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NATIONAL STANDARDIZATION

- Guidelines for preparing and submitting proposals regarding  
domestic geographical names -

Submitted by the Government of  
the United States of America\*

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## NATIONAL STANDARDIZATION AND WRITING SYSTEMS

### Paper presented by Cyprus\*

The Special Committee of Cyprus Geographic Names submits the following:

The traditional orthography should form the basis of standardization of Cypriot geographical names;

\* The original text of this paper appeared as document E/CONF. 53/L.24.

For purposes of the International Map of the World, names in the language of the minority should not be taken into consideration;

The basic principle should be strict transliteration in the Roman alphabet guided by the internationally accepted rules of transliteration of the Permanent Committee of Geographical Names of the Royal Geographical Society and the United States Board of Geographical Names.

## GUIDE-LINES FOR PREPARING AND SUBMITTING PROPOSALS REGARDING DOMESTIC GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

### Paper presented by the United States of America<sup>1</sup>

#### INTRODUCTION

Public Law 242, 80th Congress, approved on 25 July 1947, provided for a central authority to standardize geographical names for the purpose of eliminating duplication in standardizing such names among the federal departments, and for other purposes.

This central authority is the Secretary of the Interior acting conjointly with the Board on Geographic Names. The board is inter-departmental and, subject to the approval of the Secretary of the Interior, is authorized to formulate principles, policies and procedures to be followed with reference to both domestic and foreign geographic names; and to determine the choice, spelling and application of those names for official use.

The United States Board on Geographic Names and its predecessor agencies have long been responsible under executive orders and subsequent legislation for establishing the geographical names to be used on maps and other publications of the Federal Government. In carrying out this function the board depends, to a great extent, upon information furnished by government agencies which, in performing their normal functions, have occasion to investigate the local usage of nomenclature as well as documentary references thereto.

The Board on Geographic Names and the Secretary of the Interior have approved proposals of the Domestic Names Committee applicable to the United States, its territories and possessions. These proposals are aimed at expediting work on domestic names problems, developing standard procedures for all agencies to follow in their investigations of geographical names, and in reporting upon those problems requiring decisions or other actions by the board. One of the proposals concerned the designation of certain basic map and chart series as authoritative reference sources for geographical names in preparing new maps and other government documents for publication.

The statement which follows has been prepared primarily to assist government agencies in determining the kinds of name problems that should be referred to the board for appropriate action, but the procedures outlined will be useful to all persons concerned with problems of domestic geographical names. The statement is intended to facilitate investigation of the local usage of geographical names, as well as the documentary research thereon that is required in preparing new government maps and other publications. Emphasis has been placed upon standard

reference media and editorial procedures which are desirable to ensure that the geographical names published on the various government maps and other documents are in agreement regarding the respective features named, and in their spellings.

Thorough investigation of local usage and examination of references may reveal some controversy or confusion in name application or spelling. Complete information on such cases is required so the board can decide the usage that should be employed in government publications. Standard procedures for reporting names problems have been emphasized to ensure completeness of information and to facilitate consideration by the board. It is incumbent upon the agencies which produce and maintain the series of government maps and charts that have been selected as basic reference authorities on geographical names promptly to report any questions arising in regard to the validity of such names, in order that decisions can be expedited and necessary corrections made.

Communications regarding geographical name problems in the United States, its territories and possessions should be addressed to the following representative of the United States Board on Geographic Names: Executive Secretary for Domestic Geographic Names, United States Geological Survey, Washington, D.C., 20242.

#### I. PRINCIPLES RELATING TO GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES IN THE UNITED STATES, ITS TERRITORIES AND POSSESSIONS

The board has followed long-established principles in considering name cases submitted to it for decision. Agencies concerned with names should be guided by these principles, although their application to specific cases must be determined by the board. A summary statement of these principles follows.<sup>2</sup>

1. Names in dominant local use generally are retained.
2. Euphonious and suitable names of Indian or foreign origin are retained.
3. Names suggested by peculiarities of topographic features—such as their form, vegetation, or animal life—are generally acceptable, but duplication of names within one state and especially within smaller areas should be avoided. Names such as “Elk”, “Bald”, “Beaver”, “Cottonwood”, “Mill”, “Moose”, “Muddy” and “Round” are numerous and commonly repetitive within limited areas.

<sup>1</sup> The original text of this paper appeared as document E/CONF. 53/L.33.

<sup>2</sup> For more complete statements, see *Sixth report of the United States Geographic Board*, 1933.

4. Names proposed to commemorate living persons are not approved.

5. Long and clumsily constructed names are to be avoided. Such names usually will not be adopted by the public. Well-established multiple-word names should be used. Parts of these names may be combined in accordance with the United States Government Printing Office style manual.

