

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

Eight Hundred and Eighty-Third Meeting

May 14, 2026 – 2:00 p.m.

(Hybrid Meeting)

Members and Deputy Members in Attendance

Dr. Wendi-Starr Brown	Bureau of Indian Affairs (Department of the Interior)
Jessica Campbell	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Department of the Interior)
Thaddeus Ellerbe	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (Department of Commerce)
Brenda-Anne “B.C.” Forrest	Government Publishing Office
Susan Lyon	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Department of War)
Jeremy Smith	Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (Department of the Interior)
Veronica Ranieri	Library of Congress
Alexander Stum	Natural Resources Conservation Service (Department of Agriculture)
Dr. Michael Tischler	U.S. Geological Survey (Department of the Interior)
Marilyn W.	National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (Department of War)

Ex-Officio

David D., Executive Secretary, U.S. Board on Geographic Names / Foreign Names

Dr. Shellie Zahniser, Executive Secretary, U.S. Board on Geographic Names / Domestic Names

BGN/GNIS Staff

Shelby Bourquein, U.S. Geological Survey
Mackenzie Chriscoe, U.S. Geological Survey
Lindsay Decker, U.S. Geological Survey
Matthew O’Donnell, U.S. Geological Survey
Brian Purtell, U.S. Geological Survey
Stephanie Sparkman, U.S. Geological Survey

Special Committees

Tiffany D., National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (Department of War)
Tenielle Gaither, U.S. Geological Survey (Department of the Interior)

Guests and Observers

Alex Fries, National Park Service (Department of the Interior)
Peter Luthiger (Department of the Interior)
Alma Ripps, National Park Service (Department of the Interior)
Simon Seidl, National Park Service (Department of the Interior)

Mary Rose Sheldon, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (Department of Commerce)

Daniel Spring, U.S. Forest Service (Department of Agriculture)

1. Opening and Roll Call

Chair Tischler opened the 883rd meeting of the Domestic Names Committee (DNC) at 2:00 p.m. EST. The meeting was held in hybrid format. The Chair confirmed that the DNC would proceed under its customary informal rules, with motions decided by a simple majority of votes cast; abstentions would not be counted for or against. Members were asked to announce if they left the meeting to maintain an accurate vote count. The Chair reminded attendees that there would be no public comment period and that questions from the public or media should be submitted in writing to staff.

Executive Secretary Zahniser conducted the roll call. Ten voting members were confirmed present, constituting a quorum.

2. Review and Approval of Agenda

The Chair asked if there were any comments or additions to the agenda. A correction was noted to Agenda Item 5, changing “Gnébêk Creek” to “Gnébêk Stream.” A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda, as corrected.

3. Minutes of Meeting 882

A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda. The motion passed without objection.

4. Reports

4.1 BGN Chair (Marilyn W.)

Marilyn W. reported that the Special Committee on Native American Names and Tribal Communication is currently without a Chair, resulting in a temporary pause in committee meetings and activities. She encouraged members to consider serving in the role and noted that formal nominations are expected at the July 21 full Board meeting.

She also reported that the position of BGN Vice Chair remains vacant and encouraged current primary members to consider serving in that capacity. She thanked staff for their continued work supporting the Board.

4.2 Executive Secretary for Domestic Names (Dr. Zahniser)

See attached report.

Zahniser thanked Board members and staff for their contributions and editorial assistance with the FY 2025 Annual Report.

She also noted that proposed revisions to GNIS feature codes would be shared with States and Federal agencies for voluntary comment in the coming weeks. Additionally, she stated that the draft agenda for the 2026 Council of Geographic Naming Authorities conference would be disseminated when available.

4.3 Executive Secretary for Foreign Names (David D.)

See attached report.

David D. provided additional context regarding NGA's disengagement from participation in UNGEGN activities pending further guidance and noted that consultations with agency leadership remain ongoing. He also stated that the 35th BGN/PCGN Conference had been postponed to November 2027 due to staffing and scheduling considerations.

4.4 Special Committee on Communications (Gaither)

Gaither indicated that since the last DNC meeting, the Committee has been actively working on finalizing edits to the video training script and the storyboard.

4.5 Staff (O'Donnell)

See attached report.

O'Donnell added that one recently received proposal, submitted through a Google Drive link, appeared to propose the name New Ridge for a feature in southwestern Utah. He stated that the intended feature was unclear and that staff would need to clarify whether the proposal referred to a section of one of the long cliffs in the area.

4.6 GNIS and Data Compilation Program (Decker)

Decker reported that the recent State Names Authority Office Hours discussion was helpful in understanding how States use GNIS and what improvements may support future users. She encouraged DNC members planning to attend CoGNA to send any specific GNIS topics or training needs for inclusion in the planned interactive training session. She also noted that the GNIS team continues to process updates received through the help desk and Board actions.

Vice Chair Ellerbe reported he had recent problems accessing GNIS. Decker replied that she had no issues but would check with her developer to ensure there were no concerns.

5. Docket

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

Not Review Listed

Change **Pool Slough** (FID 460359) to **Poole Slough**, Iowa

A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposal.

Vote: 10 in favor
 0 against
 0 abstentions

Change **Lake Katherine** (FID 1223693) to **Lake Katharine**, South Carolina

A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposal.

Vote: 10 in favor
 0 against
 0 abstentions

Review List 432

Change **Benchmark Lake Reservoir** (FID 200543) to **Nottingham Lake**, Colorado

A member asked whether the derogatory/offensive checkbox had been selected in error, and staff confirmed that it had.

Members discussed the local and State support for the proposal, including support from the Town of Avon, the Colorado Geographic Naming Advisory Board, and the Governor of Colorado. Staff explained that, under Colorado's process, the advisory board submits recommendations to the Governor, who then makes the official State recommendation to the DNC.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposal.

Vote: 10 in favor
 0 against
 0 abstentions

Review List 447

Change **Chinamans Canyon** (FID 194666) to **Toisan Canyon**, Colorado

A member asked whether the Foreign Names Committee could consider adding the spelling Toisan as a variant in the Geographic Names Server, noting that the spelling did not appear to be recorded there. The Executive Secretary for Foreign Names Committee stated that the matter could be considered and discussed further offline.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposal.

Vote: 10 in favor
 0 against
 0 abstentions

Review List 459

New name **Sharlette Lake**, Florida

A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposal.

Vote: 9 in favor
 0 against
 1 abstentions

New name **Clark Island**, Pennsylvania

A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposal.

Vote: 7 favor
 1 against
 2 abstentions

The vote against the motion cited that the feature did not appear significant enough to name for Federal use.

Review List 460

New name **Hooten Hollow**, Arkansas

A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposal.

Vote: 10 in favor
 0 against
 0 abstentions

New name **Midas Pond**, Florida

A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposal.

During discussion, members noted that the State and County had responded with no opinion and that there was no opposition to the proposal, although one member expressed hesitation due to the small and potentially ephemeral nature of the feature.

