitted a letter outlining the lifetime accomplishments of Kit Carson and to voice his concerns upon reading “the unfortunate news that your board is again exploring a name change for Kit Carson Peak [sic].”

Regarding the proposal to change the name of Mount Whitney, California to Tumanguya (Review List 453), the proponent added that in addition to wishing to recognize one of the native names for the summit, he also expressed concerns regarding the appropriateness of Josiah Whitney’s name for the feature. Staff met with representatives of the California Advisory Committee on Geographic Names (CACGN) to review the proposal and next steps.

Staff met with a representative of CACGN to review a newly received proposal to rename the unincorporated community of Kelseyville in Lake County to Konocti. The Big Valley Band of Pomo, the Robinson Rancheria, and the Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake Tribe have submitted support for the change. An organization named Save the Name of Kelseyville submitted strong opposition. The proponent inquired regarding the timeline for BGN review and decision.

Met with staff of Alaska Board on Geographic Names December 7 to review pending proposals.

The proposal to rename Red Horn Creek in Alaska to Fish Creek, AK (RL 443) was withdrawn by proponent.

The proposal to rename Middle Lake in Michigan to Vasa Lake, MI (RL 451) was withdrawn by proponent.

On December 1 staff met with the new Georgia State Names Authority to review roles and responsibilities and pending cases.

Staff prepared a slide listing current high visibility proposals for Tischler's briefing to the new DOI acting Assistant Secretary for Water and Science.

Representative Bruce Westerman (Arkansas) submitted a letter to regarding the BGN decision in September 2023 to apply the name Wahzhazhe Summit to the highest point in the Ozark Mountains. He learned of the new name via a press release issued by the Osage Nation, who were the proponents of the name (<https://www.osagenation-nsn.gov/news-events/news/ozark-national-forest-peak-named-wahzhazhe-summit>). Rep. Westerman inquired about the naming process and expressed a concern that his office was not contacted or made awareness of the issue. The Department of the Interior is preparing a response.

An article reported that Wyoming Senate President Ogden Driskill is supportive of efforts to retain the name Devils Tower: <https://cowboystatedaily.com/2023/11/11/driskill-says-hell-continue-to-fight-to-keep-devils-tower-as-devils-tower/>.

In October 2021, the BGN approved a proposal to rename Sq \_\_\_\_\_ Island in Ontario County, New York to Skenoh Island; a sign has been erected with the new name: <https://www.fingerlakes1.com/2023/12/28/canandaigua-unveils-new-sign-for-skenoh-island/>

O'Donnell attended a briefing by the USGS New England Water Science Center to the USGS Tribal Community of Practice on the use of derogatory words in the names of USGS stations (water gages).

The Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon responded to the email notice for Review List 453, with "Our office has no comment on the name changes proposed in the Tribe's Ceded Lands and Ancestral Homelands in western Oregon and southwestern Washington. Please note that our comments are based on information available at the time of review; we reserve the right to provide additional comment."

Staff participated in Meeting 416 of the BGN's Foreign Names Committee, held on December 12.

Staff participated in a discussion with the Pennsylvania and Maryland State Names Authorities December 20 regarding the status of efforts and pending proposals to rename Negro Mountain.

A representative of the Maryland Department of Planning is assisting the Maryland SNA in its research and has offered to reach out to local authorities and elected officials for their input. A new sign marking the significance of the Negro Mountain African American Historic Site was recently erected: [https://www.times-news.com/news/local\\_news/historical-marker-honoring-black-frontiersman-unveiled-in-grantsville/article\\_16b6ceae-6957-11ee-a986-f7c41e6e4862.html](https://www.times-news.com/news/local_news/historical-marker-honoring-black-frontiersman-unveiled-in-grantsville/article_16b6ceae-6957-11ee-a986-f7c41e6e4862.html).

Robert Glover's detail as Executive Secretary for Domestic Names concluded on December 22. In addition to meeting with BGN staff to review the role and responsibilities of the Executive Secretary, he reviewed the DNC's *Principles, Policies, and Procedures* (PPP), its FAQs and websites, and the BGN name proposal form.

Staff provided feedback and edits regarding BGN Tribal outreach activities to the USGS Core Science Systems Tribal engagement plan.

The Department of the Interior continues to await member appointment letters for the 2023-2025 term; to date, four responses have been received.

On December 8, staff met with members of the BGN's Special Committee on Native American Names and Tribal Communication to review the implementation of the new Cultural Sensitivity Guidance on Native American Names.

Also on December 8, staff met with the Maine State Names Authority regarding the status of the Maine Geographic Names Authority and the ongoing activities of the Place Justice group. On January 4, Place Justice conducted a webinar entitled "Naming the Problem: Problematic Place Names in Maine and How to Make Positive Change." The presentation was critical of the pace of changes at the Federal level, as well as the "messiness" of the process and the existence of "so many barriers." The presenters also reported that on January 23 the Maine State Legislature will consider a bill to establish a new State names board.

Effective January 15, Daniel Konzek will begin a long-term detail to backfill Jessica Campbell's position as BGN deputy member representing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Staff participated in a meeting November 14 with the chair and secretary of the BGN's Advisory Committee on Antarctic Names (ACAN) and the UK Antarctic Place-names Committee to review each country's interpretation of commemorative naming policies. Glover and Runyon met on December 28 with a prospective appointee to ACAN to review roles and responsibilities.

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**U.S. BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES
DOMESTIC NAMES COMMITTEE
DOCKET
January 2024**

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.