6. Names with a derogatory implication are not accepted.

7. The multiplication of names for different parts of the same feature, such as a river or mountain range, is undesirable. One name is preferable for the main stem of a stream or throughout the length of a single mountain range. In the case of a river, the name usually follows its longest branch.

8. The naming of forks, prongs, branches etc., as "east fork" or "north prong" of a river, should be avoided. In most cases, independent names should be given to branches of a river.

9. Spelling and pronunciation sanctioned by local usage are acceptable in general.

10. Names changed or corrupted from their original form and established by local usage are usually not restored.

11. The possessive form is avoided provided that the euphony of the name is not thereby destroyed or its descriptive application changed.

12. The use of hyphens in connecting parts of names should be discouraged.

13. The letters "CH" (courthouse) appended to the names of county seats are omitted, if possible. The words "city" or "town" as parts of names should be avoided.

14. An existing name should not be replaced unless it is a duplicate or is inappropriate.

15. Acts of state legislatures, municipal councils and other local governing bodies regarding geographical names are usually accepted unless application of the names would conflict with naming principles followed by the board.

The earlier decisions of the United States Geographic Board usually indicated only the spelling of a name on which a decision was rendered, followed by identification of the place or feature to which the name applied. More recent published decisions of the board include decisions on the following, if available: spelling; feature named; location; pronunciation and hyphenation (when not self-evident); rejected names and forms of names; history and derivation of the name.

## II. CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING NAMES TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE BOARD FOR DECISION

The board does not render a decision on each name that is used on government maps or in government publications, nor is such a decision necessary. As guides in determining whether a name should be submitted to the board for decision, or whether it may be used without such action, certain classes of names are defined below. The names in group A must be submitted for decision; those in group B may be used without being submitted for decision; and for those names in group C submission is invited but not required. It is recognized that names may not appear to fall logically into any of these classes; any names that do

not clearly fall into classes under group B are to be submitted for decision.

The board is not bound to accept any names that appear to fall into the classes grouped as usable without decision, but reserves the right to consider any name at any future time if it is found to be causing confusion, or if it proves to be objectionable under principles adopted by the board.

### *Group A. Names to be submitted to the board for decision prior to publication*

1. All names for previously unnamed features;
2. New names for features that previously carried some other names;
3. Any names in current use that have a derogatory implication;
4. Old names that are given essentially new applications;
5. Conflicting or different names for the same feature, as between published and local use;
6. Names that apparently should be spelled or applied at variance with an existing decision or official standard name;
7. Names whose unapproved previous usages, in government, state, or private publications, do not agree, either as among such published usages, or as between published usage and local custom;
8. Names of "places" (cities, towns, villages, and settlements) which are duplicated within the same state;
9. Names whose governmental spelling, as represented by a formal decision, or by "provisional adoption", or by the name of a post office, is at variance with dominant local usage or with a usage that is prescribed by law or by charter;
10. Names on which there are formal decisions, if the existing decision has not been generally followed after adequate trial;
11. Names on which there are formal decisions, if the existing decision is objectionable to the state board concerned;
12. Names used incidentally in congressional legislation or used in any enactment by a state or territorial legislature that do not fall in any of the classes defined under group B;
13. Names of cities, towns and villages that are different from the post office or railroad station therein.

### *Group B. Names that may be used without being submitted to the board*

Geographical names that fall in the following classes may be used without being submitted to the board for decision, provided they do not also fall in any classes in Group A.

1. Names for which there are existing affirmative decisions;
2. Names indicated as the approved form in published lists of names "provisionally adopted";
3. Names that have been specifically adopted by a naming enactment of Congress;
4. Names that have been formally approved by a state geographic board, in conformity with the rules of the United States Board on Geographic Names, in so far as they apply to features wholly within the jurisdiction of the state board;

5. Official names of post offices, in so far as they apply only to the names of the post offices;

6. Names of civil divisions, as adopted by the Bureau of the Census, in so far as they apply only to the civil divisions themselves and not to other features, and in so far as they are not in conflict with names that are otherwise in general use;

7. Names that are in use on the latest issue of a United States Government map, and that, after reasonable search, appear not to conflict with other published usages, nor with local usage, and that conform to the principles adopted by the board;

8. Names not strictly geographical that are applied to other than natural features such as park headquarters, fish hatcheries, ranches, mines etc.;

9. Names in generally accepted use for such features as dams, railroads, highways, bridges, lighthouses and other structures which have been officially applied by the organization, legal authority or civil unit which controls the feature in so far as the name applies to the structures and not to neighbouring or resulting features;

10. Names not at variance with any of the principles adopted by the Board and that are in undisputed local use;

11. Names that are in good standing, but that do not agree with names that clearly were spelled or applied in error;

12. Names of minor features that are of navigational importance only, which are in well-established local use, and which are unlikely to be used on maps other than charts, or in the *Coast Pilots* or *Light Lists*;