Vote: 8 in favor
 0 against
 2 abstentions

Review List 461

New names **Gnébêk Stream** and **Zhigwenabêk Lake**, Michigan

A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposals.

During discussion, members noted support from the State and from the Tribe-affiliated landowner. Staff explained that the Tribal support was obtained through case-specific follow-up requested by the USGS Office of Tribal Relations and was separate from the standard Tribal outreach process. Members also discussed whether the names had any commercial association; staff stated that the names referred to Tribal culture and language and were not used by businesses associated with the property.

Vote: 10 in favor
 0 against
 0 abstentions

Review List 462

New name **Redford Cove**, Florida

A motion was made and seconded to disapprove the proposal citing the opposition from the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration which did not see a need to name the feature based on local partner input.

During discussion, the NOAA representative stated that the feature did not have a compelling navigational need for labeling and noted that the area is already well developed and contains many nearby labeled features.

Vote: 10 in favor
 0 against
 0 abstentions

New name **Pepper Pond**, New York

A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposal.

Vote: 10 in favor
 0 against
 0 abstentions

6. Other Business

Zahniser asked members to clarify how they interpret stakeholder responses of “no opinion” or no response when voting on proposals, noting that State Names Authorities and advisors had raised questions about how the Committee weighs those responses. Members discussed that “no opinion” and no response are distinct, but that neither constitutes affirmative support. Members also noted that the significance of those responses may vary depending on the context of the proposal, the feature, and whether there is opposition or other supporting information.

Members also discussed whether features may be named if they are not represented in the National Hydrography Dataset (NHD). Staff clarified that DNC actions apply to geographic features rather than to the completeness of geospatial datasets. Decker noted that work is underway to flag named GNIS features that were not previously represented in NHD so that they can be considered during the 3DHP conflation process.

7. Closing

The next Domestic Names Committee meeting will be held June 11, 2026, 2:00 p.m. ET at Department of the Interior, Kiowa Room and accessible via Teams. Chair Tischler thanked all participants for their time and adjourned the meeting.

(signed)

Secretary Zahniser, Executive Secretary
Domestic Names Committee

APPROVED

(signed)

Michael Tischler, Acting Chair
Domestic Names Committee

BGN/Domestic Names Committee Meeting 876
May 14, 2026
Staff Report

Reporting period: March 25, 2026 to April 28, 2026

Proposals received:

(Note that if a proposal's status states "accepted for consideration," this means that it meets the minimum requirements for consideration and inclusion on a Quarterly Review List. This does not imply approval by the DNC. DNC members and staff have not evaluated the justification and support for the proposals.)

It has been part of a large wilderness study area since 1970 but is unlikely to achieve wilderness status soon if ever [<https://www.nps.gov/grca/learn/wilderness.htm>]. The proposed name conforms to the names the general feature already has.

Proposal type	Proposed name	GNIS feature type	State	Status
new name	Upper Coal Branch Creek	stream	IN, IL	- not accepted for consideration, pending clarification - locally reported name - flows into Coal Branch; Coal Creek is a nearby feature - proponent will need to accept Upper Coal Branch as name to be considered
new name	Willard Lane Mountain	summit	NY	- not accepted for consideration, pending clarification - naming for local resident - proponent will need to justify the full name
new name	Gilbert Point	summit	AZ	- not accepted for consideration, pending clarification - naming for USGS geologist Grove Karl Gilbert (1843-1918) - in proposed Grand

				Canyon Wilderness proponent needs to provide justification beyond “It has been part of a large wilderness study area since 1970 but is unlikely to achieve wilderness status soon if ever. . . . The proposed name conforms to the names the general feature already has.”
new name	Berky Dell Run	stream	PA	- accepted for consideration - naming for a local resident
new name	unknown	unknown	unknown	- not accepted for consideration, pending resubmission - submitted as Google Drive link - staff asked proponent to send the form as an email attachment

Status change to pending proposals:

Proposal type	Proposed name	GNIS feature type	State	Status
new name withdrawn by proponent	Carol Park	flat	WY	- withdrawn by proponent - proponent provided information about a person they did not intend to honor with the name - proponent reports that they will submit a new proposal for consideration
new name pending	Paemasing Creek	stream	PA	proposal incomplete and not added to QRL

consideration				463 staff needs to ask proponent to provide more biographical details
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Inquiries received:

Inquiry type	Proposed name	GNIS feature type	State	Status
proposal status inquiries	various	various		- many - staff provided updates
Name origin/history	Teddys Peak	summit	CO	- Phase I entry, no records - staff responded and stated that USFS might have information
name process	unknown	island	ID	staff sent instructions
name process	unknown	summit	WV	staff sent instructions
GNIS content	n/a	n/a	n/a	- former USGS employee asked what happened to information about the history of all the names in GNIS that used to be available - staff referred inquirer to GNIS staff
Policy clarification	n/a	n/a	n/a	- inquirer asked “Does this state that even if Congress names a feature in a designated Wilderness, the DNC will not allow it?” - Staff replied to point out Policy I. Names Considered or Established by Congress or the President
name process	unknown	lake/reservoir	TX	staff sent instructions
name process	change Mount Diablo	summit	CA	- from TNM Help staff - inquirer asked about “any additional

				requirements, documentation standards, or procedural steps necessary to ensure the proposal aligns with BGN policies” for a proposal to rename Mount Diablo in California • suggested change is Tuyshtak, one of the several Indigenous names for the summit • DNC staff informed TNM Help staff about past proposals to change the name that were not approved and that staff doesn’t advise on what makes a compelling proposal
name process	unknown	stream	LA	• staff sent instructions
revisit process for a name change not approved	Iley Lake to Kapavik Lake	reservoir	TX	• proponent asked what the process was • stated they would ask local government to support proposal rather than state no objection so that the Texas Geographic Names Committee might reconsider their recommendation against the proposal
name process	unknown	falls	NC	• unnamed waterfall on proponent’s property to be named for their late wife • staff shared the instructions • proponent asked if the five-year waiting period

				for commemorative names noted in the instructions and on the form is correct and asked if there was an easier way: “Also, is this the process for naming any geological feature in the U.S.? Since our property is in North Carolina, can we just contact a representative for the state? It seems like a very in depth process with many questions. Just wondering: is there an easier way?”
Name origin/history	Metcalf Lake	lake	MI	• Phase I entry, no records • staff responded

Media requests received:

- *San Antonio Express-News* about the Cyber Beach proposal (QRL 462): “Can you share the change request documents and any other details? Who requested it? When? When will it be reviewed?”
 - Staff provided USGS OCAP with summary and proposal files with PII redacted to share with the reporter

State Name Authority/Advisor activity:

- DNC staff attended the 4/16/26 [Wyoming Board on Geographic Names](#) meeting
- The DNC hosted State Names Authority (SNA) Office Hours on 4/27/26
- DNC staff met with and began briefing the new contacts for the [Wisconsin Geographic Names Council](#) (WGNC) and will review pending proposals for features in Wisconsin received by both the DNC and the WGNC. They also discussed updating DNC guidelines that are included on the WGNC [Wisconsin Geographic Names Council Naming Policies](#).
- DNC staff attended the 4/28/26 [Arizona State Board on Geographic and Historic Names](#) meeting

**Executive Secretary Report
Domestic Names Committee Meeting
May 14, 2026**

Annual Report:

The FY25 Annual Report is complete and has been voted on by the Board. Comments have been addressed and staffing up to Secretary Burgum is currently underway.

