

U.S. Board on Geographic Names Domestic Names Committee Quarterly Review List 465

Introduction

Date posted: 10/23/2026

Number of proposals: 13

This Quarterly Review List includes geographic names proposed to the U.S. Board on Geographic Names (BGN) for geographic features in the United States between late June and mid-September. The proposals will be considered by the BGN's Domestic Names Committee (DNC) unless they are withdrawn by the proponent.

Please use the bookmarks in this document for easier navigation.

Any organization, agency, or person may contact the BGN to share their support or opposition to any proposal included in this list.

The proposals may have been submitted for Federal consideration to

- name previously unnamed features
- recognize names in current local use
- resolve conflicts in name spellings, applications, and local usage
- change existing names

The proposed names are not official for Federal use until approved by the BGN. Only one name is official per geographic feature. Variant names and spellings discovered in researching a name are listed under Other Names. These may include names and spellings that formerly were official, historical names known to have been previously associated with the feature, names that conflict with current policies of the BGN, misspellings, and names misapplied to the subject of the proposal.

The BGN allows anyone to submit a proposal as long as it meets the minimum requirements for a complete proposal under the Principles, Policies, and Procedures. After the review process, which involves seeking recommendations from interested parties, the BGN staff presents each case to the BGN for a vote. The BGN makes decisions on each proposal only after the full review process, and bases their decision on the following factors:

- the merits of the proposal
- recommendations and opinions from interested parties
- the DNC's [Domestic Geographic Names Policies](#)

The BGN has purview over the names of natural topographic and hydrographic features; reservoirs, canals, channels, crossings, and levees; and unincorporated populated places. The BGN does not have purview over the names of incorporated populated places, Census Designated Places, Civil divisions, ZIP Codes, or Tribal, Federal, State, local, and private administered land areas.

This Review List has also been posted on the [BGN's website](#).

Please send all comments on the proposals on this Review List to BGNEXEC@usgs.gov.

Alabama

New name Alatenn Island (see Tennessee)

This section intentionally left blank. Case summary is on page 31.

Arizona

New name Barrel Cactus Mountains

Proposal Information

Proposed name	Barrel Cactus Mountains
Proposal type	New name for unnamed feature
Proponent	William Wells; Surprise, Arizona
Date proposed	8/11/2026
BGN case number	6700
Quarterly Review List	465

Feature Details

Primary coordinates	32.884656, -112.176847
Feature class	Range
Feature size	5.3 mi. long, 2.3 mi. wide, highest point 2,662 ft.
Feature description	9.3 mi. NE of Table Top Mountains
Name history	Named for the presence of barrel cactus along the range.
USGS primary topo map	Haley Hills 1:24:000
State(s)	Arizona
County(s)	Pinal County
PLSS	UP 28, T6S, R2E & Sec. T7S, R2E, Gila-Salt River Meridian
Land ownership	Bureau of Land Management / Arizona State Land Department

BGN decisions

- None

Other Names

- Unpublished names: None found
- Published names: None found

Case Summary

This proposal is to apply the name *Barrel Cactus Mountains* to an unnamed mountain range in Pinal County, Arizona. The mountain range is approximately 5 miles long and 2 miles wide, running north to south with a high point at 2,662 feet (National Geodetic Survey station “HAM”). The proposal was submitted on August 11, 2025 by William Wells, resident of Surprise, Arizona.

Regarding the need for an official name, the proponent stated:

There have been scientific fauna range extensions in this mountain range that have been given the county name (Western Pinal County) because there are no names associated with this Mountain Range.

Regarding the meaning and significance of the proposed name:

Barrel Cactus Mountains refer to cactus in the genus *Ferocactus*

Regarding the appropriateness of the proposed name:

I chose the Barrel Cactus Mountains due to all 3 species of Barrel Cactus (Ferocactus) occur there.

Regarding their interest in the naming of the feature:

To use as a geographic location when publishing range extensions or other scientific data on the plants and animals of the area.

Stakeholder Input

Local government	Pinal County Board of Supervisors	
State Names Authority	Arizona State Board on Geographic & Historic Names	
Federal Agency	Bureau of Land Management	
Federally Recognized Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	
Other	Arizona State Trust Lands	

Illinois

New name Torino Islands

Proposal Information

Proposed name	Torino Islands
Proposal type	New name for unnamed feature
Proponent	Adam Schuerman, Vice President, Braidwood Clean Energy Center; Braidwood, Illinois
Date proposed	7/31/2026
Submitter	Katrina Simanski, Principal, Contracts - Real Estate, Constellation Energy; Baltimore, Maryland
Date submitted	7/31/2026
BGN case number	6698
Quarterly Review List	465

Feature Details

Primary coordinates	41.221875, -88.22295
Feature class	Island
Feature size	Largest Island ~ 180 acres, Smallest Island ~4.5 acres
Feature description	Eleven islands within Braidwood Power Plant Cooling Pond
Name history	Named in association with Torino Village and the area's coal-mining and energy-production history.
USGS primary topo map	Essex 1:24,000
State(s)	Illinois
County(s)	Will County
Local jurisdiction(s)	Village of Braceville [partly] / Reed Township
PLSS	Sec. 32, T32N, R9E, Third Meridian
Land ownership	Private (Constellation Energy Generation, LLC)

BGN decisions

- None

Other Names

- Unpublished names: None found
- Published names: None found

Case Summary

The name *Torino Islands* is proposed for a group of unnamed islands located within the Braidwood Power Plant Cooling Pond in Reed Township, Will County, Illinois. The islands partially intersect with the Village of Braceville. The proposal was submitted on July 31, 2026, by Katrina Simanski, Principal, Contracts - Real Estate for Constellation Energy on behalf of Adam Schuerman, the Vice President of the Braidwood Clean Energy Center, operated by Constellation Energy Generation LLC.

Regarding the need for an official name for Federal use, the proponent stated:

An official name provides a consistent geographic reference for Federal, state, and local agencies, supporting any emergency response, mapping, environmental documentation, regulatory filings, and long-term operational records.

Regarding the meaning and significance of the proposed name:

Torino Village was home to a small but diverse population with inhabitants from 12 countries who relocated to the area to work the coal mine. Constellation's proposed name reflects the area's history with energy and tying to modern day energy production.

Regarding the appropriateness of the proposed name:

The name will be geographically descriptive, locally recognizable, and consistent with the site's long-established identity. It provides a practical, noncommercial reference that improves clarity across maps and any official documents.

Regarding the proponent's interest in the proposed name:

As the owner and operator of the Braidwood Clean Energy Center, Constellation Energy seeks an official geographic name to ensure consistency in regulatory, environmental, emergency response, and any operational communications.