Review List 450

ALASKA

Feather Lake

[61.572923, -149.90769](#)

Local government	Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly	Support*
State Names Authority	Alaska	Support
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response
	Chickaloon Native Village	Opposed*
	Eklutna Native Village	No response*
Other	Knik Tribe	No response*
	Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority	No response*
	Big Lake Community Council	No response*
	Cook Inlet Region, Inc.	No response*
	Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Inc.	No response*
	AK Department of Natural Resources	No response*
	Mountaineering Club of Alaska	No opinion*

* contacted by SNA

The new name Feather Lake is proposed for a 45-acre lake in Matanuska-Susitna Borough. The proponent, who recently purchased property at the southern end of the lake, reports that the name is descriptive of the lake’s shape and is also “a tribute to the local avian population that have called this area home for thousands of years.” She notes also that “this lake is one of the only ones in the area that has remained unnamed, due to the fact that it is unsettled. Since we plan to settle on the lake, we believe that it is appropriate to have a name for the lake.”

The Alaska Historical Commission (AHC), which serves as the State Names Authority, received the endorsement of the Chickaloon Native Village Chief, although their response also stated:

[Feather Lake] is an appropriate name for the lake. A feather with a quill is k't'u in Dena'ina and feather in Ahtna is t'aa. . . and lake is Ben. Feather lake in Ahtna is T'aa Ben. There are many Dene words for feathers. Please consider naming the lake with a Dene name. However, it should be noted the broader Big lake [sic] area is of cultural and spiritual significance to Dene. There are many Dene place names for this area because it is on ancestral Dene land that was settled.

The AHC voted 5-3 to support the name. The minutes note: “In the discussion, commission members noted that the proposer cited no evidence of local use but noted that the descriptive name is similar to the naming conventions of other nearby lakes. Chickaloon Native Village opposed the name because the area around Big Lake is on ancestral Dena land and proposes that the lake be given a Dene name. The Matanuska Borough supported the name.”

BGN staff asked AHC staff if the Native Village was informed that they could submit a counterproposal. AHC staff responded, “While Chickaloon objected they did not provide an alternative proposal. Thus, [the Office of History and Archaeology] did not evaluate the name [presumably referring to T'aa Ben] via the guidelines nor send it out for public comment.”

Review List 451

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Change **Mount Washington** (FID [871352](#)) to **Agiochook**
 (White Mountains National Forest / Appalachian National Scenic Trail / Mount Washington State Park)

Local government	Coos County Commissioners	Opposed
State Names Authority	New Hampshire Board on Geographic Names	Opposed
Federal	U.S. Forest Service	Opposed
	National Park Service	No opinion
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response
Other	Mount Washington Commission	Opposed
	New Hampshire Commission on Native American Affairs	Support*
	Summits in Solidarity	Support*
	Approx. 107 general public emails	Opposed
	Approx. 23 general public emails	Support
	Change.org petition	Support

* Contacted by proponent

This proposal is to change the name of Mount Washington, the highest point in New Hampshire, to Agiochook. The 6,288-foot summit is located in Coös County, within the

Presidential Range of the White Mountains and Mount Washington State Park. The sides of the summit are within White Mountain National Forest, and the Appalachian National Scenic Trail passes along the summit's west side.

The proponent states:

Mt. Washington requires a name change because it is inappropriate to name a geographical feature after a person, especially a white, male member of the ruling class, complicit in slavery and the theft of land from Native Americans. . . .

Mt. Washington requires a name change because George and Martha Washington engaged in slavery. Allowing the mountain to be named after George Washington indicates federal and cultural approval of the practice of slavery.

The proponent also states that George Washington was complicit "in the murder of Haudenosaunee people," which she says constitutes genocide. She referred to the Sullivan Expedition ordered by Washington during the Revolutionary War. The expedition was sent to attack Iroquois (Haudenosaunee) villages in response to their support of the British in attacks. The expedition reportedly destroyed at least 40 Iroquois villages and their crops and forced thousands of Iroquois out of the area. Some historians describe the expedition as ethnic cleansing or genocide, and link the expulsion of thousands of Iroquois to the American settlement of the area.

The proponent wishes to change the name to one of the summit's recorded Indigenous names. Agiocochook is an Abenaki word that reportedly means "the place of the Great Spirit" or "the home of the concealed one."

USGS topographic maps have applied the name Mount Washington since 1893, and it has appeared on countless Federal and non-Federal sources. The name was first used in print in 1792. Other Native names and spellings are recorded for the summit, including:

- Kan Van Vugarty in *Incidents in White Mountain History*, 1856, meaning "the continued likeness of a gull."
- Kodaak Wadjo in *Dictionary of American-Indian Place and Proper Names in New England*, 1909, meaning "the top is so hidden," and *Indian Place Names of New England*, 1962, meaning "summit of the highest mountain."
- Kôdaakwajo in *New Familiar Abenakis and English Dialogues*, 1884, meaning "the hidden mountain."
- Waumbekket-methna, reported in *Place Names of the White Mountains, Revised Edition*, 1993, meaning "snowy mountains" and referring to "the peak and its neighbors."

In some sources, these names reportedly referred to the larger White Mountains or to the Presidential Range rather than specifically to Mount Washington. The spelling Agiocochook seems to most often be used in reference to the Abenaki name for the White Mountains.

The New Hampshire State departments that comprise the Council on Resources and Development (which serves as the State body that makes recommendations to the BGN) oppose the change. Nine of the departments opposed the change and one took no position. Seven provided letters stating their reasoning. (Some of these also addressed the proposal, submitted by the same proponent, to rename the Baker River and its tributaries. This proposal is still under review.)

The Department of Administrative Services (DAS) Commissioner wrote:

It is no exaggeration to say that Mt. Washington is an iconic natural symbol of the Granite State and is likely its single most nationally and internationally known draw for year-round tourism.