Board Membership:

Appointments for the 2025-2027 term continue to be vetted. At this point in time, all DOI members and deputies should have made intentions for continued service or made recommendations for new members/deputies to your bureau leadership.

Special Committee Native American Names and Tribal Communications

Following the retirement of USGS deputy member Chris Hammond at the end of April, this Special Committee Chair remains vacant. Exec Sec Zahniser is working with FNC Exec Sec and Full Board Chair to determine a path forward. Anyone interested in taking on the Chair role, please contact Exec Secretaries and BGN Full Board Chair.

Office Hours

On 27 April, the DNC Exec Sec hosted the monthly office hours with the State Naming Authorities and Advisors. Six States including AK, MO, MN, CA, WA, and AZ attended, and the group discussion was focused on how States use GNIS, improvements they would like to see, and identify new requirements that would benefit all. Exec Sec Zahniser will also be sharing proposed revisions to feature codes in GNIS in the coming weeks for States and Federal Agencies for voluntary comment. Additional discussion included the desire for GNIS training at the upcoming CoGNA conference to include step by step walkthroughs and interactive learning rather than presentation style. The Council on Geographic Naming Authorities Conference will take place 21-25 September in Sacramento, CA. Draft agenda in progress and Exec Sec will disseminate when available.

ACAN Collaboration with New Zealand

The Advisory Committee for Antarctic Names has received a list from New Zealand of features classified as “harbors” (62 total) that are no longer in GNIS. This may stem from Antarctic features being amalgamated with domestic names in 2021, and the harbor features being left out. BGN and ACAN staff are working together to validate the feature information and will share it with the GNIS data manager to make them available (most likely under the feature class of “bay”).



United States Board on Geographic Names

883rd Domestic Names Committee Meeting

BGN Executive Secretary for Foreign Names Report

May 14, 2026

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN NAMES REPORT

May 14, 2026

1) MEETINGS

The next FNC meeting (Meeting 425) is scheduled for Tuesday, June 9, 2026. On the agenda thus far are recommendation papers pertaining to Nepal, Norway, Turkey, and Vietnam, country policies for Mexico and South Korea, a policy update on Name Ranks, and an annual update on Anglicized names.

Critical issues:

Nothing significant to report.

2) OTHER BUSINESS

Another round of user-testing by FNC Staff of the latest GNS dissemination system build, part of NGA's ongoing Vector and Cartographic Production System (VCPS) development, is scheduled for late May, concluding in early June. This additional assessment of the GNS build will ensure all needed refinements, identified during testing in March, are in place. Deployment of this update is expected to occur during the mid-June to early July timeframe. The GNS Geographic Names Search Application will have a new look while the overall user interface will remain much the same. Added enhancements include the ability to add data layers and to save queries.

Following the release of the Presidential Memorandum on January 7, 2026, which in turn builds on Executive Order 14199 (*Withdrawing the United States from and Ending Funding to Certain United Nations Organizations and Reviewing United States Support to All International Organizations*), the NGA personnel comprising the FNC's Staff and Secretariat disengaged from involvement with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) and will remain so unless otherwise directed. UNGEGN falls under the UN's Department of Economic and Social Affairs, which is specifically cited in the President's Memorandum. The FNC has previously been an active participant in UNGEGN's working groups for Toponymic Terminology and Romanization Systems.

The Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (PCGN) is once again generously hosting FNC staff at the PCGN's London office for the week-long Toponymic Exchange, scheduled for the week of September 14-18, 2026. FNC staff will have the unique opportunity to collaborate with UK counterparts on a variety of geographic names standardization and romanization issues, bringing to bear their expertise and further contributing to this critical partnership.

Based on a variety of staff and scheduling considerations, in coordination with leadership at the PCGN, it was jointly decided to reschedule the 35th BGN/PCGN Conference for November of 2027.

Upcoming Meetings and Events (listed in chronological order)

- The 425th Foreign Names Committee meeting is scheduled for 1:00 p.m. EDT on June 9, 2026.
- The 374th Advisory Committee on Undersea Features (ACUF) meeting is tentatively planned for June 23, 2026.
- The 300th BGN full board meeting is scheduled for 1:30 p.m. EDT on July 21, 2026.

**U.S. BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES
DOMESTIC NAMES COMMITTEE
DOCKET
May 2026**

Unless otherwise specified, in accordance with the BGN's Policy 10: 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.

Please note that if an interested party's recommendation is recorded as "no opinion," that reflects the response of the interested party. If an interested party did not respond at all, the recommendation is recorded as "no response."

Not Review Listed

Correct spelling of **Pool Slough** (FID [460359](#)) to **Poole Slough**, Iowa
[43.4858066, -91.2887449](#)

Local government	Allamakee County Supervisors	No response
State Names Authority	Iowa State Names Authority	No objection
Federal	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	No opinion
Federally recognized Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	Not contacted

	Established by Congress/President	Derogatory and Offensive	Long
x	Name Change	Diacritics	Tribal
x	Commemorative	Duplicate or Similar	Commercial
	Wilderness Area	Variant	Animal

This spelling correction proposal was submitted on February 20, 2026 by Janice Chrystal, a resident of Center Point, Iowa (about 90 miles southwest of the feature). The slough is in Allamakee County and is classified as a Gut in GNIS.

The proponent states that the name should be corrected because "the correct spelling is Poole and is named after Charles Poole. The 1872 map for Allamakee County, Iowa, township Iowa shows the land owner Charles Poole." She provided a link to the [1872 Map of Allamakee County, Iowa by John G. Ratcliffe](#).

The proponent also stated that "[w]e are unaware when the spelling was changed omitting the e. I am Charles' great-great granddaughter. My family and I have often discussed

addressing this but never have got around to doing so.” She also shared a post on the IAGenWeb webpage about [Charlies Poole](#).

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources manages the Pool Slough Wildlife Management Area (also noted in State data and documents as [Pool Slough Wildlife Area](#)). Approximately 500 feet of the slough lies within the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge.

The Allamakee County Supervisors did not respond to a request for their recommendation; the staff’s email noted that if they did not respond, the DNC would assume they had no objections.