GNIS contains one feature in Illinois with "Torino" in its name: [Torino](#), a historical unincorporated populated place located in the area now occupied by the Braidwood Power Plant Cooling Pond.

Stakeholder Input

Local government	Village of Braceville Board	
	Reed Township Board	
	Will County Board	
State Names Authority	Illinois Geographic Names Authority	
Federally Recognized Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	
Other	Bradwood Clean Energy Center, Constellation Energy Generation LLC [proponent]	Support

Massachusetts

New name Muzzies Rock

Proposal Information

Proposed name	Muzzies Rock
Proposal type	new commemorative name for an unnamed feature
Proponent	Douglas McLellan; Cohasset, MA
Date proposed	1/27/2025
BGN case number	6470
Quarterly Review List	465

Feature Details

Primary coordinates	42.2449267, -70.7730768
Secondary coordinates	n/a
Feature class	island
Feature size	0.1 acres
Feature description	rock adjacent to marshland on the W side of Scituate Neck, 0.35 mi. S of Hog Rock
Name history	named for Mary “Muzzie” Litchfield McLellan (1925-2019) who
USGS primary topo map	Cohasset 1:24,000
State(s)	Massachusetts
County(s)	Plymouth County
Local jurisdiction(s)	Town of Scituate
Land ownership	private (proponent)

BGN decisions

- None

Other Names

- Unpublished names:
 - *James Rock* (reported by proponent)
 - *Mann Rock* (reported by proponent)
 - *Pear Island* (reported by proponent)
 - *Rock Island* (reported by proponent)
- Published names: None found

Case Summary

The new name Muzzies Rock is proposed for a 0.25-acre rock adjacent to marshland on the west side of Scituate Neck in the Town of Scituate, Plymouth County. The proposal was submitted on January 27, 2025 by Douglas McLellan who owns the land containing the rock and has a mailing address in Cohasset, Massachusetts.

The proponent wishes to name the rock after his mother, Mary “Muzzie” Litchfield McLellan (1925-2019) and provided the following biographical information to support her direct or long-term association with the feature (which the [Commemorative Names Policy](#) states should exist for any proposal naming a feature after a person):

Our mother, Mary Litchfield McLellan [sic] (maiden name James) died just over 5 years ago. To her close friends she was called "Muzzie". Her family settled in Hingham in 1638, and were founding members of the Old Ship Church in Hingham where she was a lifelong member. She was active throughout her life with many local organizations, beginning with the U.S.O. in her teens. She was a member of the Hingham Ladies Club, volunteered at the Hingham Library, Father Bills in Quincy and the Cohasset Historical Society and Arts Center. She was a talented artist and a wonderful mother. As our father began to experience life issues requiring him to leave our home, in our early teens, our mother, stepped up and took on the role of sole parent and head of household. My Brother and I feel it would be a nice tribute to her memory to name the rock after her. A deed to the land can be provided to the The [sic] U.S. Board on Geographic Names showing ownership. . . .

The 2 acres surrounding the rock to be named had been in my mother's side of the family for over 200 years. . . . My brother, Craig [and I], became the owners some 30 years ago. The rock has never had an official name but was sometimes referred to as “Mann Rock, Rock Island, Pear Island, and James Rock”. Originally the marsh land around the rock was used to graze cattle and harvest marsh hay in the fall. In more recent years, my brother and I, have used the rock to hunt duck in the fall.

Stakeholder Input

Local government	Town of Scituate	
	Plymouth County	
State Names Authority	Massachusetts State Names Advisor	
Federal	NOAA	
Federally Recognized Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy 10	

Michigan

New name Drake Island

Proposal Information

Proposed name	Drake Island
Proposal type	New name for unnamed feature
Proponent	Flynn Drive Residents Homeowners; Highland Michigan
Date proposed	7/9/2026
Submitter	Andrew Martin; Highland, Michigan
Date Submitted	7/9/2026
BGN case number	6693
Quarterly Review List	465

Feature Details

Primary coordinates	42.6767565, -83.5843125
Feature class	Island
Feature size	3.4 acres
Feature description	Within Duck Lake
Name history	Named for adult male ducks (drakes) that are seen on the island and associated Duck Lake area.
USGS primary topo map	Highland 1:24,000
State(s)	Michigan
County(s)	Oakland County
Local jurisdiction(s)	Highland Township
PLSS	Sec. 12, T3N, R7E, Michigan Meridian
Land ownership	Private (various)

BGN decisions

- None

Other Names

- Unpublished names: None found
- Published names: None found

Case Summary

This proposal is to apply the name *Drake Island* to a 3.4-acre island comprised of residential parcels within Highland Township, Oakland County, Michigan. The proposal was submitted on July 9, 2026, by Andrew Martin, a landowner, on behalf of the homeowners along Flynn Drive, the sole road that runs through the island.

Regarding the meaning and significance of the proposed name, the proponent stated:

This island on Duck Lake is frequented by ducks. A 'drake' is the species name of a male duck, hence Drake Island.

Regarding the need for an official name, the proponent stated:

The residents living on this island would like it to have a formal name, that can be referred to by residents, realtors and other people using the lake. The neighboring lake (White Lake) has two islands which are both formally named in GNIS.

Regarding the appropriateness of the name:

It's an appropriate name for an island on Duck Lake, naming the island to reflect the prevalence of ducks in the area. Note that this was originally an 'island' but now has a man-made isthmus bridging it to the 'mainland'. This new name recognizes its history as an island on Duck Lake.

Upon proposal submission, the proponent provided the July 8, 2026 minutes from the Flynn Drive All-Owners Zoom Meeting as evidence of support. The document contains the update given by the proponent at the meeting, stating:

Andrew provided an update on the Drake Island naming process, confirming he had gathered the necessary documentation including meeting minutes and transcription showing Drake Island won with approximately 8 votes.

Upon submission, the proponent provided minutes from a Flynn Drive Residents Committee Meeting as evidence of local awareness and support.

GNIS contains five features within Michigan with “Drake” in their names: two canal features, and three lake features. The closest feature, Drake Lake, sits approximately 10 miles to the south-southeast.