The applicant asserts without any support that: "Allowing the mountain to be named after George Washington indicates federal and cultural approval of the practice of slavery." DAS strongly disagrees with the logical leap at the center of that bald assertion. DAS believes that it is possible (indeed, necessary in these modern times) to appreciate and celebrate the more favorable aspects of a prominent historical figure's life while clearly acknowledging and learning from their known shortcomings and faults without endorsing or taking responsibility for them. . . . DAS does not believe that Mt. Washington was named after our country's first President as an endorsement of slavery. . . .

DAS also notes that there are many other nearby geographic features, places, tourist attractions, and businesses located within sight of Mt. Washington that are named after it in one way or another. A few that come to mind quickly are: Mount Washington Valley, Omni Mount Washington Resort, Mount Washington Auto Road, Mount Washington Cog Railway, Mount Washington Observatory, and Mount Washington Cruises. Therefore, changing the name of Mt. Washington could cause confusion among tourists and consumers and disassociation of those similarly named places, attractions, and businesses from the highest summit of the nearby alpine massif.

The Department of Business and Economic Affairs Commissioner wrote:

It is without question that changing the name of Mount Washington would be detrimental to the tourism value and overall identity of this iconic landmark. . . .

It is not only one of the most prominent peaks in the United States but also a beloved destination for tourists, adventurers, and nature enthusiasts from around the world. Renaming this mountain would diminish its significance as a renowned tourist attraction. . . .

Its existing name carries immense recognition and prestige. . . . A name change would result in confusion and loss of brand recognition, negatively impacting the tourism industry and, consequently, the economic growth of New Hampshire.

Furthermore, Mount Washington holds significant historical and cultural value. Named after President George Washington, it has stood as a symbol of honor and reverence for our country's first president since 1784. Changing the name would disregard the historical significance associated with Mount Washington and erode the collective memory and identity of our state and nation.

BEA acknowledges the importance of commemorating and celebrating diversity and inclusivity, and we hold that it can be achieved without altering the names of landmarks. New Hampshire celebrates the Native American heritage in the region through numerous popular tourist destinations that utilize Native American place names, including Squam Lake, Lake Sunapee, and the largest lake in New Hampshire, Lake Winnepesaukee. The Pemigewasset and Ammonoosuc Rivers, and the Kancamagus Highway through the White Mountains.

The Department of Education Commissioner wrote:

Changing the name of such a well-known peak in the northeast, which has held the title of Mt. Washington since 1874, is not in the best interest of the state and its tourists that have traveled to the top of the mountain for more than 150 years. Mt. Washington not only honors a Founding Father, George Washington, but is one of more than a dozen summits within the Presidential Range – all of which are named after U.S. presidents such as Franklin Pierce, Thomas Jefferson, Samuel Adams and John Quincy Adams.

I [oppose] the proposal to change the title of such an infamous [sic] mountain – the highest in New Hampshire – that pays tribute to the first president of the United States, a military general and grand hero.

The Department of Environmental Services (DES) Assistant Commissioner wrote:

The current names have significant cultural significance to the residents of the Granite State and the current branding is important to the State's tourism industry and many of the State's businesses.

In addition, the current names appear on numerous existing maps produced and published by NHDES, including geologic maps and companion documents that have been produced through the years, all of which would need to be modified, both in paper form and on NHDES's website. These current names also exist in many instances within database and GIS attribute tables and files used to describe landscape and water surface features. All these instances would require considerable staff time across multiple agency units to edit, perform updates, and provide to external data distributors for redistribution.

Modifying the names of these natural resources would create an innumerable number of hours of work which would divert substantial financial resources, personnel resources, and

staff time away from other critical mapping and environmentally-focused priorities while causing unnecessary confusion and eliminating the centuries of branding that has been done for the current names.

Any positive impacts of these name changes do not outweigh the negative impacts that will be caused to our tourism industry, to our businesses, to our state agencies and employees, and to the cultural importance of these names to the State of New Hampshire.

The New Hampshire Fish and Game Department Executive Director wrote:

First and foremost, the agency is opposed due to safety concerns. . . . Many, if not a majority of these outdoor enthusiasts carry satellite communication devices of varying sorts to assist in the event of an accident or unplanned event necessitating a rescue. Changing the name of a mountain or river would cause confusion and potentially interfere with lifesaving operations due to inaccurate information. These devices, which range from Global Positioning Systems (GPS units) to Personal Locator Beacons (PLBs) would all have inaccurate information programmed into them, specifically geographic names. . . . Maps, whether paper or electronic, would be immediately incorrect once a name change occurs, causing confusion and inaccurate information. Mt. Washington, for example, is literally known throughout the world. According to Bryan Enberg, the Chair of the State Search and Rescue Coordinators Council, "I can say that anytime you change well-established place names, it opens the door to confusion when every moment counts. SAR (Search & Rescue) is inherently, a geo-spatial problem. Consistency when we are communicating location information is critical to what we do".

It is difficult to measure how changing these names would impact delays and mistakes in future search and rescue missions. NH is not interested in discovering this impact. . . .

Reverend Manasseh Cutler bestowed the presidential name upon the mountain in the 1790's. Reverend Cutler was a prominent Federalist and the leading author of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, particularly the parts prohibiting slavery. The petitioner states in the application, in part, that Mt. Washington and Baker River require name changes because it is inappropriate to name a geographical feature after a person and that Washington and Baker engaged in slavery. This would equate to NH renaming almost every mountain, river, and other geological features throughout the state. NH is home to dozens of mountains named after people including over 16 more in the Presidential Range alone. We can appreciate that Washington, as a member of the ruling class, was "complicit in slavery". However, will changing the name of Mt. Washington or the Baker River sanitize history? Will there be a benefit? Will those changes improve the lives of those that are affected by racism today? Particularly interesting is the fact that Mt. Washington received its presidential name from an ardent opponent of slavery. Reverend Cutler obviously knew more about what history tells us in that Washington was the only president who actually freed his slaves and ultimately the nation by leading the United States through the Revolutionary War.