The Iowa State Names Authority has no objection to the proposed correction based on a response from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources stating that they are not opposed to the change and there would be no "immediate action. . . to reflect the name change [in State products or signage]."

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service defers to the State’s recommendation because the correction would primarily affect State use of the name.

Not Review Listed

Correct spelling of **Lake Katherine** (FID [1223693](#)) to **Lake Katharine**, South Carolina [34.0033702, -80.9637482](#)

Local government	Columbia City Council	No objection
	Richland County Council	No response
State Names Authority	South Carolina State Names Authority	Support
Federally recognized Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	Not contacted

	Established by Congress/President	Derogatory and Offensive	Long
x	Name Change	Diacritics	Tribal
x	Commemorative	Duplicate or Similar	Commercial
	Wilderness Area	Variant	Animal

This spelling correction proposal was submitted on February 20, 2026 [note, the same date as the Poole Slough proposal] by George Strickland, Director of Research for the South Carolina Senate Agricultural & Natural Resources Committee. Mr. Strickland submitted the proposal on behalf of a local family who are related to the person for which the lake was named. The lake is classified as a Reservoir in GNIS and is in the City of Columbia and Richland County.

The proponent reported that the lake was named for Katharine Heath Manning (1904-1998):

The lake was developed and named by Mr. Burwell Deas Manning Jr., after his mother, Mrs. Katharine Heath Manning, who served as a community leader and founder of the Junior League of Columbia [in 1924]. . . . Katharine Heath Manning was the daughter of a prominent Columbia businessman and founder of Heathwood Hall Episcopal School, as well as a prominent member of Trinity Cathedral. . . .

The proponent provided the following describing Mrs. Manning's direct or long-term association with the feature:

The Manning family owned much of the property East of Columbia. The US Army began using the area for Camp Jackson during WWII. Upon returning it to the family after the war, Burwell Manning Jr. developed the area and named the [lake] after his mother.

The proponent provided the following describing Mrs. Manning's significant contribution to the community, area, or state around the feature:

Founder of Columbia Junior League. Member of South Carolina Assembly debutante society. Member of Colonial Dames. Co-Founder of Pine Tree Hunt Club of Columbia.

The proponent stated that the name should be corrected because it is a misspelling of the correct name. . . . The family of Mrs. Katharine Heath Manning are still very active in the area and most local citizens recognize the misspelling. This correction would eliminate confusion in communication. . . . Her family is still very active in the community today and deserve the respect of the lake name being accurate.

To support the proposed spelling correction, the proponent noted that “The SC general assembly has recognized the proper spelling in various legislative products” and provided the following online references to support the proposed correction:

- [Gills Creek Watershed Association - History](#) (lake name)
- [Facts about Gills Creek Watershed - Columbia Star](#) (lake name)
- [South Carolina Senate Resolution 1129 \(Session 125\)](#) (honoree’s name)
- [Columbia City Council Resolution 2013-030](#) (honoree’s name)
- [Tuition & Affordability | Heathwood Hall](#) (honoree's name)
- [Our History – The Junior League of Columbia](#) (honoree's name)
- [Intersection of Elizabeth and Devine Streets - Heathwood | Historic Columbia](#) (honoree's name)

The Columbia City Manager replied that the City has no objection to the correction.

The South Carolina State Names Authority supports the correction.

Review List 432

Change **Benchmark Lake Reservoir** (FID [200543](#)) to **Nottingham Lake**, Colorado [39.6373231, -106.5303121](#)

Local government	Avon Town Council	Support
	Eagle County Commissioners	No opinion
State Names Authority	Colorado Geographic Naming Advisory Board	Support
Federally recognized Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response
Other	Eagle County Historical Society	Support

	Established by Congress/President		Derogatory and Offensive		Long
x	Name Change		Diacritics		Tribal
x	Commemorative	x	Duplicate or Similar		Commercial
	Wilderness Area		Variant		Animal

This proposal is to change the name of Benchmark Lake Reservoir in the Town of Avon in Eagle County to Nottingham Lake. It was submitted on July 10, 2018 by Grant Wilcox, a GIS Analyst with Colorado Parks and Wildlife, part of the Colorado Department of Natural Resources.

The 15-acre reservoir is in Harry A. Nottingham Park, managed by the town. The proponent proposed the change to be consistent with longstanding local use.

Town records report that the reservoir was constructed in 1980 to provide emergency water for the community. The park was named for Harry A. Nottingham (1890-1966), a member of a local ranching family whose land was sold to developers in 1972. Research conducted by the Eagle County Historical Society noted that Harry Nottingham was elected Eagle County commissioner in 1933, serving for 32 years; the Society wrote that “[a] lot of good work got done under his leadership. A lot of bridge building and road development, and stuff like that, so he should be honored.” The town of Avon was incorporated in August 1978, with Harry’s son Allan Nottingham as its first mayor.

An August 29, 2023 Vail Daily article, “[Everyone calls it Nottingham Lake, so why isn’t that the official name of Avon landmark?](#)” reported that the then-president of Benchmark Companies suggested making the area a park in 1979.

This is likely why the lake was named ‘Benchmark Lake Reservoir’ on official documents, though even in the early planning stages the company president referred to the lake as “Nottingham Lake.” Benchmark Companies transferred ownership of the park to the town of Avon in 1980. It is unclear

whether the company or town was aware of the two separate names for the lake.

The GNIS entry for Benchmark Lake Reservoir was recorded from a 1981 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) inventory of dams and reservoirs. The current USACE National Inventory of Dams (NID) lists the dam here as [Benchmark Lake](#) with Nottingham Lake as an other name.

The name Benchmark Lake Reservoir was first labeled on USGS maps in 2011. However, a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood map published in 2007 used the name [Nottingham Lake](#), as do the current FEMA National Flood Hazard Layer data, the website of the Town of Avon, Google Maps, and other local websites. The *Eagle County Colorado Fishing & Floating Guide Book*, published in 2016, used the name Avon City Park Lake and listed the following variant names: Benchmark Lake Reservoir, Harry A. Nottingham Park Lake, and Nottingham Park Lake.

GNIS lists several nearby features with “Nottingham” in their names. [Nottingham Reservoir](#), also added to GNIS from the same USACE inventory of dams and reservoirs, is 2.1 miles to the east on Nottingham Gulch. The current NID lists the dam here as [Nottingham](#). A canal named [Nottingham and Puder Ditch](#) is located to the east of the reservoir. Neither of these names are used on current FEMA maps. Nottingham Road runs along the north side of Harry A. Nottingham Park.

In correspondence with the Town of Avon, BGN staff noted that Nottingham Reservoir is close by and asked if there would be confusion if the proposed change was approved. The Town Engineer responded

There is an existing Nottingham Lake/dam [sic] north of the Post Blvd interchange [this is the officially named Nottingham Reservoir]. Having duplicate names with the State Engineer’s office will be confusing. I don’t think that impacts what people informally call [the reservoir officially named Benchmark Lake Reservoir]. We can continue to call it Nottingham Lake on the website, promotional materials, etc.