*Group C. Names whose submission to the board is invited but not required*

1. Names in undisputed local use, which conform to the general practice of the board in the consideration of old names, but which may not conform to all the rules which the board would apply for new names;

2. Names of natural features, as distinct from "places" (see A, 8) which are likely to cause confusion through duplication;

3. Names on which there are existing decisions made in conformity with a general rule which the board has modified;

4. Names on which there are existing decisions, but concerning which important new evidence has been brought forth which was not available or not considered when the original decisions were rendered;

5. Names on which there are existing decisions, or names in undisputed use, that are not spelled in accordance with their derivation, or that are objectionable because they are awkward, misleading or difficult to spell or pronounce, provided they are not so well established that it would be impractical to try to change them.

### III. BASE AND REFERENCE MAPS

Several series of maps are recognized as authoritative for geographical names. Considerations involved in the selection of these series of maps are: the series of maps or charts should provide complete coverage for the United States; field investigators should be available for obtaining and verifying names; the maps should be revised at frequent intervals, incorporating changes in new editions as quickly as possible; and the maps should be of sufficiently large

scale to show the names of minor features. As no single map series for the United States fulfils all these requirements at present, a selection of a minimum number of map series has been made to provide the authoritative name information.

#### *Base series maps*

The following map series are to be considered as basic references in editing geographical nomenclature for use on government maps and will be referred to as base series maps:

Quadrangle maps of the National Topographic Map Series (including United States 1:250,000 series), United States Geological Survey;

Nautical charts of coastal areas, United States Coast and Geodetic Survey; charts of the Great Lakes, United States Lake Survey;

Administrative maps of National forests, United States Forest Service;

Sectional aeronautical charts, United States Coast and Geodetic Survey.

Each of the separate map series meets some of the requirements described above, and the combined group can be as effective as a single comprehensive series. The agencies responsible for preparing these maps have established a communications system whereby errors or changes are referred to the proper agency for correction in the next revision or in the next reprinting of the maps. These agencies also have trained field personnel available for field research when necessary.

In all their mapping operations, agencies responsible for base series maps should provide their personnel with all the name information shown on previously published base series maps. Established usable names can be verified at the time additional names are obtained and processed. Discrepancies in the application, spelling or usage of names must be investigated and recorded on the standard form, "Domestic geographic name report."<sup>3</sup> If the discrepancy involves a map prepared by another agency, the report is referred to that agency for comment and appropriate action. The processed forms are then submitted by the originating agency to the Domestic Names Committee of the Board on Geographic Names for action. In case of serious controversy or discrepancy, each agency involved should submit a complete report to the committee for board decision.

Other agencies and map-users should refer to available base series maps for verifications of names. Discrepancies should be reported on the standard form to the responsible base series agency for action and, if necessary, submission to the Board on Geographic Names.

#### *Reference series maps*

The following maps are to be considered collateral or secondary references in compiling or editing geographical names and will be referred to as reference series maps:

United States land plats, Bureau of Land Management;

Soil survey maps, Department of Agriculture;

International Maps of the World, 1:1,000,000-scale, United States Geological Survey;

United States Geological Survey state base maps;

Public roads county maps, Bureau of Public Roads;

<sup>3</sup> See annex II below.

Geological maps, United States Geological Survey;  
Official state maps.

These reference maps contain much valuable name information and should not be overlooked or disregarded in compiling geographical name data.

Agencies responsible for reference series maps should use base series maps to verify all the names that appear on reference maps. Controversies, with supporting evidence, should be reported on the standard form and transmitted to the proper base series agency for preliminary action, as described under the heading, "Base series maps". The reports are then returned to the originating agency for review and submission to the Domestic Names Committee for final action.

By adhering to the procedures recommended above, discrepancies in names on maps of different agencies will be prevented or eliminated.

#### IV. GATHERING NAME INFORMATION

##### *A. Importance of names*

The authenticity of spelling and the application of names are the primary responsibility of the investigator, using and evaluating all available sources of information such as maps, signs, published material, local residents and officials, keeping constantly in mind the types of cultural and natural features generally named, and the necessity for a complete investigation and report when there is serious disagreement in usage. It is the duty of the office compiler to be as careful as the man in the field.

Map names have a meaning for everyone, but local names have a significance for people in home communities that a stranger can seldom fully appreciate. Names may be simply descriptions, such as "Table Mountain," "Crater Lake" and "Picture Gorge". They may be a record of animal life or of good hunting, past or present, such as "Deer Creek," "Bear Mountain" and "Sheep Canyon". Names may even be humorous or whimsical, intentionally or otherwise—e.g. "Ticklenaked," "Tightwad" and "Monkeys Eyebrow". "Enola," "Lebam" and "Tesnus" are original place names that are simply common words spelled backwards.