Stakeholder Input

Local government	Highland Township Board of Trustees	
	Oakland County Board of Commissioners	
State Names Authority	Michigan Geographic Names Authority	
Federally Recognized Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	
Other	Flynn Drive Residents Homeowners (proponent)	Support*

* submitted with proposal

New Hampshire

New name Hannahs Brook

Proposal Information

Proposed name	Hannahs Brook
Proposal type	New commemorative name for unnamed feature
Proponent	Pamela Sue Bronson; Exeter, New Hampshire
Date proposed	7/24/2026
BGN case number	6697
Quarterly Review List	465

Feature Details

Primary coordinates	43.3753863, -71.2776481
Secondary coordinates	43.380516, -71.2949388
Feature class	Stream
Feature size	1.2 mi. long
Feature description	Heads 1.8 mi. NE of Lougee Pond, flows SE into Lower Suncook Lake
Name history	Named to commemorate Hannah (Norris) Nutter (1794–1869), a lifelong resident of Barnstead and a member of one of the town's earliest settler families in the late 1700s.
USGS primary topo map	Gilmanton Ironworks 1:24,000
State(s)	New Hampshire
County(s)	Belknap County
Local jurisdiction(s)	Town of Barnstead
Land ownership	Various Private; Town of Barnstead

BGN decisions

- None

Other Names

- Unpublished names: None found
- Published names: None found

Case Summary

This proposal is to apply the name *Hannahs Brook* to an unnamed stream that flows into Lower Suncook Lake in the Town of Barnstead, Belknap County, New Hampshire. The proposal was submitted on July 24, 2026, by Pamela Sue Bronson of Exeter, New Hampshire. The stream flows through land which is mostly owned by private landowners and one parcel by the Town of Barnstead.

Regarding the need for an official name, the proponent stated:

Provides a permanent identifier for mapping, emergency response, environmental management, recreation, and public reference while improving consistency among Federal, State, and local geographic records.

Regarding the meaning and significance of the proposed name:

The name reflects Barnstead's early historical heritage through the Nutter family, one of the town's founding families. It follows the community's existing historical naming tradition reflected by Hannah Nutter Road.

Regarding the appropriateness of the proposed name:

The stream is a distinct unnamed tributary entering Lower Suncook Lake. Assigning an official name preserves local historical heritage while providing a consistent geographic reference for maps, public agencies, and future generations.

Regarding their interest in the naming of the feature:

I have no financial or proprietary interest in this proposal. My interest is preserving the historical heritage of Center Barnstead by providing an appropriate official name for an unnamed stream to improve mapping, public reference, and future historical reference.

Regarding the bibliographical information of the individual, the proponent stated:

HANNAH NUTTER has already been recognized by the Town reflecting the lasting local legacy of the NUTTER family. This family were early mid 1700 settlers who contributed to farming, milling, & community building.

The proponent answered the question in proposal form about Hannah Nutter's direct or long-term association with the feature by saying "[n]one known feature association, only Town."

The proponent also provided a copy of an email they sent to the Barnstead Historical Society asking for their support of the proposal and for any historical information about Hannah Nutter. The proponent reported that the Barnstead Historical Society did not reply. The proponent wrote:

In researching Barnstead's history, I learned of the significant role the Nutter family played in the town's earliest settlement and civic development. I also noted that the Town continues to recognize this historical legacy through the official name Hannah Nutter Road. It seemed fitting that this presently unnamed natural feature could also reflect Barnstead's rich historical heritage.

Staff asked the proponent to provide any additional biographical information to support the [Commemorative Names Policy](#)'s Section 2 ("The person being honored should have had either some direct or long-term association with the feature, or have made a significant contribution to the area, community, or State in which it is located."). The proponent provided information from a Grok query:

Hannah (Norris) Nutter (1794–1869) was a lifelong resident of Barnstead, Belknap County, New Hampshire.

She was born on August 11, 1794, in Barnstead. . . . She married William Nutter. . . in August 1817. They lived in Barnstead, where she appears in the 1850 census in his household. She died there on March 13, 1869, and is buried in Barnstead Parade Cemetery. . . .

She belonged to the large Nutter family that settled early in Barnstead. . . . The Nutters were among the town’s pioneering families in the late 1700s [whose members] were early settlers and local leaders. Hannah herself does not appear to have held public office or gained special historical notability beyond being part of these interconnected Barnstead families.

Staff asked the proponent to provide online citations that support this biographical information. They provided “a list of the key sources used in the research on Hannah Nutter in Barnstead, NH history, with full URLs and brief summaries”:

- [Hannah \(Norris\) Nutter \(1794-1869\)](#) (WikiTree) which contains no other information not included in other linked sources.
- [Genealogical and personal memoirs relating to the families of Boston and eastern Massachusetts](#) (Internet Archive) which contains details about the larger Nutter family but about Hannah Nutter specifically only recorded that she was born in Barnstead as Hannah Norris, married William Nutter (1790-1867) in August 1817, and had twelve children.
- [Genealogical and family history of the state of New Hampshire, Vol. IV](#) (LDS Genealogy) which does not mention William Nutter or Hannah (Norris) Nutter.
- [History of Barnstead from its first settlement in 1727 to 1872](#) (Internet Archive) which does not mention William Nutter or Hannah (Norris) Nutter.
- [Hannah Norris Nutter \(1794-1869\)](#) (Find a Grave) which confirms her burial in Barnstead Parade Cemetery (located about 3 miles south of the stream)
- [A real estate listing for a property on Hannah Nutter Road](#). The road is located about 3.3 miles southeast of the mouth of the stream.

The proponent provided a copy of a blanket notification letter sent to five private landowners they identified as affected property owners using Town of Barnstead Assessor’s records. One of the landowners replied that they had no objection.

GNIS contains one feature within New Hampshire with “Hannah” in its name, a lake located 23 miles to the northeast in Merrimack County. There are no features within New Hampshire with the name “Hanna.”

Stakeholder Input

Local government	Town of Barnstead Board of Selectmen	
	Belknap County Board of Commissioners	
State Names Authority	New Hampshire State Geographic Names Authority	
Federally Recognized Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy 10	
Other	One private landowner	No objection*
	Four private landowners	Pending response*

*provided by proponent

Change Little Haystack Mountain to Mount Kosciuszko

Proposal Information

Proposed name	Mount Kosciuszko
Proposal type	Change name to reflect local preference
Current official name	Little Haystack Mountain
GNIS ID	872189
Proponent	Michael I. Moffett, New Hampshire State Representative
Date proposed	6/26/2026
BGN case number	6690
Quarterly Review List	465

Feature Details

Primary coordinates	44.1409969, -71.6448250
Feature class	Summit
Feature size	Elevation: 4,774 ft.
Feature description	1.4 mi. S of Mount Lafayette, 1.7 mi. N of Mount Liberty
Name history	Named to commemorate Tadeusz Kosiuciuscko (1746-1817) who fought in the American Revolutionary War.
USGS primary topo map	Franconia 1:24,000
State(s)	New Hampshire
County(s)	Grafton County
Land ownership	White Mountain National Forest / Appalachian National Scenic Trail

BGN decisions

- None

Other Names

- Unpublished names: None found
- Published names:
 - *Little Haystack Mountain*: USGS 1986, 1988, 1995
 - *Little Haystack Mtn*: USGS 1929, 1932, 1967

Case Summary

This proposal is to change the name of *Little Haystack Mountain* to *Mount Kosciuszko* within Grafton County, New Hampshire. The summit lies along the Appalachian National Scenic Trail in the White Mountain National Forest. The proposal was submitted on June 26, 2026, by New Hampshire State Representative Michael I. Moffett.