The Town’s Capital Improvements Plan, published in September 2023, refers to the smaller reservoir as Nottingham Reservoir and the one in question as Nottingham Lake. The recent news article added, “As for the existing Nottingham Reservoir, . . . [the current] manager for the town of Avon said its name should not be an obstruction to moving forward with the renaming of Benchmark Lake Reservoir.”

At its November 2018 meeting, the DNC voted to defer the proposal in order to ask the Town if it intended to pursue a name change for the smaller Nottingham Reservoir. The DNC also expressed a concern regarding the number of features in Avon already named “Nottingham.” The DNC agreed to allow the town six months to initiate a proposal but if none was received, the DNC would proceed with a decision. There was no response. The DNC’s vote occurred without input from Colorado; this was proposed during the time between when the former

Colorado Board on Geographic Names ceased operating due to the retirement of its chair, and the formation of the [Colorado Geographic Naming Advisory Board](#) (CGNAB) in 2020.

In early 2019, the BGN staff asked the Governor of Colorado for a recommendation on behalf of the State. No response was received.

The CGNAB voted on August 17, 2023 to recommend approval of the name after considering it for the first time. The vote to recommend approval was based on the support from the Town and explicitly stated lack of opinion from the County. On April 13, 2026, CGNAB shared Governor Polis' concurrence with their recommendation per their bylaws. CGNAB contacted the Southern Ute Indian Tribe of the Southern Ute Reservation, Colorado and the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, but did not receive any responses.

Review List 447

Change **Chinamans Canyon** (FID) to **Toisan Canyon**, Colorado

Mouth: [37.2283282, -104.6981198](#) / Source: [37.2405582, -104.7325215](#)

Local government	Las Animas County Commissioners	No response
State Names Authority	Colorado Geographic Naming Advisory Board	Support
Federally recognized Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response
Other	Montezuma Land Conservancy*	Support
	Lincoln Hills Cares*	Support
	Colorado Mountain College, Outdoor Studies, Avalanche Science and Wellness*	Support
	Project Mosaic LLC, Indigenous-Woman Owned Firm*	Support

* contacted or received by Colorado Geographic Naming Advisory Board

	Established by Congress/President	x	Derogatory and Offensive		Long
x	Name Change		Diacritics		Tribal
	Commemorative		Duplicate or Similar		Commercial
	Wilderness Area		Variant		Animal

This proposal is to change the name of Chinamans Canyon, a 2.2-mile-long valley in Las Animas County northwest of Trinidad, to Toisan Canyon. The canyon is on private land.

The proposal was submitted on February 2, 2022 by Laura Merrin, who did not provide their place of residence. Ms. Merrin submitted the proposal on behalf of the proponent, Peggy Lore, a representative of Colorado Asian Pacific United (CAPU) which is based in Denver, Colorado and is “a coalition of Asian American and Pacific Islander leaders, creatives, and allies in Denver.”

The proponent wrote

We are proposing a name change for Chinamans Canyon to Toisan Canyon to recognize the Chinese who were an integral part of the history of Colorado, but who, with few exceptions, have remained faceless and nameless. . . . The Chinese who were the early pioneers and the first to come [to the United States] were primarily, if not exclusively, from the Guangdong (Canton as it was known then) region, and from a specific province, Toisan. They were Toisan men, and this renaming of Chinamans Canyon to Toisan Canyon would move one step closer to acknowledging them and their contributions.

The proponent also mentions Chinese immigrant work on railroads throughout the western United States and contemporaneous anti-Chinese views and policies:

These men were not recorded or credited by name for their work. . . . As animosity toward the Chinese grew, hostility was fueled by the Rocky Mountain newspaper carrying on the Hearst message, the Chinese were driven out of these places. Even though many did not welcome the Chinese, it appears that their presence was noted in Colorado. Names of geographic areas like China Creek, Chinamans Gulch, and Chinaman Canyon continued the use of derogatory terms. Chinese who lived, worked, and died in these parts of Colorado remained nameless. Records were not kept of most of these people. They were not buried in town cemeteries, were not allowed to become citizens, not allowed judicial rights, but had a distinction of being the only Asian nationality to be named with the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act

USGS topographic maps first labeled Chinamans Canyon in 1951. Local news articles from 1992, 1993, and 2017 referenced variant spellings Chinaman Canyon and Chinaman's Canyon. [USGS Water-Supply Paper 2288](#), published in 1989, mentioned nearby features named "Chinaman [Spring]" and "Chinaman Canyon Spring," but neither of these are listed in GNIS.

The BGN's Foreign Names Committee (FNC) recognizes the name Taicheng as the official name of the fourth-order administrative division also known as "Toisan." "Toisan" is not recognized as a variant name, but "Taishan," "Toishan," and "Toyshan" are. Many online sources refer to the region as Toisan and note the high emigration of Toisan residents to the United States. A member of the Colorado Geographic Naming Advisory Board conferred with the CAPU, which confirmed that the name Toisan is widely used for the area in China.

The [Colorado Geographic Naming Advisory Board](#) (CGNAB) voted on August 17, 2023 to recommend approval of the name after first considering the proposal on August 18, 2022. CGNAB members discussed the comment from the FNC but noted that the spelling "Toisan" was confirmed by both the proponent and a member of the CGNAB who is a professor of Chinese History at the University of Colorado Boulder. On April 13, 2026, CGNAB shared Governor Polis' concurrence with their recommendation per their bylaws.

Review List 459

New name **Sharlette Lake**, Florida

[28.544538, -82.559621](#)

Local government	Hernando County Commissioners	No response
State Names Authority	Florida State Names Authority	No opinion
Federally recognized Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

	Established by Congress/President	Derogatory and Offensive	Long
	Name Change	Diacritics	Tribal
x	Commemorative	Duplicate or Similar	Commercial
	Wilderness Area	Variant	Animal

The new name Sharlette Lake is proposed for an officially unnamed 5.2-acre lake in Hernando County. The proposal was submitted on February 25, 2026 by Rex Wilkins, a resident of Spring Hill, Florida who owns the property that contains the lake.

The proponent wrote that

[t]he Hernando [C]ounty [C]ommissioners, [B]uilding [D]epartment and [P]lanning and [Z]oning have referred me to this application. They stated in their responses to my inquiry and other departments that I own the lake and it is my right to name it.