Renaming a prominent geographical feature is an exceptional event that should be undertaken under compelling and egregious reasons. I do not see a compelling reason to make such costly changes. Changes that would include signage, markers, road signs, and kiosks. We feel that the negative effects of these name changes will far outweigh any benefits just like Washington's positive attributes and accomplishments far outweigh his negatives.

The Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR) Commissioner wrote:

As Commissioner of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR) I oversee five Divisions including the Division of Parks and Recreation, the Division of Forests and Lands, the Division of Historical Resources, the State Library, and the State Council on the Arts. . . .

A top priority of the work we do is safety and to achieve this we collaborate with other state and local, agencies every day. In consulting with our sister agencies, it is clear that a name change for these popular outdoor destinations would cause significant challenges in search and rescue efforts.

Changing names of internationally known landmarks, such as Mt. Washington will lead to many unintended consequences beyond safety. For example, there are economic impacts to consider as many New Hampshire businesses are associated with these well-known places. . . .

Changing the name of these sites does not seem necessary. Interpreting the full history of these sites, however, is a goal of ours and is an effort that we welcome input and support for.

The Director of the Division of Emergency Services and Communications within the Department of Safety (DAS) wrote:

The proposed changes could prevent or significantly delay the provisioning of emergency services to those locations because of potential confusion, lack of familiarity, or pronunciation during stressful, life-safety situations. . . .

Our Division has consistently educated the public across the state that location is the most important piece of information that our 911 call-takers need. Our mission, to locate, communicate and connect people in an emergency with the help they need is centered around our ability to quickly verify the location of a caller in need.

Changing the name of Mt. Washington, (where we already have a high incidence of emergency response) the highest peak in the Northeastern United States at 6,288.2 ft and the most topographically prominent mountain east of the Mississippi River and part of the Presidential Range in the White Mountains to Mt. Agiocochook. . . [has] the potential to

significantly delay emergency services due to pronunciation and confusion during two-way communication. . . .

With these proposed changes, existing printed maps and charts for emergency response, hiking, recreation, aviation and USGS topography would be rendered inaccurate. Mount Washington is a geographic landmark for travelers of all modalities to include all its related Mount Washington affiliations (Observatory, Auto Road, Cog Railway, Mount Washington Hotel, home of the most extreme weather etc.) and is known worldwide.

Anything that impedes our ability to obtain and verify location could cause a significant delay in rendering life-safety services in situations where seconds count. Changing the names. . . has the potential to do just that, which is why we oppose the proposed name changes.

The proponent responded to each of the State responses:

I note that the letters to you from the New Hampshire agencies that make up CORD contain many assertions unsupported by documentation. I expect that BGN expects a high level of scholarship and integrity in state agency responses to name change proposals.

None of the agencies claiming loss of tourism money or increased danger during rescues cited any data in support of these claims. For example, did renaming Mt. McKinley “diminish its significance as a renowned tourist attraction?” Have there been problems with rescues on Denali because it no longer formally designated as Mt. McKinley?

None of the agencies addressed the issue of the complicity of George Washington in the murder of Haudenosaunee people or the murder by Lieutenant Baker of Abenaki people.

- BEA (Business and Economic Affairs) Commissioner Taylor Caswell claims that “Changing the name would disregard the historical significance associated with Mt. Washington and erode the collective memory and identity of our state and nation.”

What this is supposed to mean is not clear. The history of Mt. Washington is well documented in many books, which will not disappear if the mountain’s name is changed. The petition for a name change does not aim to erode collective memory (is this different than individual memory? Does it mean what a lot of people know, or what a lot of people believe, whether these beliefs are true or not?) but rather increase people’s knowledge of who George Washington was by eroding the national myths that obscure clear thinking about him.

To acknowledge that naming a mountain after a slave-owner and what could now be called a war-criminal is not respectful, and to acknowledge that George Washington was both, would clean (somewhat) the identity of our state and nation and allow us to escape the

current and dominant sloppy and shallow beliefs that make up of one small part of our history.

It is contradictory of BEA to claim that it “celebrates” Native American history in the Native American names that remain for some landmarks, but does not dishonor Native American (and Black) history by supporting naming Mt. Washington after a slave-owner who ordered the Sullivan Massacre. . . .

I note that the amount of tourism dollars BEA claims would be lost if Mt. Washington’s name is formally changed to Agiocochook was not stated, even as an estimation.

- DAS (Department of Administrative Services) writes: “DAS believes that it is possible...to appreciate and celebrate the more favorable aspects of a prominent historical figure’s life while clearly acknowledging and learning from their known shortcomings and faults without endorsing or taking responsibility for them.”

DAS presented no evidence that the State has clearly acknowledged, described and addressed George Washington’s enslavement of other people. The only acknowledgment from the State that I am aware of is Ona Judge Staines Day, honoring the enslaved woman who escaped from George Washington.

DAS presented no evidence that the State has acknowledged the Sullivan Massacre. . . .

“DAS does not believe that Mt. Washington was named after our country’s first President as an endorsement of slavery.”

The application for a name change does not claim this.

DAS writes: “...there are many other nearby geographic features, places, tourist attractions, and businesses located within sight of Mt Washington that are named after it in one way or another... Therefore, changing the name of Mt. Washington could cause confusion among tourists and consumers and disassociation of those similarly named places, attractions and businesses from the highest summit of the nearby alpine massif.”