Most of all, names are a record of history, big and little, important and trivial. They perpetuate the memories of the early settlers and pioneers and of odd, curious or notable happenings that otherwise would be forgotten. "Battle Mountain" and "Massacre Rock" tell the story of the Indian wars. Mostly, the story in a name is a smaller incident, as in names like "Lost Boy Butte," "Bloody Hands Gap", and "Grave Creek". To local people, the important names may be those of persons prominent in the history of the locality whose memory is respected and whose relatives and descendants take pride in the association. A mistake in spelling or omission of a personal place name on an official map may be considered by local people to be a slight to the memory of the person.

Name errors and conflicts in usage may have various forms. The name itself may be completely wrong. The name may be essentially correct but the spelling wrong, or the name may be correct and correctly spelled but the application may be wrong or uncertain. Application means the identity, extent and map location of the feature to which the name applies. Without definite information on the application, a name is meaningless or misleading for map use. In most cases, the application is very

evident, but, particularly with natural features, the limits of the name application can present a perplexing problem. No name should be finally accepted until the possibility of error in the name, the spelling and the application has been eliminated.

Accuracy and completeness of name coverage can be ensured only by respect for the true meaning of names, and realization of the importance of names to every map-user.

##### *B. Responsibility for map names*

The field investigator has the original responsibility for the names. He gathers the basic name data in the field, ascertains local name usage and records the name information in a systematic and orderly form for editing. The editors select the names to be published according to the space available, check them against other references for accuracy and completeness, and specify the size and arrangement of lettering for maximum legibility. Where there is disagreement about name spelling or application, or when new names are proposed, the responsible project or field engineer will document and submit the names with the relevant information for transmittal to the Board on Geographic Names for decision or other appropriate action.

##### *C. Map features usually named*

All names of natural features are considered to be within the area of responsibility of the Board on Geographic Names. Names of man-made features are generally the responsibility of the agency having administrative control of the feature. There will, however, be place names or other names which should be considered by the board. Names of features which are not primarily geographical would normally not be the concern of the board.

##### *D. Proposed new names*

When there is need to suggest names for unnamed land or water features, the suggested name should be appropriate to the feature named. Names descriptive of peculiarities of the feature such as shape, vegetation or animal life, or derived from a person or event connected with the history of the area, are common types of names that are selected. Special care should be taken in choosing the type name for the feature. Descriptive names tend to be repetitive and may prove unsatisfactory unless the form or character of the feature is unique. Names of historic significance are preferable and local traditions might suggest names for a particular feature. Research in available records and interrogation of nearby residents are the greatest aids to the investigator in trying to establish a suitable name for an unnamed feature.

Generic terms should be appropriate to the region. In an area where all streams are called "runs" the new name should use this label. In an area where streams are dry most of the year, the stream course probably should be named "gulch", "canyon" or "wash" rather than "creek".

Proposed new names must be submitted to the Board on Geographic Names for approval before publication. The form, "Proposal of name for an unnamed domestic feature" is set out in annex I below.

##### *E. Evaluation of sources*

Information on names is obtained from many different sources, varying widely in reliability and completeness.

The map-maker must keep in mind the three requirements: authenticity, spelling and application, and the necessity of presenting a complete report when there is serious disagreement in spelling or usage.

1. *Published maps.* These are the easiest name source to use. Base series maps or information from them furnished to the map-maker will constitute an authority in gathering names, and any disagreement in the application or spelling of a name on the different base series maps should be investigated and the necessary information prepared for transmittal to the Board on Geographic Names and to the agency whose map is in error. Revision and reprinting will bring about agreement in the names of features appearing on two or more of the base series maps.

2. *Signs.* Road signs, building signs and other public displays are also important sources to use. If they have been erected by a responsible government agency they should be reliable. Only in very rare cases should a map name differ from a prominent public sign; nothing could be more confusing to the map-user. Such cases should be thoroughly investigated including, if possible, a discussion with the agency responsible for the sign.

3. *Books, bulletins, reports, local histories.* In remote, sparsely populated areas, published material may be almost the only source of name information, and for any area it is a valuable supplement to other sources. Guide-books and official directories are among the most reliable because they are carefully checked and published as reference works.

In addition to reference publications obtainable from the local public library, responsible local citizens are an indispensable source of name information. In a small community an interested person may act unofficially as the town historian. Such persons may have private reference libraries, and be able to furnish information from personal knowledge.

Most reference publications cover only a limited area, but the following standard works may be helpful: *United States Census of Population*, volume 1; *Directory of Post Offices*, *Official Guide of the Railways of the United States*, *Webster's Geographical Dictionary* and *United States Writers' Project State Guides*. Geographical names in geological reports, mineral surveys and similar scientific studies frequently contain maps that are very useful sources of name information. Other types of material with local application are city and county directories, local histories of families, towns, or communities.