The proponent intends to commemorate his sister, Sharlette Lynn Wilkins Peters (1964—2013):

I wanted to name this lake after her for her love of nature, camping and fishing with children. She was a local nurse who always provided a space in her home for needy children. She often would buy bikes, clothing and supplies for needy children in the neighboring areas. She gave homeless children a place of solace in times when their own home lives were filled full of chaos and abuses. She could often be seen fishing with children at my lake and the neighboring rivers. It was not the fish she gained and caught, it was the trust and respect of needy children in the areas. [Her] funeral at 48 years old was conducted by the children who loved her. One twin girl walked about 30 miles to attend, when asked why she did not call for a ride she said she needed a good cry. She donated her entire paycheck to funeral expenses as most of our family depleted our savings trying to save Sharlette's life from cancer. This lake will exist forever in my family for the enjoyment of children, to fish, kayak, camp, and picnic on the island. Recently I watched a young girl fishing while her older brother paddled the canoe. She caught large bass,

and other fish, she simply talked to each, gave them a kiss and released the fish. I see no better memorial for Sharlette than this lake representing her.

GNIS lists eleven features with “Charlotte” in the names in Florida, the closest of which is Charlotte Pond in Hernando County approximately 16 miles to the southeast.

The Hernando County Commissioners did not provide any formal response. The County Administrator stated that “[a]t this point the County has no objection.”

The Florida State Names Authority stated

Florida State Board of Geographic Names will offer no opinion on the Sharlette Lake proposal. I do not have any experience with commemorative name[s] like this. There is a connection to the land but I would not call it significant. This proposal is completely on private property so there are no governing entities with an interest.

Review List 459

New name **Clark Island**, Pennsylvania

[41.594197, -79.210756](#)

Local government	Kinsley Township Supervisors	No objection
	Forest County Commissioners	No response
State Names Authority	Pennsylvania Geographic Names Committee	No opinion
Federally recognized Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

	Established by Congress/President	Derogatory and Offensive	Long
	Name Change	Diacritics	Tribal
x	Commemorative	Duplicate or Similar	Commercial
	Wilderness Area	Variant	Animal

The new name Clark Island is proposed for an island of less than one acre in Tionesta Creek, in Kinsley Township, Forest County. It is upstream of an island locally known as “PK Island,” a name not recorded in GNIS. The island is located on a private inholding within the proclaimed boundary of Allegheny National Forest.

The proposal was submitted on January 18, 2025 by Scott Clark a resident of Cochranton, Pennsylvania, located 50 miles west of the island. The proponent owns land along Tionesta Creek south of the island.

The name would honor the proponent's father, Larry David Clark (1945–1997). The proponent wrote:

He was very well liked around this area, (Mayburg, PA) where he had a camp he visited frequently. He was a Vietnam Veteran, and was known to be a great friend and generous man. I . . . own a camp and property directly south of this island, and my mother still owns and visits the property that my dad loved so much. It would truly be an honor to have this island named after him. . . .

Dad and I would wade across the water (Tionesta Creek) to the island because our dogs loved running through the high grass and splashing in the shallows.

The Kinsley Township Secretary reported that the Township Supervisors “have no objection to the proposed naming of the island as Clark Island” without any further comments.

The Pennsylvania Geographic Names Committee stated that they have no opinion about the proposal: “At this time, [we] would like to remain neutral. Not sure that the proposal is in line with the naming policy but recognizing that the local community of Kingsley is in support.”

GNIS lists a feature named Clark Island in Pennsylvania located approximately 50 miles west of the proposed island.

Review List 460

New name **Hooten Hollow**, Arkansas

Mouth: [35.94347, -92.81189](#) / Source: [35.94703, -92.81713](#)

Local government	Searcy County Quorum Court	No objection
State Names Authority	Arkansas Geographic Names Authority	Support
Federally recognized Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

Established by Congress/President	Derogatory and Offensive	Long
Name Change	Diacritics	Tribal
Commemorative	Duplicate or Similar	Commercial
Wilderness Area	Variant	Animal

The new name Hooten Hollow is proposed for a half-mile-long officially unnamed valley in Searcy County, Arkansas. The proposal was submitted on May 7, 2025 by Nathan Edwards, a resident of Parkville, Missouri who owns the land that contains the valley. The valley is west of Wildcat Hollow that trends into the valley of Calf Creek.

The proponent stated that their family has owned the run of the hollow for years. When camping and exploring, we're always surprised to hear the variety of owls that have taken residency there. The name "Hooten" has been ubiquitous amongst all my family. We plan on owning and keeping this hollow wild indefinitely.

The proponent initially submitted the name "Hooten" without a generic term. The proponent included the term "Hollow" when asked by DNC staff.

The Searcy County Judge stated that he had no objections to the proposal.

The Arkansas Geographic Names Authority stated that we see no conflict and/or have any objections from the Office of the State Geologist and the Arkansas Geographic Names Authority (State Geologist) perspective and recommend its consideration and approval by the BGN.

GNIS contains one record of a feature named Hooten Hollow in Arkansas, 40 miles to the southeast in Van Buren County. GNIS contains a record of a feature named Hoot Owl Hollow in Arkansas, 69 miles to the northwest in Benton County.

New name **Midas Pond**, Florida

[28.7048382, -81.1177918](#)

Local government	Seminole County Commissioners	No opinion
State Names Authority	Arkansas Geographic Names Authority	No opinion
Federally recognized Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

Established by Congress/President	Derogatory and Offensive	Long
Name Change	Diacritics	Tribal
Commemorative	Duplicate or Similar	Commercial
Wilderness Area	Variant	Animal

This new name Midas Pond is proposed for an unnamed 2-acre feature in Seminole County. The proposal was submitted on May 27, 2025 by Stephen Lau, a resident of Geneva, Florida who owns property that contains part of the pond. Three other parcels contain part of the lake. The pond was first mapped on USGS maps after the development of the National Hydrography Dataset. Prior maps showed only a small part of the larger pond. If approved, the feature would be classified as a reservoir in GNIS.

The proponent wrote:

During and before sunset, the pond will become golden in appearance. Inspired by a famous movie in the 80's starred by Henry Fonda, this tranquil and well maintained pond deserves a beautiful name to describe its uniqueness. . . . Midas. . . refers to a legendary Phrygian King known for his golden touch, [and] Midas Pond will be a name which can convene golden meaning and elegant nature.

The proposal was reviewed by the Seminole County Commissioners, the County Manager, and the Environmental Services Department. The Environmental Services Department Director responded on behalf of the County, stating “[t]his waterbody appears to be manmade and is wholly within private parcels with no associated public infrastructure, therefore, the county staff has no opinion regarding its naming.”

The Florida State Names Authority stated that the pond appears to be wholly on private property and does not appear to impact any Florida agency that I was able to identify. I could find no evidence to indicate the name has any ties to person or family, therefore the Florida State Names Authority will have no opinion on the proposed name Midas Pond.

GNIS contains no records of any features in Florida with names that contain “Midas.”