The current name has been shown on USGS topographic maps since 1929.

The following statements were provided by the proponent on the proposal application.

Regarding why the name should be changed for Federal use:

Little Haystack is the current name for the mountain peak at the south end of N.H.'s Franconia Ridge Trail, south of Mt. Lincoln and Mt. Lafayette. The N.H. Legislature seeks to rename that peak Mt. Kosciuszko to honor that revolutionary war [sic] general similar to the way Layatette [sic] was recognized.

Regarding the meaning and significance of the proposed name change:

Neighboring Mt. Lafayette was so-named to honor the French general who was wounded while fighting for American Independence under George Washington. Tadeusz Kosiuciuscko was a Polish general who was wounded while similarly fighting for American independence under George Washington.

Regarding the appropriateness of the name change:

Historical and geographic symmetry. Neighboring Mt. Lafayette honors the French general who was wounded while fighting for American Independence under George Washington. Tadeusz Kosiuciuscko was a Polish general who was wounded while fighting for American independence under George Washington.

Regarding the proponent's interest in the naming of the feature, the proponent referred to New Hampshire House Resolution 24 ([HR24](#)), a Resolution honoring Tadeusz Kosciuszko.), a Resolution honoring Tadeusz Kosciuszko.

Regarding the bibliographical information of the individual:

Tadeusz Kosciuszko, 12 February 1746 – 15 October 1817, was a Polish military engineer, statesman, and military leader who became a national hero in Poland and the United States. Like Lafayette, he came to America to serve under George Washington during our Revolution.

Like Lafayette he was wounded before becoming a top general.

Regarding the person's significant contribution to the community, area, or state around the feature:

Kosciuszko was a comrade-in-arms with many New Hampshire soldiers in the northern theaters of the Revolutionary War, and is especially remembered for his service in the defense of West Point. [The proponent also included this same statement about Kosciuszko's "direct or long-term association with the feature" which he did not have]

Regarding the honoree's outstanding national or international recognition:

Tadeusz Kosciuszko was a Polish military engineer, statesman, and military leader who became a national hero in Poland and the United States. Like Lafayette, he came to America to serve under George Washington during our Revolution. Like Lafayette he was wounded before becoming a top general. His engineering expertise was particularly valuable.

The proponent also stated that

The peak's current official name, Little Haystack, has no historic significance, reflecting simply how it looked to an early hiker. . . . As with some older European names, it has been spelled slightly differently at different times in Europe, but *Kosciuszko* is the standard spelling in America.

The proponent stated that they were acting on behalf of the State of New Hampshire House of Representatives and submitted the proposal with the House's knowledge and support, accompanied by the attached HR24 resolution.

GNIS contains eight landform features in New Hampshire containing "Haystack" in their names. The nearest feature, [Haystack Mountain](#), is located approximately 7-miles northeast in Grafton County. Nationally, eleven summit features include "Little Haystack" in their names.

GNIS contains no records with "Kosciuszko" in the name. There are seven features with names that have the spelling "Kosciusko," none of which are BGN decisions. Details in GNIS or from online searches report that all of these were named for Tadeusz Kosciuszko (the GNIS feature class is reported in parentheses):

- [Kosciusko Island](#) (Island); Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area, AK (first labeled on maps in 1879)
- [Kosciusko County](#) (Civil); Indiana
- [City of Kosciusko](#) (Civil); Attala County, MS and the associated [Kosciusko](#) (Populated Place)
- [Kosciusko](#) (Populated Place); City of St. Louis, MO
- [Township of Kosciusko](#) (Civil); Day County, SD
- [Kosciusko](#) (Populated Place); Wilson County, TX

Mount Kosciuszko is the highest peak in Australia and is in Kosciuszko National Park. In the United States, the National Park Service (NPS) administers the [Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Memorial](#) in Philadelphia, which preserves the residence once occupied by Kosciuszko.

The proponent explained the spelling of the proposal name by stating "there have historically been a few iterations and alternate spellings, including one involving diacritics, but the most commonly accepted American version of 'Kosciuszko' is what is [proposed]." This matches the spelling used by the NPS but not the older spelling applied to other domestic geographic features.

Stakeholder Input

Local government	Grafton County Board of County Commissioners	
State Names Authority	New Hampshire State Geographic Names Authority	

Federal Agency	U.S. Forest Service	
	National Park Service	
Federally Recognized Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	
Other	State of New Hampshire House of Representatives	Support

New York

New name Shurter Mills Falls

New name Shurter Mills Falls

Proposal Information

Proposed name	Shurter Mills Falls
Proposal type	New name for unnamed feature
Proponent	Raecine Shurter; Olivebridge, New York
Date proposed	6/30/2026
Submitter	Zoeann Murphy; Olivebridge, New York
Date submitted	6/30/2026
BGN case number	6692
Quarterly Review List	465

Feature Details

Primary coordinates	41.8871389, -74.2976389
Feature class	Falls
Feature size	75 ft. tall
Feature description	2.1 mi. W of Beaver Lake, on Mettakahonts Creek
Name history	Named for the historic Shurter Mills that once operated at this site.
USGS primary topo map	West Shokan 1:24,000
State(s)	New York
County(s)	Ulster County
Local jurisdiction(s)	Town of Olive
Land ownership	Private (proponent)

BGN decisions

- None

Other Names

- Unpublished names: None found
- Published names: None found

Case Summary

The name *Shurter Mills Falls* is proposed for an unnamed waterfall on Mettakahonts Creek, in the Town of Olive, Ulster County, New York. The proposal was submitted on June 30, 2026, by Zoeann Murphy resident of Olivebridge, New York, on behalf of the landowner, Raecine Shurter, of Shurter Miller Inc.

Regarding the need for an official name for Federal use, the proponent stated:

Assigning the official name *Shurter Mills Falls* ensures consistent referencing in maps and records and preserves the site's important historical identity for future generations.

Regarding the meaning and significance of the proposed name:

"Shurter Mills Falls" honors the historic Shurter Mills, which operated at this exact site for generations, celebrating the enduring legacy of the community landmark.

Regarding the appropriateness of the name:

The name tells the story of the waterfall's historical roots, reflecting the mill's impact on the landscape and the cultural memory of, Samsonville [unincorporated hamlet], the village it is in.

Regarding their interest in the naming of the feature:

The community loves *Shurter Mills Falls*. It's where we meet to swim and catch up. We would love to see the incredible history of the mills and the workers who relied on them celebrated in this way.