4. *Local residents and officials.* Persons living in the area being mapped are the most frequently consulted source of name information. They are also the most difficult source to use and to judge. The reliability of the information obtained in this way depends on the individual, his length of residence in the area and his experience. Some individuals are inherently unable to admit that they do not know the answer to a question. The information supplied by such persons may be perfectly reliable in the areas with which they are familiar but worthless for other areas. The best guide in these cases is the reputation and the experience and occupation of the individual.

Undoubtedly the best sources of information are public officials, particularly local postmasters, county assessors, game and fire wardens, Coast Guard employees, sheriffs and county engineers. These are people of standing in the community, they are apt to be careful in their statements, and their work requires them to know the names and locations of a great many natural features.

## F. Field procedures

1. *Suggestions on questioning local residents.* The amount and reliability of the information obtainable from local residents may depend on the method of questioning. One way of confirming a name is by using it in conversation with a person who is familiar with the area. His reaction is likely to be a clue to the correctness of the usage. When questions are asked, they should not be phrased so that the answer is suggested.

The identity of the feature in question is one possible source of error in obtaining name information. Visual or descriptive reference must be positive to avoid the possibility of confusion.

Misspelling of names obtained through conversation is a common error occurring in areas where local dialects prevail. It should not be assumed that the spelling is determined by the sound of the name. Phonetic spelling easily leads to mistakes. Errors from this source can be avoided by asking that the name be spelled or, if necessary, by checking legal documents.

2. *Undisputed names in local usage.* Many of the names in common use are so well known that the spelling and application are not questioned. This class of names presents no particular problem; it is simply a matter of adequate documentation and recording the name properly. Adequate documentation involves sufficient identification by local residents. Some agencies require three such verifications; however, in thinly populated areas this requirement may be difficult to fulfil. It should be noted that names in this category may not appear on any previous publication, but are not to be confused with proposed new names.

3. *Names of minor features.* Names requiring some extra attention to ensure completeness of name coverage are those applying to small features, especially in remote areas. A conflict or discrepancy in this type of name is not likely because it is generally known to only a few people, but there may be a question of what the name is or whether the feature has a name at all.

4. *Commercial names.* Cultural features of a commercial nature, such as logging rail-roads, or large factory buildings, are identified if necessary by a type label, but usually not by the company name. The criterion is the private or public character of the organization controlling the feature. Many colleges and universities, for example, are private organizations of a public character; factories usually are not.

5. *Generic terms.* Features are referred to by different generic terms in different areas. Care should be exercised in using labels peculiar to any region. Any use other than one normally associated with the term should be explained. "Prairie" can be a swamp or a grassland; a "slough" can be an inlet or a marsh; a "bay" can be a wooded area or a swamp.

6. *Abbreviations.* The Government Printing Office *Style Manual* is the standard authority for abbreviations in all government publications. Where names carry abbreviations which differ from standard practice, the investigator must ascertain whether the difference is due to official designation or to local variation.

## G. Investigating controversial names and name changes

Names in these classes present the most difficult problems for the field investigator. When there is conflicting

usage, the responsibility for establishing the correct form rests with the Board on Geographic Names. The duty of the investigator is to decide from the evidence which instances of disagreement should be considered controversial, and hence require the development of information and a recommendation to be submitted to the Board on Geographic Names.

In evaluating name information, judgement must be used in discriminating between genuine controversy and minor discrepancies. The fact that a few people may be mistaken about a name is not sufficient grounds, in itself, to consider a name controversial. The conflicting usage may be due to ignorance or carelessness. However, general disagreement in spelling or application should always be investigated thoroughly and the results submitted to the Board on Geographic Names.

In a case where the Board on Geographic Names has made a decision, the question is not reopened except for compelling reasons.

## V. PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING DOMESTIC NAMES PROPOSALS

After the proponent of a geographical names proposal has established the need for such action according to the foregoing principles and criteria, he should make an adequate presentation of the case, including the results of his research, to the Board on Geographic Names.

The data and exhibits considered necessary by the Board for processing and standardization proceedings are discussed on following pages.

The Board on Geographic Names has approved two standard forms for presentation of essential information on names proposals. The form, "Domestic Geographic Name Report,"<sup>3</sup> is used where a controversy is involved, a name change proposed or a change in application involved, or for any name discrepancy. The form, "Proposal of Name for an Unnamed Domestic Feature",<sup>4</sup> is used when it is desired to secure approval of a name for an unnamed feature. Each domestic name proposal presented for consideration by the board should include the appropriate form, giving the information called for in as complete detail as possible.

In addition to the information called for on the form, mapping agencies should furnish the board with supplemental data as shown below.