Review List 461

New names **Gnébêk Creek** and **Zhigwenabêk Lake**, Michigan

Gnébêk Stream: Mouth: [42.74373, -86.074423](#) / Source: [42.736551, -86.059927](#)

Zhigwenabêk Lake: [42.74291, -86.06700](#)

Local government	City of Holland City Council	No objection
	Allegan County Commissioners	No response
State Names Authority	Michigan Geographic Names Authority	Support
Federally recognized Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response
	Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi, Michigan	Support

Established by Congress/President	Derogatory and Offensive		Long
Name Change	Diacritics	x	Tribal
Commemorative	Duplicate or Similar		Commercial
Wilderness Area	Variant		Animal

The new names Gnébêk Creek and Zhigwenabêk Lake are proposed for a stream and a reservoir, respectively, in the City of Holland, Allegan County. Both features are officially unnamed. The Zhigwenabêk Lake proposal was submitted on July 28, 2025. The Gnébêk Creek proposal was submitted on July 31, 2025. Both names are Potawatomi (Bodéwadmi) words. The stream name was initially proposed as “Gnébêk Stream,” but the proponent later amended the name.

The stream flows into an unnamed stream that then flows into the North Branch Macatawa River. The reservoir is not connected to the stream.

Both proposals were submitted by Nichole Mason, a Senior Project Manager at BLDI Environmental Engineering in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Ms. Mason submitted the proposals on behalf of the proponent, Nathan Ruffer, a Business Development Analyst and Marketing Manager at Waséyabek Real Estate Group in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The reservoir is entirely on and the stream flows through land owned by Mshiké Property Group, LLC, which is owned by Waséyabek Real Estate Group. The proponent stated that the properties were “recently acquired by Mshiké Property Group, LLC, which is 100% owned and operated by Waséyabek Real Estate Group. Waséyabek is a 100% Tribally-owned holding company that manages the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi’s non-gaming economic development activities. . . . BLDI was engaged by a representative of Mshiké Property Group, LLC to submit this proposal. . . .”

The proponent stated that the features need official federal names because “[t]he property containing the unnamed lake [and partly containing the stream] was recently purchased by a Federally recognized Tribal entity, and the Tribal members wish to name the feature.”

The proponent stated that the meaning and significance of the names are

- “[Zhigwenabêk] is a Potawatomi word that means ‘arrowhead or ‘flintstone’, because [the lake] resembles that shape from the air. The word ‘arrowhead’ fits with the use of the property, which is trucking/logistics and warehousing. Like an arrowhead, trucks from these companies are ‘launched’ to their targets.”
- [Gnébêk] “is a Potawatomi word that means ‘snake’, because it resembles the shape of a snake.”

The DNC member representing the USGS Office of Tribal Relations asked staff to request a letter showing that Waséyabek Real Estate Group was acting as an agent for the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi, Michigan. Homer A. Mandoka, the Tribal Council Chairman, wrote a letter stating

On behalf of the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi (“NHBP”), a federally recognized Indian tribe, the NHBP Tribal Council submits this letter in support of the applications to name a lake and a stream located on property recently acquired by Waséyabek Development Company, LLC, through its subsidiary Mshiké Property Group, LLC (“Waséyabek”), a wholly owned tribal entity created under the laws of and for the benefit of NHBP. . . .

NHBP has a longstanding cultural, historical, and linguistic connection to the lands and waters within its ancestral territory. Consistent with that connection, the proposed Bodéwadmi names for the lake and stream have been carefully reviewed and vetted by NHBP’s Cultural Department to ensure linguistic accuracy, historical appropriateness, and cultural integrity. NHBP affirms that the proposed names reflect the Bodéwadmi culture, history and language.

NHBP fully supports Waséyabek’s efforts to restore and recognize Bodéwadmi names through this naming request. As a wholly owned tribal business entity, Waséyabek is authorized to submit and pursue this geographic name change application on behalf of NHBP. This authorization includes engagement with the Board and any related federal, state or local authorities as part of the review and approval process.

NHBP respectfully requests that the Board give favorable consideration to these applications, which represents an important step in honoring NHBP’s language, culture and enduring relationship to these lands and waters.

USGS NHD classifies the feature proposed to be named Gnébêk Creek as a “CanalDitch.” The submitter stated that “[a]ccording to Heather Knight with the Allegan County Drain

Office, there is no established county drain in this area.” NHD classification of this feature as a canal or ditch does not prohibit the BGN from considering a name that includes “Creek.”

The City of Holland City Manager wrote “I am not aware of any issues this would create with our processes, or that of our partnering municipalities at Allegan County. We have no objections to this change being made on federal maps.”

The Michigan State Names Advisor stated that “based on the [proposal and the responses from the City and Tribe], the State supports the name changes [sic] from unnamed to Gnébêk [Creek] and Zhigwenabêk Lake.”

Review List 462

New name **Redford Cove**, Florida

[30.03299, -81.6653](#)

Local government	St. Johns County Commissioners	No objection
State Names Authority	Florida State Names Authority	No opinion
Federal	NOAA	Opposed
Federally recognized Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

Established by Congress/President	Derogatory and Offensive	Long
Name Change	Diacritics	Tribal
Commemorative	Duplicate or Similar	Commercial
Wilderness Area	Variant	Animal

The new name Redford Cove is proposed for an officially unnamed feature on the east side of the Saint Johns River in St. Johns County. The proposal was submitted on March 26, 2025 by Carlton C. Smith, a resident of St. Johns, Florida. The feature would be classified as a Bay in GNIS.

The proponent initially proposed the name as “Redfords Bay” but after questions from DNC staff about the meaning of the name and the shape of the feature, amended the name to Redford Cove to avoid potential commemorative interpretation and have the name better represent its geometry. (Note: the DNC does not formally define what is a bay or a cove.)

The proponent wrote that the name
is proposed to commemorate the concept associated with resilience and contribution to local history and ecological stewardship. The name serves as a tribute to the enduring connection between communities and the waterways that sustain them.

The proponent wrote that naming the feature would

- “align[] with efforts to honor Florida’s rich history while recognizing the ecological and cultural importance of its waterways. This proposal contributes to preserving local heritage while fostering community engagement with the natural environment. . . .”
- “contribute to more precise navigation and mapping of the St. Johns River, similar to how historical landmarks like Popo Point and Hallows Cove have been identified [Popo Point is between this feature and Hallows Cove. Popo Point’s name refers to a nearby Spanish fort. Hallows Cove’s name refers to the Hallows family who

lived there starting in the 19th century]. . . . [This would e]nhance navigation and mapping accuracy for recreational and commercial activities.”

- “enhance local identity, much like how the name ‘New Switzerland’ has become part of the area's character [this refers to the New Switzerland plantation dating to the 1770s. New Switzerland Point is named 1.8 miles north of the feature].”
- “[p]romote local identity and pride in Saint Johns County.
- “[s]upport historical preservation efforts by documenting geographic features tied to Florida's cultural heritage.”
- “honor this legacy [over 12,000 years of human activity along the Saint Johns River] while adding specificity to the geographic features of the river. . . . The river itself has undergone several name changes throughout history, reflecting cultural shifts and historical events, such as its early Spanish name ‘Rio de San Juan’ and its current designation as the St. Johns River.”