Again, no evidence is offered in support of this concern over confusion. Does DAS not anticipate a slow shift from Mt. Washington to Agiocochook, with both names used for many years? Since Mt. Washington State Park and the Mt. Washington Auto Road are unlikely to change their names, would not these, along with the hotels like the Mt. Washington, serve to keep the former name in current use?

- DES (Department of Environmental Services) writes: ‘Modifying the names of these natural resources would create an innumerable number of hours of work which would divert substantial financial resources, personnel resources, and staff time away from other critical mapping and environmentally-focused priorities while causing unnecessary

confusion and eliminating the centuries of branding that has been done for the current names” No evidence from other name changes is given. It also states that “Any positive impacts of these name changes do not outweigh the negative impacts that will be caused to our tourism industry, to our businesses, to our state agencies and employees, and to the cultural importance of these names to the State of New Hampshire.”

DES fails to list the possible positive impacts, cite evidence supporting its claim of negative impacts to tourism or describe what exactly the “cultural importance of these names to the State of New Hampshire” is.

DES fails to address the ethical issues presented in the application. . . .

[The proponent points out that the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources did not provide evidence for their reasoning.]

- DOS (Department of Safety) cites concerns with safety/rescues if the names of the Mt. Washington and the Baker River are changed. Again, no data in support of this is offered, nor is the likelihood of a very gradual adoption of the names considered. We see this with Mt. McKinley/Denali. Both names are used and cited. . . .

[The proponent points out that the Department of Education did not provide evidence for their reasoning and questioned the relevance of the other Presidents honored with names in the Presidential Range. The proponent also disputed the claim that Washington was a “great hero” citing his enslavement of people and ordering the Sullivan Massacre.]

- Fish & Game Director Scott Mason wrote: “Changing the name of a mountain or river would cause confusion and potentially interfere with lifesaving operations due to inaccurate information. These devices, [used by some hikers] which range from Global Positioning Systems (GPS units) to Personal Locator Beacons (PLBs) would all have inaccurate information programmed into them, specifically geographic names”

Since the SPOT and other PLBs provide location/GPS coordinates, how are these used with geographical names and other broad descriptions, e.g. Tuckerman’s Ravine, Left Gully, Dry River Valley somewhere? Where is a description of a rescue and how GPS coordinates and names of mountains and features are used in a rescue?

[The Director] does not explain how changing the names of Mt. Washington and the Baker River would ‘equate to NH renaming almost every mountain, river, and other geological features throughout the state.” Director Mason asks whether changing the name of Mt. Washington and the Baker River will “sanitize history.” This is not the intent of the name changes, as clearly stated in the application. The intent is to acknowledge that the commonly known histories of George Washington and Captain Baker have been sanitized, to increase common knowledge of these men, and to acknowledge that naming a mountain

and river after them is not respectful of Native Americans, black people, or anyone who finds slavery, genocide and sanitized history unacceptable. . . .

George Washington did not free his slaves, as the application notes. . . .

The Coös County Commissioners oppose the proposed change, stating:

Mt. Washington is the iconic symbol of the North Country and known globally as the world's worst weather. It sits at the northern end of the Appalachians majestically perched as the geographic reference point for not just New England but is the most topographically prominent mountain east of the Mississippi River.

It is not an exaggeration to declare that Mount Washington is a cultural icon for all New England and especially for Coös County. It is woven into our identity. . . .

Coös County takes its heritage very seriously. As you may know, the county name refers to the Cowass, an Algonquin speaking Native American tribe. Interestingly, the Algonquin called Mt. Washington 'The White Rocks' which ultimately became the name of Mt. Waumbec in Jefferson while the Abenaki called it Agiocochook, 'Home of the Great Spirit.' Our Native American heritage is all around us in Coös County with the Connecticut, Androscoggin, Ammonoosuc and Mohawk Rivers to name a few. This all makes perfect sense to us in the North Country. Naming the highest peak in the Northeast after our founding father was and is an honor. . . .

We have not discussed the negative economic impacts and safety concerns of first responders since that has been addressed by others. . . .

If you change the name of Mt. Washington exactly, which interests do you represent because it is not ours.

The New Hampshire Commission on Native American Affairs supports the proposal, writing:

The documentation accompanying Ms. Pastoriza's application reveals the ancient and continuing use of the name Agiocochook to reference this mountain - and reflects a respect for the 12,800 year presence of the Abenaki and their ancestors in what is now called the State of New Hampshire.

The Mount Washington Commission voted unanimously not to support the change, writing, "The Commission has reviewed the Proposal and finds that the materials filed with it do not contain information sufficient to justify the requested name change."

The U.S. Forest Service also does not recommend approval, stating: "The proponent is not speaking for a Federally recognized Tribal government and although we tried repeatedly to

obtain an opinion from Federally Recognized Tribes that have an ancestral connection to the area, we were unsuccessful. Without this input, the FS cannot support the proposal.”

In 2020, a change.org petition ([https://www.change.org/p/new-hampshire-state-house-
rename-mount-washington-to-original-indigenous-name](https://www.change.org/p/new-hampshire-state-house-rename-mount-washington-to-original-indigenous-name)) was directed to the New Hampshire Governor, the State House and Senate, and New Hampshire State Parks, expressing support for a name change:

Agiocochook, Waumbik, and Kodaak Wadjo are three of the names that predated the current name. The mountain should be renamed to one of the original names that it has had throughout most of history. A number of people already refer to the mountain as Agiocochook so reverting back to this is probably the best alternative to the new name.

As of January 2024, the petition included 535 signatures.

In 2011, the BGN approved the name Agiocochook Crag for a small summit 0.8 miles northeast of Mount Washington.