### A. Supplemental data from mapping agencies

Information stating whether the feature covered by the name proposal is in a federal or state reservation or management area (as a national or state forest or national or state park) and, if so, giving the views of the administering agency of that area as to the name proposal; federal mapping agencies should secure these views in writing and furnish copies with the name proposal;

The results of interviews with appropriate officials of local governments which may have an interest in the name proposal;

Opinions and conclusions of advisory boards or state boards of geographic names are sought by the United States Board on Geographic Names and should be included where practical as part of the name presentation;

<sup>3</sup> See annex II below.

<sup>4</sup> See annex I below.

Statements or other exhibits resulting from interviews or discussions with individuals or organizations as to local usage or other research data;

A statement on the history of map usage; this will include a review of current basic name series maps and such supplemental series as are applicable, with a report on usage as shown by such maps;

Any other pertinent information useful to the board in rendering a decision on the name proposal.

### B. Supplemental data from non-mapping agencies

With name proposals, non-mapping agencies should furnish the information indicated above to the extent that it can be obtained.

### C. Directions for completing forms

A further discussion follows of each topic or item of information called for on the forms, indicating in detail the information needed by the board. Where space provided by the form is insufficient to accommodate the essential information, continuation sheets or a separate text, properly referenced, should be used.

Forms for domestic name proposals can be secured from the Executive Secretary for Domestic Geographic Names, United States Geological Survey, Washington, D.C., 20242.

#### *Discussion of form used in naming an unnamed domestic feature<sup>4</sup>*

*Proposed name, state, country:* The proposed name should appear here in exactly the form proposed for map usage. If the feature falls in more than one state, all states should be listed and, in a like manner, all county names should appear.

*Pronunciation:* if this entry is applicable, the pronunciation and spelling should be confirmed if possible by an identified local source.

*Latitude, longitude etc.:* The geographical location of the feature is essential if the feature can be identified by a centre point location. The location of the centre point should be given by latitude and longitude carried to minute or second value depending on the nature of the feature. If a large feature such as a mountain cannot be located practically by a central geographic point or by township and section listing, other well-known geographical features may be used for boundary definition. The public land survey location is desirable, but should be attempted only in surveyed townships. If the proponent does not have facilities for determining the latitude and longitude of the feature, reference to the delineation of the feature on a basic name series map attachment will be considered as adequate.

*Description and extent of feature:* This statement is to contain, as a minimum, all information necessary to define the particular object being described, to the definite exclusion of any other objects with which it could be confused. This section will be concerned with its appearance, the size of the feature, and any other distinguishing data that will contribute to its description. The appended map location will supplement this descriptive data.

*Distance and direction from prominent features or towns:* The feature or town must be of sufficient proximity to

make the tie-in significant. The distance may need specification as to airline, travel by stream or other means, unless otherwise clear to the reviewer.

*Basis of knowledge that feature is unnamed:* This statement will require confirmation of omission from a basic name series map and confirmation by an adequate authority regarding local usage. The existence of wide local usage should not be ignored because the feature is not named on current basic name series maps.

*Reason for choice of name:* A name may have been selected for reasons other than its descriptive value, a nearby feature, or for a person. Examples might be of some historical connexion such as "Battle Run" or "Camp Springs". The reason for the selection of the suggested name should be presented in sufficient detail to make the reason acceptable.

*If the name is descriptive, state why it is appropriate:* This entry is provided to elaborate on the descriptive association of the name with the feature. Examples might be "Slate Creek", "Windy Gorge", "Flat Run", "Blue Valley". In each case the significance of these specific terms should be established.

*If named for another feature:* State for that other feature:

1. Name, latitude, longitude, section, township, range, and meridian;
2. Any known variants in spelling or other names; this entry gives an opportunity to explain any variation between "other feature" name as shown above for the specific feature as compared to that suggested for the feature name; otherwise the name form under item 1 above will be identical to that suggested for naming;
3. Number of years known by present name; this will generally be answered by acceptable map usage, strengthened if possible by personal statements of persons in the area, or other forms of research;
4. Relation of the two features; this may be from proximity, historical association with the same event, prevalent characteristic shared by the features such as geological structure, colour, etc.

*If the name commemorates a person, state:*

1. Full name of the person (do not propose name of a living person);
2. Date of person's death; this should be authenticated by records or common knowledge;
3. Last residence; this should be the town or county in which the person last resided; if this is different from a place of accidental death, both places should be reported;
4. Association of the person with the feature to be named; the reason for a commemorative name selection should be related under this heading; the degree and nature of the association of the individual with the feature should be shown;
5. Brief biography; this material about the person should provide brief information containing vital statistics, background, employment, principal interests, contributions in the field of life work, activities in community, enduring monuments of work, and other

facts that would add to the justification for commemorative naming.