The proponent stated that the name was not intended to commemorate any person with the last name Shurter. She provided the following answers to the questions about the Commemorative Names Policy:

The proposed name does not refer to a single person. While the current landowner shares the Shurter name, the name *"Shurter Mills Falls"* refers to the historic mill, which stood for generations and ceased operations many years ago, not to an individual. The landscape was changed by the mill itself.

The name refers to the mill rather than an individual. There have been many Shurters living in the area for hundreds of years.

For hundreds of years of Shurters in the area owned the mill and the land where the mill was. Captain John Shurter, a veteran of the War of 1812, began building the village in the early 1800s. Since then family members have owned and cared for the land where the falls is.

The Shurter Mills contributed significantly to the community by supporting local agriculture, providing jobs, inspiring local folklore, and shaping Samsonville's economic and social identity for over a century. Naming this feature will honor local heritage and provide a meaningful geographic reference for future generations.

Regarding any evidence that the name is not being used for commercial purposes:

The name references a historic mill that no longer exists.

In staff correspondence, the proponent elaborated that:

The grist mill shut down after a flood in 1928, and the sawmill worked until the early 1950s.

During proposal processing, staff found that public property records identify the parcel associated with the feature as owned by Shurter Miller, Inc. Because the proposed name includes “Shurter Mills” and the proposal references historic Shurter mills, staff asked the proponent to clarify the relationship between Shurter Miller, Inc., the historic Shurter Mills, and the proposed name in relation to the Commercial Names Policy. The proponent replied:

The historic Shurter Mills buildings no longer exist. The proposed name “Shurter Mills Falls” is intended solely to recognize the historic mills, not to promote Shurter Miller, Inc.

Shurter Miller Inc. was established solely to protect the Shurter family from possible personal injury to people admiring and/or swimming at the waterfall areas. Shurter Miller Inc. has never engaged in any financial activity, as shown by its tax filing history, and has no intention or plan to engage in any commercial activity.

The proponent provided several documents indicating local support and historical context, including:

- Ruth Anne Muller, Town of Olive Historian: “The first known settler in Samsonville was Jack Shurter who became one of the original town officers when the Town of Olive was formed in 1823. He operated the Shurter grist mill and also saw mills for excelsior, barrel headings, and shingles, at the top of the falls. These mills were foremost in the development of Samsonville.”
- Melissa McHugh, Director of the Olive Free Library: McHugh stated that formal recognition of the proposed name “would provide several public benefits,” including “preservation of local heritage and geographic identity,” “improved consistency for maps and public reference,” and “recognition of longstanding community usage and support.”
- Sylvia B. Rozzelle, former Town Clerk and Town Supervisor for the Town of Olive: described the Shurter family as “an integral part of the Samsonville community” and “every Samonville [sic] local today is familiar with the falls at Shurter’s mill.” She further wrote that it is “only appropriate that the historic waterfall and site be given the name ‘*Shurter Mills Falls*’ in in the Geographic Names Information System.”
- A May 22, 2026 letter signed by neighboring property owners stated that the falls have been “a cornerstone of summer for so many for so long,” and that recognizing the name would provide public benefits including “preservation of local heritage and geographic identity,” “improved consistency for maps and public reference,” and “recognition of longstanding community usage and support.”

GNIS does not contain any records with “Shurter” in the name.

Stakeholder Input

Local government	Olive Town Board	
	Ulster County Legislature	
State Names Authority	New York State Committee on Geographic Names	
Federally Recognized Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	
Other	Landowner [proponent]	Support*
	Town of Olive Historian	Support*
	Library Director, Olive Free Library	Support*
	Former Town of Olive Clerk and Supervisor	Support*
	Letter of support with 8 residential landowner signatures	Support*

*Submitted with Proposal

North Carolina

New name Blue Jay Pond

Proposal Information

Proposed name	Blue Jay Pond
Proposal type	New name for unnamed feature
Proponent	Lisa Ann Moore; Greenville NC
Date proposed	7/20/2026
BGN case number	6694
Quarterly Review List	465

Feature Details

Primary coordinates	35.637888, -77.32788
Feature class	Reservoir
Feature size	16 acres
Feature description	Located 9 mi. E of Allens Pond, 4.4 mi. N of Hardees Pond
Name history	Named for the Littleton Blue Jays, a former team of reservoir constructor Collice Moore (1939–2017), and for blue jays observed in the area.
USGS primary topo map	Greenville 1:24,000
State(s)	North Carolina
County(s)	Pitt County
Local jurisdiction(s)	City of Greenville
Land ownership	Private (Proponent's family)

BGN decisions

- None

Other Names

- Unpublished names: None found
- Published names: None found

Case Summary

The name *Blue Jay Pond* is proposed for a fifteen-acre reservoir located in the City of Greenville, Pitt County, North Carolina. The proposal was submitted on July 20, 2026, by Lisa Ann Moore a resident of Greenville, North Carolina. The feature is on land owned by Collice and Ann Moore LLC. The proponent is the daughter of Collice (1939-2017) and Ann Moore.

Regarding the need for an official name for Federal use, the proponent stated:

The pond has been named "Bluejay Pond" by the Moore family in honor of family history and has become the recognized name for the feature. Official recognition

will preserve this local heritage while providing a consistent geographic reference for mapping, emergency response, land management, recreation, and future documentation.

Regarding the meaning and significance of the name:

The name commemorates the Littleton Blue Jays baseball team, which held special significance to the family, particularly to the late Collice Moore, who originally created the pond.

Regarding the appropriateness of the proposed name:

Blue jays are a familiar presence around the pond, making the name a natural fit for the landscape.

Regarding their interest in the naming of the feature:

Family - Ann Moore is my mother

During correspondence with BGN staff, the proponent provided the following additional information:

As for the Littleton Blue Jays and their significance, here is some additional information and why we chose that name:

My dad, Collice Moore, was a real estate appraiser and developer in the Pitt County, NC area. He was born in Littleton, NC in 1939 and played football and baseball for the Littleton Blue Jays, his high school. He went on from there to play football for NC State. He loved sports and the outdoors. He developed the pond because he had a passion for nature and wildlife. He passed away in 2017, and had spent many days fishing with his family at the pond. He was not the type to want something named after himself, so our family knows not to name it Collice Moore Pond or Moore Pond. So, we decided to go with one of his sports teams from the past, especially due to the fact that we regularly see Blue Jays at the pond. It just fits.

The proponent provided a letter supporting the proposal written by her mother as a representative of Collice and Ann Moore LLC.

GNIS contains no features in North Carolina with “Blue Jay” in their names.