Review List 452

GEORGIA

Pine Creek

Mouth: [34.10344, -84.15815](#) / Source: [34.10356, -84.17379](#)

Local government	Forsyth County Commissioners	No opinion
State Names Authority	Georgia State Names Authority	No opinion
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

This proposal is to apply the new name Pine Creek to a 0.95-mile-long tributary of Dick Creek in Forsyth County. The proponent, a local resident, states, “As I explored the area, I couldn't help but notice the abundance of magnificent pine trees surrounding the creek, creating a picturesque setting. The soft sound of the water flowing gently through the rocks combined with the subtle scent of pine needles in the air made it an enchanting spot. Hence, I decided to pay homage to the dominant natural feature of the area by naming it ‘Pine Creek.’ This name serves as a reminder of the creek’s tranquil beauty and its connection to the magnificent pine forests that grace the Georgia landscape.”

GNIS lists 131 geographic features in Georgia with “Pine” in their names; of these, 15 are streams. Four are named Pine Creek, but none of these are in Forsyth County. The closest is 53 miles from the stream in question. There are two bodies of water in Forsyth County named Pine Lake.

WYOMING

Change Swastika Lake (FID [1595236](#)) to Knight Lake (Medicine Bow-Routt National Forest)

Local government	Albany County Commissioners	Support
State Names Authority	Wyoming Board of Geographic Names	Support
Federal	U.S. Forest Service	No objection
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response
Other	Albany County Historical Society (proponent)	Support
	The Foundation to Combat Antisemitism*	Support

* sent to the Albany County Commissioners

This proposal is to change the name of Swastika Lake in Albany County to Knight Lake. The 12-acre lake is in the Snowy Mountain Range, 33 miles west of Laramie and within the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests.

The replacement name was proposed by the Albany County Historical Society in response to a previous proposal to change the name to Fortune Lake (Review List 451). The proponent of the latter name stated it would reference the original meaning of the swastika symbol; she has since withdrawn her proposal and now endorses the name Knight Lake.

The name Knight Lake would commemorate Samuel H. Knight (1892-1975), a University of Wyoming professor who in 1925 established the nearby University of Wyoming Science Camp. In 2011, the camp property was purchased by The WEST Institute, a Christian organization that operates out of Laramie Valley Chapel.

In the proposal, the Albany County Historical Society stated:

Students from universities across the nation studied the ecology of that area [around the lake] during summers from that date until 1975. The camp was named in [Knight's] honor in 1966, and subsequent to its sale to a local church it no longer bears his name. . . . Knight served as the Wyoming State Geologist and was named by the American Heritage Center in 1999 as Wyoming's Citizen of the Century for Healthcare, Science & Technology.

The Swastika was used as the name for a Laramie business that operated 1913-1916 and a ranch in southwest Albany County and prior to World War II. When the Nazis coopted the symbol, it morphed into one of antisemitism, hatred and discrimination [so] the ranch changed its name. Neo-Nazis and White supremacists continue to use the symbol even to this day. It is not a fitting name for a lake in Albany County.

The name Swastika Lake has been labeled on USGS topographic maps since 1961. The earliest known reference to the name is the 1922 volume *Publications in Science: Botany, Volume 1, "Algae of the Medicine Bow Mountains, Wyoming, in the vicinity of the University of Wyoming Summer Camp,"* published by the University of Wyoming. The lake is adjacent to the camp, which was reportedly built in the 1920s. The name also appeared in a subsequent university publication in 1935, and in *An Ecological Reconnaissance in the Medicine Bow Mountains* (Ecological Monographs, Blake, 1945).

At its April 2023 meeting, the DNC approved a proposal to rename Swastika Mountain in Lane County, Oregon to Mount Halo. During the State and Federal review of the proposal, the Hindu American Foundation (HAF) expressed concerns that the change was presented as necessary "because the symbol is offensive." HAF wished to emphasize that it has been a sacred symbol for Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, and Zoroastrians for 4,000+ years and is also significant in many Native American cultures. They did not object to efforts to commemorate a native leader (Chief Halito or "Halo") but noted that "renaming [the mountain] because of ignorance about a sacred symbol for more than a billion people in the world is not something we can support."

A small community in Clinton County, New York is named Swastika and a post office of the same name operated there from 1913 until 1958. In September 2020, the town voted to retain its name.

Review List 453

IDAHO

Petes Peak

[43.24238, -112.00545](#)

Local government	Bingham County Commissioners	Support
State Names Authority	Idaho Geographic Names Advisory Council [inactive]	No response
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

The name Petes Peak is proposed to be made official for a 5,650-foot peak in Bingham County. The proponent reports that the name has been used locally for over 125 years and that it honors "early Wolverine Canyon homesteader Pete Morris (d. 1892), [who] made many contributions to the region, including an engineered irrigation system for the local homesteaders."

The proponent adds, "The peak is a steep incline to a point that attracts the eye when scanning the horizon and [the name] should commemorate those who helped to tame the land and the region."

A 1985 volume describing the history of Bingham County states:

Pete Morris developed a fine farm by having a ditch engineered from the creek up the side hill to irrigate many acres, a real ‘work of art.’ Pete, a bachelor, met an early death in 1892 from his horse falling on him. Before he died, he asked his friends to bury him on top of the peak which overlooked his holdings. They wanted to oblige, but the task of getting his body up on ‘old Pete Morris’s Peak’ just looked too big. They ended up going to the Blackfoot cemetery.

GNIS does not list any features in Bingham County with names that contain “Pete.” However, 220 miles to the southeast of the peak in question is an 8,253-foot summit that is also known locally as “Petes Peak.” This summit, located on the Payette National Forest, is recorded as Peak 8253 on IdahoClimbingGuide.com, but is not listed in GNIS. The origin of this name is unknown.