*Attached identification aids:* Such aids might be:

1. Marked map; this map should be of sufficient size to show the surrounding features, particularly those used for reference location purposes; it should be of sufficiently large scale to show the whole feature and the specific pattern of its delineation; in the name of a stream, the map should show the proper application of the name clearly and completely; if not adequately covered in the above text material, the map can be utilized to show the intended limits of a feature; a map presentation can clarify a written description and should be included wherever possible;

2. Marked photographs; where available, extra materials such as photographs and sketches are helpful in giving the reviewer a more vivid understanding of the feature; sketches are often used to supplement relative map position.

*Discussion of form used for a domestic geographic name report<sup>3</sup>.*

*Proposed name:* Indicate name, state and county.

*Reason for proposal:* Check appropriate box or boxes on the form.

*Location of feature:* Indicate latitude, longitude, section, township, range and meridian. Comments on name form, location data and brief description of feature are similar to those listed previously for the previous form.

*Is name in local use? Approximate number of years:* A name is considered to be in local use when local residents refer to the feature freely, without prompting and without obvious confusion as to application. The reference to the feature is widespread among the residents and without class or group restriction.

*Maps using recommended name:* This entry will list the base series maps and those of available reference series using the recommended name. Any additional data on the history of map usage should be contained in the transmittal.

*Variant spelling or other names for the feature and map use review of variant names:* Names at variance with the recommended name, together with map usage, should be reported in these two entries.

*Available information as to origin, spelling etc.:* This section should contain the background information necessary for the Board on Geographic Names to arrive at a proper decision on the name problem. It is the responsibility of the proponent to supply all the facts at his disposal bearing on his recommendation with a clear statement of his case and with an objective review of the adverse position resulting from his experience and research.

The importance of map usage throughout the map history of the area is emphasized, but in a controversial case the investigation of local usage must be given full attention. A statement showing concurrence from at least one local resident in a position implying knowledge and respect in such matters is essential and similar reports from others, including results of text research, observation of signs etc. should be included in detail.



FORM FOR PROPOSAL OF NAME FOR AN UNNAMED DOMESTIC FEATURE

FORM 9-1344  
(MAY 1960)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES WASHINGTON 25, D. C.  <b>PROPOSAL OF NAME                  FOR AN UNNAMED DOMESTIC FEATURE</b>	Proposed name  <hr/> State _____ County _____  Pronunciation, if not obvious (use Webster's <i>Dictionary symbols</i> )
Location of Feature  Latitude _____ ° _____ ' _____ " N. Longitude _____ ° _____ ' _____ " W.  Section(s) _____, T. _____, R. _____, _____ Meridian	
Description and extent of feature:	
Distance and direction from prominent features or towns:	
Basis of knowledge that the feature is unnamed:	
Reason for Choice of Name: <input type="checkbox"/> descriptive <input type="checkbox"/> other (state reason): <input type="checkbox"/> for a nearby feature <input type="checkbox"/> for a person	
If the name is descriptive, state why it is appropriate:	
If named for another feature, state for that other feature:	
1. Name _____ Lat. _____ ° _____ ' _____ " N. -- Long. _____ ° _____ ' _____ " W. Section(s) _____, T. _____, R. _____, _____ Meridian	
2. Any known variant spellings or other names:	
3. Number of years known by present name:	
4. Relation of the two features:	

If the name commemorates a person, state:

1. Full name of the person: \_\_\_\_\_  
(do not propose name of a living person)
2. Date of the person's death: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Last residence: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Association, if any, of the person with the feature to be named:

5. Brief biography:

List any Attached Identification Aids	Marked map: Marked photographs: Other:
--	--

SUBMITTED BY:

Individual or private organization

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Government agency (State or Federal)  *Check appropriate box*

Field officer of a mapping agency

Agency \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Name and title \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Annex II**  
**FORM FOR DOMESTIC GEOGRAPHIC NAME REPORT**

Form 9-1343 (Apr. 1967)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES WASHINGTON, D.C. 20242  <b>DOMESTIC GEOGRAPHIC NAME                  REPORT</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Controversial name	Recommended name
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Name change	State
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Changed application	County
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	
Lat. ____° ____' ____" N,    Long. ____° ____' ____" W,    Mouth    End    Center    (Circle one) Lat. ____° ____' ____" N,    Long. ____° ____' ____" W,    Heading    End    (Circle one)			
Description of feature: where appropriate, give shape, length, width, direction of flow or trend, direction and distance of extremities from points with established names, and section, township, range, meridian where useful, also elevation if known.			
<b>Published Maps Using Recommended Name</b> (Map name, date, agency, & scale)	<b>Variant Name or Application</b>	<b>Map or Source Using Variant</b> (Map name, date, agency, & scale)	
Available information as to origin, spelling, and meaning of the recommended name and/or statement concerning nature of difference in usage or application:			
<b>AUTHORITY FOR RECOMMENDED NAME</b>	<b>MAILING ADDRESS</b>	<b>OCCUPATION</b>	
Submitted by:			
Name	Title	Date	
Agency			
Address			
Person who prepared this copy if other than above:			
Name	Title	Date	

*Instructions on above form*

This form should be used to provide supporting information on domestic geographical name problems. A full statement covering the field investigation of each name is necessary so that adequate evidence may be submitted in proper form to the Board on Geographic Names for decision. Names should be reported if they fall in one of the following categories:

- Names that have more than one local spelling;
- Names where local spelling differs from that shown on previously published maps or reports;
- Conflicting name usage due to change in property ownership;
- Conflicting published names or application; New or proposed name for features previously unnamed (use BGN form 9-1344).