DNC staff asked the proponent to further explain the meaning of “Redfords” and the significance of this name to this particular feature, especially how it “commemorate[s] the concept associated with resilience and contribution to local history and ecological stewardship” and “serves as a tribute to the enduring connection between communities and the waterways that sustain them.” The proponent responded

- that the name “is not tied to a specific individual but carries significant historical and symbolic meaning rooted in early settlers’ use of the St. [sic] Johns River and its surrounding features” including the importance of fords (“critical for early agricultural communities in Saint [sic] Johns County”) in the area and Jacksonville’s original name, Cowford (“these crossings were [vital] to settlers and their livelihoods. Naming this bay ‘Redfords Bay’ pays homage to this legacy by recognizing its potential role as part of this network of crossings that supported early economic development.”)
- that the name is “highly appropriate for this feature due to its historical, ecological, and cultural significance” with several supporting statements (only statements that are substantially new or expanded from the original proposal statements are included):
 - “This bay may have served as an access point or safe harbor area for settlers navigating the river system or driving cattle along routes that connected agricultural estates and markets.” Note: the proponent did not provide any evidence to support his statement that this cove was the location of a ford.
 - “The bay exemplifies the resilience of Florida’s natural ecosystems, which have adapted over centuries despite human activity. Naming it ‘Redfords Bay’ highlights this resilience while encouraging ongoing conservation efforts.
 - “The ‘Red’ in Redfords reflects the reddish-brown tint of the St. Johns River caused by tannins from decaying vegetation—a defining characteristic of this unique waterway. Additionally, this bay lies within a brackish section of the river. . . . The blending of fresh and saltwater symbolizes both ecological

diversity and adaptability—qualities mirrored by early settlers who relied on these waterways for survival. The name also metaphorically reflects resilience—both in nature’s ability to adapt to changing conditions and in the determination of settlers who used these crossings to build thriving communities.”

- “The proposed name ‘Redfords Bay’ honors both the historical contributions of early settlers who relied on fords for cattle crossings and transportation, as well as the ecological importance of this unnamed bay within the St. Johns River system. It serves as a tribute to resilience, environmental stewardship, and community connection—values deeply rooted in Saint Johns County’s identity.”

DNC staff then asked for the following details and clarifications:

Was there a ford at this particular point on the Saint John River[?]

If so, why are you proposing the name as "Redfords Bay" rather than "Redford Bay" or "Red Ford Bay"? Redfords would imply that the name commemorates a person; "Redford" or "Red Ford" would make it clear that the name does not refer to a person.

Jacksonville (Duval County) is over 15 miles to the north; why is the history of Jacksonville and its origin as "Cowford" relevant to this bay in Saint John County in particular?

The proponent replied

- “Yes, the bay in question includes a shallower point along the St. Johns River that functions as a natural ford during periods of lower water. This physical characteristic made the location a practical crossing point for early settlers, cattle drivers, and travelers.” Note: the proponent did not provide any evidence to support his statement that this cove was the location of a ford.
- “The choice of ‘Redfords Bay’ rather than ‘Redford Bay’ or ‘Red Ford Bay’ is intentional and grounded in both historical and linguistic considerations. . . . The plural ‘fords’ acknowledges the possibility that several nearby shallow crossings existed in this area, rather than a single ford. This usage reflects the dynamic nature of the river’s channels and sandbars, which could create multiple accessible points over time.”
- “There is no intent to commemorate any individual named Redford. The name ‘Redfords’ is meant to evoke the historical function of the location and its distinctive natural features—specifically, the reddish-brown tint of the water and the presence of fords. . . .” Note: the proponent did not provide any evidence to support his statement that this cove was the location of a ford.
- “While Jacksonville. . . is located over 15 miles to the north, the reference is not meant to imply direct geographical proximity, but rather to provide important regional context [about fords]. . . . Recognizing this in the naming of bays and

localities helps preserve an often overlooked aspect of the region's past. . . . This proposed name offers an opportunity to educate residents and visitors about how natural features shaped the growth of multiple counties—not just Jacksonville, but throughout the St. Johns River basin.”

After DNC staff pointed out that the feature looked like other nearby places called “Cove,” the proponent amended the name from Redfords Bay to Redford Cove.

The Chief of Staff of the St. Johns County Administrator stated that “[s]taff have reviewed the request and have no objections to the proposed name.”

The Florida State Names Authority stated that the name does not appear to impact any Florida agency that I was able to identify. I could find no evidence to indicate the name has any ties to person or family, therefore the Florida State Names Authority will have no opinion on the proposed name Redford Cove.

The National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) does not support the proposed name. The DNC member representing NOAA stated that “[o]ur navigation manager reached out to the Northeast Florida Harbor Safety Committee [HSC] Members. . . . The [two] responses were of mixed opinions and there were no charting or safety concerns brought up.” One of the responses stated “I approve of your renaming [sic, NOAA is not proposing this name and it is a new name for an officially unnamed feature], but seem to think you should shorten the name.” The other “stated “[i]t appears to me this is nit [sic] a cove or bay! So I don't understand the need!” The DNC member representing NOAA stated that neither response “is indicating a compelling need to support the proposal. . . . NOAA's main concern with charting is safety and if the HSC isn't seeing a compelling need for this, then we will not support it.”

Review List 462

New name **Pepper Pond**, New York

[41.744398, -73.737356](#)

Local government	Town of Washington Supervisors	Support
	Dutchess County Executive/Legislature	No objection
State Names Authority	New York State Committee on Geographic Names	Support
Federally recognized Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	No response

Established by Congress/President	Derogatory and Offensive	Long
Name Change	Diacritics	Tribal
Commemorative	Duplicate or Similar	Commercial
Wilderness Area	Variant	Animal

The new name Pepper Pond is proposed for an officially unnamed 0.25-acre reservoir in the Town of Washington, Dutchess County. The proposal was submitted on October 13, 2025 by James Duguay, a resident of Millbrook, New York who owns the land that contains the reservoir.

The feature is not shown on USGS topographic maps or in the National Hydrography Dataset but is visible in aerial imagery. The proponent reported the reservoir was built in the late 1970s.

The proponent stated that the feature needs an official federal name because “[i]t is a small, unnamed body of water that connects by stream to another, named small body of water”; that the name refers to the pond’s shape (“oblong shaped like a pepper”); and that the name is appropriate for the pond because “[i]t is an inoffensive name for a body of water that is deserving of a name.” The proponent’s interest in naming the feature is that he “own[s] the pond and it is unnamed.”

The Washington Town Board voted to support the proposal on March 4, 2026. A member of the Dutchess County Executive’s Office reported that the County Executive had “no issues” with the proposal.

The New York State Committee on Geographic Names supports the proposal “given the demonstrated local support.”