Stakeholder Input

Local government	Greenville City Council	
	Pitt County Board of Commissioners	
State Names Authority	North Carolina Board on Geographic Names	

Federally Recognized Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	
Other	Collice and Ann Moore (landowner)	Support*

*Provided by proponent

New name Celeste Creek

Proposal Information

Proposed name	Celeste Creek
Proposal type	New commemorative name for unnamed feature
Proponent	Susan Sapienza; Glenville, North Carolina
Date proposed	8/24/2026
BGN case number	6703
Quarterly Review List	465

Feature Details

Primary coordinates	35.19498, -83.05274
Secondary coordinates	35.19320, -83.04686
Feature class	Stream
Feature size	0.4 mi. long
Feature description	Heads on the NE slope of Rocky Knob, flows W into a stream that has no name recorded in GNIS
Name history	Named to commemorate Celeste Elise Dalabakis (1989-1990), who died in infancy; the stream crosses land owned by her family.
USGS primary topo map	Big Ridge 1:24,000
State(s)	North Carolina
County(s)	Jackson County
Land ownership	Private (various landowners & proponent) / within the proclaimed boundary of Nantahala National Forest

BGN decisions

- None

Other Names

- Unpublished names: None found
- Published names: None found

Case Summary

This proposal is to apply the name *Celeste Creek* to an unnamed stream in Jackson County, North Carolina. The proposal was submitted on August 24, 2026, by Susan Sapienza, resident of Glenville, North Carolina and who owns land through which the stream flows. The stream flows into a tributary that is also unnamed for Federal use but is referred to by the proponent as “Griffith Branch”; that tributary then flows into Big Laurel Branch.

Regarding the need for an official name, the proponent stated:

The creek is a distinct, perennial geographic feature that is currently unnamed on official maps. An official name would provide a consistent reference for mapping,

emergency response, conservation, land and water resource documentation, and communication among agencies and landowners.

Regarding the meaning and significance of the proposed name:

Celeste Creek honors my daughter, Celeste Elise Dalabakis, who died in infancy. Along the creek's course, two smaller streams join the main stream, evoking Celeste and her two sisters, Elyse and Sophia, and the enduring bond among three sisters who never had the opportunity to grow up together.

Regarding the appropriateness of the proposed name:

Celeste Creek is appropriate because it names a distinct, perennial mountain stream crossing private lands. Along its course, two tributaries join the main stream, creating a meaningful geographic connection to the name and an identifiable name for a previously unnamed feature.

Regarding their interest in the naming of the feature:

Andrew and I own land crossed by approximately two-thirds of the stream and are creating it as a legacy for our blended family. Each of our four living daughters is being invited to claim a special place on the land. Celeste cannot choose one, so naming the creek for her gives my oldest daughter a place of her own.

Regarding the bibliographical information of the individual, the proponent stated:

Celeste Elise Dalabakis was born October 6, 1989. Diagnosed with a brain tumor in infancy, she died May 8, 1990, at seven months old. Though her life was brief, she was deeply loved, and her memory has remained an enduring presence in the lives of her family and sisters.

Regarding the honoree's direct or long-term association with the feature:

Celeste had no direct association with the feature during her lifetime. Her mother and stepfather own the land crossed by approximately two-thirds of the stream's course. We are creating the property as a legacy for our blended family, and Andrew proposed naming the creek for Celeste as a way of including her in that family legacy.

The proponent obtained support from the three landowners directly on the stream and from twelve other community members.

GNIS contains one feature within North Carolina with "Celeste" in its name: Celeste Hinkel, an unincorporated populated place located 125 miles to the northeast of the proposed feature in Iredell County.

Stakeholder Input

Local government	Jackson County Board of Commissioners	
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State Names Authority	North Carolina Board on Geographic Names	
Federal Agency	U.S. Forest Service	
Federally Recognized Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	
Other	Landowners abutting the stream feature (3)	Support*
	Community members in the general vicinity (12)	Support*

*provided by the proponent

New name Seven Oaks Pond

Proposal Information

Proposed name	Seven Oaks Pond
Proposal type	new name for unnamed feature
Proponent	Brian Milch; Statesville, NC
Date proposed	8/15/2026
BGN case number	6721
Quarterly Review List	465

Feature Details

Primary coordinates	35.679341, -80.960380
Feature class	Reservoir
Feature size	1 acre
Feature description	0.45 NE of the E shore of Lake Catawba, 0.5 mi. N of East Monbo
Name history	named for seven mature white oak trees that surround the pond
USGS primary topo map	Troutman 1:24,000
State(s)	North Carolina
County(s)	Iredell County
Local jurisdiction(s)	None
Land ownership	private (proponent and others)

BGN decisions

- None

Other Names

- Unpublished names: None found
- Published names: None found

Case Summary

The new name Seven Oaks Pond is proposed for a approximately 1-acre reservoir that has no name recorded in the Geographic Names Information System, located in Iredell County. It was submitted on August 15, 2026 by Brian Milch who owns land containing part of the feature and who has a mailing address in Statesville, North Carolina.

The proponent provided the following answers on the DNC proposal form:

- Why does the officially unnamed geographic feature need an official name for Federal use?
An official name would provide a consistent way to identify this currently unnamed pond for mapping, geographic records, emergency response and environmental reference. The pond is also a numbered water source used by local Troutman Fire & Rescue.

- What is the meaning and significance of this name?
Seven Oaks Pond is named for the seven mature white oak trees that surround the pond. The trees are a prominent part of the wooded landscape, and in the fall their leaves often cover the surface of the water, making them a defining feature of the pond.
- Why is the name you are proposing appropriate for this officially unnamed feature?
The name Seven Oaks Pond is appropriate because it comes directly from a noticeable natural feature of the pond: seven mature oak trees surrounding the water. The trees have long been part of the pond's wooded setting and give it a distinctive character.
- If private landowners or managers are involved, provide evidence by email that they are aware you are submitting a proposal to the BGN.
I do not have email contact information for the other private landowners [the proponent noted two additional landowners]. One parcel is a vacant lot whose owner lives outside the area, and the other property is a secondary residence whose owners live out of state.
- What is your interest in the name of this feature?
My property directly borders the pond, and it is a prominent natural feature of the area around my home. My family and I regularly observe and enjoy the pond and its wildlife, and I have an interest in giving this currently unnamed feature a meaningful and identifiable name.

In October 2023, the proponent submitted a proposal for "Milch Pond," but it was not accepted because it could be construed to honor the proponent themselves, whose surname is Milch. That proposal form stated:

Milch is my surname and I've owned this property since 2016. A [sic] believe naming of the spring-fed pond is appropriate because it is [a] somewhat rare natural feature and is quite the little wildlife habitat. It is also uniquely the source for the name of the subdivision we live in: Spring Shore. I solely maintain this feature and it is a well-known landmark in our community.