KENTUCKY

McKinley Creek

Mouth: [38.10045, -85.43273](#) / Source: [38.10342, -85.42076](#)

Local government	Spencer County Judge Executive	Support
State Names Authority	Kentucky Geographic Names Committee	Support
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

The new name McKinley Creek is proposed for an unnamed 0.73-mile-long tributary of Big Plum Creek in Spencer County. The proponent, a member of the McKinley family, states that the name would commemorate their heritage and history. Five generations of the family have either owned and farmed the land or trapped and hunted along the stream, where they have “created many memories.” The stream “contains some beautiful features with small waterfalls, wildlife, and priceless tranquility that need to be named”

When asked to identify specific family members, the proponent listed his grandparents Harry McKinley, Sr. (1903-1991) and Ruby Mae Gordon McKinley (1904-1999), and their five sons, all of whom have been deceased at least five years. His grandparents were members of Plum Creek Baptist Church in nearby Waterford.

MASSACHUSETTS

Change **Brown Island** (BGN 1971, 2012) (FID [614648](#)) to **Crowninshield Island**
<https://edits.nationalmap.gov/apps/gaz-domestic/public/summary/614648>

Local government	Town of Marblehead Select Board	Support
State Names Authority	Massachusetts State Names Authority	Support
Federal	NOAA	Support
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response
Other	The Trustees of Reservations (landowner)*	Support
	Marblehead Harbormaster/Harbors and Waters Board*	Support
	Peabody Essex Museum*	Support
	Town of Marblehead Historical Commission*	Support
	State Representative Jenny Armini, Eighth Essex District*	Support
	Marblehead Town Historian (retired)	Oppose

* Contacted by proponent

This proposal is to change the name of Brown Island in the Town of Marblehead to Crowninshield Island. The 705-acre island is located within Dolliber Cove.

The proponent, who serves as chair of the Crowninshield Island Committee, submitted this change to the BGN in 2008 but it was rejected in January 2012, citing the opposition of the Town of Marblehead Board of Selectmen, the Town Historian, and the Marblehead Harbors and Waters Board. All three cited long-term use of the name Brown Island. Citing changes of opinion, the proponent is asking the BGN to revisit the matter.

Although the name Brown Island has been published on USGS topographic maps since 1945, it was not made official by the BGN until 1971. USGS maps published as early as 1893 labeled the island Orne Island and this name continued to appear on NOAA charts until 1970; from 1971 until the present, it has been labeled Brown Island. The 1966 Essex County map labeled it Brown Island. The 1971 proposal stated, "According to town officials of Marblehead, this feature has been known locally as Brown Island for many years. Both of these names [Brown and Orne] are family names and Brown seems to be the name in popular local use today." There was no mention in the 1971 file of the Crowninshield family's connection to the island.

At the time of the 2008 proposal, the proponent reported that that the name Crowninshield Island had been in local use "for over five decades." The Trustees of Reservations, who "preserve, for public use and enjoyment, properties of exceptional scenic, historic, and ecological value in Massachusetts," referred to the island as "Crowninshield Island (formerly called Brown's Island)." Their [website](#) added, "The Island's name honors Louise duPont Crowninshield, a pioneer in America's historic preservation movement from 1925 until her death in 1958." A local realtor's website referred to "Crowninshield Island, better known as

Brown's Island . . .” An Environmental Protection Agency notice, published in the Federal Register in May 2008, on the establishment of a No Discharge Area along the coast of Massachusetts, also referred to Crowninshield Island. *North Shore Magazine*, in an article on Marblehead's beaches, referred to “Crowninshield Island (Brown's Island to you 'Headers)”. In 2008, *The Salem News* stated, “There is also Crowninshield Island off Marblehead, a 5-acre property also known as Brown's Island.” *Outside Magazine's* Urban Adventure Boston mentioned, “Brown Island, also called Crowninshield Island.”

In early 2023, the same proponent contacted the BGN to report that the Town Selectboard and the Marblehead Harbors and Waters Board now support the change, and as such, he is asking the BGN to reconsider its previous decision. At its March meeting, the DNC agreed it would “consider reopening the case after local support can be confirmed.” The proponent followed up with letters of support from the Town and the Harbors and Waters Board, along with a petition signed by over 50 residents whose properties surround the island. He added:

In 1797, the island was sold by Mary Orne, widow of Joshua Orne of Marblehead, for \$350 to John Brown.

In 1918 the Browns sold the island (called Orne Island at that time) to Frank Crowninshield. The Crowninshields, who lived across from the island, planted the trees and plants we see today as it had been barren rock until then. In 1955 Mrs. Crowninshield gave the island to The Trustees of Reservations, which is the oldest statewide land conservation organization in the country. This was to ensure that the island would remain undeveloped and open to the public forever. The Crowninshields were active civic contributors to the North Shore community over their lifetime, and accordingly, deserve the honor of having the island bear their name. It is identified by many local sources currently as Crowninshield Island.

He also provided a copy of the description of Crowninshield Island from the Trustees of Reservations handbook, a photo of a sign on the island, material from a “Discovering Marblehead” brochure, the Marblehead Conservancy town map, and the town's zoning map, all of which use the name Crowninshield Island. He notes also that Google Maps and Google Earth use the proposed name. According to a description of the island published in the aforementioned brochure, “A century ago the island, like much of Marblehead, was barren. The trees were planted by Mrs. Francis B. Crowninshield to improve the view from her house on Peach's Point.” Wikipedia also has an entry for [Crowninshield Island](#).