Established names in local use, even if previously unpublished, are not considered new names. If spelling, application and extent of use are undisputed, a name may be accepted for publication without submitting it to the Board on Geographic Names for approval.

This form is furnished in triplicate. Geological Survey offices should submit first two copies through appropriate channels to Geographic Names Section, Topographic Division. Other government agencies submit in accordance with established agency procedures.

Private individuals or non-Federal agencies, submit original only to Executive Secretary for Domestic Geographic Names, United States Geological Survey, Room 1040 GS Building, Washington, D.C. 20242.

**Annex III**

**EXCERPTS FROM EXECUTIVE ORDERS**

The purpose, jurisdiction, and duties of the Board on Geographic Names and its predecessor agencies have been defined by Executive

Orders and legislation. Executive Order No. 27-A of September 4, 1890, signed by Benjamin Harrison, stated:

“ . . . it is desirable that uniform usage in regard to geographic nomenclature and orthography obtain throughout the Executive Departments of the Government, and particularly upon maps and charts issued by the various departments and bureaus, . . . ”

and that the jurisdiction of the Board includes:

“ . . . all unsettled questions concerning geographic names which arise in the departments, . . . ”

and the duties of the departments relative to the Board are that:

“Department officers are instructed to afford such assistance as may be proper to carry on the work of this board.”

Executive Order No. 399 of January 23, 1906, specified that the responsibility of the Board included:

“ . . . all cases of disputed nomenclature, . . . ”

and

“ . . . the duty of determining, changing, and fixing place names within the United States and insular possessions, . . . ”

and the approval before publication of

“ . . . all names hereafter suggested for any place by any officer or employee of the Government . . . ”

It is also stated that:

“ . . . the decisions of the board are to be accepted by the departments of Government as the standard authority.”

Executive Order No. 6247 of August 10, 1933, stated:

“The spelling of geographic names [in Executive Orders and proclamations] shall conform to the most recent decisions of the United States Geographic Board . . . ”

Executive Order No. 6680 of April 17, 1934, abolished the independent U.S. Geographic Board and transferred its functions to the Department of the Interior.

Public Law 242, passed by the 80th Congress on July 25, 1947, established the present Board on Geographic Names.

**EXTRACTS FROM THE REPERTORY OF TECHNICAL RESOLUTIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC BUREAU (IHB)**

**Paper presented by the International Hydrographic Bureau\***

The subject of standardizing geographical names on an international basis is of great interest to the International Hydrographic Bureau, which has been dealing with some of the problems involved for some years in accordance with its basic mission of encouraging and promoting the standardization of nautical charts and related publications.

With the thought that the work accomplished to date by IHB in this respect could be of some assistance to the delegates as background information (particularly for nations which are not yet member States of IHB), the approved resolutions bearing on the subject, extracted from the *Repertory of Technical Resolutions*, 1919-1965, of IHB, are reproduced below.

*A14. Uniform policy for handling geographic names*

1. With the purpose of obtaining approximate uniformity in the geographic names appearing on the nautical documents of maritime countries, it is recommended that each national hydrographic office:

- (a) On its charts and other nautical documents of its own coasts, show names that are in exact agreement with the forms prescribed by the most authoritative source.

Each country will thus provide complete and authoritative name coverage in its own official script, whether Roman or non-Roman, for the use of all other national hydrographic offices that issue charts on various scales, and other nautical documents, for the same area.

(b) On its charts and other nautical documents of foreign coasts where the Roman alphabet is officially used by the sovereign country, show names that are in exact agreement with the most authoritative usage of the country having some sovereignty.

It is anticipated that these names may eventually be obtained directly from new and revised editions of the nautical charts and other documents of the country having sovereignty.

(c) On its charts and other nautical documents of foreign coasts where the script of the sovereign country is other than the Roman alphabet, show names that are obtained by applying its own authorized transcription system to the names appearing on the most authoritative sources of the country having sovereignty.

*Note.* Among countries where the Roman alphabet is official, international uniformity in transcription systems would be advantageous to the several national Governments. It is accordingly recommended that national hydrographic offices place before their Governments the desirability of obtaining uniformity and urge

\* The original text of this paper appeared as document E/CONF. 53/L.54.