When staff informed the proponent that the DNC could not consider the Milch Pond proposal due to the [Commemorative Names Policy](#), the proponent replied:

My intention is not to name it after myself or any living person. The name was chosen for the future generations that will live here. The name is essential, considering it will be handed down to my family who will care for the pond. My hope is that it will encourage them to continue to care for the pond.

Staff informed the proponent that there are no exceptions to the [Commemorative Names Policy](#).

In November 2024, the submitted a proposal to name the feature "Milkmere Pond," that was considered and included on Quarterly Review List 458. That proposal stated:

The name “Milkmere” is intended to evoke the milky, pale quality of the water, as well as the serene, nurturing environment created by the white oaks. The word "mere" is an old term for a pond or lake, linking the name to its historical roots while also indicating its nature as a tranquil body of water.

The DNC voted to not approve the proposed name Milkmere Pond at their meeting on April 9, 2026. The DNC’s vote cited the neutral stance from the North Carolina Board on Geographic Names (NC BGN) and the lack of response from the county government. The NC BGN only stated that they had “no opinion” about the Milkmere Pond proposal.

GNIS contains zero features within North Carolina with “Seven Oaks” in their names. Within Iredell and Catawba Counties, there are zero features with “Oaks” in their names.

Stakeholder Input

Local government	Iredell County Board of Commissioners	
State Names Authority	North Carolina Board on Geographic Names	
Federally Recognized Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy 10	

Tennessee

New name Alatenn Island

Proposal Information

Proposed name	Alatenn Island
Proposal type	New name for unnamed feature
Proponent	Dylan Bratcher; Florence, Alabama
Date proposed	8/10/2026
BGN case number	6701
Quarterly Review List	465

Feature Details

Primary coordinates	35.01115, -88.19166
Feature class	Island
Feature size	160 acres
Feature description	2.6 mi. NNW of State Line Island, within Tennessee River
Name history	Named for its location on an island that crosses the Alabama–Tennessee border, combining elements of the names Alabama and Tennessee.
USGS primary topo map	Pickwick 1:24,000
State(s)	Alabama / Tennessee
County(s)	Lauderdale County / Hardin County
PLSS	Sec. 11, T1S, R16W, Huntsville Meridian
Land ownership	Tennessee Valley Authority

BGN decisions

- None

Other Names

- Unpublished names: None found
- Published names: None found

Case Summary

This proposal is to apply the name *Alatenn Island* to an unnamed Island which intersects the border of Alabama and Tennessee. The proposal was submitted on August 10, 2026, by Dylan Bratcher, resident of Florence, Alabama.

Regarding the need for an official name, the proponent stated:

This geographic feature is a large island, located on the Tennessee River. This island is on the Alabama and Tennessee border, hence the proposed name.

Regarding the meaning and significance of the proposed name:

I feel this island should be named due to its geographic location and being shared by two states.

Regarding the appropriateness of the proposed name:

This is appropriate due to the geographic location. Stateline Island is an island below this one and I feel this a good combination of states for the island.

Regarding their interest in the naming of the feature:

I believe this to be too intersting [sic] of an island not to be named. Due to it being shared by two states.

GNIS contains no features with “Alatenn” in their names.

Stakeholder Input

Local government	Lauderdale County Commission, Alabama	
	Hardin County Commissioners, Tennessee	
State Names Authority	Geological Survey of Alabama Geographic Names Committee	
	Tennessee Committee on Geographic Names	
Federally Recognized Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	
Other	Tennessee Valley Authority	

Texas

New name Roberts Creek

Proposal Information

Proposed name	Roberts Creek
Proposal type	New commemorative name for unnamed feature
Proponent	Justin Sharp; Axtell, Texas
Date proposed	7/15/2026
BGN case number	6695
Quarterly Review List	465

Feature Details

Primary coordinates	31.539172, -96.852027
Secondary coordinates	31.60697, -96.84847
Feature class	Stream
Feature size	5.2 mi. long
Feature description	Heads 5 mi. NE of Battle Lake, flows S 5.2 miles into Big Creek
Name history	Named to commemorate Robert Clayton Sharp (1977-1996) who enjoyed playing in the creek and passed away in a car accident on a bridge over the creek
USGS primary topo map	Mart 1:24,000
State(s)	Texas
County(s)	Limestone County, McLennan County
Land ownership	Private (proponent's family / other private individuals / Birome Land Co.)

BGN decisions

- None

Other Names

- Unpublished names: None found
- Published names: None found

Case Summary

The name *Roberts Creek* is proposed for an unnamed tributary of Big Creek that originates in Limestone County and flows south into McLennan County, near the City of Mart, where it joins Big Creek. The proposal was submitted on July 15, 2026, by Justin Sharp, whose mailing address is in Axtell, Texas, and whose family reportedly owns part of the property through which the creek flows.

Regarding the need for an official name for Federal use, the proponent stated:

Since owning the property since 1991, this particular creek starts on our family land and has continually grown (and growing) to over 4 miles long, eventually joining Big Creek just outside of Mart Tx.

Because this response primarily described the feature rather than the need for an official name, staff followed up for clarification. The proponent then stated:

The creek I am trying to have named is in a growing rural setting. An official name as "*Roberts Creek*" would help logistically to all environmental regulators, emergency services, land management, and identical data for flood mapping.

Regarding the meaning and significance of the proposed name:

The significance of this creek: As kids my brothers and I would go down to this creek often. Fast forward to September of 1996, our 1 brother passed away in rollover car accident where this creek runs under FM 939. He started life playing in this creek and sadly his life ended in same creek.

Regarding the appropriateness of the name:

The name is appropriate as *Roberts Creek* as this creek starts on familys [sic] property and this is where he spent many days with friends (from nearby town of Mart TX) where many still reside to this day. Sadly, this is where Robert's life was also taken. Roberts creek would be an honor to family/friends.

The proponent identified multiple landowners along the stream, including the Birome Land Company, which the proponent stated owns most of the creek. In correspondence with staff, the proponent provided support from the Birome Land Company and from a representative of one private landowner. The proponent also stated that he used McLennan County Appraisal District records to identify owners of abutting parcels and mailed letters to those landowners.

The proponent initially left the proposal form question regarding their interest in the naming of the feature blank. In follow-up correspondence with staff, the proponent stated:

I am seeking to honor my late brother, Robert, by naming this creek "*Roberts Creek*" in his memory. The creek begins on our family property where Robert was raised. Naming the creek after him would honor his lifelong connection to this land and preserve his memory for future generations.

Regarding the bibliographical information of the individual:

Robert Clayton Sharp July 20th, 1977- September 29, 1996.

Mart, Tx High School Graduate. Salutatorian, President and National Honor Society of his 1995 graduating class. Enrolled at Texas A&M University as Mechanical Engineer.