In its current letter supporting the change, the Town Selectboard states:

This would recognize the generous gift of Louise Crowninshield, who donated the island to the Trustees of Reservations in 1955 for the enjoyment of the public. She was a significant figure in the historic preservation movement and one of the region's most generous benefactors.

As the Island under our care will now be open to the public and regional boaters forever going forward, we feel this is an appropriate thing to do and a permanent way to honor the generosity and achievements of this distinguished American family.

Additional letters of support provide similar justifications for the change. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), which did not provide a definitive recommendation at the time of the 2012 decision, now reports, “NOAA and [U.S. Coast Guard] sector Boston discussed this with harbor masters in the areas as well as Pilots. There are no operational issues with this proposed name change. The maritime community in the area gives it a thumbs up.”

The former Town Historian continues to oppose the change, stating, “The Crowninshields were not permanent residents of Marblehead, residing primarily during the summer months. The island has and has had so many names. The older I get, the more I want things to stay the same.”

MICHIGAN

Change Aanikegamaa Lake (BGN/Secretarial Decision 2022) (FID [638682](#)) to Swan Lake

Local government	Fenton Township Board	Support
	Genesee County Commissioners	Support
State Names Authority	Michigan State Names Authority	Support
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response
	Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians	Oppose
Other	PST Lake Association (proponent)	Support
	Michigan State Representative Mike Mueller	Support

This proposal is to change the name of Aanikegamaa Lake, an 80-acre lake in the Charter Township of Fenton in Genesee County, to Swan Lake. The lake is privately owned by many residents within the PST Lake Association (currently named the Ponemah, Sq___ & Tupper Lake Association), which submitted the proposal to change the name. The name refers to swans (likely mute swans) that nest on the lake.

The lake was named Sq___ Lake on USGS maps as early as 1920 and was shown on a county atlas as early as 1873. On September 8, 2022, the BGN accepted the replacement name Aanikegamaa Lake, which was recommended by the [Derogatory Geographic Names Task Force](#) established by [Secretary’s Order 3404](#).

The Ojibwe People’s Dictionary reports that “aanikegamaa” means “it is a chain of lakes” and this name presumably refers to the series of connected lakes in Fenton Township.

In June 2023, Fenton Township residents began meeting to discuss renaming Aanikegamaa Lake. A [June 19, 2023 Tri-County Times article](#) quoted Township Supervisor Lorraine: “I understand [the DOI’s] desire to change the name; however, I feel it would have been more appropriate to have the residents of the lake to be part of that process.” Many other articles reported that residents felt they should have been asked to provide input on the name change and that the native name is difficult to spell and pronounce.

A [June 26, 2023 Tri-County Times article](#) quoted Supervisor Lorraine: “It was the National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers in the Wilderness Society that got together and they are the ones that decided to make the change to Sq___ Lake.”

The PST Lake Association solicited potential replacement names from area residents, after which a vote was taken. The number of votes cast for each name were:

- Swan Lake, 74
- Swan Island Lake, 19
- Little Ponemah Lake, 9
- Serenity Lake, 9
- Aanikegamaa Lake, 0

The Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians submitted their opposition to the proposed change in a response to the Review List notice sent to all federally recognized Tribes under the BGN’s [Tribal Geographic Names Policy](#). The Band’s Tribal Historic Preservation Officer wrote:

[We] would like to oppose this name change from an Ojibwemowin (Ojibwe Language) place name to an English place name, due to the limited number of Ojibwemowin place names that actually exist in the state of Michigan. The spelling of Aanikegamaa Lake is properly spelled in Ojibwemowin. Most places that are named in Ojibwemowin have been misspelled in the past. An example is Negaunee, a town just west of Marquette, Michigan. The correct spelling of the word is nigaanii, meaning ahead, “leading or in front of.”

Colonization has completely altered the traditional names of places in our ancestral homelands into English names. I have participated in the renaming of places within the state of Michigan to Ojibwemowin [the Lac Vieux Desert Band submitted the proposals to change Hogala Lake to [Waagaagamaa Lake](#) and Marsh Bay Lake to [Makwagamaa](#)]. We support leaving this place name as is—Aanikegamaa Lake, which translates to my knowledge, Second Leader or Second in Command Lake. Though we don’t know the story behind this naming, we support and honor the likely oral history behind it.

The Michigan State Names Authority supports the change to Swan Lake, stating:

The State of Michigan has traditionally gone with the name supported by the residents of the area, provided they followed the prescribed process and responded to questions/comments. Those residents requesting the change from Aanikegamaa Lake to

Swan Lake have done so. While Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior Chippewa do make a valid point that there are few Ojibwemowin place names in the State, their ties to this area are unclear. For these reasons, my opinion is that the name should be changed to Swan Lake.

U.S. Representative Jake Bennett’s office inquired about the proposal after the Fenton Township Supervisors contacted them.

MINNESOTA

Fox-Hunter Bay

[46.6767664, -94.175069](#)

Local government	Crow Wing County Commissioners	Support
State Names Authority	Minnesota Geographic Names Authority	Support
Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

The new associative name Fox-Hunter Bay is proposed for an unnamed 17-acre bay on the south shore of Whitefish Lake in Crow Wing County. According to the proponent, who lives on Fox Hunter Road, located adjacent to the bay, the name has been used locally for “an unknown amount of time,” adding:

Founded in 1946 by Ester and Larry Fox and Edith and Tex Hunter . . . Fox-Hunter Lodge was established as a family-owned and operated resort. It was the original development on the bay. The Lodge ceased operation in 1967. Many of the original family members and their descendants continue to live on and enjoy Fox-Hunter Bay.

GNIS lists three geographic features in proximity to the bay that have names that include “Fox”: East Fox Lake, West Fox Lake, and Fox Creek, approximately six miles to the northeast.