He was a remarkable young man and to this day, locals in Mart, TX know his name.

Regarding the person’s direct or long-term association with the feature:

Lived on property for years as a child where the creek begins on Family property. Sadly, where his life started in this creek, it also ended in single car rollover on FM 939 in this same creek.

Regarding the person’s significant contribution to the community, area, or state around the feature:

This creek is just outside of his hometown Mart Tx where his family and friends still reside to this day. He was a Mart high School graduate and excelled in both academics and sports. His name still lives among many locals in the small population of 1800 residents. It would be a huge honor for family and friends to see "Roberts creek" on the drive

Staff requested details on how the stream developed over time and connects to Big Creek. The proponent responded:

This creek catches an abundance amount of water from watershed. Therefore, through the years we have seen the erosion of the creek, create a much larger footprint in width, depth and in length.

GNIS lists one existing feature named Roberts Creek in McLennan County, approximately 10 miles northwest of the headwaters of the proposed Roberts Creek. Statewide, GNIS lists additional Texas features containing “Roberts” and “Robert,” including one county, one lake, nine reservoirs, one spring, one summit, two civil features, and twelve additional streams.

Stakeholder Input

Local government	Limestone County Commissioners’ Court	
	McLennan County Commissioners' Court	
State Names Authority	Texas Geographic Names Committee	
Federally Recognized Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	
Other	Landowner [Charles “Chuck” Barton]	Support*
	Landowner [Birome Land Co.]	Support*

*provided by proponent

Virginia

New name Oríhawag Creek

Proposal Information

Proposed name	Oríhawag Creek
Proposal type	New name for unnamed feature
Proponent	The Nature Conservancy
Date proposed	8/25/2026
Submitter	Dan Hannon; Waverly, Virginia
Date submitted	8/25/2026
BGN case number	6702
Quarterly Review List	465

Feature Details

Primary coordinates	36.99748, -77.07307
Secondary coordinates	36.9663891, -77.0552406
Feature class	Stream
Feature size	3 mi. long
Feature description	Heads 0.8 mi. WNW of Jenkins Pond, flows ~NW into Quaker Branch
Name history	Named for the Nottoway word Oríhawag, meaning “song,” in recognition of the stream’s avian soundscape and the Nottoway Tribe’s cultural connection to the area.
USGS primary topo map	Manry 1:24,000
State(s)	Virginia
County(s)	Sussex County
Land ownership	The Nature Conservancy / Various Private

BGN decisions

- None

Other Names

- Unpublished names: None found
- Published names: None found

Case Summary

This proposal is to apply the name *Oríhawag Creek* to an unnamed tributary of Quaker Branch in Sussex County, Virginia. The proposal was submitted on August 25, 2026, by Dan Hannon of The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and resident of Waverly, Virginia, on behalf of the larger organization. The majority of the stream flows through the TNC’s Piney Grove Preserve.

The TNC worked with the Nottoway Indian Tribe of Virginia (which is recognized by the Commonwealth of Virginia but not by the federal government) to select the proposed name.

Regarding the need for an official name for Federal use, the proponent stated:

Establishing a new name is of practical value to TNC and our state and federal prescribed fire partners, as land managers who rely on landscape features such as streams to inform place-specific operations including prescribed burning and ecological monitoring.

Regarding the meaning and significance of the proposed name:

The avian chorus in the wetland and uplands around the stream is one of the inspirations for the proposed name of “Oríhawag” (“Song”) Creek. The name originates from the language of the Nottoway people. TNC proposes this name to commemorate the Nottoway people as well as the stream's unique soundscape

Regarding the appropriateness of the name:

The area around the stream [sic] provides important wildlife habitat and serves as important corridors for animal movement across the landscape. Over 40 bird species use the wetland and upland forests around the stream, and the avian chorus is the inspiration for the Nottoway Tribe name of *Oríhawag Creek*.

Regarding private landowner awareness, the proponent initially stated that TNC staff met with one of the private landowners who shares a portion of the creek with TNC and that the landowner verbally “expressed no concern and general support” for the proposal. The proponent then reported that TNC had attempted to reach the other two landowners but had not received a response and would continue attempting to gather a response.

Regarding The Nature Conservancy’s interest in the naming of the feature:

As a place name & landmark for preserve management - namely prescribed burning as well as a way to reconnect the Nottoway Tribe to their ancestral lands by adopting placenames influenced by their cultural heritage and language.

The proposal materials used two spellings of the name, Oríhawag Creek and Oríhwa? Creek. Staff asked the proponent to clarify the correct or preferred spelling of the Nottoway word. The proponent explained that although “Oríhwa?” would be the correct spelling, the TNC “realized that the phonetic spelling would be sufficient and that the glottal stop is not an accepted diacritic.” Staff clarified that the glottal stop character is an accepted diacritic (though it is not included in the DNC’s Principles, Policies, and Procedures [Appendix G—Characters Approved for Use in Geographic Name Proposals](#).) The proponent confirmed that the preferred spelling for DNC consideration is “Oríhawag.”

Regarding the BGN Domestic Names Committee’s cultural sensitivity guidance for Native American names, the proponent referenced a March 2026 letter of support from the non-

federally recognized Nottoway Indian Tribe of Virginia’s Language Committee Chair who wrote:

On behalf of the Nottoway Indian Tribe of Virginia, and in collaboration with the Nottoway Environmental Committee, I extend our full support for The Nature Conservancy’s initiative to name the identified stream Orihawag Creek (song creek) in Sussex County, VA using the Nottoway language. We appreciate the organization’s commitment to honoring the cultural, historical, and ecological significance of the lands and waterways within our ancestral territory. . . .

We have had the opportunity to collaborate with The Nature Conservancy to ensure the chosen name is linguistically accurate, culturally appropriate, and reflective of our traditions. Our Tribal leadership and language stewards are prepared to assist with continued consultation, translation, and historical context as needed.

We commend the efforts of The Nature Conservancy to honor Indigenous heritage and to foster a more inclusive approach to conservation.

The proponent also noted that a Tribal elder visited the site in March 2025 and that the Nottoway Tribe of Virginia held an on-site stream-naming ceremony with TNC Virginia Pinelands staff in April 2025. The proponent stated that, although the name is not official for Federal use, TNC and its partners have agreed to use the name for internal planning and management purposes.

GNIS contains no records with Orihawag nor Orihwa?.

Stakeholder Input

Local government	Sussex County Board of Supervisors	
State Names Authority	Virginia Board on Geographic Names	
Federally Recognized Tribes	All federally recognized Tribes contacted under Policy X	
Other	The Nature Conservancy (Proponent)	Support
	Nottoway Indian Tribe of Virginia	Support*

* provided by proponent